

# AnE Vibe

*The Pulse of Entertainment*

## DOUGH BOYS - KANSAS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2007



Written by Deborah Ground Buckner

WEDNESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2007

Film: Dough Boys <http://www.doughboysthemovie.com/>

Studio: The Bakery; Ducky Entertainment

Principal actors: Louis Lombardi, Gaetano Iacono

Director: Louis Lombardi

Screening Date: September 15, 2007 Kansas International Film Festival

Film length: 100 minutes

Rating: unrated

### 5 Stars

Reviewer: Deborah Ground Buckner

Louis Lombardi (Edgar Stiles on "24") has written (with Evan Jacobs), directed, produced and starred in a valentine to his beloved Bronx; the result is as sweet as the pastries served up in *Dough Boys*. Frank (Gaetano Iacono) and Louis (Louis Lombardi), the Conti brothers, inherit their father's bakery in the Bronx. Louis, as his deceased father narrates in a voice-over, was born "with a rolling pin in his hand." Frank wasn't so keen on the bakery business, but he is a good son, and family means everything. Despite his knack for the bakery work, Louis was—and remains—always in trouble.

The film opens with the boys' father saying: "Even after we're gone, we tend to look in on them [our children], especially when we're needed the most. This happens to be one of those days."

And what a day it is! As the credits roll by (very cleverly presented within the context of the bakery), Louis and Frank are hard at work preparing all the treats to be sold in a day. Louis' cell phone rings, his ring tone the bugle call that opens a horse race—a major clue of Louis' gambling problem. We hear the voice of Mr. Gregario whose face we see reflected in a fish tank; if this brings to mind a piranha, it's a good image. Overhearing, Frank asks Louis if he is in debt to Mr. Gregario. Louis admits he is "a little to him, a lot to me." Louis goes to meet Mr. Gregario who tells him, "You've got 'til eight o'clock tonight to come up with the money, and if you don't, then I'm in business with you."

Back at the bakery, the regulars start arriving, Dom who buys an espresso (made with the machine the boys' father ordered from Italy) then sits outside listening to the radio report of the heat of the summer day; Schmul who, covered in cat hair, settles down with a cup of espresso and a stack of *Reader's Digests* and has a pat phrase for every situation; Kelly, the tattoo-ed neighborhood drug dealer; Jackie, the brothers' sexy niece working for the summer; Sally Boy, the brothers' young cousin and not-so-hard-working delivery boy; and a host of others who don't know what they want to buy or how much money they want to spend. It is a wonderful slice of Bronx life, seeing the people who know the best food can often be found in a little-hole-in-the-wall family operation.

A series of flashbacks showing the boys growing up in the bakery with their dad reveal the lessons Louis should have learned and, perhaps, ultimately does. In one flashback, Louis' father tells him every time the church bells ring, "it means the Big Guy is watching." Throughout Louis' day, the church bells ring at the times he most needs looking after.

As the day goes by, Louis faces one trouble after another, leading to a showdown between the two brothers. Anyone who knows an Italian family knows whether business interests or brotherhood will prevail.

This is a nostalgic, feel good film (reminiscent of *My Favorite Year*), one Lombardi proudly says the film contains "no curse words." One could watch it with children or grandparents without embarrassment and with all finding something to enjoy. *Dough Boys* won the "Audience Choice Award" at the 2007 Staten Island Film Festival. There is a ready and waiting audience for this work which, hopefully, will be with a distributor soon.