

MOVIES :: [PRINTER FRIENDLY »](#) [EMAIL ARTICLE »](#) [BOOKMARK](#) [social icons]

## Character actor enjoying Starr turn

February 8, 2008

BY MIKE THOMAS [mthomas@suntimes.com](mailto:mthomas@suntimes.com)

Former Chicago-based actor Mike Starr -- who you might recognize from his appearances in films and television shows ranging from "Goodfellas" and "Ed Wood" to various crime dramas and the now-canceled NBC dramedy "Ed" -- is in town this weekend to celebrate the worldwide premiere of his latest film, "Osso Bucco," at the Wilmette Theatre. It also screened a few days ago at the Midwest Independent Film Festival.

Shot in Chicago and co-directed by Gary Taylor and Fred Blurton of River West Films, "Osso Bucco" is a romantic mob comedy set largely in an Italian restaurant on North Broadway.

### 'OSSO BUCCO'

7:30 tonight, followed by a discussion with the filmmakers and Mike Starr

Wilmette Theatre, 1122 Central, Wilmette

Tickets, \$10

Additional screenings Saturday through Wednesday

Tickets, \$6-\$7

(847) 251-7424, [www.wilmettetheatre.com](http://www.wilmettetheatre.com)

For the Queens-born Starr, a 30-year veteran of the thespian scene, his role opposite Illeana Douglas marks his first turn as a romantic lead. Or, as Taylor joked on the set, "Mike's kissin' a girl!"

**Q.** *What's the difference between playing character roles and the leading man?*

**A.** There's more responsibility. I always feel you have to step up, but it's just like being in a different position in the batting order.

**Q.** *Once you're successful at playing one type of character, you tend to get cast in similar roles. You've played a lot of Italianesque heavies over the years. Have you been able to shed that image to some extent?*

**A.** What's funny is that someone will say, "You played Italianesque heavies," right? So then you say, "Where?" "Goodfellas." I say, "No no no, he [Frenchie] was not a heavy. He was a cargo supervisor who was half Irish, half French." They say, "Hoodlums." "Well, now, [he was] German." "Easy Streets." "No, we were Irish." So it's funny, because I think it's the state of mind. ... If you're a white guy in organized crime, you're immediately Italian.

**Q.** *You did the series "Ed" for a couple of years on NBC. Do you miss having a regular TV gig?*

**A.** [Laughs] I think you miss that steady work, but I love the idea of changing and doing different characters. And that's not to say that if tomorrow the writers' strike ends and someone comes up and says, "Geez, I got a pilot that's perfect for you," that I wouldn't be thrilled to do it -- something good.

**Q.** *Is your unique look a blessing and a curse in that it gets you roles but it also puts you out of the running sometimes, too?*

**A.** That's probably true. A lot of times I'll say, "Oh, God, this happened," or "I would have been in that." And then I say, "Wait a second." I can look at some other situations where I happened to turn the right corner or be in the right place at the right time.

### Did you know?

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

The Sun-Times is #1 in Chicago every week.

1.1 Million weekly readers



SOURCE: 2007 CHICAGO SCARBOROUGH RELEASE 1 MARCH 06-FEBRUARY 07 (INCLUDES 2 DAILIES AND 1 SUNDAY IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO)

### Jump local | What's This?

- Pick-up joints
- What's in Beverly?
- Chicago history lesson
- Go down to Chinatown

### VIDEO :: MORE »

- Student Kills 2, Self at Louisiana College**  
[Image] Play
- Gunman's Note: 'The Truth Will Come Out'**  
[Image] Play
- Authorities: Super Bowl Attack Planned**  
[Image] Play

### TOP STORIES ::

- NEWS**  
The year of potholes for commuters
- BUSINESS**  
Tesco coming to town?
- SPORTS**  
Chicago sports radio stuck in sewer
- ENTERTAINMENT**  
Give it up for Chicago at the Grammys
- LIFESTYLES**  
Girrrrl glamor

### Ads by Google

**Berlin Film Festival 2008**  
Breaking News and Scoops from the International Film Festival  
[www.variety.com/festivalcentral](http://www.variety.com/festivalcentral)

**Chicago Teaching Fellows**  
Make A Difference In Chicago's Classrooms. Apply Today!  
[www.ChicagoTeachingFellows.org](http://www.ChicagoTeachingFellows.org)

**Movie Reviews**  
Read what the experts have to say on current and classic movies.  
Spout.com

**Rare Collectible Movies**  
Specializing in rare collectible Dvd's and Video Movies  
[www.bodawg.com](http://www.bodawg.com)

**Pimp Your Page**  
Free Layouts, Backgrounds & GlitterProfile. 100% Free. Download Now!  
[MySpace.coolfetti.com](http://MySpace.coolfetti.com)