



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

WITH THE PARTICIPATION
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

PRODUCTION NOTES

A film by John N. Smith, **The Boys of St. Vincent** was co-written by Newfoundland writer Des Walsh, Smith, and Sam Grana. Handled with great sensitivity and care, Part One of **The Boys of St. Vincent** presents viewers with a disturbing story of child sexual abuse at a church-run orphanage during the 1970s. Part Two picks up the story 15 years later, when the former abusers are at last arrested and charged, and the victims face difficult choices as a government inquiry reopens old wounds.

The Boys of St. Vincent is a work of fiction inspired by recent events in Newfoundland, Ontario, Native residential schools in Western Canada, and elsewhere, but is not a re-enactment of any actual event. The mini-series is produced by Télé-Action in co-production with the National Film Board of Canada, in association with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and with the participation of Telefilm Canada.

Shooting began on the mini-series in November of 1991 in Montreal and continued until Christmas of that year. After a break for the holidays, production shifted to St. John's, Newfoundland, and continued until the end of March 1992.

BEGINNINGS...

According to Smith and Grana, inspiration for the story actually began in 1988, when they were in the tiny Newfoundland community of Brigus South, preparing the groundwork for their feature film **Welcome to Canada** (1989). The parish priest who served the village was a popular figure, and was approached by Smith and Grana to appear in their movie. When the Reverend James Hickey was charged and convicted in January of 1988 of sexually abusing young boys, the two visiting filmmakers witnessed first-hand the shock and grief of their neighbours in Brigus South.

"When you're in a community as small as Brigus South, you get to know people pretty intimately," Smith says. "Sam and I saw and felt the impact that this had on everyone. Their faith was so much a part of who they were, and a breach of trust of this magnitude left everyone reeling."

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**

 **National
Film Board
of Canada** **Office
national du film
du Canada**

The events which Smith and Grana witnessed left a lasting impression on the two filmmakers. They and Studio B executive producer Colin Neale began discussions in 1989 on a film project that would explore the widespread problem of child abuse, and hopefully shed light on both the causes of abuse and the healing process for victims and their loved ones. While the research for **The Boys of St. Vincent** would include abuse cases across Canada, the filmmakers felt strongly that the story should remain set in Newfoundland.

"It was the suffering of Newfoundlanders that brought out the subject of abuse within the clergy for the whole country," Grana explains. "There's a great awareness of the problem there, which John and I experienced firsthand. We both felt that the necessity of dealing with abuse is far more advanced there than in the rest of the country."

Discussions began in the fall of 1989 with Jim Burt, Creative Head of Movies and Mini-Series for the CBC Television Network.

"Following the highly publicized revelations of many cases of child sexual abuse in Canada, we received a number of proposals on the subject," says Burt. "We knew there was an important story to tell; but we wanted to wait until we had the right artists with the right take on the story."

"When John Smith and Sam Grana presented their idea to us, we felt immediately that they were the ones with whom we wanted to work. They had the talent, the insight, the sensitivity and the track record in dealing with difficult subjects that gave us the confidence to back the project."

THE PRODUCTION TEAM

The Boys of St. Vincent production team represents a successful marriage of private and public sector expertise. The mini-series is produced by Sam Grana and by Claudio Luca, who is head of the Montreal-based production company Télé-Action.

A co-writer on the mini-series, Grana was a constant presence on set during filming, and worked closely with director and longtime collaborator John N. Smith in maintaining their creative vision throughout the production of the film.

Producer and executive producer on the acclaimed NFB-co-produced feature **Une histoire inventée**, Claudio Luca also served as executive producer of **The Boys of St. Vincent**. His responsibilities included overseeing the entire production, and arranging financing and logistics for the production. Télé-Action worked closely with the National Film Board of Canada, the CBC and Telefilm Canada to bring the necessary people and resources together for the mini-series.

A former member of the current affairs department of the French-language television network Radio-Canada, Claudio Luca says that one reason why he was so strongly drawn to the film is that the issues explored rang true for him, based on his own experiences as a former newsman.

"**The Boys of St. Vincent** explores the misuse of authority, and the need to question the people that are committing these acts. It looks at how governments can cover up the truth, if it suits their purposes. This story felt very real to me," he says.

While the project began as an initiative of Studio B of the National Film Board of Canada, the contributions made by the CBC were vital to the project's success. CBC's licensing commitment, added to the NFB's commitment, formed the cornerstone of the production financing. From the earliest stages of script development through to the final editing of the film, Jim Burt worked in close collaboration with the filmmakers, providing invaluable input throughout the process. The financial support of Telefilm Canada was instrumental in the making of this mini-series.

According to NFB executive producer Colin Neale, his goal was to create a situation where the filmmakers would be free to follow their inspiration and create the film they wanted.

"I had worked with John and Sam on **Welcome to Canada**, and knew that the best results would happen if they had the support and working environment they needed," says Neale. "My approach was to let them develop the story at their own pace. I had a great deal of confidence that they would pull it off."

THE BACKGROUND

While Smith and his staff were researching **The Boys of St. Vincent**, the province of Newfoundland was conducting its Hughes Commission Royal Inquiry, investigating accusations of abuse by Christian Brothers at St. John's Mount Cashel orphanage.

It was while attending Commission hearings that Smith first met Dereck O'Brien, a former resident of the orphanage and a consultant for **The Boys of St. Vincent**. Smith's interviews with him eventually lead O'Brien to write a book about his experiences, "Suffer Little Children." More of the story of their encounters is contained in Smith's introduction to the book, published by Breakwater Books.

The filmmakers spoke extensively with professionals working in the field of child sexual abuse who counsel both victims as well as abusers. Research was done into child sexual abuse, the clergy, physical and sexual abuse by the clergy, how church authorities have responded to the problem, and the physical and emotional after-effects of abuse for both victims and abusers.

It was only after this exhaustive research process that Smith and Grana finally felt ready to begin work on the story.

THE STORY

"As we were researching, I began to formulate a story," Smith says. "The way I work on projects is that I start with documentary research and, in effect, when the documentary research is complete -- and a documentary film would start shooting -- that's the point when I start to write.

"By then, I've absorbed enough about the subject matter and the people involved to develop my own set of instincts, and my own hook into it -- what are the emotional truths that I'm interested in going after?"

"**The Boys of St. Vincent** is a work of fiction, not fact," adds Grana. "Our goal was to create a story which would help people to understand how abuse happens, and how healing can begin to take place both for the victims, and their abusers."

A NEWFOUNDLAND PERSPECTIVE

Newfoundland writer, poet and musician Des Walsh worked with Smith and Grana in writing the script for **The Boys of St. Vincent**. No easy task, considering the writers went through over a dozen drafts before arriving at a version of the film with which they were satisfied.

Walsh first met Smith and Grana when he acted in and served as music consultant for **Welcome to Canada. On The Boys of St. Vincent**, his poet's love for language played a vital role in recreating the Newfoundland characters' dialogue with authenticity and great attention to detail.

"I was very interested in working with a poet on this script," Smith explains. "When you're writing dialogue, you're dealing with a very particular use of words. It was a pleasure to work with someone who comes at words from a very critical, individual, special point of view."

"Des is also someone who was brought up as a good Catholic in Newfoundland; as with a lot of Catholic youths in St. John's, he was taught by Brothers. With his Newfoundland, Irish Catholic perspective, Des helped to make sure that the script wouldn't violate any truths about these characters and their lives."

For 11 days, Walsh, Smith and Grana locked themselves away in a house in the community of Carbonear, 70 miles outside St. John's, to hammer out the initial story treatment on Walsh's battered old word processor. For Walsh, who was mainly accustomed to writing alone, this three-way arrangement required some adapting, as he recalls.

"John and Sam have worked together so long, so well, that they really function as a unit," Walsh says. "One knew what the other was saying before he finished saying it! At first, I was worried that I wouldn't be able to 'break their code.' Of course, there were also a lot of cultural differences for us to overcome."

"Still, I felt confident about working with them. None of us wanted a story that was going to be sensational or exploitive. In fact, we made a deal that if it wasn't working out, if the story we were developing was going in

the wrong direction, we would not go on with the project. I wasn't too worried about that happening with John and Sam, though."

After a number of drafts, Burt, Smith, Grana, Neale and Luca felt that the script was ready to be presented to the CBC's Vice President of Arts and Entertainment, Ivan Fecan, for a production commitment.

"**The Boys of St. Vincent** follows in the tradition of **Conspiracy of Silence** -- they're both hard-hitting, topical dramas which took courage to make. We're proud of our involvement with John Smith on this important mini-series," said Ivan Fecan, Vice-President of Arts and Entertainment for CBC-TV.

THE CASTING

Extensive casting for **The Boys of St. Vincent** was done in St. John's, Toronto and Montreal, with additional casting in Vancouver and Los Angeles. A lot of the credit for the exceptional ensemble of adult and child actors in the mini-series must go to casting director Rosina Bucci, who Smith says "presented me with wonderful and interesting casting choices in every session we had."

The CBC casting people were also of tremendous help, making suggestions and arranging to tape auditions in the two west coast cities. Susan Morgan and Maria Armstrong of CBC Casting suggested Henry Czerny for the role of PETER LAVIN.

The talents of Newfoundland actors are well-represented in **The Boys of St. Vincent**. Of the more than 75 actors who appear in the four-hour mini-series, almost 40% are from Newfoundland, including three of the four boys who appear in principal roles in the mini-series: Brian Dodd (STEVEN LUNNY), Jonathan Lewis (EDDIE LINNANE) and Jeremy Keefe (MIKE SPROULE).

Ashley Billard, also from St. John's, portrays STEVEN's older brother BRIAN LUNNY at the age of 16. BROTHER MacLAVERTY and BROTHER GLACKIN are played, respectively, by Michael Wade and Greg Thomey, both noted Newfoundland actors and writers. St. John's actor, musician and dramaturge Phillip Dinn plays MIKE FINN, the St. Vincent's janitor who discovers that boys are being abused at the orphanage and does everything in his power to put a stop to it. Fast-rising young Newfoundland actor Sebastian Spence stars as the adult KEVIN REEVEY.

THE BOYS

"Of course, we spent a lot of time casting the children," director Smith says. "We knew that the children who would be participating in **The Boys of St. Vincent** would have to do so with the total involvement of their families. Therefore, we made it clear in our preliminary casting calls that the mini-series would be dealing with the issue of child sexual abuse, and we made sure that parents knew this well ahead of time.

"When we found children in whom we were interested, before we would go ahead with the next stage of casting we would have a meeting with the parents to discuss the project, and how we would be approaching the subject matter."

The filmmakers made it clear to all the parents that participating in the mini-series also meant having to deal with the subject of child sexual abuse with their children. The children had to feel free to talk to their parents about this issue, and how they were feeling during rehearsals and filming.

Once casting had been completed, Sam Grana flew out to St. John's with a copy of the final script and met with the three Newfoundland youngsters and their families for several days. During that time Grana literally read the script from cover to cover, carefully outlining each and every scene where there would be suggestions of child abuse, as the filmmakers had done with Johnny Morina (KEVIN) and his family in Montreal.

Grana emphasizes "suggestions" since, of course, all scenes where the children's characters appear to be victimized were accomplished by creating the illusion that abuse was taking place. Grana described to the youngsters and their families how filmmakers use camera angles and editing to create such impressions, and invited Greg Thomey (BROTHER GLACKIN) to drop in for a visit with Brian Dodd, who plays the young STEVEN LUNNY.

"Greg's an incredibly warm guy, and he and Brian hit it off right away," Grana remembers. "So when I told Brian that Greg was the one who'd be playing GLACKIN, Brian said 'Oh, if it's him, no problem.'"

"Everyone in that room -- myself, Greg, Brian's mother -- could see that Brian was relaxed and comfortable about acting with Greg, and that made us all feel better," he says.

THE REHEARSALS

After all the meetings and discussions with the children, their families and the actors had taken place, everyone was at last ready to begin rehearsals. It was at this point that psychotherapist Dr. Pierre Gauthier became involved as an advisor to the production.

The father of four children, and grandfather of five, Dr. Gauthier was a professor of psycho-education at the Université de Montréal for 15 years, and has many years of experience working with abused children as well as abusers. He met with the kids and parents on their first day on set, and explained that he would be working closely with the children to monitor their feelings and ensure that they were not being adversely affected in any way by participating in the film.

At the outset of the rehearsals, Dr. Gauthier recommended that the children and the adults who were portraying the orphanage Brothers have the opportunity to form friendships outside of the rehearsal and acting process, so that the children would be able to clearly distinguish the line between acting and real life. Henry Czerny (BROTHER LAVIN), Greg Thomey (BROTHER GLACKIN), Alain Goulem (BROTHER GLYNN) and Michael Wade (BROTHER MacLAVERTY) were all able to spend a great deal of time with the kids, since all the orphanage scenes were filmed in the same building in Montreal.

Furthermore, many of the delicate scenes were not shot until late in the filming, when Dr. Gauthier and the filmmakers were satisfied that a strong bond of trust and friendship existed between the adult actors and the youngsters.

"Henry and Johnny (KEVIN) had formed a very strong relationship outside of their roles," director Smith says. "When it came time to do some of their most difficult scenes, it was a matter of the two of them being able to say to each other, 'Well, we have to do this now, so let's do it.'"

"The other thing that I found very helpful were sessions with Pierre Gauthier, the children and the actors, where we would explain to the kids that it was at least as difficult for the adult actors to perform these scenes as it was for them. You could see the lightbulb go off in the kids' minds, as they were listening to all of this," Smith says.

"In the end, neither I nor the children's parents saw any negative reactions from the children," Dr. Gauthier states. "In fact, with all the precautions we were taking, some of the parents even thought that I and the filmmakers were being somewhat overprotective.

"We simply wanted to ensure the children's well-being at all times, and make sure that they understood what they were doing."

HIGH-ENERGY PERFORMANCES

Which is not to say that there were no problems on set. According to Dr. Gauthier, the film crew had their hands full simply trying to cope with the explosive energy of any normal group of boisterous, high-energy kids.

"The secret was to always keep them busy," he confides. "When you have large group of normally active and playful kids, you can't expect them to sit around the set and wait for long periods of time while technicians are setting up the next shot.

"So we always had games and activities for them to do when they weren't working. We also had a tutor (Terry Tierney), who made sure that their education didn't suffer while they were participating in the film.

"The problems we did encounter were just the normal difficulties you'd expect with large groups of kids," Dr. Gauthier says. "For example, at one point it became clear that there was some tension between the four boys who had principal roles and the boys who were appearing as extras. The boys who had major roles were obviously getting a lot of attention from the film crew, and so they must have decided that they were better than the other boys, and started to tease them.

"As soon as we saw that, we took the four of them aside and explained to them that they had a special responsibility to make the other boys feel at home, that they were like the 'captains'. Once the boys understood that, you could see that they took this responsibility very seriously and the friction between the boys disappeared."

Second A.D. Marie-Josée Bourassa can also attest to the sheer bedlam that a group of high-spirited kids can unleash on a busy, crowded movie set.

"At one point," she recalls, "we had 60 boys between the ages of 8 and 14 here on the set. What a zoo! It seemed more like 300.

"At first, we tried to let them have all the fun they wanted, hoping it would make things easier. I told the babysitters to just let them go wild, but that was a mistake, because it was too hard to settle them down afterwards."

Dr. Gauthier's vast experience was invaluable here, too. He sat down with the boys and explained to them why the film crew needed to know where the boys were at all times, and that even one minute of waiting on a film set can cost thousands of dollars. Also, some of the boys were playing with the prop toys as if they were their own, so Dr. Gauthier carefully explained to the youngsters why they couldn't move the toys between scenes, since the

people watching the mini-series on TV would notice.

A newcomer to the world of feature filmmaking, Dr. Gauthier no doubt had some lessons to learn, as well. Director John N. Smith chose Gauthier to perform the role of PETER LAVIN's counsellor in the mini-series -- exactly the type of authentic casting that Smith and Grana had practised for years as pioneers of the "alternative drama" genre.

THE FAMILIES

Naturally, the families of the three Newfoundland youngsters traveled to Montreal to be with their children for the duration of filming. While filming in Montreal, the families and their children spent a lot of time shopping, dining and enjoying the city's unique recreational opportunities. The boys all got along like the best of friends most of the time, even though they didn't know each other before.

"We've had a ball here in Montreal," says Colina Keefe, the mother of Jeremy (MIKE). "We've seen *Phantom of the Opera* at Place des Arts, and a Canadiens-Oilers hockey game. A highlight for the boys was getting Patrick Roy's autograph after a Team Canada game. We've taken rides on the Metro, gone to video arcades, and have spent a lot of time swimming in the hotel pool.

"Jeremy's handling being a 'movie star' well, he's a bright and mature kid. Of course, he isn't treated specially at home. The way I feel now after being personally involved in this project is, 'When I was growing up, why didn't they show me what was out there?'

Patricia Hanlyn, aunt of Johnathan Lewis (EDDIE), was another Newfoundland family member to travel to Montreal. Like all the parents and relatives, she had the highest praise for the way the filmmakers treated their children.

"The filmmakers have been good with the boys and the crew are all very sensitive to situations which might upset the boys," she says. "Johnathan's father is an actor in Newfoundland, so he has helped prepare Johnathan for this experience. The children understand that this is a film, not real life."

Steven McDonald, stepfather of Brian Dodd (STEVEN), says that Brian has already been chosen to act in a film that will be shot in St. John's next year. He also mentions that Brian's uncle -- who is a priest -- and his mother have spoken to him about the film, explaining that it is not the Church which is bad, just some people in it. As for other reactions to Brian's participation in the film, he says:

"Brian's friends in school know he's in Montreal playing in a movie. There's a lot of envy and admiration that he was chosen. He's an exceptionally smart boy who has always excelled at anything he has done: hockey, boxing, studies. There's no apprehensions among family members about Brian participating in this film."

AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

Pioneers of the NFB's acclaimed "alternative dramas," which use non-professional actors in improvised situations, John N. Smith and Sam Grana have a wealth of experience between them in helping actors of all levels of experience to feel comfortable in front of the camera.

To this end, Smith even ran filmmaking workshops where his actors -- both young and old -- exchanged places with the film crew.

"To help put the children at ease, we had a workshop where the kids were behind the camera, and the crew was in front," Smith recalls. "The kids were looking through the camera and operating it. I and other crew members got out in front, so that the kids could, in effect, film us."

"This way, they saw that everyone who worked behind the camera was not just watching them, but doing a specific job. A lot of care was spent setting up situations in which the kids would feel comfortable."

Smith also credits this 'workshop' technique with helping the adult cast of **The Boys of St. Vincent** to deliver such strong performances. The cast spent a considerable amount of time behind the camera, experimenting with different lenses and lighting so that they could see for themselves how to match the intensity of their performances with the intimacy or distance created by the camera. In an unusual twist on the standard 'camera rehearsal,' Smith and other members of the film crew would even take the time on set to perform entire scenes while the actors viewed the action from behind the camera.

"All of this was done to break down the barriers," Smith explains. "With knowledge comes security, and we wanted to make our actors as comfortable and secure as possible, so they could be free to take risks with their performances."

Dialogue coach Barbara Doran worked closely with all four starring youngsters in the mini-series, helping them with their lines and coaching Montrealese Johnny Morina (KEVIN REEVEY, child) with his Newfoundland accent.

"I can't say enough about Barbara's contribution to the film," says Smith. "With the adults, as well as the children, she made sure that the actors had their lines down by the time we were ready to shoot scenes. Particularly when you're working with children, so much time and focus can be lost if actors aren't totally sure of what they're doing. Barbara's a filmmaker in her own right, and she knew exactly what I needed."

THE RIGHT LOOK

Director of photography Pierre Letarte mentions that part of the inspiration for the look of **The Boys of St. Vincent** came from 18th and 19th century European paintings, which the filmmaking team studied and discussed early on in the production.

"We put a lot of thought into the visual impact of the mini-series," Letarte says. "Paintings from these centuries were very useful as inspiration, because the imagery was so dark and heavy, almost 'medieval.' That's a quality which you see reflected in the interior design of the orphanage, the priests' robes, even in the heavy crucifixes they carry."

To film all the interiors of 'St. Vincent,' the filmmakers shot at a monastery in the N.D.G. district of Montreal. While the monastery's clean, bright appearance bore little resemblance to the hidden, shadowy world that viewers will see in **The Boys of St. Vincent**, the institution's size was ideal for a large film crew and a vast ensemble of actors.

It was Claudio Luca who recommended veteran art director Réal Ouellette, with whom he had worked on *Une histoire inventée*. To create the interiors for the St. Vincent's orphanage, Ouellette and his team transformed the spotless halls of the monastery into the gritty, stark environment that viewers will see in **The Boys of St. Vincent**.

"Obviously, there was a lot that had to be changed," says Ouellette. "The nuns who reside there kept the monastery in immaculate condition. It's bright, simply but neatly decorated, not at all what you see on the screen."

"We wanted something that would strongly convey the violence and severity that was a part of the boys' life, seen through their eyes. The eating and sleeping quarters were gloomy and impersonal, and the halls and rooms were quite dramatic and frightening. I was able to work closely with the director of photography, Pierre Letarte, which I enjoyed a great deal."

"It's rare to find a working atmosphere as good as we had with **The Boys of St. Vincent**," he adds. "Sometimes, as an art director, you feel cut off from the filmmaking process after the start of shooting. But everyone worked together on this project."

Costume designer Denis Sperdouklis, himself a resident of a Montreal-area Catholic orphanage from the ages of 8 to 18, attests to the realism of the design for 'St. Vincent.'

"When I saw the set, it felt very real to me," Sperdouklis recalls. "While I was not aware of any abuse at the orphanage I attended -- in fact, I was treated with a lot of kindness -- physically, the areas where the boys ate, slept and played seemed very realistic to me."

His strikingly dramatic design for the priests' robes worn by LAVIN and the other Brothers was an attempt on his part to capture part of the fearsome power that these men had over the lives of the youngsters in their care. Rather than literally recreating the type of garb worn by Catholic Brothers during the 1970s, he opted for a design inspired in part by an Italian model from the late 19th century.

"We wanted something more militaristic, to reflect the atmosphere of the film and the way the boys are being treated," Sperdouklis explains. "The robe is larger and more flowing than a more contemporary design and, as you see in the film, the effect is quite strong when the Brothers are walking down those dark, frightening hallways."

The filmmaking team participated in the selection of shooting locations in and around St. John's, Nfld. Approximately one third of the mini-series was shot in Newfoundland, and all the filmmakers had the highest praise for the hospitality of the people of St. John's, and the talent of its actors and technicians.

"Shooting in St. John's was a wonderful experience for us," says Claudio Luca. "The people and the local government really go out of their way to facilitate shooting a film in their city. If you need something, they make sure you get it. It isn't at all like in other centres, where people see a lot of major productions being filmed, and there's more red tape."

CZERNY ON "LAVIN"

According to Henry Czerny, Sperdouklis' striking costume design was a key element for **The Boys of St. Vincent** star in helping him to 'become' the abusive PETER LAVIN. In immersing himself in his terrifying character, Czerny says he also gained an insight into how one man's actions can have wide repercussions -- either for good or ill.

"One of the most amazing things for me has been the realization of how one powerful figure like Lavin can disrupt the lives of so many," he says. "There's a ripple effect. Abused kids grow up and each person that they in turn encounter feels this dysfunction."

"People like John Smith are the ones who try to smooth the ripples, and begin a healing process. One person can calm the waters, and that's why a project like this is so important."

"I was very sad when the shoot ended," he continues. "How often do you get a chance to work on something that uses as many elements of yourself as you can conjure up? **The Boys of St. Vincent** has been a team effort and no one wanted to let the team down."

While he and co-star Johnny Morina (the young KEVIN REEVEY) developed a close friendship, Czerny chose not to socialize much with his fellow actors during the shooting of the mini-series, so that he would not have to "change worlds" all the time from Lavin to Czerny, and back. He worked hard on his rapport with the kids on the set, however, to make sure they all understood that he's not Lavin, just someone "doing a job."

For Czerny himself, however, the distinction was not always all that clear. He calls playing the part of Lavin "a very disturbing experience." To understand Lavin, Czerny says, he had to "dip into the very lonely and dysfunctional part of me." This painful, introspective process even began to blur the line in his own mind between what separated him from his character, according to the actor.

"Just before Christmas I felt that I was 'losing it,'" he recalls. "The line between Czerny and Lavin was starting to blur in my own mind. I was feeling emotionally out of control."

According to director Smith, it was only when Czerny had the chance to view the film after the completion of shooting -- once by himself, once with his girlfriend -- that he completely regained the emotional distance between himself and Lavin.

"It was an emotional catharsis for Henry," remembers filmmaker John N. Smith. "I think that viewing his work on screen, as one part of a larger film, finally helped make it a little less personal and put it back in perspective for him. He gave an unforgettable performance, and he should be very proud."

ACTORS' NOTES

For both Kristine Demers (SHEILAH) and co-star Sebastian Spence (the adult KEVIN REEVEY), *The Boys of St. Vincent* marked a major turning point in their young acting careers. The two became a tightly-knit team during filming, with Demers showing him around the city while filming in Montreal.

"Both Sebastian and I put ourselves in John Smith's hands," she says. "He's someone you can trust. I also hit it off with Lise Roy (CHANTAL LAVIN). I met her first when we went to see the rushes of the scenes with the kids. There was a connection between us right away and we understood each other's character: she's discovering a monster in her husband and I'm discovering a man who is suffering intensely. I end up lucky, she doesn't."

David Hewlett (STEVEN LUNNY, age 25) recalls how John Smith's unconventional approach to filmmaking led to some uncomfortable moments for him and co-star Tim Webber (BRIAN LUNNY, age 30).

One morning, the two actors shot a scene in a St. John's hotel restaurant where the Lunny brothers meet after years of being separated from each other. After lunch, they were due to perform a very powerful scene where Brian discovers Steven very high on drugs in his hotel room, and must face the unpleasant truth about what's happened to his younger brother.

"It's a pretty heavy scene, and I suppose both Tim and I were a little nervous about it," Hewlett recalls. "Just before we break for lunch, John tells us that when we come back, we're going to improvise the scene. Naturally, Tim and I just assume he's joking. John was always making jokes and playing little tricks with us -- so we go off for lunch thinking this was just another little trick, and how were we going to pay him back for this one?"

"Of course, when we come back to do the scene, we realize John isn't kidding, at all. He shows us where we can move in the room, talks to us about the scene, and then tells us to improvise. I remember Tim and I looking at each other in terror and wondering, 'what have we got ourselves into?'"

There were some moving moments on set for Philip Dinn (MIKE FINN), an actor with most of his background in the theatre, who confesses to having been worried about portraying emotions in the intimate medium of television. Again, he credits Smith with creating a spontaneous acting environment.

"Most of what I do here in St. John's is connected to the theatre," Dinn explains. "In theatre, you are always far away from the audience. They can't see the tears in your eyes, so you have to find other ways -- your voice, gestures -- to get the emotion across. I had always wondered what it would be like to cry on cue for the camera and in *The Boys of St. Vincent* I found out that if everything works right, you don't have to try at all.

"We were shooting the scene in the basement of the orphanage where Finn gets fired and he goes to collect his tools and finds the young Brian Lunny (ASHLEY BILLARD) crying after being beaten, running his bruised hands under the cold water. Here we were, all crammed into this little kitchen area -- the camera started rolling, the scene went smoothly and suddenly the tears were flowing.

"John is a fabulous director," he says. "His attitude is just go ahead and do it. He doesn't tell you what to do, what not to do."

MEMORABLE ENCOUNTERS

During the production, there were many reminders for cast members of how many lives have been affected, in one way or another, by the tragedy of child abuse. Certainly, the 'mainlanders' in the cast saw first-hand during shooting in St. John's the hurt and anger that many Newfoundlanders still feel over recent events.

A routine cab ride for Lise Roy (CHANTAL LAVIN) on the way to a costume fitting in Montreal turned into an unforgettable encounter with the enduring pain of abuse, as a 68-year-old cab driver revealed to her his own experiences as a boy.

"He was badly beaten by a priest at school and no one in his family would believe him," Roy recounts. "So he was ashamed and ran away. He said that the one man who saved his life was a Montreal police inspector, with whom he ended up corresponding for the next 10 years."

"It was amazing! Here it was, the script for my movie being played out right in this Montreal taxi cab."

Working on the mini-series meant new insights, even, for Dereck O'Brien, who was himself a victim of physical abuse. Along with his role as consultant for **The Boys of St. Vincent**, O'Brien plays the officer who arrests PETER LAVIN in the mini-series. According to Lise Roy, O'Brien said that his scenes with her and co-star Henry Czerny helped him gain new insights into the pain and suffering felt by an abuser's loved ones.

"Dereck came up to me after we filmed the scene and said that it was very moving for him. Seeing what Chantal was going through, it was the first time that he'd considered the pain that an abuser's wife would also undergo, with her whole life collapsing around her. Hearing that from Dereck meant a tremendous amount to me," Roy says.

TEAM SPIRIT

The tight bond which existed between the film crew and the adult and child actors in **The Boys of St. Vincent** exploded into delightful pandemonium on December 23, which was the last day of shooting in Montreal before production shifted to St. John's.

A combination Christmas/wrap party had been planned for that day, with cast and crew choosing names at random and exchanging gifts with one another. However, once the last take was shot at the Schubert public pool, everyone either jumped or was tossed into the pool and a huge, impromptu game of water polo erupted.

More of this close family feeling was in evidence at the final wrap of shooting in St. John's in late March. Following a party organized by the families of the Newfoundland youngsters, the Montreal crew members all chipped in to ensure that everyone who participated in the film in St. John's could join the cast and crew for a final farewell at a local restaurant.



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

*John N. Smith's Powerful Mini-Series Explores Child Abuse
at Church-run Orphanage and the Fight to Uncover the Truth*
"THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT" AIRS DEC. 6 & 7 ON CBC

MONTREAL, November 2 -- The two-part, four-hour mini-series **The Boys of St. Vincent**, the powerful story of sexual abuse of children at a Church-run orphanage and its aftermath years later when the abusers are brought to trial, will air on the CBC Television Network on consecutive evenings, Sunday, December 6 and Monday, December 7 from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Directed by John N. Smith, Part One of **The Boys of St. Vincent** is a disturbing portrait of child abuse at a boys' orphanage in Newfoundland in the 1970s. Part Two picks up the story 15 years later, when a long-awaited inquiry into abuse at the orphanage and its cover-up by Church and government officials reopens old wounds.

The Boys of St. Vincent is co-written by Newfoundland writer Des Walsh, John N. Smith and Sam Grana. The mini-series is a work of fiction inspired by recent events in Newfoundland, Ontario, Native schools in Western Canada, and elsewhere, but is not a re-enactment of any actual event. **The Boys of St. Vincent** was filmed in Montreal and St. John's.

Henry Czerny stars as Brother Peter Lavin, the charismatic and deeply troubled supervisor of the St. Vincent orphanage. By turns compassionate and unspeakably cruel, he inspires both awe and terror in the orphaned boys who are in his charge, forcing them to hide his terrible secret.

Brian Dooley plays Detective Noseworthy, a tough-minded cop whose investigation first uncovers the truth about Brother Lavin. He battles official indifference and a cover-up by the Church and the provincial government to bring the abusers to justice.

Many talented Newfoundland actors are featured, including Philip Dinn as the orphanage janitor, the first outsider to learn about the epidemic of abuse at St. Vincent; newcomer Sebastian Spence as a former victim who must face his past once more when he testifies in court; Greg Thomey as Brother Glackin, one of the abusers; Mary Walsh as the host of a radio phone-in show; and Michael Wade as Brother MacLavery, the kind and decent brother who brings about Lavin's removal from the orphanage.

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**



National
Film Board
of Canada

Office
national du film
du Canada

Pioneers in the field of "alternative dramas," which use non-professional actors, John N. Smith and Sam Grana have assembled an impressive ensemble of child actors to portray the young boys who are residents of St. Vincent. Johnny Morina, as ten-year-old Kevin Reevey, and Brian Dodd, as Steven Lunny, also age ten, both give unforgettable performances.

The Boys of St. Vincent is produced by Les Productions Télé-Action Inc. in co-production with the National Film Board of Canada, in association with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and with the participation of Telefilm Canada.

The mini-series is the latest in a long series of collaborative efforts by John N. Smith and Sam Grana, including the award-winning feature **Train of Dreams** (1987) and the Oscar-nominated short drama **First Winter** (1981). **The Boys of St. Vincent** is produced by Sam Grana and Claudio Luca (Télé-Action). The Executive Producers are Claudio Luca and Colin Neale. Jim Burt is Creative Head of Movies and Mini-Series for CBC Television.

Immediately following the telecast, the two-part series will be available on videocassette from the National Film Board of Canada for use in schools, libraries and community organizations. International distribution is being handled by Alliance International. A French-language version will air on Radio-Canada in early 1993.

-30-

CONTACTS:

Rose Mangone
NFB Toronto
tel. (416) 973-9094

Shawn Goldwater
NFB Montreal
tel. (514) 283-0740

Karen Marginson
NFB Montreal
tel. (514) 283-9410

Alison Dyer
NFB St. John's
tel. (709) 772-0359

Harold Rennie
NFB Halifax
tel. (902) 426-6157

Linda Hiles
NFB Ottawa
tel. (613) 996-6288

Anna-Marie Boquist
NFB Winnipeg
tel. (204) 983-2455

Karen Walker
NFB Edmonton
tel. (403) 495-3573

Al Parsons
NFB Vancouver
tel. (604) 666-8152

For the CBC:
JoAnne Zoon
CBC Toronto
tel. (416) 205-7176



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.
IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

SYNOPSIS

Behind the walls of one of the oldest and most respected institutions in the province, there lies a terrible secret. A secret that no one wants to hear, or believe.

For as long as anyone could remember, the All Saints Brothers of the St. Vincent's orphanage cared for the young and the helpless. They were men of the cloth, revered by the community, sworn to serve the Lord and protect the weak.

But it was the weakest they preyed upon. It was the children.

The Boys of St. Vincent follows the desperate struggle by young orphanage residents to escape their nightmare of physical and sexual abuse. Their cries for help go unheeded, until a tenacious, kind-hearted janitor and a no-nonsense cop wage a personal crusade to uncover the terrible truth, and end the suffering.

Justice does not come easily, or quickly. For many long years, Church officials, police and high government officials conspire to conceal the truth. For the victims, there is only shame and bitterness. And a deafening silence.

At last, a government inquiry reopens the case, 15 years later. The victims must relive the awful past yet again. Once more, they must come face-to-face with their abusers. They must tell the shocking truth.

The time for silence has ended.

-30-

TELE·ACTION

 **CBC Television**

 National
Film Board
of Canada Office
national du film
du Canada

THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.
IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

HENRY CZERNY

(BROTHER LAVIN)

Biography

Henry Czerny, who stars as BROTHER PETER LAVIN in **The Boys of St. Vincent**, hopes that viewers of the four-hour television mini-series will be asking themselves the same thing he did while portraying Lavin -- what makes him tick?

"I believe that as a society we have to change the way we look at abusers," Czerny says. "Our system is still largely based on punishment, assuming that people like Lavin are 'evil', and ignoring the reasons why abuse exists in our culture.

"We see the pain of the victims and there's an automatic desire to punish the perpetrator. Surely we have to realize by now that this alone isn't the answer."

Czerny did a lot of painful soul-searching into male sexuality and his own Catholic background to prepare for the part of Lavin. He feels that the competitive pressures within hierarchical, all-male institutions such as the one portrayed in the film can create unhealthy conditions where the weakest become targets for abuse.

"While Lavin is clearly maladjusted for the position he holds, he has total authority, and is interacting with people who are extremely vulnerable," he says. "It's like oxygen and a spark. Something is bound to explode."

Czerny's recent feature film credits include a starring role as "Nelson" in director Paul Donovan's **Buried on Sunday**. His television credits include a principal role in the NBC movie-of-the-week **DOC**, directed by Dan Petrie, as well as a guest-starring role in the CBC series **Street Legal**. Czerny also guest-starred on the series **Secret Service**, **Top Cops**, **Friday the 13th** and **The Judge**. Other TV work for Czerny includes principal roles on the mini-series **Sound and the Silence**, directed by John Kent Harrison, as well as such series as **T and T**, **Night Heat**, **Hot Shots** and **The Edison Twins**.

TELE-ACTION 

 **CBC Television**



National
Film Board
of Canada

Office
national du film
du Canada

A former member of the National Arts Centre and Stratford theatre companies, Czerny was honored with the Tyrone Guthrie Award for his lead role in the Stratford production of **Not About Heroes**, and was also nominated for two Dora Mavor Moore Awards for his roles in the Toronto Free Theatre's **Romeo and Juliet** and the Factory Theatre production of Canadian playwright Anne Marie MacDonald's **The Arab's Mouth**.

Czerny made his professional acting debut in 1982 in a Theatre 2000 production of George F. Walker's **Zastrozzi**. A graduate of the National Theatre School in 1982, he also studied Fine Arts at York University and Musical Theatre at the Banff School of Fine Arts.

SEBASTIAN SPENCE

(KEVIN REEVEY, age 25)

Biography

Sebastian Spence plays KEVIN REEVEY, age 25, who must face his nightmarish past once more when a government inquiry investigates abuse at the St. Vincent's orphanage 15 years later.

According to Spence, he began his acting career strictly by chance, when he met a friend in a bar who suggested he perform the role of the "Duke of Albany" in a summer production of **King Lear**. Spence thought the friend was joking, and to play along with the idea spent much of the evening singing "I Am the Duke of Albany" with a funny British accent.

It was not until the next morning that he realized his friend had taken him seriously, and by then, it was too late to back out.

A little over three years later, Spence is making his screen debut in **The Boys of St. Vincent**. Starring in a major television mini-series is a tough way to get your feet wet in screen acting, Spence admits, but it seems to have worked to his favour. Kristine Demers, who co-stars as his girlfriend SHEILAH, was also a relative newcomer to the acting scene, and the two young actors formed a solid friendship off-screen that helped them to be relaxed with one another in their scenes together.

Spence's theatre credits include roles in **Walking to Australia** and **Catlover**, both written by his mother, Janis Spence. He has toured Newfoundland and Labrador with the Rising Tide Theatre Company productions **Nothing Else to Do** and **Get a Life**, which also included fellow **The Boys of St. Vincent** star Ashley Billard (young BRIAN LUNNY).

PHILIP DINN

(MIKE FINN)

Biography

Philip Dinn plays MIKE FINN, the janitor who first learns about abuse in the St. Vincent's orphanage and does everything in his power to see that the mistreatment of the boys is stopped.

"Mike Finn is a belligerent type of guy, not too educated, but when he sees an injustice he won't stop until he gets satisfaction," Dinn says. "He goes everywhere, approaches everybody, until he finally gets some help for these boys."

Dinn recalls one instance where director John N. Smith's unique approach to filmmaking allowed the Newfoundland artist to step outside his role as actor and contribute to the scripting process, as well.

"John's very flexible and open to changes suggested by actors," he says. "For instance, in the original scene where Lavin fires Finn, Lavin just tells Finn to get out and he walks through the door without saying anything."

"I told John I didn't think that's the way it really would have happened, that it didn't make sense for Lavin to have the last word. So we discussed it and I wrote up what I thought would be the right ending to the scene. I brought it back to John, who improved it, smoothed it out, until it became the ending you see in the film."

Dinn is well known to Newfoundlanders, both as a founding member of the popular folk group Figgy Duff, and in his current role as artistic director, writer and performer in St. John's Sheilah's Brush Theatre Company.

After helping to found Figgy Duff back in the early 1970s, Dinn recorded and performed with the group for "eight or ten years" before leaving the band to focus his efforts in theatre. The Sheilah's Brush ensemble has since staged over 15 productions, performing at their downtown St. John's stage as well as on numerous Newfoundland and Canadian tours.

One of the company's perennial favorites is **Jack Meets the Cat**, based on traditional folk tales told by Newfoundland storyteller and oral historian Pius Power of Placentia Bay. Following his role in **The Boys of St. Vincent**, Dinn and colleagues were busy preparing an adaptation of **Jack Meets the Cat** for CBC Radio.

BRIAN DOOLEY
(DETECTIVE NOSEWORTHY)

Biography

Brian Dooley plays **DETECTIVE NOSEWORTHY**, who battles official indifference in his efforts to convict the offenders and protect the children from abuse in **The Boys of St. Vincent**, a television mini-series directed by John N. Smith.

"I feel very good about Noseworthy's role in the film," Dooley says. "He's a positive character who tries to expose what's going on. I don't think he's a knight in shining armour, but he's courageous enough to believe in taking action when he thinks something wrong is happening."

The father of a two-year-old daughter, Dooley does a lot of work with young people in acting workshops and student plays. While he doesn't go into details, Dooley does say that he has been shocked by what he hears from many of these kids about the abuse that young people receive -- sexually, physically as well as emotionally.

"It's just coming to the fore how big a problem it is," he said. "I have friends who were abused; I also know some abusers. It's easy for me to see how a cover-up, like the kind in our film, could have taken place."

Dooley's strong interest in the welfare of young people is evident in his involvement in the National Film Board of Canada's 1987 **Wednesday's Children** series of educational dramas for adolescents and adults on the subject of teenage alienation. He directed a film in the series, **Alex**, about a teenager attempting to cope with his parents' separation, and performed in **Jenny**, the story of a seemingly tough 17-year-old who is arrested for selling drugs.

Recent film and TV appearances for Dooley include principal roles in the NFB co-production **Angel Square**, directed by Anne Wheeler; the children's series **Are You Afraid of the Dark?**; **The Harder They Fall**; director Roger Cardinal's feature **Malarek** and its TV spin-off **Urban Angel**; and such independent features as **Obsessed** and **Keeping Track**. One of his earliest screen appearances came in CBC's acclaimed **For the Record** series, where he worked with the late NFB documentarist Donald Brittain.

Other NFB credits include a number of roles in "DramaLab" short films: **Without Work: Not by Choice** (1989), **Where Are You My Lovelies** (1986), **Gabe's Army** (1986), **Harriet 1-225** (1986), **The Job Offer** (1986), **Discussions in Bioethics: Critical Choice** (1985). Dooley was also featured in the NFB's award-winning half-hour drama **The Last Right**, co-produced by Sam Grana in 1984.

GREG THOMEY

(BROTHER GLACKIN)

Biography

While Henry Czerny (BROTHER LAVIN) did a lot of soul-searching to prepare himself for his role in the film; co-star Greg Thomey, who plays BROTHER GLACKIN, found that it helped not to think about it at all. The difference in approach between the two actors lies in the contrasting qualities of their characters, and their roles in **The Boys of St. Vincent**.

"I'd describe my character as someone who's oblivious to what he's doing," Thomey says. "He's in a kind of childlike stupor, which I'm sure is why many abusers are able to do what they do -- they simply can't see that what they're doing is wrong.

"For this reason, I decided not to analyse my character too much during the shooting. Glackin appears mainly in the first half of the mini-series, and we don't see too much of him during the trial, 15 years later. So Glackin remains a kind of opaque figure, to himself as well as the viewers. We never see him confronting, in any sense, the terrible damage he's done to these boys," he says.

Born in St. John's, Thomey has worked as an actor, writer and director for stage, radio, television and film. His recent film work includes **Hanlon House**, which was adapted from the stage play which Thomey co-wrote, directed and starred in. Thomey will also be appearing on the **CODCO** television series in the 92/93 season.

Currently at work writing his second full-length play, his recent stage acting credits include **Walking to Australia**, written by Janis Spence, mother of **The Boys of St. Vincent** co-star Sebastian Spence (KEVIN REEVEY).

MICHAEL WADE

(BROTHER MacLAVERTY)

Biography

"Brother MacLavery is a simple, good, religious man, whose only fault is that his faith in the brotherhood is so strong that he doesn't see what's going on in front of him," says Newfoundland actor Michael Wade, who plays BROTHER MacLAVERTY in **The Boys of St. Vincent**. "And why he doesn't see it is that it's just so far from his imagination.

"I'm glad I don't have to play the role of LAVIN, because it would be difficult for me. The kids like my character and they transfer that liking to me personally. When John Smith was introducing us and the characters we played at the beginning of rehearsals, he introduced me and the kids all spontaneously cheered. That made me feel really good, and I immediately had their trust.

"Kids are naturals," Wade says. "You never have to act with them. And they steal the show."

Born in Avondale, Newfoundland, Wade's feature film credits include the newly-released **Secret Nation**, directed by Mike Jones and produced by Black Spot Inc. with the participation of the National Film Board of Canada. Wade also performed in the 1986 film **The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood**, which was co-directed by brothers Mike and Andy Jones. He has also appeared in **John and the Missus**, **No Apologies** and two films by local filmmaker Ken Pittman.

Wade, who began acting in the sixties, has performed in over 40 stage productions. Currently the Artistic Director of the Newfoundland Shakespeare Company, Wade has written four plays. He is also a well-known poet, with several published works, including the collection *Voices Underground*, with mini-series writer Des Walsh.

LISE ROY

(CHANTAL LAVIN)

Biography

Lise Roy plays CHANTAL LAVIN, the wife of the former St. Vincent superintendent, who is sickened and horrified to learn of her husband's abusive past in the television mini-series **The Boys of St. Vincent**.

Working on **The Boys of St. Vincent** was a very emotional experience for Roy, due both to the disturbing nature of the story and the intensity of the film's director, acclaimed NFB filmmaker John N. Smith.

"From my first moment with John Smith, it was clear that he'd do anything for the stories and for the actors. He gives us a tremendous amount of liberty in our roles, which of course is good but it's also terrifying," Roy says.

According to Roy, the natural chemistry between wife and husband was the result of a special effort by her and Henry Czerny (PETER LAVIN) to establish a genuine rapport, off-screen.

"Henry and I talked a lot about our roles," she recalls. "We had to get to know one another. It had to be real, like there was a real relationship going on. We talked about what would attract two people like Peter and Chantal to each other. We always got together before and after each scene."

Roy's role in **The Boys of St. Vincent** comes on the heels of her principal role in another NFB co-produced TV movie **...comme un voleur**, directed by Michel Langlois. Recent film and TV credits also include the TV movies **Onzième spéciale** and **Le Grand Jour**, and appearances as authors Virginia Woolf and Emily Bronte in the Radio-Canada series **Les Grands Esprits**.

Since 1975, Roy has appeared in numerous theatrical productions, including Pirandello's **Henri IV**, with La Nouvelle Compagnie Théâtrale, and Michel Tremblay's **Le Vrai Monde?** at the Théâtre populaire du Québec. In 1984-85, she toured France with a production of **Ligne blanche, ligne brisée**, written by Françoise Pillet. Most recently, Roy played the title role in **Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher**, which was produced as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations for the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal.

KRISTINE DEMERS

(SHEILAH)

Biography

Franco-Ontarian actress Kristine Demers plays Sheilah, girlfriend of KEVIN REEVEY, who gives him the love and strength he needs to face his past and testify at the trial of his former abuser.

"Sheilah is one of those roles where you really have to look inside yourself," Demers says. "I haven't had any personal experiences that would be the same as Sheilah's, but I definitely do have a tender, supportive side to me."

"The scene where Kevin was testifying was extremely powerful for me and Sebastian (who plays the adult Reevey). There's something very emotional about a man opening up after 15 years of not talking about the atrocities that happened to him. It would be hard in real life. Even though this is acting, it's still hard."

Screen credits for the fluently bilingual Demers include the independent films **Roy & Dale & Me & Dale**, **Sylvia**, **Demain**, **Two Out of Three** and the TV series **Urban Angel**. Demers' performing talents have also been heard off-screen, dubbing and supplying voices for commercials and animated films.

A graduate of theatre from the University of Ottawa, Roy performed in a number of stage productions in Ottawa and toured France with **Cafe Eveil**.

DAVID HEWLETT

(STEVEN LUNNY, age 25)

Biography

David Hewlett plays STEVEN LUNNY, age 25, whose efforts to escape his past through drinking and drugs ends in tragedy when he returns to Newfoundland to testify about the abuse he suffered at St. Vincent's orphanage.

While the English-born actor has "played a lot of messed-up people before," he reports that it was a very different experience for him portraying the adult Steven Lunny in **The Boys of St. Vincent**.

"Going to Newfoundland to shoot my scenes, I was very nervous about portraying a character inspired by real events, and the suffering that people had gone through," Hewlett says. "You're always asking yourself if you're doing it right, and doing them justice."

While on location, Hewlett became close to Dereck O'Brien, a consultant for the mini-series and former Mount Cashel resident. Hewlett had read O'Brien's book, "Suffer Little Children," and was impressed by the man's warmth and vitality.

"Dereck and I hung out a lot, and I found him to be an incredibly warm, inspiring person. Despite what he'd gone through, he managed to come out of it a strong, loving family man. It was really inspirational for me to talk to him, particularly because my character's life ends so sadly," Hewlett adds.

Hewlett's film credits include major roles in **Desire and Hell at Sunset Motel**, **Scanners II** and **Where the Heart Is**, directed by John Boorman. His first major film role came in 1987, when he starred in the psychological thriller **Pin**, filmed in Montreal.

Selected television credits for Hewlett include leading roles in the TV movies **Quiet Killer**, **First Circle**, **Penthouse**, and the series **Katts and Dog** and **Top Dog**. He also appeared in principal roles in such series as **T and T**, **My Secret Identity** and **Street Legal**.

His stage appearances include the Crow Theatre production of **A Short History of Night**, **Diary of Anne Frank** with Young People's Theatre, and **Spring Awakening** at the St. Lawrence Centre.

ASHLEY BILLARD

(BRIAN LUNNY, age 16)

Biography

Twenty-two-year-old Ashley Billard is certainly not the type of actor who sits by the phone. In fact, when the call came that he'd been chosen to play the role of the young BRIAN LUNNY in **The Boys of St. Vincent**, it seemed doubtful for a time if the filmmakers would be able to find him at all.

Billard was on a tour of far-flung Newfoundland and Labrador cities and towns with the Rising Tide Theatre Company when his family received the call that he'd been selected for the part of Lunny. The group was scheduled to perform on the tiny island of Ramea, off Newfoundland's south coast, but that was as much as the family knew.

"It was my sister, Robyn Kennedy, who tracked me down," Billard recalls. "She contacted the RCMP, who gave her the phone number of a confection store in Ramea. From there, she got the numbers of two boarding houses on the island where the company was being put up.

"When she finally got through to me, she told me 'They called you a couple of days ago. You got the part.' What a way to find out," he remembers.

Billard's other screen credits include roles in the feature films **A Secret Nation** and **Understanding Bliss**. Co-founder of the Corey & Wade's Playhouse group, Billard has co-written and/or performed in numerous stage, radio and television productions by the popular St. John's-based ensemble. This busy young performer has already compiled an impressive list of commercial acting credits, and last summer was a writer/host on the CBC radio morning programme **Goosebumps**.

Billard has toured the province several times with the Rising Tide theatre company, along with fellow **The Boys of St. Vincent** cast member Sebastian Spence (the adult KEVIN REEVEY).

TIMOTHY WEBBER

(BRIAN LUNNY, age 30)

Biography

Timothy Webber plays the adult **BRIAN LUNNY** -- a bitter man who can only watch in horror as his younger brother, who he'd left behind at St. Vincent's, self-destructs before his eyes.

"There's no resolution to Brian's story in the film, no real ending," Webber says. "But I like that. There's no real resolution or happy ending to life. I despise the sitcom type of show where everything always ends up happy. That's just not the way life is.

"My character wasn't sexually abused, but he was beaten and feels terrible guilt about leaving his younger brother behind in the orphanage. He's buried all this bitterness, but fifteen years later, during the trials, the whole thing comes tumbling down on him again.

"It's a great part," he says, "one of the roles where you work from your emotions and try to find as many common points as you can with your own life. As an actor, you're paid to explore some dangerous emotional territory. When you start digging into psychological areas like that, you have to stay with it. You can't just turn it off when you go home at night, and leave for work the next morning."

Webber, who grew up in St. John's, Nfld., now lives on the West Coast where he says he's close to the one prerequisite he needs -- "an ocean." He has performed principal or lead roles in over 20 feature films, including: **Leaving Normal**, **Bethune**, **The Moderns**, **John and the Missus**, **Toby McTeague**, **One Magic Christmas**, **The Grey Fox**, **Hotel New Hampshire** and **Ticket to Heaven**.

Following his work in **The Boys of St. Vincent**, Webber began work on the made-for-television movie **The Exxon Valdez**. Other TV credits include a lead role on the TV series **Street Justice**, and guest spots on such series as **E.N.G.**, **War of the Worlds** and **T and T**. He has appeared in principal roles in the acclaimed Canadian mini-series **Love and Hate**, the movie-of-the-week **Race to the Pole**, **Children of Poverty** and **The Ann Jillian Story**, and such series as **Wiseguy**, **Mom P.I.**, **Max Glick** and **MacGyver**.

Some of Webber's theatre credits include Neptune Theatre's **Warm Wind in China** and **Sweet Like Suga** at Centaur Theatre, and numerous productions at Dawson College's Dome Theatre in Montreal, including **Twelfth Night** and **Caucasian Chalk Circle**.

MAURICE PODBREY

(THE ARCHBISHOP)

Biography

A pillar of the Montreal anglophone theatre community, and a recipient of the Order of Canada, Maurice Podbrey has amassed an impressive acting career in film, TV and theatre.

For Podbrey, who plays the ARCHBISHOP, **The Boys of St. Vincent** marks the second time that he and mini-series co-writer and producer Sam Grana (MONSIGNOR) have acted together. The two men appeared together in the National Film Board of Canada alternative drama **The Last Straw** (1987), directed by Giles Walker.

Podrey's other film acting credits include the independently produced films **Obsessed**, **Contracoeur**, **Happy Birthday to Me** and **Earthquake**. On television, he has appeared in **Urban Angel**, and the U.K.-series **Brittain**.

Founder and artistic director of Centaur Theatre for over 20 years, Podbrey has also performed in many of the theatre's productions. This season marks his third appearance in the title role in **Uncle Vanya**, directed this year by Russian Sasha Morin. His other performing credits include "Josef Stalin" in **Masterclass**; "Willy Loman" in **Death of a Salesman**; "Max" in Harold Pinter's **Homecoming**; and Captain Boyle in **Juno and the Paycock**.

A graduate of Rose Bruford College in England, Podbrey served as Assistant Director of the English section of the National Theatre School in Montreal from 1966 to 1969.



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

JOHN N. SMITH

Director/Co-writer

Biography

"When I look back, what strikes me most is the extraordinary seriousness and intensity with which everyone -- the cast, the crew, everyone -- approached this project. Never have I seen people so caught up in and moved by a story, and this is true for me personally," says John N. Smith, director and co-writer on *The Boys of St. Vincent*.

"There was something special about this film from the very beginning; even for the seasoned pros. The overriding importance of the film and the issues it addresses made it a memorable project for all of us.

"*The Boys of St. Vincent* will try to take the viewer on a journey that goes beyond the feelings of horror and outrage," Smith says. "We wanted this story to look at the healing process. What is there beyond anger and the desire for revenge? How does a victim feel whole again?"

Prior to working on *The Boys of St. Vincent*, Smith received international acclaim for his pioneering work in the genre of "alternative dramas," which use non-professional actors, improvised dialogue and documentary techniques. His most recent alternative drama, *Welcome to Canada* (1989), chronicles the illegal landing of a boatload of Tamil refugees on Canada's Atlantic coast. Inspired by an actual incident in 1986, the film was co-written and produced by longtime collaborator Sam Grana.

"Smith has combined some of the conventions of cinematic drama with the documentarist's fundamentals to create an original hybrid of filmed reality that seems somehow more emotionally true than either of the traditional forms," wrote John Haslett Cuff of *The Globe and Mail* in an interview with Smith about *Welcome to Canada*.

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**



National
Film Board
of Canada

Office
national du film
du Canada

In 1987, Smith directed, edited and co-wrote the multi-award-winning feature **Train of Dreams**, a gritty portrait of a 17-year-old whose violent behaviour and criminal activities eventually land him in a correctional facility for juvenile delinquents. Film critic Jay Scott described the film as "an utterly unromanticized and utterly extraordinary account of one angry young man's effort to come to terms with his rage."

The tremendous critical success of **Train of Dreams** came on the heels of Smith's 1986 alternative drama **Sitting in Limbo**, about West Indian teenagers in Montreal, which was named Best Canadian Film at the Montreal World Film Festival, and was awarded a Gold Ducat at the Mannheim Film Festival.

Smith and Giles Walker were co-directors and co-producers on the NFB's first alternative drama **The Masculine Mystique** (1984), which looks at the changing male role in society through the eyes of four men. The film garnered a Red Ribbon Award at the American Film Festival in New York.

Nominated for an Academy Award for the short drama **First Winter** (1981), Smith's other dramatic credits include the half-hour dramas **A Gift for Kate** (1985), **The Rebellion of Young David** (1985), **Revolution's Orphans** (1979), **Happiness Is Loving Your Teacher** (1977) and **Bargain Basement** (1976).

Smith's fascination with the performing arts have resulted in a number of acclaimed films: **First Stop, China** (1985), **Acting Class** (1980), **For the Love of Dance** (1981) and **Gala** (1982). **For the Love of Dance** and **Gala** won the New York Dance Film Festival's Grand Prize in 1982 and 1983, respectively. In 1984, Smith also directed the IMAX®-format **River Journey**, the hit of the 1984 New Orleans World Fair.

Winner of an Emmy Award in 1972 for the WNET production **51st State**, Smith was also a writer, director and producer for **The Fabulous Sixties** and **Here Come the Seventies**, two critically acclaimed series broadcast on CTV and syndicated internationally. He got his start in television in 1968, when he signed on as a researcher with the CBC Toronto nightly current affairs programme **The Day It Is**.

Born in Montreal in 1943, Smith's background includes stints as a stevedore, tobacco picker, construction worker, taxi driver and insurance executive. He graduated from McGill University in 1964 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in political philosophy, which he followed with two years of graduate work.

He has been a staff director with the National Film Board of Canada since 1972.

Principal Filmography

<i>Year</i>	<i>Film</i>	<i>Credits</i>
1992	The Boys of St. Vincent	Director/Co-writer
1989	Welcome to Canada	Director/Co-writer/Editor
1987	Train of Dreams	Director/Co-writer/Editor
1986	Sitting in Limbo	Director/Co-writer/Co-producer
1985	A Gift for Kate	Director
1985	The Rebellion of Young David	Director/Writer
1985	First Stop, China	Director/Producer
1984	The Masculine Mystique	Director/Co-producer/Co-writer
1984	River Journey (in IMAX®)	Director
1982	Gala	Director/Co-producer
1981	For the Love of Dance	Director/Co-producer
1981	First Winter	Director/Co-producer
1980	Acting Class	Director/Co-producer
1979	Revolution's Orphans	Director
1978	No Day of Rest	Director/Co-producer
1977	Happiness Is Loving Your Teacher	Director
1976	Bargain Basement	Director
1975	Bella Bella	Producer
1975	We Sing More Than We Cry	Director/Producer
1975	Ready When You Are	Director/Producer

1974	The New Boys	Director/Producer
1974	A Star Is Lost! (also distributed as a four-part series Star!)	Executive Producer
1974	A Case of Eggs	Executive Producer
1974	The Heatwave Lasted Four Days	Executive Producer
1974	A Moving Experience	Executive Producer
1973/4	West series	Executive Producer
1972	The 51st State TV series (WNET)	Producer
1970-71	Here Comes the Seventies TV series (Hobel-Leiterman Prods. for CTV and Four Star International)	Director/Writer/Producer
1970	The Fabulous Sixties TV series (Hobel-Leiterman Prods. for CTV and ABC Films)	Producer
1970	Face-to-Face-to-Face TV series (With Gloria Steinem and Patrick Watson; Hobel-Leiterman Prods. for CTV)	Producer
1970	The Takeover Game (Hobel-Leiterman Prods. for CBC)	Writer/Director
1968-69	The Way It Is (CBC weekly series)	Story Editor/Producer
1968	The Day It Is (CBLT nightly series)	Story Editor/Researcher

Awards

Welcome to Canada

Nomination for Best Director
Genie Awards,
Academy of Canadian Cinema, 1989

Train of Dreams

Ouimet-Molson Prize
Best Quebec Feature
6th Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois, 1987

Nominations for:

Best Director
Best Film
Best Screenplay (with Sam Grana)
Best Actor, Jason St. Amour
Genie Awards
Academy of Canadian Cinema, 1987

Gold Plaque to Jason St. Amour for his outstanding performance
Gold Plaque to Fred Ward for his outstanding performance
23rd International Film Festival
Chicago
October, 1987

Principado de Asturias
Award for Best Feature Film of the Festival
Best Director Award
Best Actor Award, Jason St. Amour
International Film Festival,
Gijon, Spain
July, 1988

Best Actor, Jason St. Amour
International Youth and Children's Festival
Paris
June, 1989

Sitting in Limbo

Best Canadian Film (out of competition)
World Film Festival
Montreal
August, 1986

Honourable Mention
Festival of Festivals
Toronto
September, 1986

Gold Ducat
35th International Film Week
Mannheim
October, 1986

Nomination for Best Director
Genie Awards
Academy of Canadian Cinema, 1986

Special Merit Award - Drama Category
National Black Programming Consortium's Annual Awards Ceremony
Columbus, Ohio
November, 1987

A Gift for Kate

Chris Bronze Plaque
Health and Medicine Category
35th Annual International Film Festival
Columbus, Ohio
November, 1987

The Masculine Mystique

Red Ribbon Award
Contemporary Concerns Feature Category
27th American Film Festival
New York
May, 1985

Gala

Gold Star Award
12th Annual Dance and Mime Film and Video Festival
New York
April, 1983

City of Les sables d'Olonne Award
International Festival of Films on Dance
Les sables d'Olonne, France
September, 1983

Award for its didactic strength and poetic impact
36th Annula Film Festival
Salerno, Italy
October, 1983

For the Love of Dance

Grand Jury Prize
11th Annual Dance Film Festival
New York
April, 1982

3rd Prize awarded by the Public Scientific and Didactic Film Festival
Rondo-Malaga, Spain
November, 1982

First Winter

Oscar Nomination
Short, Live Action Films Category
Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences
Hollywood
March, 1982

Revolution's Orphans

Bronze Hugo
Short Subject, Drama Category
15th International Film Festival
Chicago
November, 1979

Revolution's Orphans (cont'd)

Genie Award for Outstanding Performance, Rudi Lipp
Academy of Canadian Cinema
Toronto
March, 1980

Happiness Is Loving Your Teacher

Etrog Award for Best Actress, Marina Dimikopoulos
Canadian Film Award
Toronto
November, 1977

Bargain Basement

Blue Ribbon Award
Fiction Films Category
19th Annual American Film Festival
New York
May, 1977

People's College Diploma
25th International Film Week
Mannheim
October, 1976

Etrog Award for Best Actress, Luce Guilbeault
TV Drama
Canadian Film Awards
Toronto
October, 1976

The 51st State

Emmy Award
Best Current Affairs Programme
Academy of Television Arts and Sciences
Hollywood, 1972

*** various other awards for The Fabulous Sixties and Here Come the Seventies**



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

SAM GRANA

Co-writer/Producer/Principal Actor

Biography

Producer and co-writer of **The Boys of St. Vincent**, Sam Grana and longtime collaborator John N. Smith reserve the highest praise for one another, and for the unique working relationship that they have developed over the years. In fact, these two men have worked together so much that at times the connection seems almost telepathic.

"John and I need not talk," Grana says. "We've been working together for so long and know each other so well that in our discussions, even our disagreements, each of us knows what the other is about to say before he's said it. When (**The Boys of St. Vincent** co-writer) Des Walsh first started working with us, he told us he couldn't 'crack our code.'"

The Boys of St. Vincent is the latest in a long series of collaborative efforts by Grana and John N. Smith. The two NFB filmmakers are pioneers in the field of "alternative dramas," which use non-professional actors, improvised dialogue and documentary techniques. In fact, the initial inspiration for the mini-series came in 1988, when Smith and Grana were in Newfoundland working on their feature film **Welcome to Canada** (1989).

Present on set throughout the shooting of the **The Boys of St. Vincent**, Grana's role as producer included protecting his director from unnecessary distractions and headaches, so that Smith could focus all of his energies on working with his actors and crew. As well, they shared the responsibility of maintaining creative control over the project, ensuring the integrity of their story right through to the final edit.

An actor himself, Grana worked a great deal with the cast, and was deeply involved in safeguarding the well-being of the children in **The Boys of St. Vincent**. When casting of the children had been completed, it was Grana who flew back to St. John's for several days to meet with the children and their families. Once there, he read through the entire script several times and demonstrated to the kids and their parents how the filmmakers could create the illusion of abuse, with absolutely no harm to the children.

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**



National
Film Board
of Canada

Office
national du film
du Canada

In 1987, Grana produced the multi-award-winning feature **Train of Dreams**, directed by John N. Smith. A gritty portrait of a 17-year-old whose violent behaviour and criminal activities land him in a correctional facility for juvenile delinquents, the film was awarded the 1987 Ouimet-Molson Prize as best Quebec feature film, and also garnered two Special Jury Awards at the 23rd International Film Festival in Chicago.

In 1982, Grana stepped in front of the camera to play the part of "Alex," a philandering husband in search of romance and excitement, in **The Masculine Mystique**, an alternative drama co-directed by John N. Smith and Giles Walker. Grana went on to play "Alex" in what became a trilogy of films, with the sequels **90 Days** (1985) and **The Last Straw** (1987), both directed by Walker.

Other producing credits for Grana include the 1990 documentaries **Oliver Jones in Africa** and the award-winning **Night and Silence**, which explores the long-running war in the Horn of Africa. An NFB co-production, **Night and Silence** was awarded a Golden Sheaf at the Yorkton Film Festival and was voted Best Television Documentary and Best Investigative Documentary by Canadian journalists. Grana was producer on **Toivo, Child of Hope** (1989) and the Canada/Holland co-production **The Boulevard of Broken Dreams** (1988), directed by the late Derek May.

Grana and director John N. Smith shared an Academy Award nomination for the 1981 short drama **First Winter**, chronicling the struggles of an immigrant Irish family in the 1830s. Grana also served as producer for the NFB's **Family Crisis** series, which included the award-winning dramas **The Last Right** (1984) and **A Gift for Kate** (1985).

He began his career at the Film Board in the early 1970s after studies in Communication Arts at Loyola College. A native of Foggia, Italy, Sam Grana emigrated with his family to Canada at the age of six.

Filmography

<i>Year</i>	<i>Film</i>	<i>Credits</i>
1992	The Boys of St. Vincent	Producer/Co-writer/Principal Actor
1990	Oliver Jones in Africa	Producer
1990	Night and Silence	NFB Producer
1989	Toivo, Child of Hope	Producer
1989	Welcome to Canada	Producer/Co-writer

1988	The Boulevard of Broken Dreams	Co-producer
1987	The Last Straw	Principal Actor
1987	Train of Dreams	Producer
1986	Eritrea series The Forgotten War Songs of the Next Harvest A Time to Heal	Producer
1986	Family Crisis series A Gift for Kate	Producer
1985	Family Crisis series Running Scared Out of a Job One Step Away	Producer
1985	90 Days	Principal Actor
1985	At the Wheel series After the Crash On the Road Under the Influence The Road Ahead	Associate Producer
1984	"Excuse Me, But There's a Computer Asking for You"	Associate Producer
1984	Family Crisis series The Last Right	Associate Producer
1984	Starbreaker	Producer
1984	The Masculine Mystique	Principal Actor
1983	A Single Regret	Producer
1982	The Way It Is	Producer
1981	First Winter	Producer
1980	Gulfstream	Associate Producer

1977	The Insulation Story	Director
1976	SDL-1 Shakedown	Director/Producer
1976	Au boutte du quai	Producer
1976	Porter's Magic Dreams	Producer
1976	Diving Below Daylight	Director/Producer
1975	Citizen Sailors	Director/Producer
1974	DREE Atlantic	Director/Producer
1973	Une Simple histoire d'amour	Producer



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

DES WALSH

Co-writer

Biography

When John N. Smith and Sam Grana first approached Newfoundland poet Des Walsh with the idea of having him collaborate on the screenplay for **The Boys of St. Vincent**, he wasn't sure if he wanted to do it.

On the other hand, he didn't want anyone else doing it, either.

"This is a very difficult and painful story, especially for an Irish Catholic Newfoundlander," Walsh explains. "I felt that the story needed to be told, but I wasn't sure if I was ready to do it.

"But then I thought, what's the point of jumping up and down and complaining three years down the road if the story gets done and I don't like it? I wasn't worried about John and Sam -- I've worked with them before and I have a tremendous amount of faith in their principles -- but if I wanted to make sure that this story was told right, now was my chance to get involved," he says.

Walsh first met Smith and Grana when he acted in and served as music consultant for the National Film Board of Canada's "alternative drama" **Welcome to Canada** (1989). For **The Boys of St. Vincent**, Walsh's background as a writer and poet helped the filmmakers re-create the Newfoundland characters' dialogue with authenticity and great attention to detail. An Irish Catholic boy from St. John's, schooled by Catholic Brothers, Walsh helped ensure that the mini-series would respect the experience of characters and their lives.

Walsh's poetry has been published in over a dozen collections and anthologies, beginning in 1972 with *Voices Underground*, which also featured works by **The Boys of St. Vincent** actor Michael Wade. Walsh's most recent collection of poetry is *Who Would Kiss the Mottled Birch* (1992; Bremon Press), where his works were featured alongside illustrations by artist Gerald Squires. Following his work on **The Boys of St. Vincent**, he and Squires collaborated again when Walsh edited *The Art of Gerald Squires*, to be published in 1993 by Breakwater Books.

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**



National
Film Board
of Canada

Office
national du film
du Canada

Walsh served as a script consultant for the 1991 feature film **No Apologies**, produced by Red Ochre Productions. Also at home in the theatre, his stage adaptation of Harold Horwood's novel *Tomorrow Will Be Sunday* premiered at the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre on September 25, 1992. A former editor of *Arts in formation* magazine, Walsh worked as a freelance scriptwriter for CBC Radio from 1982 to 1983, and later taught creative writing at Memorial University and was writer-in-residence on a Canada Council program at the Resource Centre for the Arts in St. John's.

A man of diverse talents, along with his role in **Welcome to Canada**, his screen acting credits include the feature **Finding Mary March**, and the CBC dramas **Nothing to Do There** and **Season on the Water**. Walsh also performed as a musician and actor in several Newfoundland theatre productions.



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

DERECK O'BRIEN

(Consultant for THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT/ "DETECTIVE OWEN")

Biography

Dereck O'Brien and filmmaker John N. Smith first met in 1989, when O'Brien was testifying at the Newfoundland government's Hughes Commission inquiry into abuse at the Mount Cashel orphanage, and Smith was doing research for *The Boys of St. Vincent*.

A resident of the orphanage between the ages of 12 to 17, O'Brien was interviewed by Smith about his experiences, and became a consultant for the mini-series. Out of these discussions came O'Brien's book about his experiences, "Suffer Little Children," published by Breakwater Books, with an introduction by Smith.

While *The Boys of St. Vincent* is a work of fiction, not a factual re-creation of events in Newfoundland or elsewhere, O'Brien is satisfied that the film respects the realities of child abuse which he experienced first-hand.

"The film is accurate," O'Brien states. "It's as close to real life as it can be. I wanted it to be a film that didn't hold back any punches."

One of the pioneers of the National Film Board of Canada's acclaimed "alternative drama" feature films, which use non-professional actors, director Smith decided to cast O'Brien in the role of DETECTIVE OWEN, the police officer who finally arrests PETER LAVIN (played by Henry Czerny). According to O'Brien, "Acting in *The Boys of St. Vincent* was something that just seemed to come naturally to me, maybe because I knew the story so well that I didn't have to act." He feels that working in the film "has been a kind of therapy."

O'Brien, who's a chef in St. John's, also travels the country to speak to physicians, lawyers and social workers in an effort to raise awareness about child abuse. While he has been able to deal with feelings of hurt and pain from the abuse he suffered, it has not been easy.

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**



National
Film Board
of Canada

Office
national du film
du Canada

"I got involved in all sorts of booze and drugs, the whole thing," O'Brien remembers. "Then I woke up one morning late for work -- I had been warned that it was my last chance -- and I told myself I had to get my life in order. I turned my life around.

"It's not easy. The other day my oldest daughter (age 8) said to me, 'Daddy, read me a story from your book.' I kind of got a lump in my throat and I had to tell her, 'Daddy just can't read you that story. Maybe when you're older.'"



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.
IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

CLAUDIO LUCA

Producer and Executive Producer

Biography

When you're working on a project that's as big as **The Boys of St. Vincent**, team work is essential, explains producer and executive producer Claudio Luca.

"A big part of the success of **The Boys of St. Vincent** was teamwork," Luca explains. "You're talking about a four-hour production, hundreds of actors and extras, several major co-producers, two shooting locations hundreds of miles apart -- the only way to make a project like this work is for everyone to work as a group."

"John Smith is a filmmaker who understands the value of having people feel free to make suggestions and share ideas, which is one of the reasons why I wanted to work him. When egos are set aside and an environment is created where as many people as possible can have creative input, the film can only get stronger. **The Boys of St. Vincent** is proof of that," he says.

Prior to working on **The Boys of St. Vincent**, Luca was producer and executive producer for director André Forcier's acclaimed feature **Une histoire inventée**. Co-produced by Telescene and C.M. Luca in association with the NFB, **Une histoire inventée** was named Best Canadian Film and awarded the prize for Most Popular Film at the 1990 Montreal World Film Festival. The film was screened in the 1991 "Quinzaine des Réalisateurs" at Cannes, and was Canada's official entry in the category of Best Foreign Film for the Academy Awards.

In 1991, Luca served as co-producer on the children's dramatic series **Une faim de loup**, broadcast on Canal Famille. Recent credits also include the variety special **La La La Human Sex**, which aired on Radio-Canada's **Les Beaux Dimanches** series, as well as the documentaries **Cinema Italiano** and **L'Italie du Sud**.

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**

No stranger to shooting in faraway locations, his 1986 one-hour documentary **Cho Oyu La Voie de l'Impossible** chronicled the first-ever winter ascent of Mt. Cho Oyu in the Himalayas. Filmed on location in Tahiti, the one-hour children's drama **La Fleur de Noël** was produced and executive produced by Luca in 1985. Peru was the setting for his 1984 documentary **Esperanza**, co-produced with Radio-Québec.

A member of Radio-Canada's current affairs programme **Le Point** until 1985, Luca's credits include the short documentary **Les Requins du Frère Marcel**, produced by Luca and co-directed with Pierre Nadeau. He also produced three seasons of **Les Risques du métier** (1982-85), a series on safety in the workplace which aired on the Radio-Québec and Télé-Métropole networks. In 1983, he served as a producer with the TVEC/Super Écran cable network.

Prior to working as a producer and director, Luca served from 1975 to 1982 as a director of photography and cameraperson for the Radio-Canada current affairs series **Le 60**, **Télémag**, **Dossier**, **Les Beaux Dimanches** and **Première Page**. A graduate of the Germain School of Cinematography in New York in 1965, Luca began his career in filmmaking in the mid-sixties as an editor and cameraperson.

Luca productions currently in development include the feature **Le Sphinx de la banlieue**, shooting this spring; and **Les Gratte-ciel d'Ahuntsic**, a six-hour mini-series on Italians in Canada for the CBC and Radio-Canada networks, scripted by noted author Marco Micone. Also upcoming are the features **Le Chien**, directed by Jean-Marc Dalpé, and **Miami Trip**, scripted and directed by Marilù Mallet.

Filmography

1992	The Boys of St. Vincent	Producer/Executive Producer
1991	Une faim de loup series	Co-producer
1990	Une histoire inventée	Producer/Executive Producer
1988	L'Italie Du Sud	Producer
1987	Cinema Italiano	Producer
1986	La La La Human Sex	Producer
1987	Cho Oyu La Voie de L'Impossible	Producer/Executive Producer
1985	La Fleur de Noël	Producer/Executive Producer

1985	Les Requins du Frère Marcel	Director of Photography/Producer
1982-4	Les Risques du métier <i>series</i>	Producer
1984	Léproserie San Pablo	Director/Director of Photography/ Producer
1984	Pilotage	Director
1984	Esperanza	Producer
1983	Pionniers de la brousse	Producer
1983	Catherine Sauvage au Petit Champlain	Producer
1983	Téléthon TVEC	Producer
1982	Les Masques	Director of Photography
1982	Première Page <i>series</i>	Cameraperson
1975-81	Le 60, Télémag, Dossier, Les Beaux Dimanches <i>series</i>	Director of Photography/Cameraperson
1970-74	Director of photography and cameraperson for numerous documentaries, including Rock Festival and The Making of Franco Zeffirelli's "Francis of Assise"	



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

COLIN NEALE

Executive Producer

Biography

As head of Studio B of the National Film Board of Canada since 1988, Colin Neale has served as executive producer on many of the NFB's most acclaimed feature films, docudramas and documentaries. NFB executive producer of **The Boys of St. Vincent**, John N. Smith, Sam Grana and Colin Neale previously collaborated on the 1989 feature film **Welcome to Canada**.


Neale's recent credits include last year's hit feature **The Company of Strangers**, directed by Oscar-winner Cynthia Scott, which captured the hearts of critics and audiences around the world for its off-beat portrayal of seven elderly women stranded in the Canadian countryside. The NFB co-production **Princes in Exile**, directed by Giles Walker, is a funny, uplifting drama about a teenaged boy at a summer camp for kids with cancer, and was named Best Television Film at the Monte Carlo Television Festival.

Neale is also executive producer on two new NFB productions offering vastly different views of Canada to the world. Native filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin's eagerly awaited feature-length documentary **Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance**, scheduled for release in early 1993, provides an exclusive behind-the-barricades look at the historic stand-off between Mohawk Warriors and the Canadian army last summer.

The world's first film in IMAX® HD (high definition), **Momentum** was the centrepiece of the Canadian Pavilion at Expo' 92 in Seville, Spain. Co-directed by Tony Ianzelo and legendary Canadian filmmaker Colin Low, the \$4.4 million production was the first IMAX film ever shot and projected at 48 frames-per-second -- twice the normal film speed. This new process, which produces images of unprecedented richness and clarity, showcases the beauty, vastness and dynamism of Canada as never before.

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**

 **National
Film Board
of Canada** **Office
national du film
du Canada**

Other new Neale productions include **Double or Nothing: The Rise and Fall of Robert Campeau**, director Paul Cowan's docudrama on the spectacular rise and fall of the renegade Canadian financier. Neale and Cowan previously worked together in 1989 on **Justice Denied**, a powerful look at the 11-year legal nightmare of Donald Marshall, Jr., a Native teenager wrongfully jailed for murder in Nova Scotia in 1971, despite evidence that he was innocent.

Neale served as executive producer on the ground-breaking large-format film **Urgence/Emergency** (1987), which was the first film in IMAX to make extensive use of radio microphones in synchronous sound for multiple actors, resulting in unheard-of realism and intimacy, and **The First Emperor of China** (1990), a Canada/China co-production that set new standards for the dramatic potential of IMAX movie-making.

Before moving into producing, Neale was Assistant Director-General and Quebec Centre Director of the English Program Branch of the NFB from 1985 to 1988. He was Director of Distribution Services for the Film Board from 1979 to 1985, and headed English Marketing for two years before that.

Filmography

<i>Year</i>	<i>Film</i>	<i>Credits</i>
1992	The Boys of St. Vincent	Executive Producer
1992	Double or Nothing: The Rise and Fall of Robert Campeau	Executive Producer
1992	Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance	Executive Producer
1992	Momentum	Executive Producer
1992	A Passage from Burnt Islands	Executive Producer
1992	Donald Brittain - Filmmaker	Executive Producer
1992	Children of Jerusalem	Co-producer/ Executive Producer
1991	The Greenpeace Years	Executive Producer
1991	The Colours of My Father: A Portrait of Sam Borenstein	Executive Producer
1991	A Song For Tibet	Executive Producer

1991	Playing Fair <i>series</i>	Executive Producer
1991	Listen to Us <i>series</i>	Executive Producer
1991	Le Patro Le Prévost	Executive Producer
1990	The Company of Strangers	Executive Producer
1990	Princes In Exile	Executive Producer
1990	Beautiful Dreamers	Executive Producer
1990	Falling Over Backwards	Executive Producer
1990	Blockade: Algonquins Defend The Forest	Executive Producer
1990	Oliver Jones in Africa	Executive Producer
1990	The Ticket Back	Executive Producer
1990	Chandler's Mill	Executive Producer
1990	My Macondo	Executive Producer
1989	Justice Denied	Executive Producer
1989	Welcome to Canada	Executive Producer
1989	The First Emperor of China	Executive Producer
1989	Notman's World	Executive Producer
1989	Without Work <i>series</i>	Executive Producer
1988	Emergency/Urgence	Executive Producer
1988	No Address	Executive Producer
1987	Wednesday's Children <i>series</i>	Executive Producer

THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

PRINCIPAL CAST

The Boys:

Kevin Reevey, age 10
Steven Lunny, age 10
Eddie Linnane
Mike Sproule

Peter Lavin
Kevin Reevey, age 25
Mike Finn
Detective Noseworthy
Brother Glackin
Brother MacLaverty
Chantal Lavin
Sheilah
Steven Lunny, age 25
Brian Lunny, age 30
Brian Lunny, age 16
Brother Glynn
Tom Kennedy
Monsignor
Archbishop
Detective Owen
Social Worker
Psychiatrist
Leonora Pardy
Brother Michael Davitt
Commission Lawyer
Donna
Dr. Maynard
Lou Benson
Premier
Dermot Maher
Policemen

Lavin's Lawyer
Defense Lawyer
Paul Stevens
Minister
Justice Minister
Commissioner
Antoine Lavin
Pierre Lavin
Brian Lunny's Son
Brian Lunny's Daughter

JOHNNY MORINA
BRIAN DODD
JONATHAN LEWIS
JEREMY KEEFE

HENRY CZERNY
SEBASTIAN SPENCE
PHILIP DINN
BRIAN DOOLEY
GREG THOMEY
MICHAEL WADE
LISE ROY
KRISTINE DEMERS
DAVID HEWLETT
TIMOTHY WEBBER
ASHLEY BILLARD
ALAIN GOULEM
ED MARTIN
SAM GRANA
MAURICE PODBREY
DERECK O'BRIEN
KELLY RICARD
PIERRE GAUTHIER
MARY WALSH
AIDAN DEVINE
SHEENA LARKIN
BERNI STAPLETON
TYRONE BENSKIN
DAVID FRANCIS
GORDON DAY
TONY ROBINOW
GLENN DOWNEY
DOM FIORE
MICHAEL CHIASSON
FRANK SCHORPION
BRYAN HENNESEY
GARY MCKEEHAN
PHILIP SPENSLEY
FREDERIC SMITH
ÉRIC LORTIE
DANIEL LORTIE
JONATHON HODDINOTT
LOUISE STOODLEY

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**

 **National Film Board of Canada** **Office national du film du Canada**



THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT

A John N. Smith Film

PRODUCED BY
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

CREDITS

Directed by
Produced by

JOHN N. SMITH
SAM GRANA

Written by

CLAUDIO LUCA
DES WALSH
JOHN N. SMITH
SAM GRANA

Executive Producers

CLAUDIO LUCA
COLIN NEALE

Original Music by
Editors

NEIL SMOLAR
WERNER NOLD (Part One)
ANDRÉ CORRIVEAU (Part Two)

Production Designer
Director of Photography
Casting

RÉAL OUELLETTE
PIERRE LETARTE
ELITE PRODUCTIONS
NADIA RONA / ROSINA BUCCI

MONTREAL CREW

Line Producer
Associate Producer
1st Assistant Director
2nd Assistant Director
3rd Assistant Director
1st Assistant Camera/
Camera Operator
2nd Assistant Camera
Stills Photographer
Sound Engineer
Boom Operator
Assistant Art Director
Chief Decorator
Decorator
Property Master
Assistant Props
Props
Swing Gang

MARTINE ALLARD
NICOLE DE ROCHEMONT
PIERRE PLANTE
JOSÉE LACHANCE
MARIE-JOSÉ BOURASSA

JOCELYN SIMARD
CORINNE JOUDIOU
ROGER DUFRESNE
SERGE BEAUCHEMIN
MARC FURTADO
RÉAL PROULX
CLAIRE ALARY
JOSÉE PILON
MARC CORRIVEAU
ARMAND THOMAS
ANNE ST-DENIS
ALAIN CLOUATRE
GUY FORTIN

Scenic Painters

SYLVAIN ROUSSEAU
MICHEL CLÉMENT
MARC DESJARDINS
MERCEDES LEMELIN
JOHANNE DUMOULIN

Chief Carpenter

JOHANNE CULLEN
JEAN-FRANÇOIS BONNEVIE

TELE-ACTION

 **CBC Television**

 National
Film Board
of Canada

Office
national du film
du Canada

Carpenters

Costume Designer
Assistant Costume Designer
Assistant Wardrobe
Dresser
Assistant Dressers

Make-up
Hairdresser
Gaffer
Electrics

Equity Program
Key Grip
Grips

Script Supervisor
Post Production Supervisor
Production Coordinator
Production Secretaries

Office Assistant
Production Accountant
Assistant Production
Accountants

Unit Manager
Location Manager
Production Assistants

Driver
Craft Service
Post Production Coordinator
Assistant Film Editors

Supervising Sound Editor
Dialogue Editors

ADR Editor
Sound Effects Editor
Foley Artist
Re-recording Mixers

Foley Recording
ADR Recording
Music Recording
Choral Arrangements/
Music Consultant

PIERROT GELINAS
CLAUDE LECLAIR
MARTINE GIGUÈRE
JEAN-YVES ETIENNE DESLISLE
DENIS SPERDOUKLIS
LOUISE DUBÉ
RENÉE TREMBLAY
FRANCINE RICHARD
RENÉ SAUCIER
CELINE CARON
KATHRYN CASALT
GAÉTAN NOISEUX
CLERMONT LAPOINTE
BRUNO FERLAND
FRANÇOIS ALLARD
EVELINE LECALVEZ
JEAN-PIERRE LAMARCHE
PIERRE MALOIN
MICHEL R. CARON
DORIS LAPIERRE
ROSANNE COHEN
SYLVIE BOILY
LYNN MAILLOUX
ANNE-HÉLÈNE BRUNET
MICHEL DREZET
ALAIN-LOUIS PHARAND

MICHELINE BONIN
MARIE LUCA
RÉAL CHABOT
HELEN HENSHAW
ANDRÉ CHABOT
YVES LEMIEUX
YVES AMYOT
CLAUDE BOILY
JEAN-CLÉMENT RENAUD
GRACE AVRITH
MARTIAL ÉTHIER (Part One)
CÉLINE BÉLAND (Part Two)
MARCEL POTHIER
VIATEUR PAIEMENT (Part One)
DANUTA KLIS (Part Two)
JACQUES PLANTE
ANTOINE MORIN
JÉRÔME DÉCARIE
ADRIAN CROLL
HANS PETER STROBL
SHERLY DESBIENS
JO CARON
LOUIS HONE

CHRIS CRILLY

Titles
Title Graphic
Dialogue Coach
Set Psychotherapist
Unit Administrator
Tutor
Guardian
Lawyers

Completion Guarantor
Insurer

Public Relations
Technical Crew
Equipment

NEWFOUNDLAND CREW

3rd Assistant Director
Still Photographer
Set Decorator
Props Buyer
Swing Gang

Dresser
Assistant Dresser
Assistant Make-up
Assistant Hair
Electrician
Grips

Location Manager
Production Coordinator
Production Secretary
Production Assistants

Drivers

Office Driver
Craft Service
Lawyer (St. John's)

FOR THE N.F.B. - STUDIO B

Administrator
Studio Clerk

VAL TEODORI
HAJIME SAVADA
BARBARA DORAN
PIERRE GAUTHIER
MARIE-TONTO DONATI
TERRY TIERNEY
CHRISTINE DESROCHERS
GEOFFRION, JETTÉ AVOCATS
MICHEL JETTÉ
FRANÇOIS FERLAND
CINÉGARANTIE LTÉE.
TAILLEFER, DEVINE &
BERNADIN
NATIONAL/FRANCINE LAHAY
S.T.C.V.Q.
NATIONAL FILM BOARD
LOCATIONS MICHEL TRUDEL

LISA PORTER
MANNIE BUCHHEIT
ANNIE MCLEOD
GEOFF YOUNGHUSBAND
JOHN GERARD LUSH
MARTIN E. SEXTON
PEGGY HOGAN
KAREN POTTLE
JANET HEARN
CINDY PHILPOTT
SEAN DORAN
BOB PETRIE
PHIL WINTERS
GLENYS MOSS
MARY SEXTON
JUNE HISCOCK
DAVID ARCHIBALD
DOUG CLOUSTON
ROBERT WHELAN
NATALIE SPRACKLIN
CHRIS DARLINGTON
DON ELLIS
DUNCAN COWAN
LINDA CLARKE
FRANK RYAN

MARIE TONTO-DONATI
NICKIE MERULLA

FOR THE C.B.C.

Creative Head	
Movies and Mini-Series	JIM BURT
Executive in Charge of	
Production	PAT SCHOFIELD
Head of Talent	MARIA ARMSTRONG
Casting Director in Charge	
of Independent Productions	SUSAN MORGAN

The Producers wish to thank:
THE CITIZENS OF ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND
THE CANADIAN COAST GUARD - NEWFOUNDLAND REGION

Produced by
LES PRODUCTIONS TÉLÉ-ACTION INC.
in Co-production with
THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA
In association with
CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION
With the participation of
TÉLÉFILM CANADA

Filmed on location in the provinces of Quebec
and Newfoundland.

Running Times:

Part One - 92:21	
I.D. # C 0192 107 (film)	C 9192 107 (video)
Part Two - 92:34	
I.D. # C 0192 108 (film)	C 9192 108 (video)

APPROVED - FINAL VERSION

THE BOYS OF ST.VINCENT

A shocking tale of deceit and exploitation, THE BOYS OF ST.VINCENT lifts the veil of secrecy that shrouded a town's orphanage for over twenty years. This 4-hour mini series exposes how young boys at the orphanage fell victim to sexual and physical abuse at the hands of clergymen and the town's subsequent cover-up in the face of scandal.

A fictional story partly inspired by true events.

Director John N. Smith. Written by Des Walsh, John N. Smith and Sam Grana. Producer Sam Grana. Executive Producer Claudio Luca. Executive Producer N.F.B. Colin Neale. Produced by Tele Action in co-production with the National Film Board of Canada and the participation of Telefilm Canada.

4-hr mini-series (2 x 2hrs)/Colour/1992

