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## The Salvage Gang

UK : 1958 : dir. John Krish : World Wide Pictures / Children's Film Foundation : 52 min  
prod: Hindle Edgar : scr: John Krish : dir.ph.:  
*Ali Alleney; Frazer Hines; Amanda Coxell; Christopher Warbey* .....  
Richard Molinas; Wilfred Brambell

| Ref:  | Pages | Sources | Stills | Words | Ω 8 ∅ M ∅ | Copy on VHS | Last Viewed |
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Looking like a trial run for **"THE KNACK, AND HOW TO GET IT"** (65)

Source: C.F.F. Catalogue & Index 1972

Children's Film Foundation catalogue and index of films 1972 note:

"The amusing adventures of four children who inadvertently sell for scrap iron a bed belonging to one of their parents, and set off in hot pursuit as the bed is passed from one dealer to another. Produced by World Wide Pictures Ltd. Story by Mary Cathcart Borer. Music by Jack Beaver."

The British Film Catalogue 1895-1985 listing:

"Children sell bed for scrap iron and then try to track it down."

Sight & Sound – Spring 1959 – column by the director:

"The decline of British films is due to poor subjects – amongst other things. Weak producers aren't likely to film strong scripts, even if they had the judgement to recognise one. They have a living to make, and in a way I sympathise with them. But there are times when I dearly wish they were making something else that belongs in a can. Like baked beans. They're cheap, and the appetite for them doesn't change much – and they don't need much effort to swallow.

I care a great deal about films, but to be asked for my personal choice with all freedoms guaranteed is an impossible question – for me. By nature I am not a dreamer, and I don't believe that the completely free hand will always

bring about better pictures. It hasn't in the past. I set my sights seemingly a little lower – but on more fertile ground.

If I had the choice, I would mainly make films not for adults, but for the international audience of children: for as a parent I believe the responsibilities to one's own children are as to all children.

Writing for and directing child actors who are real children (not cute gnomes) can be wholly satisfying. Bringing them to grips with the particular situation in the script (not treating it all as a lovely game), seeing them concentrate and listen and try to succeed, is stimulating and exhausting – and that is just what work should be.

Now I don't want to theorise about The Child Audience, because to me an audience isn't a lot of "thems", but individuals. And the child at the pictures is one aspect of oneself. The kind of film I should like to make for this child would be similar to the one I made called **"THE SALVAGE GANG"**. This takes a realistic situation and treats it with comedy, so that most of the laughs are not gained at anyone's expense but come from the feeling and affection the child in the stalls has for the child on the screen.

Over the past few years I have sat with and watched the Saturday morning audience on quite a few occasions. In my experience, the child wants value for money. He will pay attention – if the film is good enough for him. He will criticise it in his individual way – never considering whether it is fashionable to like something or dislike it. He is absolutely direct in what he thinks about the film – and being a realist that appeals to me enormously.

If the child is given the best when he goes to the pictures, then he will continue to go all his life. If, as it seems, we are now coming to a period of better subjects (although I note with regret that hardly one is an original screenplay), then I'd like to have some part in making sure that these better pictures are going to have a better audience."

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

**The Moving Picture Boy** entry on Frazer Hines:

"He trained at the Corona Stage School in London, and was in show business from the age of eight. After his teens, Hines continued in further films: **"GO KART GO!"** (64), **"THE LAST VALLEY"** (70) and **"ZEPPELIN"** (71). In the late Seventies he was cast as Joe in Yorkshire TV's new series **"Emmerdale Farm"**, little knowing that it would still be running, with him in it, more than 15 years later. He has latterly done little else."

**Cast:**

Borer .....**Christopher Warbey**  
Ali .....**Ali Alleney**  
Pat .....**Armanda Coxell**  
Kim .....**Frazer Hines**  
Mr Caspanelli .....**Richard Molinas**

No further information currently available. Very laudable remarks, in a general sense, from director Krish. Unfortunately, treating subjects in a comic fashion to appeal to juvenile audiences is precisely what **all** second-rate children's film-makers do, and hardly bespeaks of great respect for their public. What distinguishes so many continental children's films is that they deal with believable situations and circumstances in a gentle, but unpatronising fashion –

addressing the consciences and imaginations of their viewers more than their funny-bones. There is always a place for comedy, naturally, but it's perhaps easier to make children laugh than to make them sit quietly, easier to lampoon adult behaviour than to make it comprehensible to them.

Note the presence on the cast of Wilfred Brambell, presumably one of the scrap metal dealers, some six years before he became a household name (as a scrap metal dealer) in "**Steptoe and Son**". Frazer Hines was 14. Long before "**Emmerdale Farm**" he landed a regular spot on "**Doctor Who**" as one of Patrick Troughton's (ie: the second incarnation, 66-69) stalwart companions, the highlander Jamie. Many of his films as a boy appear to have been for the Children's Film Foundation. They include "**ON THE TWELFTH DAY**" (55), "**STOCK CAR**" (55), "**THE DODO**" (56), "**PERIL FOR THE GUY**" (56, also with Ali Alleney), "**X – THE UNKNOWN**" (56) and the serial "**THE YOUNG JACOBITES**" (59). Nothing else is known of Ali Alleney, Amanda Coxell or Christopher Warbey.

See subject index under [CHILDREN'S FILM \(& TV\) FOUNDATION](#) and **COMEDY**.