

Billy Elliot

UK : 2000 : dir. Stephen Daldry : : 111 min
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
Jamie Bell
 Julie Walters; Gary Lewis

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω □ € Z ♂	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5071	1½	1	3	402	- - - - -	No	unseen



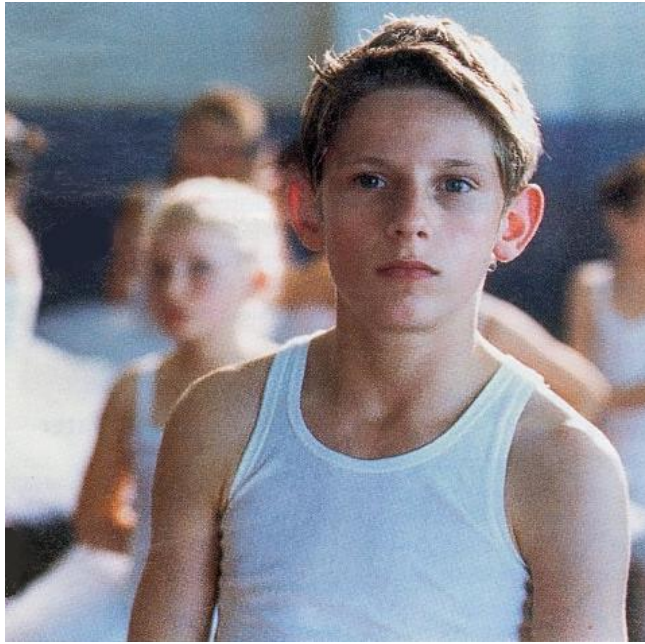
Source above and right: Barbican Screen Guide

Barbican Screen Guide (September 2000)
 review:

“Royal Court theatre director Stephen Daldry is the latest stage director to venture in film, and like colleagues Anthony Minghella, Sam Mendes and Deborah Warner, shows that the theatre experience can be revealing when turned to cinema. Set in the Durham area during the 1984 miners’ strike, Billy Elliot is the winning story of an 11 -year-old boy who shies away from the boxing lessons his father wants him to take, and finds himself being drawn to the girls-only ballet classes in the local gym. A rousing tale of triumph over adversity, with Julie Walters, Gary Lewis, and an astounding performance by the young Jamie Bell in the central role.”



Jetée, moi non plus ...



No further information currently available. It will be very interesting to deconstruct this particular title, given the awful social climate in which it was made and first screened. It can be seen as part of the same post-feminist analysis of male identity which produced "**MA VIE EN ROSE**" in France the previous year. After all, the logical extension of the process which saw girls gatecrashing those social, educational and sporting arenas which had hitherto been the province of boys is to show boys breaking new ground in "female" pursuits and domains. I doubt somehow we'll be seeing boys' beauty pageants anytime soon, or advertising messages portraying boys as sensitive beings and girls as hostile, aggressive ones.

But the UK is not France, and its cinema far less inclined to challenge the shibboleths of society. The nationwide farrago in 1999/2000 over the Government's proposed abolition of "Section 28" (a malicious Thatcherite anti-homosexual clause calculated to deter any positive discussion of the subject in classrooms) illustrated shamefully the breadth and depth of intolerance here where (adolescent) male identity is concerned. It is almost too much to hope for that a British film would work against that grain, even in the interests of cut-and-pasting the "new man" ethos back onto boyhood itself. We must hang fire and see.

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