

Talent

This Boy's Life

'All through my life, I've never been able to complete things," says writer/director Raoul O'Connell. That's finally changed with *A Friend of Dorothy*, a short film the 24-year-old O'Connell began shooting while at New York University. It's about a young gay man looking for love—and finding it—while browsing through the Barbra Streisand CDs at the downtown Tower Records. *Dorothy*, which also stars O'Connell, is one of three shorts appearing in the compilation *Boys Life*, which opens at Quad Cinema on December 2. All deal with young men coming to terms with their sexual orientation and are surprisingly polished works given the hand-to-mouth circumstances under which they were made. More important to O'Connell, they're also free

of the traditional gay-movie angst. "If you walk through life feeling like you have to apologize for being gay," he says, "people are going to respond to that. If you walk around expressing it as something you're perfectly comfortable with, then people don't have much ammunition." What audiences respond to most when seeing O'Connell in *Dorothy* is his winsome charm. Hollywood has taken notice, too. He's already auditioned for a role as a boyfriend on *Blossom* (he didn't get it); a role in *Frisk*, based on a book by Dennis Cooper (he got it); and a role as a soldier in a sci-fi flick (he got that too). But there's a price to be paid for even modest success. "Now I have to work out," he groans. "I have to get buffed, or at least semi-buffed. I hate working out—it's just standing there and saying, 'I want my bicep bigger; I want my bicep bigger.' And I don't want it that much bigger." **Michael Giltz**

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the sense of himself as an outsider. The person who dethrones him is Charles Van Doren (Ralph Fiennes), a popular English instructor at Columbia

disagree v be much Morgan Director