

Ca Commence Aujourd'hui

("It Starts Today")

France : 1999 : dir. Bertrand Tavernier :

: 118 min

prod: : scr: Dominique Sampiero, Tiffany Tavernier & Bertrand Tavernier

dir.ph.: Alan Choquart

Philippe Torreton; Maria Pitareresi; Nadi Kaci

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	□	≠	Z	⚡	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Empire – September 1999 – review:

"A dedicated smalltown teacher finds education is low on everyone's list of priorities, except his own.

Following cop flick "**L.627**" and "**L'APPALT**", Bernard Tavernier completes his "true stories" trilogy with this Ken Loach-style insight into toiling at the chalk face, which will have teachers everywhere applauding its authenticity.

Daniel (Torreton) is head of a primary school in the once prosperous northern town of Hernaing. But while he and his staff are dedicated to giving their young charges the best possible start in life, they are constantly being distracted by the problems of impoverished parents, the indifference of the social services and the interference of the state inspectorate. The hassles even follow Daniel home, where his sculptor girlfriend's son has all the makings of a juvenile delinquent.

Apart from the hopelessly optimistic finale, in which the community rally together to organise a jolly opening day, this is painfully real as fingernails scraping down a blackboard. But it's the director's socialist humanism as much as the roll call of credible incidents that makes this episodic drama so effective.

Amid the wealth of precise details stands Philippe Torreton's imposing performance. Expertly preventing Daniel from seeming like just another liberal do-gooder, he shows him struggling to cope with both his strained relationship with his gruff miner father and his failure to make the grade as a poet. Even more remarkable is his interaction with a cast that contains more than its share of non-professionals. Whether coaxing classes or confronting parents and politicians unwilling to take responsibility for their children. He bristles with commitment.

Even though Alan Choquart's camera seems to capture the action accidentally, this is a highly manipulative film. Yet it's also quietly passionate in its insistence that countering familial dysfunction and social injustice should not be added to the teacher's already large burden. Co-screenwriter Dominique Sampiero, Tavernier's headmaster son-in-law, based his script on 20 years' teaching experience. *** " - David Parkinson

[no listing in "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001"]

No further information currently available.

See subject index under **SCHOOL**.