

= The Tic Code =

The Tic Code (also known as Lessons in the Tic Code) is a drama film directed by Gary Winick and written by Polly Draper . It tells of a single mother , the relationship she forms with a jazz musician who has Tourette syndrome , and her young son ? a jazz piano prodigy ? also with the disorder . The musician and the boy form a friendship , and the film is loosely based upon the experiences of Draper 's jazz musician husband Michael Wolff , who provided the film 's score . Draper , star of Thirtysomething , portrays the mother and Gregory Hines plays the musician with Christopher George Marquette as the boy .

Principal photography took place in 1997 in New York City . The Tic Code appeared at several film festivals in 1998 and 1999 , where it won a number of awards . It received a limited theatrical release in the United States on August 4 , 2000 , and a DVD release in February 2001 . Critical response to the film was generally favorable .

= = Plot = =

The film tells the story of a young boy , Miles Caraday (Marquette) , a jazz piano prodigy who has Tourette syndrome , and his divorced mother Laura Caraday (Draper) . Miles has a school friend , Todd (Desmond Robertson) who seems not to be bothered by Miles ' condition . Miles wants to become a jazz pianist against the wishes of his classical @-@ oriented instructor Miss Gimpole (Carol Kane) . At a local nightspot , Miles becomes friends with a jazz saxophonist , Tyrone Pike (Hines) , who also has Tourette 's but has learned ways to cover up his condition .

In the film , Tyrone tells Denny Harley who bullies Miles that the reason they both tic is :

Tyrone : [...] because we both know the code .

Denny : [...] Code , what code ?

Tyrone : [...] ' the tic code ' .

Denny : So you and Miles made this whole thing up ?

Tyrone : No , the C.I.A. did ; a lot of people know about it now .

= = Filming = =

The Tic Code was in development for five years before finally being made . Principal photography took place on location in New York City in 1997 , on a budget of US \$ 2 million . The film was directed by Gary Winick , who took over after original director Norman René died during pre @-@ production . It was written by Polly Draper , who also produced alongside Karen Tangorra , Midge Sanford , Sarah Pillsbury and Larry Meistrich . Draper based the screenplay on the experiences of her noted jazz musician husband Michael Wolff , who has Tourette syndrome . Wolff 's involvement as co @-@ producer ensured the cooperation of jazz club The Village Vanguard , which granted the production permission to use its name and exterior shots of the building . Herman Leonard loaned his collection of photographs of famous jazz musicians , and the Blue Note jazz club allowed its name to be used on fake fliers . Wolff also provided the film 's piano score , to which Alex Foster also contributed by providing the soundtrack for scenes of Hines ' playing the saxophone .

= = Post production = =

The Tic Code appeared at the first Newport International Film Festival in June 1998 . It was subsequently shown at the Wine Country Film Festival in July ? August 1998 , and at the Hamptons International Film Festival in October 1998 . It also appeared at several film festivals in 1999 , including the Vancouver Reel to Real Festival on March 3 , 1999 , the Berlin International Film Festival , and the Giffoni Film Festival . On April 2 , 1999 , the film aired on the Starz ! television network . The distribution rights were subsequently picked up by insurance company @-@ backed film library Chaross Pictures , which buys independent films that have run into financial difficulty . The rights were sold to Lions Gate Entertainment in May 1999 . Lions Gate gave The Tic Code a

limited theatrical release in the United States , opening on August 4 , 2000 . It grossed US \$ 205 @, @ 000 from nine theaters and closed on October 5 , 2000 .

= = Cast = =

Gregory Hines plays Tyrone Pike , a jazz saxophonist and Laura 's boyfriend . Hines also studied Wolff to imitate his ticcing and develop the character . During filming , Hines committed himself to spending a full day as a Touretter ; after being stared at by a taxi driver , Hines reflected that he had not considered how embarrassing the disorder could be . He also studied tapes of Alex Foster to learn how to finger the saxophone .

Polly Draper plays Laura Caraday , Miles ' single mother .

Christopher Marquette plays Miles Caraday , a young jazz piano prodigy with Tourette Syndrome . Marquette learned how to play the piano from Wolff . He also studied ticcing from Wolff and watched videotapes , including the documentary Twitch and Shout , to perfect his technique . In preparation for the role , Marquette practiced ticcing in public .

The film also features Desmond Robertson as Todd , Miles ' friend ; Carol Kane as Miss Gimpole , Miles ' music instructor and teacher ; Robert Iler as Denny Harley , a bully ; Bill Nunn and Tony Shaloub as bartenders Kingston and Phil ; Camryn Manheim as Mrs. Lily Swensrut , one of Laura 's customers ; and James McCaffrey as Michael Caraday , Laura 's ex @-@ husband . Wolff cameos as Sound Engineer # 2 .

= = Awards and reception = =

The Tic Code received generally favorable reviews from film critics . Rotten Tomatoes reported that 77 % of critics gave the film a positive write @-@ up , based upon a sample of 26 , with an average score of 6 @. @ 6 / 10 . At Metacritic , which assigns a normalized rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , the film received an average score of 64 , based on 17 reviews .

In 1998 , the film won the Audience Award for Most Popular Feature at the Hamptons International Film Festival . It also received a " special recognition " award from the festival jury . Polly Draper won the Bronze Gryphon award for Best Actress at the Giffoni Film Festival , and Christopher George Marquette won the Bronze Gryphon award for Best Actor . In 1999 , the film won the Crystal Bear award at the Berlin International Film Festival . The film also took the Best Overall Film award at the first Vancouver Reel to Reel Festival .