



BIG SCREEN CLASSICS

Boyz N the Hood

Boyz N the Hood

Directed by: John Singleton
©: Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc.
Presented by: Columbia Pictures
A Columbia Pictures release
Produced by: Steve Nicolaides
Production Associate: Kendrick J. Wallace
Production Accountant: Katha Jones
Production Co-ordinator: Linda Allan-Folsom
Unit Production Manager: Steve Nicolaides
Location Manager: Ernest Kojo Lewis
1st Assistant Director: Don Wilkerson
Script Supervisor: Dawn Gilliam
Casting by: Jaki Brown
Screenplay: John Singleton
Director of Photography: Charles Mills
Camera Operator: Tony Gaudioz
1st Assistant Camera: Robert A. Torres
Key Grip: Chuck Wells
Still Photographer: D. Stevens
Special Effects: Special Effects Unlimited
Edited by: Bruce Cannon
Art Director: Bruce Bellamy
Set Decorator: Kathryn Peters
Property Master: Willie J. Thompson
Men's Wardrobe: Darryle Johnson
Women's Wardrobe: Shirlene Williams
Make-up: Marietta A. Carter
Hairstylist: Sterfon Demings
Titles/Opticals by: Cinema Research Corporation
Original Music Score by: Stanley Clarke
Music Supervisor: Raoul Roach
Music Editor: Jamie Gelb
Sound Mixer: Veda Campbell
Boom Operator: Michael Anthony Patillo
Re-recording Mixers: Paul Massey,
Don DiGirolamo, Bob Glass
Supervising Sound Editor: Patrick Drummond
Drive-by Sequence/Beats: DJ PooH
Stunt Co-ordinator: Bob Minor
Cast:
Larry Fishburne (*Furious Styles*)
Ice Cube (*Doughboy Baker*)
Cuba Gooding Jr (*Tre Styles*)
Nia Long (*Brandi*)
Morris Chestnut (*Ricky Baker*)
Tyra Ferrell (*Mrs Baker*)
Angela Bassett (*Reva Styles*)
Meta King (*Brandi's mom*)
Whitman Mayo (*the old man*)
Hudhail Al-Amir (*Scholastic Aptitude Test man*)
Lloyd Avery II (*knucklehead 2*)
Mia Bell (*female club member*)
Lexie Bigham (*Mad Dog*)
Kenneth A. Brown (*little Chris*)
Nicole Brown (*Brandi aged 10*)
Ceal (*Sheryl*)
Darneicea Corley (*Keisha*)
John Cothran Jr (*Lewis Crump*)
Na' Blonka Durden (*Trina*)
Ousaun Elam (*utility stunt 1*)
Susan Falcon (*Mrs Olaf*)
Jesse Ferguson (*Officer Coffey*)
Dedrick D. Gobert (*Dooky*)
Redge Green (*Chris*)
Karen J. Grimes (*ice cream truck kid*)
Tammy Hanson (*Rosa*)
Valentino Harrison (*Bobby age 10*)
Desi Arnez Hines III (*Tre age 10*)
Baha Jackson (*Doughboy age 10*)
Dee Dee Jacobs (*Renee*)
Kirk Kinder (*Officer Graham*)
Regina King (*Shalika*)

'One out of every twenty-one Black American males will be murdered in their lifetime. Most will die at the hands of another Black male.'

These two stark statements trigger John Singleton's 1991 feature debut *Boyz N the Hood*. A hugely personal account of the type of gang violence that continues to blight so many urban communities, and was so prevalent during the then-film school graduate's own upbringing in the South Central Los Angeles 'hood, Singleton's achievement provided not only catharsis for himself but a film that resonated around the world.

Despite several incidents of violence during early US screenings – clearly unprompted by the film's clear-eyed yet compassionate outlook – *Boyz N the Hood* became one of the most acclaimed and the most profitable film of that year, garnering dual Oscar nominations for Singleton as writer and director (the youngest filmmaker to do so since Orson Welles). And it clearly, alongside Spike Lee's growing body of work and the same year's *New Jack City*, *Straight Out of Brooklyn* and *Daughters of the Dust*, helped usher in the 1990s resurgence in black filmmaking.

While the film doesn't have the bravura, in-your-face stylings of Lee's 1989 *Do the Right Thing* – a film that galvanised Singleton himself to tell his story – *Boyz N the Hood* very consciously eschews more extravagant techniques to focus on its story. Which shouldn't suggest that it's lacking in its own cinematic ambitions. Indeed, it's incredibly impressive that Singleton, who had never made anything longer than Super 8 shorts before this, was able to express himself and his world so evocatively and with such sophistication first time out.

Leigh Singer, bfi.org.uk, 27 October 2016

John Singleton describes his impressive directorial debut as a film about 'boys becoming men', which pleads for 'African American men to take more responsibility for raising their children, especially the boys'. Certainly, the theme of paternal strength is a key element in Singleton's polemical narrative, in which each character's chances of survival are defined by the presence or absence of a sturdy father figure. 'I can't teach him how to be a man' declares Reva Styles as she hands her unruly child over to the character building custody of his father, Furious. 'That's your job'. This same obsession with an absence of guiding paternal power also underwrites Singleton's analysis of the inter-black rivalry which renders the 'hood dwellers impotent in their struggle for better living conditions. Just as Doughboy and Ricky are separated by the ghosts of their divided fathers, so the 'hood dwellers turn upon each other because they have no common cultural leadership. Similarly, despite his brash pronouncements to the contrary, the adolescent Tre is revealed mid-way through the film to harbour a deep-seated fear of intercourse stemming from his terror of becoming a father – which he views as the ultimate burden.

Within this framework, Furious Styles serves not only as a father to Tre, but also as a prototype leader who will conduct his people out of the wilderness. His apparently unprovoked and prosaic address to the local citizens, wherein he lectures on the evils of white 'gentrification', may seem to jar with the harsh naturalism adopted elsewhere. But thematically it is entirely consistent; Furious is the voice of salvation, the absent father returning to restore order to the cultural chaos.

Leaneur Lane (*gangster 2*)
Donovan McCrary (*Ricky age 10*)
Don Nelson (*gangster 1*)
Jimmy Lee Newman (*kid*)
Malcolm Norrington (*knucklehead 1*)
Alysia M. Rogers (*Shanice*)
Esther Scott (*Tisha's grandmother*)
Leonette Scott (*Tisha*)
Vonte Sweet (*Ric Rock*)
Baldwin C. Sykes (*Monster*)
Raymond D. Turner (*Ferris*)
Yolanda Whittaker (*Yo-Yo*)
Gerard Williams (*utility stunt 2*)
USA 1991©
112 mins
Digital

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The Umbrellas of Cherbourg (Les Parapluies de Cherbourg)

Fri 1 Dec 14:40; Wed 13 Dec 18:20 (+ intro by
Geoff Andrew, Programmer-at-Large);
Sun 17 Dec 18:45; Wed 20 Dec 20:55

The Passenger

Sat 2 Dec 20:20 (+ pre-recorded intro by
Jason Wood, BFI Executive Director of Public
Programmes & Audiences); Sun 10 Dec 15:45;
Wed 27 Dec 17:50

After Life (Wandafuru Ralfu)

Sun 3 Dec 12:45; Tue 12 Dec 17:15;
Wed 27 Dec 14:40; Sat 30 Dec 20:20

My Night with Maud (Ma Nuit chez Maud)

Mon 4 Dec 18:15; Thu 14 Dec 20:50;
Thu 28 Dec 18:15

Five Easy Pieces

Tue 5 Dec 14:30; Sat 9 Dec 20:55;
Tue 19 Dec 18:15; Fri 29 Dec 18:20

White Material

Wed 6 Dec 18:10 (+ intro by film curator Abiba
Coulibaly); Fri 29 Dec 20:45

Boyz N the Hood

Thu 7 Dec 20:35; Sat 16 Dec 18:15;
Sat 23 Dec 20:40

Meet Me in St Louis

Fri 8 Dec 18:10 (+ intro by writer Richard Dyer);
Wed 20 Dec 14:30; Thu 21 Dec 18:10;
Sat 23 Dec 11:50

It's a Wonderful Life

Wed 13 Dec 18:10; Sat 16 Dec 20:25; Mon 18 Dec
20:25; Wed 20 Dec 18:10; Fri 22 Dec 14:30, 20:25;
Sat 23 Dec 18:10

The Shop around the Corner

Fri 15 Dec 18:20; Mon 18 Dec 14:30;
Thu 21 Dec 20:45; Sat 30 Dec 12:20

Remember the Night

Sun 17 Dec 12:15; Tue 19 Dec 20:40

Fanny and Alexander (Fanny och Alexander)

Sat 23 Dec 14:20; Fri 29 Dec 13:30;
Sat 30 Dec 13:00

Directed with bold certainty by Singleton, *Boyz N the Hood* thus emerges less as a portrayal of the rigours of urban life than a romantic elegy to the stable, patriarchal family unit. The film clearly addresses itself to young audiences, or more specifically young *male* audiences. Singleton (it seems) is preaching not only to the fathers who currently fail their offspring, but to the children themselves, urging them to become the better fathers of the future.

Mark Kermode, *Sight and Sound*, November 1991

Furious Styles is the name of the role model/father figure in John Singleton's *Boyz N the Hood*. The name tells you what drives Singleton's art: a sense of commitment and an interest in technical display. He turns the typical coming-of-age drama into an expression of the contemporary social pressures affecting young black American males, while also showing what sparks their imaginative lives. To realise how unusual this is for modern Hollywood, one need only contrast *Boyz N the Hood* with the 80s Brat Pack films: in the former, black teens see life in terms of survival; in the latter, white teens see it in terms of fun.

Singleton is the most successful of the new directors at translating the swing and heat of hip-hop culture into cinematic language. Set in the culture of gang war and hardcore rap of strife-ridden South Central Los Angeles, *Boyz N the Hood* follows four males from their pre-teen years to post-adolescence. One of the stars is Ice Cube (a former member of the rap group NWA), whose manner, both folksy and surly, is a key to the film's matter-of-fact view of suffering. Singleton turns the sexual confession of lead character Tre (Cuba Gooding Jr), a 'nice boy', into a leering, hyped-up fantasy; the scene of older boys intimidating younger boys becomes a primal male myth, both intense and pathetic.

Sight and Sound, August 1991

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