

Leonardo DiCaprio

Titles: 6 Sources: 1 Stills: 15

Born: Leonardo Wilhelm DiCaprio; Los Angeles; November 11th 1974

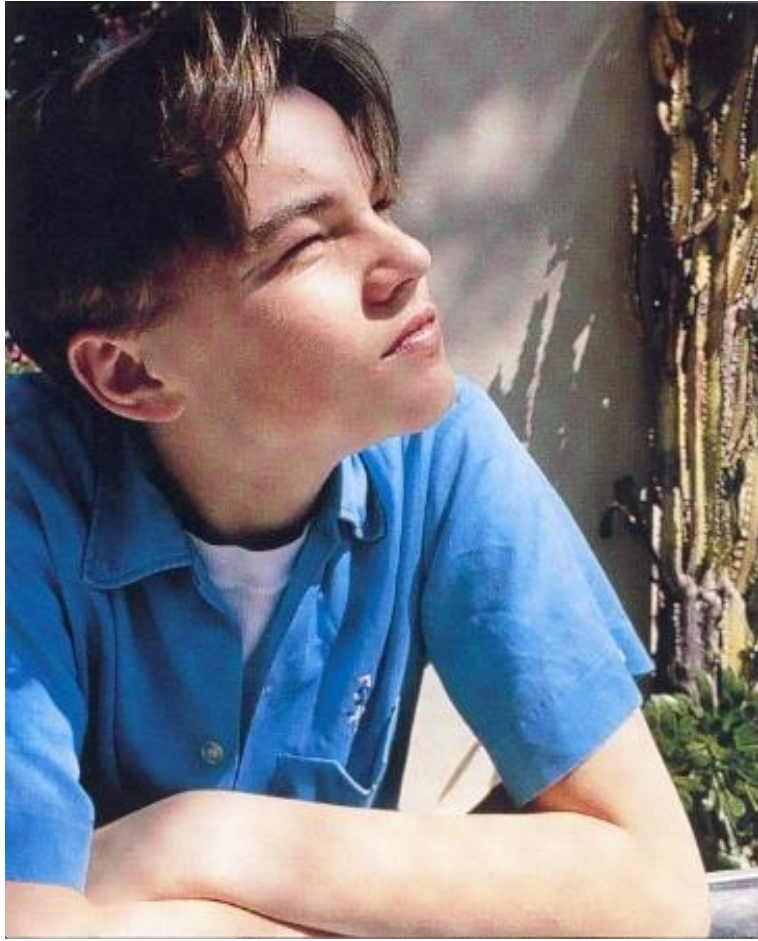
Biographies: "The Leonardo DiCaprio Album" (Brian J. Robb 1997)

"Leonardo DiCaprio" (Douglas Thompson 1998) - see **Sources - Books**



The eyebrows have it – DiCaprio is one in a long line of older teen actors with the felicity to pass themselves off in younger roles (it generally proves to be a curse in the long run) but few of them have his unquestionable talent, nor his quizzical charisma, which is refreshingly unego-centric.

Source: Leonardo DiCaprio



The senseless death in 1994 of River Phoenix, age 21, left the field free for the next teen actor with the looks, the presence, and the native ability to play sensitive and "difficult" teen roles, as well as the more conventional romantic leads. DiCaprio was already waiting in the wings.

Source: The Leonardo DiCaprio Album

Film Review 1994-95 entry in "The Ten Most Promising Faces of 1994"

"Good as he was as the abused stepson of Robert De Niro in Michael Caton-Jones's **"THIS BOY'S LIFE"**, nobody expected Leonardo DiCaprio to become a star. The film that turned the actor around was the quirky, humane **"WHAT'S EATING GILBERT GRAPE?"**, in which DiCaprio played the retarded 18-year old Arnie, brother of Johnny Depp. Giving a performance of astonishing innocence and spontaneity, DiCaprio brought a touching credibility to a very difficult part.

"I had to really research and get into the mind of somebody with a disability like that" the actor says, "So I spent a few days at a home for mentally retarded teens. We just talked and I watched their mannerisms. People have these expectations that mentally retarded children are really crazy, but it's not so. It's refreshing to see them because everything's so new to them". DiCaprio

was nominated for an Oscar for his performance, and was suddenly the hottest teenage comer in town..

Born in 1974 in Los Angeles, Leonardo DiCaprio was signed up by an agent at the age of 14 and was soon appearing regularly in commercials. He made his TV debut in two episodes of **"Lassie"**, and went on to appear in such regular fare as **"Santa Barbara"**, **"Roseanne"** and **"The Outsiders"** – before landing the recurring role of the 13-year old Gary in **"Parenthood"**.

In 1991 he appeared as a homeless boy, Luke, in the family sitcom **"Growing Pains"** and went on to make his "official" film debut in **"CRITTERS 3"**, in the OK role of Leonard. The same year he also had a small part in the Drew Barrymore melodrama **"POISON IVY"**. DiCaprio won the central role of Tobias Wolff in **"THIS BOY'S LIFE"**, he says, through "ignorant confidence. I went into the audition, looked De Niro in the eye and got the part. I was

confident, even though I'd never done anything like it before. I had no idea."

"WHAT'S EATING GILBERT GRAPE?"

followed, and he was then chosen by Sharon Stone to star opposite her in the Western **"THE QUICK AND THE DEAD"**. In fact Ms Stone was so eager to have him on board that she paid his salary out of her own pocket. "I wanted him bad" the actress relayed, "and we'd topped out financially". But will her investment pay off? "It better, or I'm going to beat the living shit out of him – You little punk! I want my money back!" DiCaprio then landed the starring role in **"THE BASKETBALL DIARIES"**, a film based on the early years of Jim Carroll growing up on the "mean streets" of New York. "

Excerpt from 1995 interview with Dennis Hopper:

"...And I also like Leonardo DiCaprio. He's incredible! There's talk of him making a film about Jimmy [= *James Dean*]. If anybody could pull it off, he could. He's yet to have a real hit, but boy! What an incredible actor! "

FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Age	Title	Role
89	14	Lassie	US TV series – two guest appearances
- -		Santa Barbara	US TV series – guest appearance
- -		Roseanne	US TV sitcom – guest appearance
90	15	The Outsiders	US TV series – guest appearance
90		Parenthood	US TV series, as Gary, 13
91-92	16	Growing Pains with <i>Kirk Cameron</i>	US TV sitcom – guest appearance, as Luke Brower
92	17	CRITTERS 3 with <i>Aimee Brooks, Christopher & Joseph Cousins</i>	as Joshua
92		POISON IVY with <i>Drew Barrymore</i>	as "1st guy"
93	18	THIS BOY'S LIFE	in title role, Toby "Jack" Wolff
94	19	WHAT'S EATING GILBERT GRAPE?	As Arnie Grape, 18
94		THE FOOT SHOOTING PARTY	short
95	20	THE QUICK AND THE DEAD	as "the kid"
95		THE BASKETBALL DIARIES	in central role, Jim Carroll
95		TOTAL ECLIPSE	as Arthur Rimbaud
95		LES CENT ET UNE NUITS ("The 101 Nights")	France
96	21	MARVIN'S ROOM	(as Hank)
96		WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S ROMEO AND JULIET	in lead role, Romeo

[at 13, prior to his acting debut in "Lassie", he made TV ads for the US government and Disney, among others]