



The

Veteran

ISSUE 165
WINTER 2019



The Magazine of

The British Cinema and
Television Veterans

'COMING SOON' AGAIN?

ROCK 'N ROLL *with Laughter!*

NAT JACKLEY · PAT KIRKWOOD
BONAR COLLEANO

**STARS IN
YOUR
EYES**



CO-STARRING **EASTMAN COLOUR**
DOROTHY SQUIRES

GUEST STARS
JACK JACKSON · HUBERT GREGG

WITH
MEIER TZELNIKER · VERA DAY · JOAN SIMS · JIMMY CLITHEROE

Screenplay by TALBOT ROTHWELL from an original by FRANCIS MILLER
With additional dialogue by HUBERT GREGG
Produced by DAVID DENT · Directed by MAURICE ELVEY



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PLUS: The Newsletter of the Film & Television Charity



THE FORGOTTEN SHOWMAN

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of technological pioneer Robert Paul whose story has remained largely hidden in popular history despite his contribution to the early film industry. A new exhibition now open at the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford – *The Forgotten Showman: How Robert Paul Invented British Cinema* – aims to bring his role to light.

After establishing his instrument making company in 1891 Paul became interested in picture devices and was commissioned to make replica Kinetoscopes, the first machines to show moving pictures, originally made by Thomas Edison.

In 1896 Paul pioneered a new way of projecting moving images. His ground-breaking equipment would eventually be sold internationally, leading to a number of dazzling 'firsts' in filmmaking and cinemagoing.

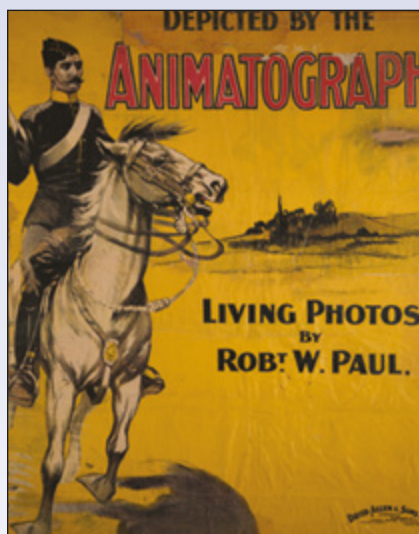
Paul was the first to sell apparatus, films and projection equipment to the wider market, including to French director Georges Méliès, as well as launching Britain's first film studio, where he produced the country's largest number of films annually until the end of the 1890s. He made Britain's first fiction film, *The Soldier's Courtship* (1896), frames from which are in the collections of the National Science and Media Museum (a reconstruction is screened as part of the exhibition). He also created the first two-shot film in which the camera cut between scenes in *Come Along Do!* (1898) and the earliest on-screen titling and intertitles, which can be seen in *Scrooge, or Marley's Ghost* (1901).

He continued to experiment with new techniques, subjects and formats, including distributing films of foreign locations, hand colouring films and capturing panning shots. Paul produced more than eight hundred titles before leaving the business in 1910.

Original objects on display include Paul's Theatrograph projector, the 35mm camera made and used by Paul to film the Diamond Jubilee Procession of Queen Victoria in 1897, and original frames from one of his earliest works: *Incident at Clovelly Cottage*, made with Birt Acres in February 1895.



R. W. Paul.



Poster advertising R. W. Paul's Living Pictures shown via the Animatograph, circa 1897. © National Science and Media Museum.

Theatrograph projector.
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THE FORGOTTEN SHOWMAN
National Science and Media Museum
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Bradford BD1 1NQ
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Founded 1921

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who have given more than 30 years
to the cinema, film or television industries

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Issue 165 | WINTER 2019 | Contents

- 2 THE FORGOTTEN SHOWMAN
- 4 COLOUR BY EASTMANCOLOR *By Paul Frith*
- 11 DENNIS: MISCHIEF BY MAGIC *By Bob Harvey*
- 15 ADELPHI FILMS - THE SURVIVOR *By Allen Eyles*
- 22 PEOPLE AND PLACES *By Bill Gilbert*
- 25 GREAT SLOGANS QUIZ
- 26 THAT WAS THEN
 - 50 Years Ago - December 1969
 - 25 Years Ago - December 1994
- 27 BOOK REVIEW *By Tony Williams*
- 28 FROM THE PRESIDENT
- 29 LETTERS *By Sir Sydney Samuelson CBE, Dr. Claire Jesson and Arthur Ellis*
- 29 NEW MEMBERS
- 30 IN MEMORIAM
- 31 FILM & TELEVISION CHARITY NEWSLETTER

Back cover KIMONO: KYOTO TO CATWALK

The Film & Television Charity is a separate organisation from The British Cinema and Television Veterans – for contact details, see page 31

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Colour by Eastmancolor

A new British research project has examined the effect of the colour process on British cinema between 1955 and 1985 and the problems of faithfully preserving its characteristics – as senior researcher **PAUL FRITH** explains

From the late 1960s onwards, colour cinematography replaced black-and-white as the dominant form of filmmaking in British cinema. The story of its introduction in the twentieth century, however, was initially one of trial and error. The reasons for this are multifarious and include the higher costs associated with the production of early photochemical processes (notably Technicolor three-strip) and also a preference for the aesthetics of black-and-white during the early sound era.

A recent Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project 'The Eastmancolor Revolution and British Cinema, 1955-85', based at the University of Bristol and University of East Anglia, explored the impact of Eastmancolor film stock on British cinema and the significant role it played in the transition to all-colour filmmaking by the 1970s. As a cheaper, single-strip stock that could be used in any camera (sometimes referred to as mono-pack or tri-pack), Eastmancolor offered studios and filmmakers a more readily available colour process in a period dominated by monochrome. The greater portability of cameras using Eastmancolor, combined with the improved light sensitivity of the negative, therefore signified a crucial shift in British production away from the confines of the studio settings associated with colour during this period. It also afforded filmmakers more creative freedom as Eastmancolor productions were unhindered by the restrictions imposed by the Technicolor colour consultancy services, most notably the on-set presence of Natalie Kalmus who served as advisor on the majority of Technicolor films alongside her British counterpart Joan Bridge. Directors and cinematographers were therefore free to experiment with the Eastmancolor stock, establishing a new colour aesthetic for British cinema in the process.

1957 release in Eastmancolour and CinemaScope. DoP: Gilbert Taylor.



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Advertisement from the Kine Year Book 1957.

One of the primary aims of the Eastmancolor project has been to consider how filmmakers and other practitioners adapted to this new technology over a thirty-year period. Though Eastmancolor offered a more affordable option than those earlier colour processes, its initial adoption was slow. There are a number of reasons for this, with the dominance of black-and-white images on television and in other media often cited as a contributing factor. However, the transition is a far more complex issue than simply one of competition between television and cinema. While studios such as Hammer embraced colour as a means of rejuvenating the horror genre (which had fallen out of fashion in the post-war period), the respectable traditions of documentary realism remained closely tied to monochrome during the rise to prominence of the British New Wave. Though a distinctly British colour aesthetic was established using the Technicolor process during the 1940s by a number of prominent British cinematographers (including Oswald Morris and Jack Cardiff), the shift to Eastmancolor resulted in a diverse range of approaches to the new colour negative and print stocks which has often gone unrecognised in favour of championing earlier Technicolor films such as those made by

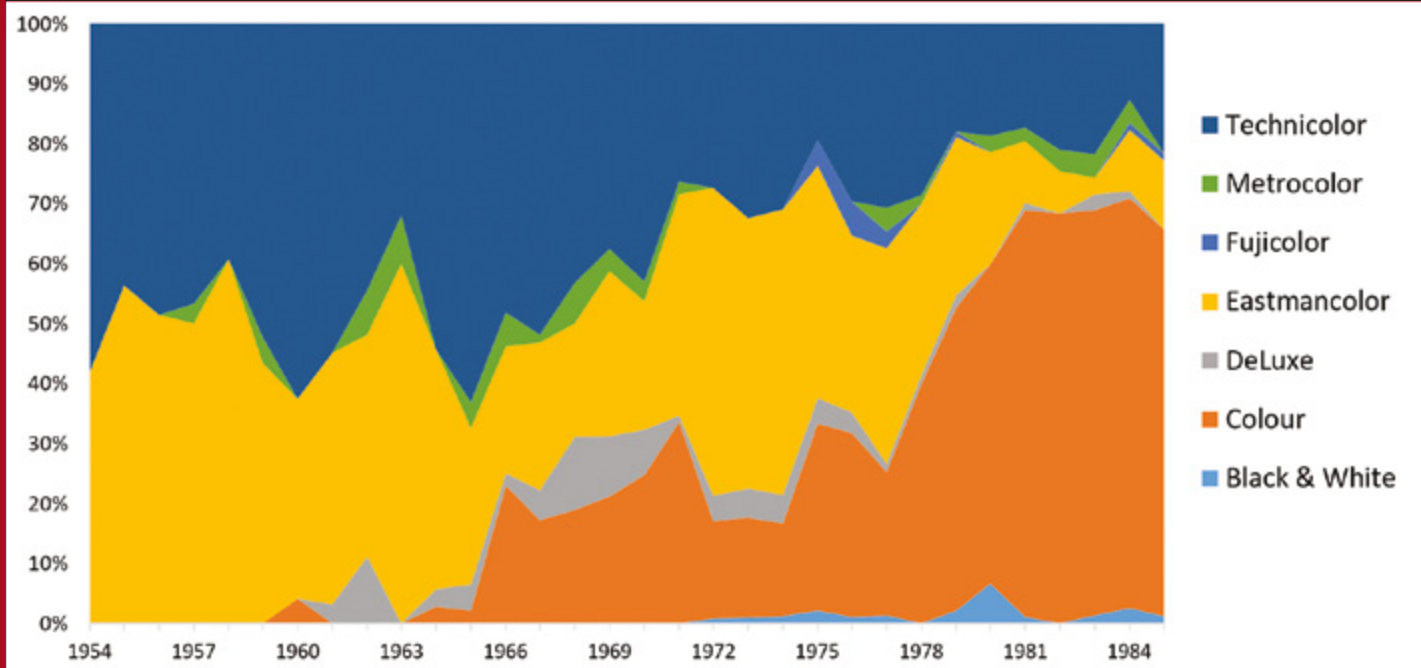
The Archers. The project also looked beyond the feature film industry to consider how other modes of filmmaking (amateur, industrial, sponsored film, etc.) adapted to these new technologies. Also, as developments in colour cinematography were part of a trend towards colour reproduction in other art forms and media during this period (including advertising, publishing, fashion, photography, painting, design and architecture), the project considers the interplay between these various intermedial aspects and the feature-film industry.

While the work of the film laboratories has often been neglected in discussions of British cinema, recent research on the subject has sought to reinstate the importance of the labs for their contribution to the British colour aesthetic. As the research conducted during the Eastmancolor Revolution project has shown, the expertise of the laboratory team (particularly the film graders or 'contact men') had a significant impact on the final look of the film. Just as the work of the production and costume designers have been recognised for their contribution to film aesthetics, the laboratories themselves must also be acknowledged for playing a key role in the development of British colour design. Given the lack of prior research on this subject, the project

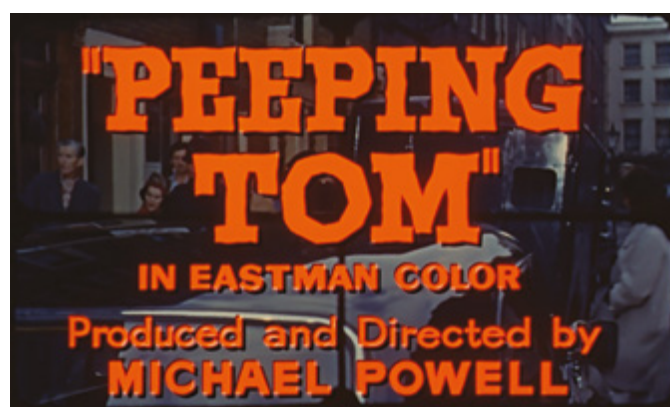
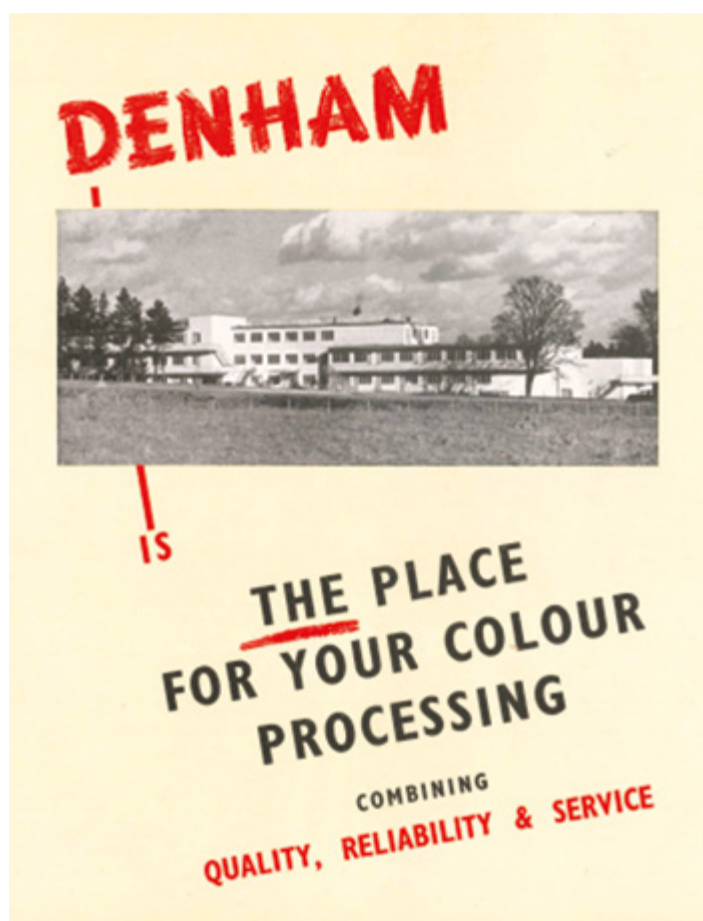


From interview with Evangeline Harrison.

team worked in collaboration with the British Entertainment History Project (historyproject.org.uk) to produce a number of in-depth interviews with key personnel working within the film industry during the period of our study, with a specific focus upon the approach to colour design and the relationship between filmmakers and the laboratories. Interviewees include: cinematographers Peter Suschitzky (*Charlie Bubbles*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*) and Chris Menges (*Kes*, *Made in Britain*); production designer Peter Lamont (*For Your Eyes Only*, *A View to a Kill*); costume designer Evangeline



Graph to show 'branding' of colour processes, 1954-85 (% of British feature films).



Trailer for this 1959 release. DoP: Otto Heller.

Harrison (*Get Carter*, *A Christmas Carol*); former laboratory technicians, Paul Collard (Kay's, Kodak, Metrocolor), Colin Flight (Kodak, Rank) and Alan Masson (Kodak); and restoration and conservation specialists Kieron Webb (British Film Institute), Tessa Idlewine (Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences) and Simon Lund (Cineric, NY). These interviews offered different perspectives on the industry, demonstrating the importance of the relationship between the filmmakers and the laboratory during the transition to all-colour production, whilst also reflecting on the legacy of the analogue era in the digital age. Excerpts from some of these interviews are included here.

The 'Invisible' Colour Process

In order to trace these developments in colour film production, the early stages of the project focussed primarily on identifying key film texts and creative personnel working within the industry during this period. This required research into all of the colour films produced in Britain during the thirty-year period of the project, the key collaborators involved, as well as the laboratories employed for processing and printing. In order to disseminate this



Poster for this 1958 release in "Eastman Colour processed by Technicolor". DoP: Jack Asher.

material a unique database was created containing the 1,800-plus British feature films produced in colour between 1955 and 1985, incorporating relevant details pertaining to the production and release of each title. As a result, the project database revealed a number of significant issues related to the branding and marketing of the Eastmancolor process. Following the demise of the Technicolor three-strip process, the majority of colour films produced in the UK post-1955 were made using Eastmancolor negative (or some derivative of the Eastman technology). Though Eastman now had a near monopoly on the production of feature-film colour negative, for the first ten years following the last British three-strip production on average only fifty per cent of colour films were actually promoted as being 'in Eastmancolor'. The remainder were listed in trade reviews and promotional material as 'Technicolor' regardless of the fact that, in most instances, it would have been produced using an Eastmancolor negative. This is largely due to Kodak having no patent for their colour negatives, meaning that the credit was often attributed to the laboratory involved in processing or the studio financing the production. In the US, where this practice was more common, films processed by Fox would be listed as 'Color by Deluxe', Warner's as Warnercolor, and MGM as Metrocolor. Regardless of the branding used, the process was almost guaranteed to be Eastmancolor.

In Britain, the major labs would often credit films simply as 'in Eastmancolor' with a separate credit for Rank, Humphries, etc. In the years to follow, the Eastmancolor name became even less common in Britain (except for a brief period in the mid-1970s) with most films more likely to be listed as simply 'in colour'. Unlike the tightly controlled, and heavily promoted, Technicolor three-strip process of the 1940s and 1950s, Eastmancolor was something of an 'invisible' brand as the owners, Kodak, were not insistent upon the inclusions of references to their product

in marketing for individual films. As a dominant force in the industry, Kodak already provided the vast majority of negative, intermediate, and print stocks for feature film production and therefore had little incentive to draw the public's attention to their colour process. Any film promoted as either Technicolor, Deluxe, Warnercolor or Metrocolor remained, essentially, an Eastmancolor production. However, regardless of this uniformity in camera negatives, the work of the laboratories (particularly Technicolor during the 1950s and 1960s) should not be underestimated as they played a significant role in establishing the final look of the film, from processing the negative to creating the release prints.

British Film Laboratories and the Eastmancolor 'Look'

Just as the various creative teams involved in film production have been recognised for their contribution to film aesthetics, the laboratories themselves must also be acknowledged for playing a key role in the development of British colour design:

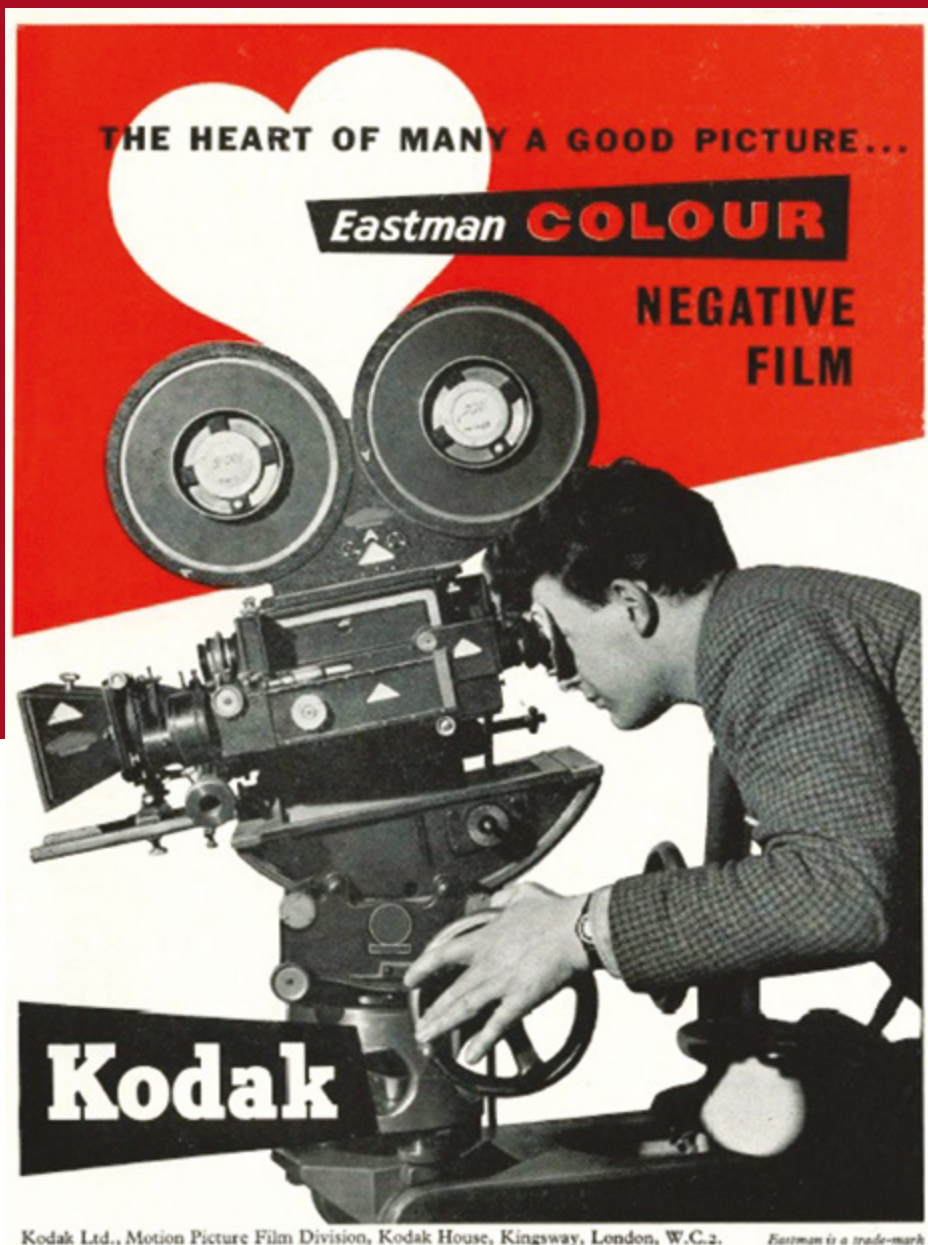
The film laboratory was the black box, because it was the unknown [...] but they were recognised by the filmmakers as being where they get what they want done properly. The relationship between [...] those three areas – manufacturers, filmmakers, and the laboratory – was essential [and] the creativity within the laboratory would get them what they wanted on screen. They didn't always know what they wanted from a filmmaker's perspective and within the laboratory we were able to alter so much [...] Someone would actually sit down [...] with the customer, sitting with the grader, saying "I love that. Could you make that a little bit colder, make that look a bit greener



From interview with Alan Masson.



From interview with Colin Flight.



here.” And within the context of the ability within your laboratory, you could make those changes. – *Colin Flight, 2017.*

Following the adoption of Eastmancolor as the standard process after the demise of three-strip, the processing and printing of the colour negative was carried out by several British labs, most prominently Rank (Denham), Technicolor, Kay’s and Humphries. Alongside a number of smaller laboratories, largely dealing with non-standard gauges and occasional feature film processing, these labs played a substantial role in creating the aesthetic for each individual film in that they provided filmmakers with the tools required to manipulate the image captured on the negative. Though cinematographers were able to maintain a certain level of control over colour reproduction during filming, a lot of the work was done in collaboration with the laboratory team:

That relationship was incredibly important, as important as dealing with, or as working with the art department or the costume department

[...] When you have a close relationship with the grader and the lab, you can almost fix any problem. There are certain problems you can’t fix, like cyan and magenta can be problems, but on the whole you can almost fix any problem with working with a lab. The big problem that you can’t solve is speed. – *Chris Menges, 2019.*

Just as other creative personnel worked closely with the director and cinematographer on-set to establishing a particular look in front of the camera, there remained a number of influential factors during processing and printing which held just as much importance for the final look of the film:

I worked with Humphries on smaller films, from the very outset with *It Happened Here*, that was processed at Humphries. They had very dedicated and knowledgeable technicians there [...] I would phone them several times a week, but the real contact came at the printing stage which was very much a hit and miss process compared to today. When I think back on how we graded a film it was

so crude and hit and miss you would sit in the lab with a technician next to you projecting the cut, with the edited cut, and the cinematographer would say this scene looks a bit too light, or too blue, or too green or whatever – print it darker or lighter, etc. – *Peter Suschitzky, 2018.*

In most instances, the close relationship between filmmakers and the labs worked to ensure that the final grade of the film captured the look of the film envisioned by the director and cinematographer. However, the first answer print of the film (which has been fully graded to the requirements of the filmmakers) was not necessarily the version seen by audiences in cinemas due to the numerous influencing factors during the production of distribution prints. One of the most significant of these was the continuation of the Technicolor imbibition (IB) printing method, which finally ceased production in the UK in the late-1970s:

When I was at Kodak, the Technicolor process was still going and it was explained to me that if you needed 500 prints of something, then it was economic to set up a Technicolour dye transfer line and knock off 500 prints because the individual cost of each print was lower [...] For small to medium runs, it was way more cost-effective to simply take a tri-pack colour film and print film, and process it through a Kodak ECP process to make the prints. – *Paul Collard, 2017.*

Adopted during the three-strip era, Technicolor IB differed from the photochemical processes used in other laboratories in that it employed techniques similar to lithographic printing; applying layers of dye to a film base to create a projection print. As a result, the colours produced using the IB method differed from those created using Eastmancolor intermediates and print stock. Whereas Eastmancolor rendered contrast more sharply, but with a low chromatic range (at least



Eastman Colour image from
Don't Look Now (1973). DoP:
Anthony B. Richmond.

for the pre-1968 stocks), the colour produced using the Technicolor IB prints were richer and more vivid. Though some cinematographers and directors displayed a preference for the Technicolor IB prints, others were opposed to the difference in colour reproduction:

The thing that really bothered me was the fact that you might shoot on Eastmancolor but if the company had a contract with the Technicolor lab it was printed a different way [...] what they call, the “imbibition process” and [...] it looked quite different from the rushes that you would have seen in the studio cinema. Arriving at the point of grading, or timing (as the Americans call it) the film, you would see something rather different with the reds heavily emphasised compared to Eastmancolor. And that used to, I must say, annoy me and distress me that one would see the rushes one way and then the film looked different. – *Peter Suschitzky, 2018.*

Following the demise of IB printing, other manufacturers (including Fuji and Agfa) also competed for business in the lucrative mass-production market. Though not as pronounced as the difference between Technicolor IB and Eastmancolor prints, these alternative print stocks represented another opportunity for variations in colour reproduction from the original image. As the decision of where to manufacture exhibition prints was primarily one made by a film’s production company (quite often as a result of minimising cost), the final look of a print was largely dependent on the deals struck between the financiers and the laboratory rather than a creative decision made by the director or cinematographer.

Though the first answer prints (or premiere prints) were likely to have been approved by the cinematographer, they were often only seen

during the first screenings or for part of the original run in the West End. For national (and international) distribution, deals were secured at the bigger laboratories for mass-print runs which were often based on pre-established agreements between the producers and the labs. These deals took into consideration a number of factors including: the lab involved in processing the original negative; the quantities of product required; and the deal secured with the manufacturer supplying the print stock:

Fuji became quite popular because it was so consistent and this upset Kodak because there used to be quite a difference in balance between the emulsions and they had quite a hard time of it because labs were saying, “Well, I’m gonna use Fuji because A, it’s cheaper” which quite often it was “and B, it’s much more consistent.” And sometimes laboratories were forced into using a different stock [...] I mean if you’re going to have a thousand copies you can say “Right, I want you to use Eastmancolor because I like Kodak and they look after me” [...] So these were the influences. It wasn’t always quality, colour reproduction. There was a lot of other reasons for it. – *Brian Pritchard, 2019.*

Similar negotiations also took place for popular films which were later re-issued in cinemas often resulting in subsequent print runs being produced by a different laboratory to the original release; possibly using an updated version of the original print stock, or even print stock from an alternate manufacturer. Each of these factors had the potential to effect the colour in the projected image, subsequently resulting in a problematic legacy for many British colour production of this period in the attempt to recreate the ‘original’ look of the film.



From interview with Peter Suschitzky.

Restoring the ‘Original Look’

This relationship between the filmmakers and the labs raises a number of key issues in regards to recreating the ‘original’ colour of these films, both for analogue and new digital film restorations. As the early Eastmancolor print stock (and, in some instances, the negative itself) were prone to fading, quite often there are no good quality reference copies of the original print in existence which might serve as a guide for creating a new version:

This is a very difficult problem. If you have a reference print, this is great and, assuming that it hasn’t faded, [...] you’ve got to hope that the print is the way it was when you first saw it, or when it was first made [...] If you’re lucky enough and the director is still alive, or the cameraman [...] you could use that as a guide but apart from that, you just graded and hoped you make it look correct and hope that the director didn’t want a special look to it. Some of them do, you know, they like it slightly blue or green or whatever, but in general you would just grade it to be as correct as possible. It’s a difficult problem. – *Brian Pritchard, 2019.*



From interview with Chris Menges.



From interview with Brian Pritchard.

Given the tendency for Eastmancolor prints to fade, restoration projects have either relied on later prints, on low-fade stock, or educated guesswork by the team involved in the restoration. For British Eastmancolor films produced prior to the end of Technicolor dye-transfer printing there is, of course, the chance that IB prints of the film survive in the archives. Given the nature of the dye-transfer printing process, in most instances these Technicolor prints have retained all of their original colour whereas the Eastmancolor prints have all but faded to magenta. While the Technicolor IB prints (as well as the later low-fade Eastmancolor prints) represent invaluable reference material, it is not always helpful to assume that these versions represent the original intentions of the filmmakers (as Peter Suschitzky's thoughts on IB printing suggests). When possible, restoration projects (such as those carried out by the British Film Institute) have sought to confer with either the director or cinematographer to ensure that their efforts match to the original image as closely as possible:

We don't often get a chance because the age of films we're working on sadly to be able to work with those who were involved in them [...] I think it's good for the Archive to sit and talk quite a lot with the person, or group, to [...] be clear on how you see it and are there considerations that the archivist might not have taken into account about the production as a way of working through anything. I would like to do more of it actually just because [...] I find it so fascinating in so many other ways. – *Kieron Webb, 2019.*

As custodians of our film heritage, national archives such as the British Film Institute are primarily concerned with the recreation of the filmmaker's original intentions in order to preserve

the image for future generations. Working with surviving directors, cinematographers, and the original colour graders, has played a crucial role in achieving a respectable approximation of the film's original look. However, for those companies involved in restoration (or remastering) for the purpose of selling a 'new' product, catered for the tastes of a modern audience demanding the 'best quality', the input of the filmmakers themselves is often negated in favour of financial gain:

Kes is the only film that I've actually signed off on the grading. I mean, even *Michael Collins* I didn't do the final grade of that on the Blu-ray. I think that the distribution companies think they know best and they also think it's going to cost money and cause delays. Well, it doesn't cost money and it doesn't cause delays and they don't know best. I feel that the person, whoever it is, who made the original commitments will be the only person who knows what it should look like. Nobody else knows. – *Chris Menges, 2019.*

While the added demand for content in the multi-channel multi-format digital era has made it easier to access films which have often been neglected in discussions of British cinema, financial considerations typically govern how the original image is presented to modern audiences. Just as each generation establishes new modes of exhibition and viewing habits (analogue TV, VHS, DVD, etc.) the new digital era has created a demand for full-4k scanning and presentation in UHD:

It wasn't until more modern time when 4K, and so on, came in when people wanted restored copies. They wanted to show something that was really good. In the past they didn't care very much and you used to see some dreadful prints on TV because that

was all they had and weren't certainly going to pay to have them restored because it was difficult and expensive to restore them. – *Brian Pritchard, 2019.*

As Brian Pritchard suggests, the availability of high-resolution digital scanning and more affordable restoration techniques has not only created a demand for 'better quality' images, it has also made available lesser known British films only previously available as poor copies of well-worn prints or VHS transfers. Nevertheless, as we move further towards all-digital production and exhibition, it becomes increasingly necessary to look to the past to ensure the techniques of the analogue era remain central to the reproduction of the British colour aesthetic of the mid-20th century.

Just as in recent years there has been a great deal of research into colour in early cinema, projects such as 'The Eastmancolor Revolution' have sought to demonstrate the importance of studying colour during other periods of British cinema. As with early cinema, the accounts of practitioners involved in film production, combined with detailed analysis of the films themselves, remains fundamental to preserving the legacy of colour filmmaking in Britain. **V**

Full video interviews and transcripts are available at historyproject.org.uk

For more information on the project visit eastmancolor.info

Paul Frith was Senior Research Associate on 'The Eastmancolor Revolution and British Cinema, 1955-85' and is based at the School of Art, Media & American Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich Research Park, Norwich. Contact: paul.frith@uea.ac.uk and/or send us a letter which we can publish and forward to him.

Dennis: Mischief by Magic

CRASH!

SPLAT!

Bob Harvey recalls the challenges
of animating a comic icon

All Dennis images © D. C. Thomson and used
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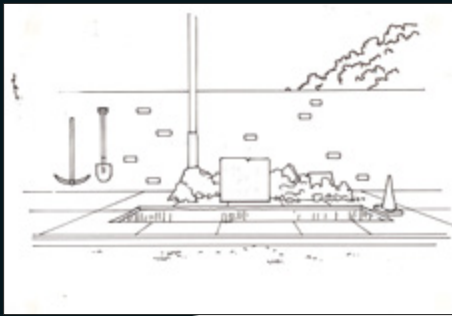


The author as
director with Dennis



Working with animals and children is, as I discovered early in my directing career, a stroll in the park compared to mastering the complexities of puppeteering.

"Dennis the Menace" had started life in *The Beano* in March 1951, its stories of a mischievous schoolboy who had a knack of attracting trouble eventually becoming its longest running comic strip. By the early Nineties, D. C. Thomson & Co., *The Beano* publishers, had decided it was time to bring Dennis and his trusty sidekick Gnasher the dog to life on our television screens and The Children's Channel was charged with the responsibility of creating a vehicle for the characters that would reflect the design and humour of the comic itself. Robb Hart, Head of Production at TCC, devised the format and persuaded an old art school pal, John Bonner, to create the comic strip background worlds with the help of fellow graphic designer Bob Jobling, whilst Mike Quinn and Dave Barclay of Ultimate Animates set to work creating the puppets. Quinn and Barclay's credentials included *Star Wars*, *Little*



The Dennis team, the author at right.



Original pencil drawings by designer John Bonner prior to colourisation.

Shop of Horrors and *Fraggle Rock*, so they were perfectly placed to bring the Dennis characters to the small screen. Mike Barfield, who was a comic fanatic and had already presented a series called *Comic Cuts*, was immediately engaged to write the scripts and I came on board as series producer/director.

At a production meeting we went over the delivery schedule. Mike would write a hundred storylines, then convert them into scripts so that I could rough out basic drawings to show John Bonner my visualisations for the action. John would then convert the drawings – be they fields, streets, school playgrounds, bedrooms or garden sheds – into professionally drawn coloured backgrounds that mirrored the design in the comics, as requested by D. C. Thomson. These graphics would then be delivered to the studio the following morning on tape so that we could incorporate them into the shows, as backgrounds behind the puppets, who would act out their roles against green screen. It all sounded fairly straightforward but, with limited time and a small budget, it turned out to be a heady challenge, and there were unforeseen complications.

When Mike and Dave unveiled the Dennis puppet for the first time it was a work of art and reflected a perfect, spitting image of Dennis the Menace as portrayed in the comic. But his hands were of the rodged type and, although this was a standard method of operation for many puppet shows, Dennis was an all-action character who needed to run, ride on roller-skates and skateboards, tumble through the air, fire catapults, and pick up various objects and throw them in all directions – none of which could be achieved without operational hands and legs.

One answer would have been to simplify the scripts but the action would not have replicated the energy of the comic strips, so Ultimate

Animates agreed to rethink how Dennis could become more animated. John Bonner then raised the question of how the bubble captions would work. These were the comic bubbles that contained words like SPLAT! or SPLODGE! at moments when some yucky mixture smacked into walls, cupboards or fences, or PONG! whenever Dennis let off one of his customary stink bombs.

Robb came up with a solution that was technically ahead of its time and involved the use of laser discs. John Bonner would create the bubble words, animate them and transfer them to laser disc so that they could be activated instantly at the appropriate moment during the recording of the shows. The idea excited John so much that he began complicating the art work, despite the time constraints, by adding the backgrounds themselves to the laser discs and animating these as well. It was hairy stuff but a good example of how ideas can grow organically when a production team is fired up.

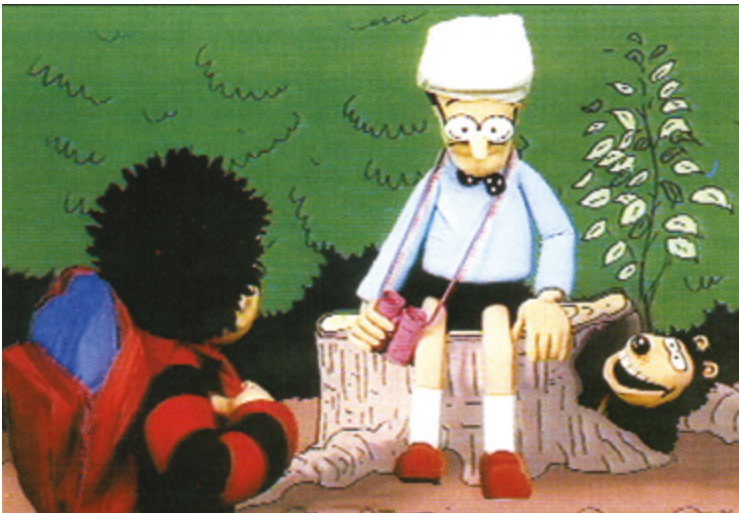
With Mike's scripts now coming at us in a landslide of ingenuity, Director of Programmes Dan Maddicott and I undertook read-throughs on every script, checking both dialogue and action in order to address any possible problems that might arise during the recordings. These were sent to our producers at D. C. Thomson for approval and Logan Murray, the comic, was then contracted to voice all of the characters, including some virtuoso dog-type grunts for Gnasher, and these pre-recorded voice tracks were sent to the studio for the puppeteers to mime to.

Robb had taken the decision not to post-edit the shows after the recordings, which meant we had to record as 'live' in a small, makeshift studio in a basement in Wardour Street and end the day with completed shows ready for transmission the following morning. The monitor bank in front



Gnasher and Dennis.

SPLODGE!



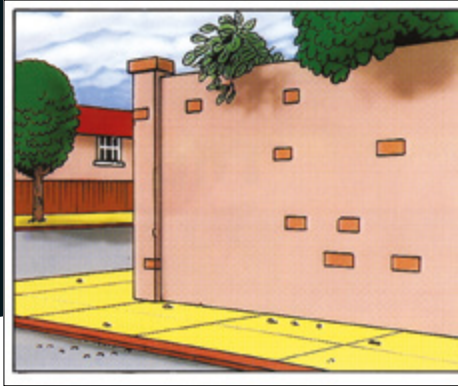
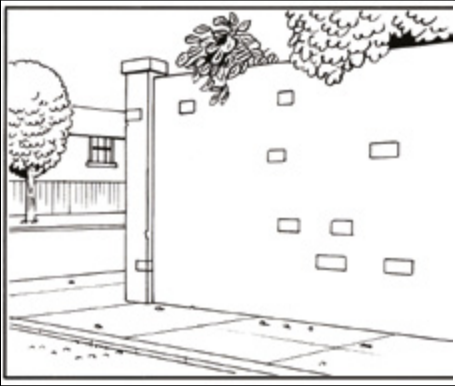
Dennis, Walter the Softy and Gnasher.

PONG!



Gnasher in kennel.

SPLAT!



The production process illustrated with three images: background Beanoville wall prior to colourisation, coloured, and with Dennis and Gnasher composited into the background.

of me showed three studio cameras with the characters against green screen: one on a standard long shot and the other two for cross-cutting on the puppets' faces. Three other monitors showed the corresponding graphic backgrounds that John and Bob had supplied for insertion behind each of the studio shots, each change of shot showing the characters in front of a different background, depending on the required frame size and geographical position. A seventh monitor displayed the animations on the laser disc and an eighth monitor the main composite shot comprising the puppets with their combined backgrounds.

The composites switched accordingly as we cut from shot to shot but a further complication arose at the end of each scene when we had to initiate a pre-planned tape stop or stop recording because of a technical problem. Because we had no edit time, the VT operator had to wind back the tape and run it forward again so that when we reached the previous stop point, recording re-commenced in real time with, hopefully, an invisible edit. This meant running in the voice tracks at the exact same point, with the puppeteers on standby, ready to pick up the action, either where it had left off or at the beginning of a new scene. By a miracle, most pick-up points were inserted seamlessly – picture and sound in perfect synch – thanks to the patience and professionalism of the technical staff and the puppeteers.

The experience certainly showed me just how much I did not know or understand about puppeteering. I was walking into a room full of hidden trapdoors and falling down every one of them. On one occasion, when Walter the Softy was fighting his way out of a paper bag, I asked Geoff Felix, the Walter puppeteer, on open mike, if he could see okay out of the bag. There was a stunned silence, broken by a slightly bemused

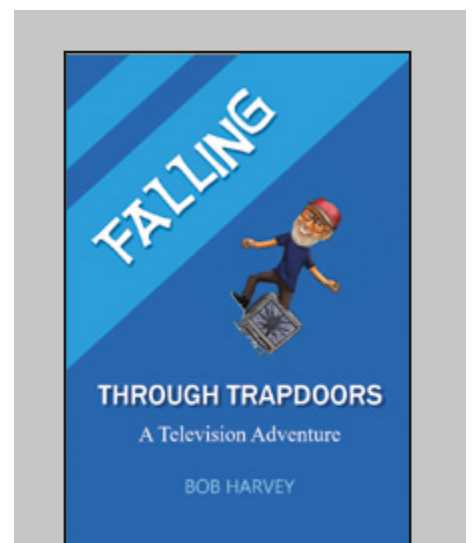
floor manager replying over the intercom: "But, Bob, he's not actually inside the bag." One of the cameras panned round to confirm that Geoff was standing below the platform performance area, holding the script and paper bag in his hand and looking confused. It was the first of many moments when I wanted the floor to open and swallow me up, though thankfully the puppeteers thought this naivety amusing – perhaps even a compliment to their skills in making me believe that Geoff really was concealed inside the paper bag.

Something I realised from day one was that keying out the green chromakey backgrounds was a problem that required tremendous patience on the part of the technical crew since the technology available to us in the early Nineties was not as sophisticated as the CGI we use today. Thus, Dennis's newly acquired functional hands and flexible legs meant it took three puppeteers to operate him, which involved three bodies, dressed in green, standing against green screen, often creating black shadows that were difficult to mask out, even with the comic strip backgrounds keyed in.

Despite the technical limitations the format worked well and *The Dennis the Menace and Gnasher Show* became one of The Children's Channel's biggest successes, with Robb Hart breaking boundaries with his particular brand of visual sorcery, John Bonner producing art work of the highest calibre, Ultimate Animates giving us a robust, fully 3-dimensional Dennis, and Mike Barfield somehow managing to create, almost single-handedly, over a hundred very funny scripts within a hectic time frame.

Between us, in partnership with D. C. Thomson, we had created something out of nothing: hours of entertaining and informative children's television on a shoestring, and we enjoyed every minute of it. ■

CRASH!



An extract from **FALLING THROUGH TRAPDOORS** A Television Adventure by Bob Harvey. Spellcaster Publishing. ISBN: 9781795556859. Paperback, 308 pages. £7.99 through Amazon.co.uk

Adelphi Films – The Survivor

Allen Eyles looks at the company's history and its extraordinary resilience

Images courtesy of Kate Lees and Adelphi Films

Adelpi was not the biggest of the many independent British film distributors that competed in the 1950s but it is the longest lasting – still in the same family and still in business more than sixty years after it last released a film, preserving and licensing the library of forty features made for Adelphi by associated production companies between 1947 and 1956 – none of which have achieved true masterpiece status but all of which have aspects of historical interest and most of which are viewable today. Adelphi belongs to the Dent family – first Arthur, then his sons David (still with us, aged 97) and Stanley (1917-2012), and now with Stanley's daughter, Kate Lees, a retired NHS manager who promotes the company with a passion at every opportunity. She is under no illusions about Adelphi's output – “cheap and cheerful – but good entertainment!” – and she loves every title dearly.

Adelphi was a distribution company (or renter, as they were more commonly called) taken over by Arthur Dent in 1948. The company's Certificate of Incorporation, dated 19 May 1939, survives in the Adelphi files. It was formed by an entrepreneur called Louis Zimmermann and, it would seem, the outbreak of World War Two delayed progress until 1944 when Adelphi released four reissues and a new documentary.

Arthur Dent was a trade veteran who, in 1922, had formed Waverley Films in Glasgow with the financial backing of John Maxwell. This was the distributor in Scotland of the product from Wardour Films in London and it eventually took over Wardour Films, retaining the latter's name. As Maxwell built up the Associated British Picture Corporation and its huge circuit of Associated British Cinemas, Arthur Dent remained a key executive but left ABC a month after Maxwell's death in 1940. He became the British representative of Samuel Goldwyn during World War Two.

Arthur Dent formed a production company called Advance and produced *Comin' Thro' The Rye*, a 52-minute film about the Scottish poet Robert Burns. It was trade shown in late 1947 without a distributor and released through Adelphi after he took over the company.

Under Dent, in March 1949 Adelphi offered exhibitors four new features, one short and a reissue of *Fire Over England*, the 1936 costume adventure with Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. Six new features, three shorts and two more reissues followed in the autumn. The features included several minor westerns along with six new British films made by Advent and Advance, two production companies associated with Adelphi.

There were musical comedies starring Hal Monty and a young Max Bygraves – *Bless 'Em*



Kate Lees and the Adelphi archive in its former garage location.



Adelphi's half page advertisement in the Kinematograph Year Book 1951.



Peter Sellers as Crystal Jollibottom in *Let's Go Crazy* (1951). Sellers played five parts, including Groucho Marx in this musical featurette set in a nightclub with sketches written (uncredited) by Sellers and Spike Milligan.



Peter Sellers and Harry Secombe in *Penny Points to Paradise* (1951).

All and *Skimpy in the Navy* – and ones starring a new comedian called Ben Wrigley – *Melody in the Dark* and *High Jinks in Society*. Arthur Dent's son, David, served as production administrator on *High Jinks in Society* and became a producer on *Skimpy in the Navy*, the first of thirteen he made for Adelphi release, including almost all its most significant titles. Another son, Stanley Dent, a qualified accountant, came in to run the business side as financial director.

Advance also hired Frank Richardson to produce and direct a thriller called *Bait* from a play he had written. More significantly, Adelphi, after using a young John Guillermin as a screenwriter and co-producer on some of its 1949 comedies, allowed him to write and direct a thriller through Advance called *Torment* (also known as *Paper Gallows*); his first film as a director, aged 24.

From the start, Arthur Dent was highly critical of the duopoly exercised by ABC and Rank as owners of the major circuits – ABC and Odeon/Gaumont – for refusing to book many of his films and he took his complaints to the government. His letters were often intemperate and he seems in particular to have been shunned by his old company, Associated British. While a number of Adelphi's better releases would be given a major circuit release, only two of the company's output gained an ABC release, both as B features. However, the other films helped

independents meet the quota requirements of the day, 40% first features and 25% supporting films in 1949-50 (although some cinemas had reductions or were exempt).

Adelphi issued only one new British production in 1950 – an hour-long musical comedy called *A Ray of Sunshine*, headed by Ted Ray with Janet Brown and Wilson, Keppel and Betty. It imported an old French film about white slavery, *Traffic in Souls* (*Cargaison blanche*, 1937), which could now be shown with one of the new X certificates. It also obtained the first BBFC classification allowing Hedy Lamarr's notorious *Ecstasy* (1933) to be widely shown, although so cut that it only rated an A certificate. During 1950 Arthur Dent moved Adelphi's offices in Soho to 187 Wardour Street which he renamed Adelphi House.

1951 was significant for Adelphi handling the official film debuts of the trio who would go on to create the hit radio series *The Goon Show*: Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers and Harry Secombe. This was *Penny Points to Paradise*, a feature-length comedy with Harry Secombe as a pools winner, Peter Sellers in two roles and Spike Milligan in one, and *Let's Go Crazy*, a 32-minute musical comedy written and improvised by Milligan and Sellers. The latter starred Sellers and featured Milligan as both a waiter and his *Goon Show* character Eccles. Spike was impressed

when Stanley Dent sent him some royalties and responded with a typed letter using the red half of the ribbon, saying "thanks for the lolly" and "It is a pleasant surprise [*sic*], as I never expected any at all (knowing the film profession to be what it is)" and ending: "p.s. do you think they will bring back ducking stools?" However, it was E. J. Fancey and New Realm that capitalised on the trio as The Goons with the 1952 comedy *Down Among the Z Men*.

Shorts released during this period included several major boxing matches that provided a topical fillip to cinema programmes. Kate Lees observes: "Adelphi scored a big hit with the release of the July 1951 heavyweight title match when the British underdog Randolph Turpin unexpectedly took the title from Sugar Ray Robinson (sadly Sugar Ray won it back in September of the year)."

1952 renewed Adelphi's connection with John Guillermin. He had gone to work for Roger Proudlock's Vandyke Productions, one of whose films, the comedy *Song of Paris* (1953) starring Dennis Price, was released by Adelphi and double-billed with a Columbia crime drama, *The Dark Page*, starring Broderick Crawford, on the Gaumont circuit. A crime feature, *My Death Is a Mockery*, produced by David Dent, went out on the ABC circuit as support to MGM musical

Lovely to Look At. Kate Lees notes: “*My Death is a Mockery* gained notoriety in 1952 through the infamous case of the murder of a policeman by Christopher Craig. At 16, Craig was too young to hang but his accomplice Derek Bentley was hung instead. The case was a cause celebre and a major miscarriage of justice. The afternoon of the murder Craig had been to the cinema to see *My Death is a Mockery* and it was said at the trial that the film had incited him to murder. It was withdrawn soon after and was only seen publicly for the first time since then earlier this year.”

Arthur Dent was unable to get a major circuit booking for Adelphi’s *My Wife’s Lodger*, starring Diana Dors, and sold the farce for showing on the lesser but important Granada circuit for a flat fee of £1,500, which Granada reckoned saved £600 compared to booking it on normal terms. *My Wife’s Lodger* was the first of eight pictures directed by Maurice Elvey for producer David Dent and Adelphi and the first of four Adelphi releases in which Diana Dors appeared.

The Great Game (1952) concerned a football club scandal with Dors in the leading female role but character actor “James (Pickwick) Hayter” was given star billing following his success in rival Renown’s *The Pickwick Papers*. Better remembered in Dors’ career is *Is Your Honeymoon Really Necessary* (1953), a farce displaying her as the first wife of Yank airman Bonar Colleano disputing whether his second marriage to Diana Decker was valid. It achieved a circuit release (via Odeons), topping a double bill with a Glenn Ford Technicolor western, *The Man from the Alamo*. Whether Dors was under a term contract with Adelphi is not known but Arthur Dent later took credit for advancing her career. The actress soon went to Associated British and front-rank stardom in bigger films like *The Weak and the Wicked* and *Yield to the Night*.

The oddest production undertaken by Adelphi was *Intimate Relations* (1953), the British version of an acclaimed French film, *Les Parents*

Terribles, written and directed by Jean Cocteau in 1948 from his stage play. Promoted with the line “FATHER and SON Betrayed by the SAME WOMAN!”, this drama of a woman driven to suicide after her husband’s former mistress turns up as her son’s new girlfriend was the first British production to earn the X certificate, unavoidable given the subject matter. Charles Frank, a Belgian who had made *Uncle Silas* (1947), directed his own adaptation. It had a long premiere run at the Marble Arch Pavilion (run by another small distributor Archway) and seems to have attracted quite a few bookings from independents although its cast – Harold Warrender, Marian Spencer, Russell Enoch and Swedish actress Elsy Albiin – was hardly stellar.

Adelphi also released a German film, *Vienna Waltzes* (1951), starring Anton Walbrook who attended the premiere at the Marble Arch Pavilion. Time was taken to produce a dubbed version in English in the hope of reaching a wider audience than the market for just a subtitled version.

Other 1953 productions were the comedies *Alf’s Baby* (made by ACT Films, a branch of the trade union) and *Don’t Blame the Stork* (through David Dent). The latter was booked to the ABC circuit in early 1954 as the B feature support to British Lion’s drama *The Heart of the Matter* and became a cropper through no fault of its own. The main feature performed so disastrously in its first week in north west London that it was propped up by a big new Hollywood crime film, *The Big Heat*, for the rest of its run throughout the country. I wonder if Adelphi was adequately compensated for the termination of *Don’t Blame the Stork*’s run.

In 1954, John Guillermin directed *The Crowded Day* for David Dent. This episodic drama about the lives and loves of women working in a department store received good reviews and is considered by Kate Lees to be the best film released by Adelphi. She comments: “It was devised by David Dent as a drama about a group

of working women in the 1950s. One woman is pregnant although unmarried and contemplates abortion – a very radical subject for the time. The film is an excellent commentary on many of the social taboos and issues for working women at that time.” Guillermin went on to direct for bigger companies, making a lively thriller *Town on Trial* (1957) and major films such as *The Blue Max* (1966) and *The Towering Inferno* (1974).

Dent and Adelphi made another episodic film that year, *The Happiness of Three Women*, actually about four women in a Welsh village. Despite a lack of contrast, this was combined with *The Crowded Day* as a double bill on the Odeon circuit, starting in the slack pre-Christmas period of 1954 – a fate that would befall other Adelphi releases.

There was a third film from David Dent and Adelphi with a strong female angle. *What Every Woman Wants* was “A DRAMATIC THUNDERBOLT OF HUMAN RELATIONS!” with Elsy Albiin playing a Midlands wife tempted to commit adultery, and also explores the impact of a housing shortage with a background of trade union activity, but its fate was to float - as in “floating”, the trade term used to describe films with no proper release date.

In 1955 Adelphi bought another exploitable foreign film – the Swedish *Unmarried Mothers* (1953) with no name stars but a helpful X certificate.

The big Adelphi release of the year was *You Lucky People*, a vehicle for comedian Tommy Trinder which claimed to be the first black and white feature in ‘scope, using a French process rather than Fox’s CinemaScope. Adelphi called it CameraScope. The army comedy was heavily promoted at the Cinema Exhibitors’ Association annual conference, held at Llandudno that year. It bypassed the West End for a run through the Gaumont circuit, starting with a standard pre-release week at the Dominion Tottenham Court Road and New Victoria before being combined



Kathleen Byron and Donald Houston in *My Death Is a Mockery* (1952), a drama about a trawler fisherman who turns to smuggling to make ends meet.



Arthur Dent shakes hands with Jean Cocteau watched by Charles Frank and Elsy Albiin at what seems to have been a press reception to promote Adelphi’s production of *Intimate Relations*.



Trade show announcement for *Intimate Relations* in 1953.



The only scene still in the Adelphi archive for *Intimate Relations* (1953) shows Russell Enoch and Elsy Albin.



Adelphi chief Arthur Dent in the office with his producer son David.

with a United Artists drama starring Anthony Quinn, *The Naked Street*. The manager of the large Gaumont Sheffield in his Weekly Return wrote, regarding *You Lucky People*: “This film has not had one favourable comment from our patrons – the general comment being ‘too slapstick’.” The programme did half the business at this cinema of a Ronald Shiner comedy, *Up To His Neck*, the year before.

Adelphi ceased activity as a distributor of new product in 1955 but two more features were produced by David Dent through the family’s new company Grand Alliance, for which brother Stanley had arranged distribution by British Lion. The films received brief West End premiere runs in the dead period before Christmas a year apart.

The first, *Fun at St. Fanny’s*, was a schoolboy comedy starring Fred Emney and Cardew Robinson, widely likened to the Will Hay classroom comedies of the 1930s. It played for a week in mid-December 1955 at the Warner Leicester Square before Warner Bros.’s *Sincerely Yours*, the big screen debut of Liberace, followed on 22 December.

Fun at St. Fanny’s was supported by a long delayed Adelphi release, *Miss Tulip Stays the Night*, given B feature status despite starring a “Dynamic” Diana Dors in her fourth and last film for the Dents. The 68-minute comedy thriller also brought back Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge for an older generation. (At the same time, a reissue of *Is Your Honeymoon Really Necessary* was on a long run at the Cinephone Oxford Street supporting an X certificate Continental feature, Gala’s *The Wayward Wife*.)

The final Dent film was *Stars in Your Eyes*, produced by David Dent in 1956 at MGM Borehamwood Studios. Previous Adelphi films had used lesser studios like Nettlefold and Beaconsfield.

Stars in Your Eyes had test showings at the Essoldo Clapham Junction (a former music hall) and at one of Mortimer Dent’s cinemas in Coventry (Mortimer, known as “Mick”, was Arthur’s brother). A number of very favourable response cards from both showings are in the Adelphi archive. The Essoldo preview was on 19 April 1956 and the film had a rather long period awaiting release.

The trade reviews were favourable. *Kine Weekly* (29 November 1956) declared: “Cheery, disarmingly inconsequential show business musical, presented in CameraScope and Eastman Color.... Just the thing for the tired working man and woman and their nippers. Points of appeal. – Title, stars, guest artists, clean fun, tuneful melodies, honest heart interest, CameraScope, Eastman Color, quota ticket and U certificate.” *Today’s Cinema* concurred: “A great family show, this one.”

The film then had the apparent advantage of being booked for a two-week run at a major West End cinema, the Empire in Leicester Square, owned by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Like other cinemas operated by Hollywood majors, such as the Warner in Leicester Square and Paramount’s Plaza near Piccadilly Circus, the Empire occasionally booked British films from small distributors to help meet its quota obligations but with 2,778 seats it took some filling.

The musical comedy opened on Thursday 6 December 1956 and did not draw in substantial audiences. From Sunday, it was propped up by a recent MGM hit, *Bhowani Junction*, in a double bill but admissions for its first and only week totalled a new low of 7,484. There was much musical competition in the West End: *Guys and Dolls* at the adjacent Ritz, *The King and I* in its last week at the Rialto, and show business biopic



Quad poster for *Is Your Honeymoon Really Necessary* (1953).



Company head Arthur Dent with the star of four Adelphi films, Diana Dors.

The Best Things in Life Are Free at the Carlton. *Love Me Tender* with Elvis Presley was about to blast off at the Rialto. As Kate Lees observes, the advertising for *Stars in Your Eyes* tried to link the film to changing tastes with its slogan “Rock’n’ Roll with Laughter!” (see front cover). The Empire brought forward by a week the launch of the major MGM musical (and sure-fire hit) *High Society* which achieved 46,728 admissions in the first week of a six-week run.*

It should be said straight away that the box-office failure of *Stars in Your Eyes* in the West End is no argument for not reviving it. A lack of audience appeal then is no guide to the merits and interest of a production now (*Stars in Your Eyes* does feature the only film appearance of Dorothy Squires). The film may not have been suited to West End tastes or such a large cinema. Top-billed northern comedian Nat Jackley was hardly a major draw down south and had done little previous film work. Also, the West End was only just recovering from a petrol shortage which had hit attendances (the number of buses may still have been reduced) and pre-Christmas December was a notoriously bad period for opening new films as picturegoers were spending their money on presents instead. In addition, Stanley Dent told his daughter Kate that the weather was atrocious that week. Denied a major circuit release, *Stars in Your Eyes* was made available to the still substantial number of independent cinemas, but figures in the Adelphi archive suggest that it achieved half the number of bookings of *Fun at St. Fanny's*. Being a more expensive film with the extra cost of colour, it needed to do better.

* A British comedy in Technicolor from Associated British called *She Didn't Say No!* achieved an even lower admissions total than *Stars in Your Eyes* of 6,664 in its one-week run in October 1958. All the Empire's admissions from 1928 to 1961 were published from box-office records in *Picture House* no. 13, Summer 1989, the magazine of the Cinema Theatre Association.

David Dent made no further films. By this time Arthur Dent, the driving force of the company, had become seriously ill and died on 25 June 1956 at the age of 68. Kate Lees notes: “His death was the end of any new productions although Adelphi continued to trade actively as a distributor for another twenty years, managed by Stanley and David. It became dormant in the late 1970s.”

Kate has further observed: “My father Stanley Dent and his brother David kept faith with Adelphi at a time when the films were out of fashion and forgotten by all but a few real enthusiasts, and the brothers kept the company going in difficult times. They always believed in this wonderful collection and how right they were!”

“The cans of film were stored in Stanley Dent's family garage in Highgate for many years and were just part of the junk in the garage while I was growing up. David rescued them circa 1995 and donated them to the BFI National Archive. I continued to find more film material that Stanley had kept in the house when I took over the company in 2006 (he was not known to be a tidy man!). Stanley also kept all the documents that now form the wonderful Adelphi Document Archive, the best document archive of its era and much visited by academics.

“I started working with the BFI in 2006, and also with my two wonderful colleagues, friends and directors Bill Allan – now sadly passed away and very much missed – and Richard Jeffs.”

Adelphi continues to own around forty titles. “Twenty-six have been digitalised – four to SD, the rest to HD. Two early Peter Sellers films – *Penny Points to Paradise* and *Let's Go Crazy* – were funded by a very generous individual. Eleven other titles on DVD and BluRay were funded by the BFI (when budgets were not so tight). Six titles were funded by the Lottery as part of the BFI ‘Unlocking Film Heritage’ programme. And



Stanley Baker in *The Tell-Tale Heart* (1953), a twenty-minute short with an X certificate that went missing for many years.



Fun at St. Fanny's (1955). Poster by newspaper cartoonist Thelwell.

1955 ADELPHI WINNERS!

*A spine-tingling
B Comedy-Thriller!* **DYNAMIC—DIANA DORS**
PATRICK HOLT · JACK HULBERT · CICELY COURTNEIDGE
MISS TULIP STAYS THE NIGHT
WITH Guest Star A. E. MATTHEWS **A British Film**

NAT JACKLEY
IN
SPICE OF LIFE
WITH THE CREAM OF TOP-LINE PERSONALITIES SPICING
THE ENTERTAINMENT! **A British Film**

CARDEW ROBINSON in
FUN AT ST. FANNY'S
A SIDE SPLITTING COMEDY—A CROSS BETWEEN
ST. TRINIAN'S AND NARKOVER! **A British Film**

COTTAGE TO LET
A COTTAGE IN THE COUNTRY—THREE TENANTS
ANXIOUS FOR PEACE AND QUIET—A COMEDY
FULL OF WARMTH AND CHARM! **A British Film**

AN ARMY IN SKIRTS
REMEMBER "BLESS 'EM ALL"? WERE BACK IN
THE ARMY FOR 15 DAYS REFRESHER TRAINING
WITH THE GIRLS OF THE WRACS TO HELP
IN THE TROUBLE! **A British Film**

BATTLE OF BALLYMAGHEE
AN IRISH-AMERICAN COMEDY OF LOVE AND
BATTLE BETWEEN AN IRISH GIRL AND HER
AMERICAN HUSBAND! **A British Film**

UNMARRIED MOTHERS **X**
A NEW SWEDISH FILM CONVEYING A
VITAL MESSAGE TO EVERY YOUNG WOMAN!
(ENGLISH SUB-TITLES)

ADELPHI FILMS, 187 WARDOUR ST., LONDON, W.1 TELEPHONE: GERARD 7511 BLUE LAMP: ADELPHI WEST LONDON

Adelphi's half-page advertisement in the Kine Year Book 1955 lists three film projects that were never made, probably because of Arthur Dent's death. Scripts for two of the films are in the company archive. Spice of Life became Stars In Your Eyes.

seven titles were funded by Adelphi from income."

Eight or so of the films had gone AWOL. But Kate Lees was delighted to report in the online Adelphi Newsletter in October 2018: "We have found a very important missing film! Adelphi owns a wonderful short film called *The Tell-Tale Heart* based on the Edgar Allan Poe story. There have been many filmed versions of this Gothic murder thriller but it will come as no surprise that I can say with confidence that ours is the best. Made in 1953 there is only one actor but that actor is none other than the fabulous Stanley Baker. This film has been lost for many years despite much searching and I had never seen it. But a copy has come to light in an attic in a remote Scottish village and it has now been digitised. [...]the story [of its rediscovery] has been in many of the national papers – *The Times*, *The Sun*, *The Mail*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Scotsman*, *The Independent* online, *The Herald Scotland*, *The London Metro*. Jeff Wells, who found the film, and I have also been interviewed on several local radio stations and on Radio 5."

The film was horrifying enough in 1953 to earn an X certificate which must have limited its number of bookings. (It was soon in competition with an 8-minute animated version that also gained an X certificate, released a few months



The rare quad poster for *Stars In Your Eyes* (1956). See black and white version on front cover. Released to independent cinemas March 1957.

later through a major distributor, Columbia.) Earlier this year, BFI Southbank screened Adelphi's *Tell-Tale Heart* with another long unseen feature, *My Death Is a Mockery*, as Adelphi celebrated its eightieth anniversary.

The BFI has handled the marketing of the Adelphi collection. Many titles have been released on DVD and BluRay (and one of a number of boxing shorts made its way onto the BluRay of *A Kid for Two Farthings* as an extra). Some features were recently licensed to the Retro television channel. Many have been seen on BFI Player, Sky Arts and Talking Pictures.

"But", says Kate Lees, "we have one very important title that we have never been able to restore because it is just too expensive for us to do alone – *Stars in Your Eyes*. This fabulous Adelphi musical comedy romance has not been seen for many years. The only print is in very poor condition and would not survive the scanning process necessary to make it available to be viewed. There is just one surviving original copy of the 35mm Eastmancolor negative that must be converted to digital format in order to restore and preserve this slice of British film history.

"The story is of a troupe of young performers battling to keep their show and their theatre

open in the face of intimidation by evil property developers. The 1950s saw a lot of social change and *Stars in Your Eyes* explores a number of contemporary issues including the impact of TV on theatre and cinema, gender identity (lots of cross dressing!) and the long shadow of WWII cast throughout the film with parody of army life. There is also a strong love story.

"The cost of digitising and restoration of *Stars in Your Eyes* will be £14,000 plus other expenses. It's expensive because it is long at 96 minutes, is in colour and must be done from the original negative. A Crowdfunding campaign sadly did not meet the target but a very generous private donor has come forward to offer to meet the shortfall. Funding is not yet finally confirmed but I am optimistic that this wonderful film will finally see the light of day and will be available once more. If you would like to help us with funding please contact kate.lees@adelphifilms.com "

More information at <http://www.adelphifilms.com>

Michael Glynn recalled working for Adelphi as its publicity manager from 1953 to 1956 in the article "Adelphi Films of Wardour Street" in issue 109, Winter 2005, of this magazine. v



Joan Sims and Hubert Gregg in *Stars In Your Eyes* (1956).

People And Places

Bill Gilbert recalls some encounters from his career

HARRY WATT - 36 Golden Square, London W1

I expect many Veterans will share my experience when thoughts are triggered viewing a movie or TV programmes of people you were involved with, directly or indirectly, remembering the time, place and circumstances. This happened to me when watching a wartime feature documentary *For Those In Peril* and the name Harry Watt came up on the screen.

It took me back to 1955-56 when I was working in the Film and Stage Booking Department of Granada Theatres at 36 Golden Square. I had joined Granada straight from school at 17 as an office assistant at the Granada and Century Theatres in Slough. From an early age I developed a love of cinema and movies which was to take over my entire life. Granada was my University. I was transferred to work towards the launch and beyond of Granada Television which had been awarded the weekday ITV franchise for Lancashire and Yorkshire. (Granada was a bit stingy on travel. In over three years I only went up on the train to Manchester on two occasions, one day plus an overnight.)

Many executives joined me on the move to the television side and some did not stay all that long. I found myself liaising with Harry Watt among many industry personalities.

I was in awe of this legendary film maker, having during my wartime schooldays seen in the cinemas *London Can Take It*, *Christmas Under Fire*, *Target for Tonight* (for which he received an honorary Academy Award in 1942) plus contrasting feature films *Nine Men* and the Tommy Trinder comedy *Fiddlers Three*.



*Harry Watt.
(Courtesy of The Cinema Museum.)*

I was also aware of the classic documentary *Night Mail* and his work with the renowned John Grierson on *Man of Aran* and then our first glimpse of the Australian outback with the popular *The Overlanders* in 1946.

Watt also directed *Where No Vultures Fly* which was selected for the 1951 Royal Film Performance. There was a subsequent "replica" Royal Film Performance at the Odeon Birmingham. I was stationed in the RAF near

Birmingham and through contacts in Granada and CMA obtained a complimentary standing ticket for me in the back stalls to attend this occasion. Anthony Steel, Dinah Sheridan and Harry Watt appeared on stage plus there was a wonderful live comedy performance by Terry Thomas.

With all these memories I was now working alongside Harry Watt. Granada seldom gave executives job titles or definitions of their activities. It was many years later, reading Denis Forman's book *Persona Granada*, that I learned Harry Watt had worked with Sidney Bernstein during the war at the Ministry of Information and had been brought in to help with the recruitment of programme staff.

Harry planned to make a series, *Webb On Crime*, with Duncan Webb, a well-known newspaper crime reporter. Before the Kray twins there were a number of prominent gangsters including Jack "Spot" Comer and Billy Hill. There was gang warfare with stabbing on Compton Street in Soho.

Harry wanted to capture all these criminal events, filming on the streets of London with Duncan Webb. But there was only a 25-minute pilot with no green light for a series. I wonder if there is a copy somewhere in the archives?

In addition to *Webb On Crime*, Harry was working on an afternoon talk show with the actor John Sharp but again all the preparation did not reach a satisfactory conclusion. I sensed Harry was becoming increasingly frustrated. His background was front line documentaries and feature films...

Nothing was said but one day Harry was not in his office. He had left, and I cannot recall any farewells. I found him a charming, down to earth person with no illusions of grandeur. He went back to films with Ealing.



David Warner in *A Suitable Case for Treatment*, written by David Mercer.
(Courtesy of The Cinema Museum.)

MILTON SHULMAN – 36 Golden Square, London W1

Milton Shulman arrived at Granada with an established reputation as a stage and film critic of the London *Evening Standard* and *Sunday Express* and with a distinguished war record. Serving with the Canadian army, he had worked in Secret Intelligence and was a lawyer at the Nuremberg war trials and the author of a novel, *Defeat in the West*, an account of the collapse of the German army.

Once again, he had no job description except that he would be involved on advising on programme acquisitions and development of projects.

One of my jobs was to collate all the film and series offers from the various distributors. I would organise screening sessions. First, I needed to check the availability of the Golden Square Preview Theatre. All the programmes in those days were on 16mm and 35mm. Then the availability of Cecil Bernstein (CGB), Sidney's brother, and now Milton Shulman plus any other executives I could round up including Eddie Pola and Ken Brierley (former manager of Granada Tooting).

Organising CGB and executives at a specific time was a nightmare. At the end of the day CGB always made the final decision but I was getting involved in all the negotiation.

On the bleak Tuesday afternoon of 6 February 1958 I managed to organise a wide selection panel headed by CGB with Milton Shulman and other executives.

Tony Elkins, chief projectionist at the Golden Square Preview Theatre, was always given strict instructions that CGB was not to be disturbed

during the viewing sessions. Tony grabbed my attention – calls were coming from Granada Manchester, insisting they must talk to CGB. Projection stopped as Mr. Cecil took the call and we all sat in the dark, not knowing the subject of the phone call.

CGB had a bad stammer but slowly broke the news that the Manchester United plane had crashed in Munich.

One hour later Granada had cleared a slot in the ITV Network to mount an emergency programme on the crash, not from Manchester but from the Rediffusion studios in Kingsway, Holborn. My immediate task was to contact the newsreel film libraries to organise footage of the Manchester United games over the years as Granada had no material in its own library.

Information was still vague but news filtered through that many had been killed and some of Manchester United's Busby's Babes were lost. There were also prominent sports journalists on board. In the event, no football footage was used as it was felt inappropriate for a tribute programme with news of the dead and injured still not confirmed. It was the first of many tragic happenings that Granada TV had to deal with.

Because of his evening theatre commitments, Milton Shulman would not arrive at 36 Golden Square until around 11.30am. He was then not to be disturbed. As I got to know him more, I worked out why he did not want to be disturbed. *The Sporting Life* and other racing sheets disclosed that Milton liked to play the horses.

Milton and I would occasionally go dutch for lunch at the Lyon's Corner House between Piccadilly and Leicester Square – a good two-course lunch for seven shillings and sixpence. In my daily chats with Milton I cannot recall us ever

talking about the plays or shows he had seen or his work during WWII.

We discussed current television comedy and drama, analysing the US and UK markets. Milton was sceptical of the rating systems. Stories were breaking in North America that Madison Avenue had different ways of calculating the ratings, including the story of an old lady who judged programmes depending on her pet dog's reaction.

Milton loved Phil Silvers and *Bilko*. When Granada launched *The Army Game*, the early episodes were out-rating *Bilko* on BBC TV. He could not understand this. We subsequently learned that local British comedy was nearly always more popular than some of the great American comedy shows of the period.

An early Granada success was *Criss Cross Quiz*, a general knowledge game based on noughts and crosses, taken from the American format *Tic Tac Dough*. The initial host was Jeremy Hawk. We worked on the fifth floor in Golden Square in glass partitioned offices. At the end of the corridor was the *Criss Cross Quiz* production office. Potential participants in the show would come and go from that office.

Milton casually remarked, "Have you noticed that participants in the *Criss Cross Quiz* office are left alone with the producer while waiting for interviews?" We laughed as to the question of whether they could possibly have prior access to the questions. I thought about this time many years later when viewing the Robert Redford-directed movie *The Quiz Show*, based on the quiz show scandals in the States in 1958.

I kept a close watch on Milton's work over the years with fond memories of his regular participation in BBC Radio 4's amusing talk show *Stop The Week*.

DAVID MERCER – Prague

In the late spring of 1968, I represented Rank Overseas Film Distributors (ROFD) at the Prague International Film Festival with the Rank feature library and the Children's Film Foundation (CFF) catalogue. Several months earlier I had decided to change career direction when an opportunity arose to form a new TV department within ROFD. From BBC TV film acquisition to International Sales, Marketing and co-production from Shepherd's Bush, it was back to Wardour Street and the haunts I had known from my Granada days in the Fifties.

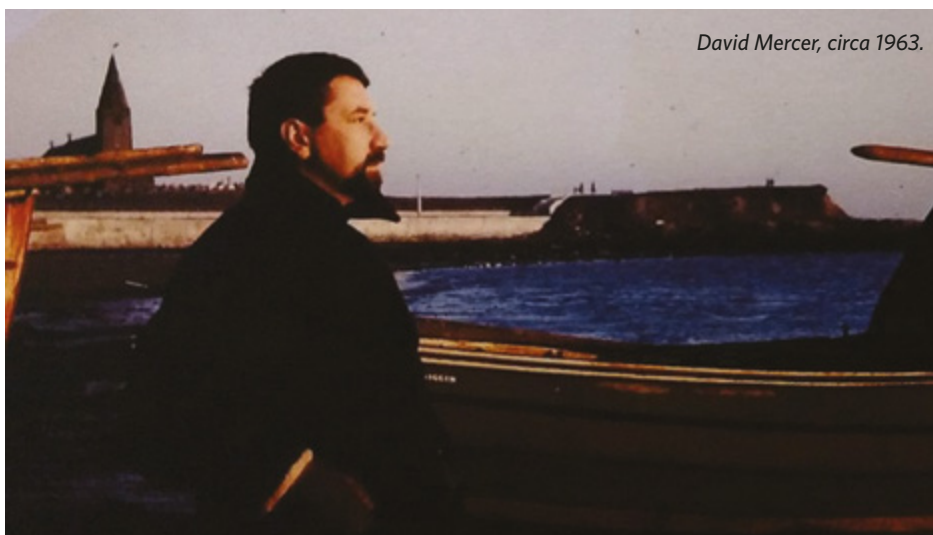
I had already represented ROFD at MIP TV in Cannes and made my first expedition to New York and Toronto to liaise with ROFD's US and Canadian distributors. I was scheduled to attend Cannes 1968 Film Fest but Jamie Jamieson, MD of ROFD, instead decided that I should participate in the Prague International Film Festival as, despite offices in Hamburg and Vienna, ROFD had achieved little business in the Eastern European territories. I was fortunate to miss Cannes that year as it was the time of student protests and widespread strikers across France greatly affecting the Festival and transportation.

It was my first venture behind the Iron Curtain, arriving in Prague at the time dubbed "The Dubcek Spring" – Alexander Dubcek, a Slovak politician and chairman of the Czechoslovak Communist Party was endeavouring to move the country away from hard-line Russian Communism to a more democratic movement. All the East European film and TV companies were strictly State controlled and I had meetings organised with the various broadcasters and acquisitions people. Friends from the international community marked my card for operating in Prague – for example, if I went to a certain hotel between 10 and 11 am there were film agents who could organise a much better rate of money exchange.

In the hotel bar I got talking to David Mercer, a playwright I admired, particularly from the film *Morgan A Suitable Case for Treatment* and his television plays including *A Climate of Fear*, *The Birth of a Private Man*, *For Tea on Sunday* and *Where the Difference Begins*. Mercer had been invited to the festival by the Union of Czechoslovak Journalists but was becoming very disillusioned by the set-up. In a lovely Yorkshire brogue, he muttered, "I've been an effing Communist all my life, I come to an effing Communist country and I can't find an effing Communist...."

At that point I remembered *Morgan* and the final scenes in the film in a mental home tendering a flower bed. As the camera pulls back, Morgan has planted the flowers in the shape of a hammer and sickle. David Mercer was the Morgan character.

Mercer was a great raconteur, telling me that his first wife was Czechoslovakian, whose father and uncle were involved in the plot to assassinate Reinhard Heydrich, a high ranking German Nazi official and the main architect of the Holocaust. Despite problems, a bomb did explode under Heydrich's chauffeur-driven car but he was not immediately killed. With a sardonic smile, Mercer reported that the springs in the car went up into Heydrich's posterior and a week later he died of gangrene – a fitting end to a most evil



David Warner in *A Suitable Case for Treatment*, written by David Mercer. (Courtesy of The Cinema Museum.)

person. All this came back to me when I watched *Anthropoid* (2016). I cannot recall if Mercer ever covered this story.

Throughout the festival, Czechoslovak Television were warm and friendly hosts, organising a day trip to Karlovy Vary, formerly Karlsbad. Word quickly went round: "Don't drink the water." I thought of David E. Rose, who started with Douglas Fairbanks Sr. and Sam Goldwyn in the early 1930s and became chairman and MD of all Paramount British companies, then an independent producer. Rose recalled that Fairbanks would over indulge and prior to starting a new production Rose would accompany the star to Karlsbad to take the cure. Fairbanks did his own stunts but his life style (and perhaps the Karlsbad water) caused his premature death.

Czechoslovak Television also invited us to travel by charabanc into the countryside to watch a peasant wedding. As we descended from the

buses, waiters in stiff white shirts and black bowties were waiting to greet us with glasses of (I think) Slivovitz. I heard Mercer murmur, "Poor bloody lackies."

As we approached the church, we could hear a beautiful choir singing "Ave Maria". David muttered, "I've been an effing Communist all my bloody life and I come to an effing Communist country ending up in a Catholic church!"

We learned that Czechoslovak Television had promised the newlyweds a complete suite of furniture if they could film the wedding with all the overseas delegates. David was outraged: "It's bloody America all over again!"

Our paths never crossed again but I always kept a watch out for David Mercer's work. He worked with Ken Loach on *A Family Life* and with Joe Losey on Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and scripted *Providence*, directed by Alain Resnais. The Royal Shakespeare Company staged a number of his plays. He had a fatal heart attack in 1980.

Many regarded Mercer as the most political of British dramatists of the period.

At the festival we occasionally saw guys in GI uniform. They were part of the team making nearby *The Bridge at Remagen*, a WWII action film directed by John Guillermin. The Russians claimed they had spotted US Army manoeuvres on the outskirts of Prague. The production was using WWII tanks with US and German markings. Movies were giving the Russians another excuse.

My visit to Prague was the start of many years working in the international markets to keep British films and television on the global map.

By coincidence, my wife's family came from Czechoslovakia. A few months later I drove to Bavaria where my wife's family was now living. News came through that Russian tanks were advancing into Prague and the Dubcek reforms were over. I feared for friends I had met in Prague. The Czech border was only two hours away and I intended to rescue those fleeing as the Iron Curtain came down again. After breakfast my wife brought me back into the real world: no way was I a pimpnel and I did not even speak the local language. A number of the film and television locals did manage to escape, ending up with jobs in the West, particularly in America. ▀



“ GREAT SLOGANS QUIZ”

“Based on an actual lie” was an arresting way of promoting this year’s *The Farewell*. There have been many memorable pitches to sell films over the years and sometimes they are better remembered than the films they were selling. One of my favourites was “Don’t say it. See it!” – the work of Columbia’s publicists in an uphill attempt to sell *Phffft* (1954). I had to admire the Globe Old Kent Road’s efforts to sell Olivier’s *Richard III* (1955): “The hunchback king! Whose lust for power brings death to all!” And one of the *Psycho* sequels had: “Check in. Unpack. Relax. Take A Shower”. Going much too far was United Artists’ attempt to sell *Taras Bulba* (1962): “Now... Add a Motion Picture to the Wonders of the World!”

Anyway, here are some memorable slogans (or taglines as they are now called) with the year and nationality if not American.

How many of the films can you name?

And if we’ve missed any of your favourite slogans, let us know.

1. Garbo TALKS! (1930).
2. The Monster Demands A Mate (1935)
3. Garbo LAUGHS! (1939)
4. Gable’s back and Garson’s got him! (1946)
5. A hilarious study in the gentle art of MURDER (1949, British)
6. A highland fling on a tight little island (1949, British)
7. A LION in your lap! A LOVER in your arms! (1952)
8. The ‘Doc’ and the ‘Crock’ – Twice As Funny Together! (1956 reissue double bill, British)
9. They fought like seven hundred! (1960)
10. You are cordially invited to George and Martha’s for an evening of fun and games. (1966)
11. They’re young... they’re in love... and they kill people (1967)
12. Nine men who came too late and stayed too long. (1969)
13. A man went looking for America and couldn’t find it anywhere (1969)
14. love means never having to say you’re sorry – (1971)
15. Flushed with success – the Carry On team carries on round the bend! (1971, British)
16. Today they demolished 23 cars, 4 motor cycles and 1 apartment building. But don’t call the cops. They are the cops (1974)
17. Makes Ben Hur look like an epic (1975, British)
18. On every street in every city, there’s a nobody who dreams of being a somebody (1976)
19. You’ll believe a man can fly. (1978)
20. In space no one can hear you scream. (1979)
21. Die Harder. (1990)
22. Somebody said get a *life*....so they did. (1991)
23. He’s having the day of his life.... over and over again. (1993)
24. An Adventure 65 Million Years in The Making (1993)
25. Movies were his passion. Women were his inspiration. Angora sweaters were his weakness (1994)
26. Fear can hold you prisoner. Hope can set you free. (1994)
27. He Knows No Fear. He Knows No Danger. He Knows Nothing. (2003, British)
28. A Romantic Comedy. With Zombies (2004, British)
29. The longer you wait the harder it gets (2005)
30. You don’t get to 500 million friends without making a few enemies (2010)

Answers on page 30.

THAT WAS THEN

50 YEARS AGO – DECEMBER 1969



The latest Bond – *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* – has its royal world premiere, attended by the Duke and Duchess of Kent, at the Odeon Leicester Square.

Hello, Dolly! is launched on 27 December with a royal premiere attended by the Duke of Edinburgh.

Due to a shortage of screens in London's West End, the Odeon Kensington is promoted to first-run status with the opening of *The Magic Christian*, a world premiere attended by Princess Margaret.

Bob Hope and the latest Miss World make personal appearances at London's New Victoria to publicise the comedian's new release, *How To Commit Marriage*.

The Lion in Winter is the longest running West End hard ticket attraction, completing its first year. Others still in the money are *Oliver!*, *Goodbye Mr. Chips* and the revival of *Ben-Hur*.

Battle of Britain and *Women in Love* are the top box-office draws in the West End, joined by *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* and *Women in Love*.

United Artists breaks normal ties to give *Women in Love* to the ABC circuit for a two-week blanket release after Odeon, its traditional outlet, wanted a slower, hard ticket rollout.

Disney's revival of *Alice in Wonderland* is the standout holiday success on general release. *True Grit* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* go out head to head at the end of the month.

Independent exhibitor Myles Byrne adds the Molem Swanage, Rex Wareham and Tivoli Wimborne to his existing circuit of six cinemas.

Star returns the Ritz Thirsk to films from bingo as the Studio and has converted the balcony of the Hippodrome Ripley to a Studio cinema. The chain has removed bingo from the Rex Lewisham which is being converted to two cinemas, Studio 6 and 7.



Alan Bates and Oliver Reed in *Women in Love*, directed by Ken Russell.

The top box-office draws for the year (to the end of November) are announced by the *Kine Weekly*. Only two have X certificates. The top ten special attractions are *Oliver!*, *Gone with the Wind* (reissue in 70mm), *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Where Eagles Dare*, *Doctor Zhivago*, *Battle of Britain*, *Funny Girl*, *The Lion in Winter*, *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *Romeo and Juliet*. The top ten general releases are *Till Death Do Us Part*, *Carry On Camping*, *The Love Bug*, *Bullitt*, *Carry On... Up the Khyber*, *The Virgin Soldiers* (X), *Shalako*, *Oh! What a Lovely War*, *Half a Sixpence* and *Candy* (X).

25 YEARS AGO – DECEMBER 1994

Top box-office draws pre-Christmas are *Pulp Fiction*, *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *The Lion King*, joined by *The Specialist* and *Junior* at the end of the month.

The longest running West End film is *The Mask* (20 weeks at the end of the month) followed by *Reservoir Dogs*, *Clear and Present Danger*, *The Last Seduction*, then (both 13 weeks) *Forrest Gump* and *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*.

The top films of the past twelve months (December 1993 to end of November 1994) are (in order of box office success) *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *The Flintstones*, *The Lion King*, *The Mask*, *Aladdin*, *Schindler's List*, *True Lies*, *Forrest Gump* and *Speed*.

The Tory government's Heritage Secretary Stephen Dorrell announces a cut in annual grant of £100,000 (to £17m) for the British Film Institute and stand still grants for the British Film Commission (£800,000), British Screen Finance (£2m) and the National Film and Television School (£1.8m). The Arts

Council receives an extra £5m. However, some of the income from the new National Lottery will go to part-financing films.

Two 9-screen multiplexes open – the MGM Northampton with 1,881 seats and the Warner at Acton, north London, with 2,382 seats – bringing the year's total of new multiplexes to six. Odeon adds screens 8 and 9 to its Arundel Gate Sheffield complex with a tenth to follow.

The Cannon Hammersmith re-opens as the MGM after three months with the former circle split to raise the screen total to 4. The Empire Holyhead has re-opened. The three-screen Cannon at Henleaze, Bristol, has closed but will re-open as the independent Orpheus in January.

Having agreed to pay \$4 million for international rights, Mayfair Entertainment refuses delivery of *Mesmer* because of changes during filming. Written by Dennis Potter, the film stars Alan Rickman and was

shown in August at the Montreal Film Festival. (It is not released in the UK until 2006 as a DVD.)

Films in the studios are *Jane Eyre* at Ealing, *Hackers* at Pinewood (also filming in New York), and *Haunted* at Shepperton.

Filming on location is *The Innocent Sleep*.

Passing on: Sebastian Shaw and Norman Beaton, actors; Pauline Murray, actress (*It Happened Here*); Alun Owen, writer; Neil Hartley, producer.



The MGM Northampton.



Most of the *Carry On* stars and guest Frankie Howerd appear in an ITV special on Christmas Day called *Carry On Christmas*.

Films in production in the studios include: *The Lonely Heart* at Bray; *A Last Valley* at Halliford (near Walton); *All the Way Up* at Lee International; *Perfect Friday* and *When Eight Bells Toll* at Pinewood; *Loot* at Shepperton; and *Ask Agamemnon* (later *Goodbye Gemini*) at Twickenham. MGM Borehamwood has only TV series *UFO* as its future remains uncertain. *The McKenzie Break* is based at Ardmore.

Films on location include: *Ryan's Daughter*, *Walkabout*, *Cry of the Banshee*, *Welcome to the Club*, *Eye Witness* and *Forbush and the Penguins*.

The first issue of a new historical magazine, *Focus on Film*, appears dated January/February 1970. It would have been called just *Focus* but a consumer magazine uses that name.

Passing on: Eric Portman, Henry Oscar and Gus McNaughton, actors; Hugh Williams, actor and writer; Kenneth N. Hargreaves, exhibition executive; George Lee, Veteran and pioneer Scottish exhibitor; James Welsh, Scottish exhibitor.



Charlotte Gainsbourg and William Hurt in *Jane Eyre*, directed by Franco Zeffirelli.

The big films on TV on the evening of Christmas Day are *Robin Hood Prince of Thieves* (1991) on BBC, Disney's 1959 *The Sleeping Beauty* on ITV, and the 1954 Fox musical *There's No Business Like Show Business* on ITV with *The Butcher's Wife* (1991) following a Royal Opera House production of *Aida* on BBC 2.

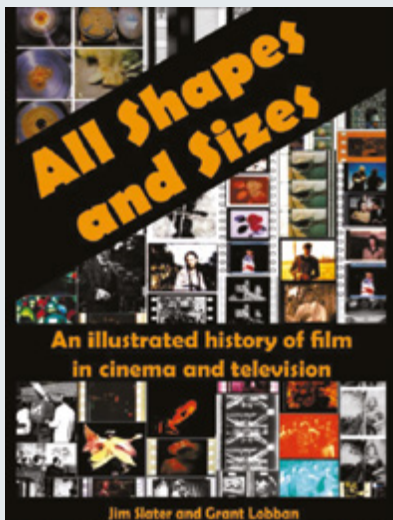
What was happening in the television industry requires a knowledgeable volunteer to provide the details!

BOOK Review



ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

By Grant Lobban and Jim Slater



AG Books, Andrews UK Ltd. ISBN: 9781789821499
Hardback (approx. A4). 277 pages.
£24.99.

Reviewed by Tony Williams

This book, which carries the subtitle *An illustrated history of film in cinema and television*, is a compendium of the numerous systems and formats used to make and present films since cinema first began. It is easy to read and extremely well illustrated, with numerous clips from films. The book's introduction is entirely accurate when it claims:

The authors have taken great pains to explain the many different technologies involved in a manner that is understandable to the novice, whilst providing sufficient detail to satisfy the expert and the enthusiast seeking an in-depth understanding of the many and varied topics that are covered.

The whole book is leavened by the inclusion of many personal stories and experiences from the authors which make it enjoyable to read.

The book explains extremely clearly how colour film has evolved and all the different colour systems there have been, including every version of Technicolor – many of which were news to me. It explains and illustrates the various aspect ratios, picture sizes and formats that have come and gone, right up to digital 3D and, for example, Screen X. The book also covers frame rates, the reasons why the 1:2.35 aspect has come to dominate cinema and why television is 16:9. Running through the book is a recognition of the difficulties

of preservation and the complexity of the challenge of ensuring that our film history is not lost.

Encyclopaedic in its coverage, the book is also a treat to dip into, perhaps because much, though not all, of the material was published as articles in *Image Technology* and *Cinema Technology* magazines over many years. Bringing it all together may have been a labour of love as the authors admit, but the result of their labours is very rewarding. The book is something which the authors say that neither could have completed it alone, and that I can believe.

Some of the nuggets I found are the story behind MGM using its Perspecta sound system with CinemaScope films instead of the 4-track mag which Fox wanted. Have you ever heard of Nudiscopes, TerrorColor and Thomascolor? Neither had I. Then there's Metrocolor which was just re-branded Eastman color, as were WarnerColor, Color by DeLuxe, Color by Pathe and Movielab. The book explains the difference between all the large format versions and their usual basis of 65mm camera film stock, however they were branded.

In some respects, this is a wallow in nostalgia as it took me back to my childhood, and remembering seeing Perspecta Sound advertised for a film showing at the (long gone) Scala cinema in the centre of Birmingham on my way to school (I never did see the film). But the book is much, much more. It is an authoritative and carefully assembled publication which has to be very relevant today to anyone involved in film preservation. A very large number of films have been lost, many because nobody thought that pictures would have a life after their cinema release. Thankfully, some turn up in unlikely places but present a restoration and preservation challenge for which this book should be of help. It will most likely also be a valuable resource in restoring pictures for which only sub-standard negatives or prints exist.

The book has an excellent index and it would not surprise me if a copy will soon be found in film archives all over the world, as archivists seek to find the best ways of restoring films to their original glory. The book will also appeal to a much wider range of readers, including film students and cinema enthusiasts seeking a deeper insight into the history of the cinema. It would make an ideal Christmas present for anyone at all interested in the technical history of cinema and film-making. [V](#)

From the President



Dear Members

It is five years since we have had to increase our subscriptions, but from next year we will have to raise our annual membership fee from £35 to £40. The Executive Committee reluctantly decided on this extra amount to cover continual increases in running our organisation that include postage, printing, wages, expenses and rent. We also have to take in account the cost of our impending move back into new offices at our old address in Golden Square after a year in temporary accommodation. I am sorry for this increase, but I hope

you will understand and support us in our efforts to keep our financial situation stable for the immediate future.

At our Annual General Meeting in July I should have ended my three-year term as President but, with all the arrangements for our office move that I had been involved with, the Committee was happy to extend my term of office which would be of more help to our Company Secretary. Ted Childs will continue as Vice President.

In October, we had the second round of this year's John Brabourne Awards, which the BCTV support with the Film and Television Charity. Our chosen candidate is Jesse Lawrence, a writer/director from the south west, who needs help to fund his writing and give him time for further research for his film *Sargasso Dreams*.

On 11 November I attended the Cinema Technology Community (CTC) Annual Awards at NBC Universal's London HQ. Over 150 industry professionals (which included several Veterans) attended the occasion, hosted by film critic, author and broadcaster Mark Kermode, with CTC's own 'Last Projectionist Standing' Dave Norris, veteran broadcaster Simon Mayo, British film composer David Arnold and compered by Patrick von Sychowski and Helen Budge.

The awards night recognised individuals and organisations that continue to drive excellence in movie-going through the use of technology and outstanding service to the industry.

The 2019 Award Recipients

Technology of the Year – CJ CGV Screen X

Cinema of the Year – Odeon Cinema Luxe Leicester Square

Team of the Year – BBFC

Rising Star – Grainne Peat, Event Cinema Association

Technology Pioneer – Harkness Screens

Outstanding Achievement – Michael Swinson, Ellis Williams Architects

Lifetime Achievement – Rolv Gjestland, Cinema Designer/Consultant

President's Award – Dennis Kelly, CTC Secretary

This very enjoyable evening, with much catching up with old friends, concluded with Richard Mitchell, President of CTC, congratulating the award winners.

On Talking Pictures TV recently I caught a very interesting programme, "Remembering Merton Park Studios", introduced by Clifford Earl. Made in 2008, it featured staff and technicians who worked over the years on the many films that were made there. Many, I am sure, are among our members today.

There was a letter in THE VETERAN a year ago [Issue 161, page 29] about the Veterans' lapel badge as a collector's item. Now I've noticed a car badge on sale on e-Bay for £50. I wonder if any current Veteran has one and even drives around with it on display.

The 2020 Annual Membership Renewal Forms will be going out in February next year. Please could I remind members to enclose a stamped addressed envelope when returning their forms as this really does make our life easier and speeds things up!

It just remains for me, on behalf of our Secretary and the entire Executive Committee, to send you my very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Nigel Wolland
President

*The Veterans' car badge
which recently turned
up on e-Bay.*



The Cinema Technology Community Annual Awards. The Odeon Leicester Square won Cinema of the Year – seen on stage for the award: critic Mark Kermode, Duncan Kerr (project manager), Tessa Street (general manager), Mike Bradbury (circuit sound and projection executive) and Mike Mannix (technical manager).

© GTC – photographs by Julie Edwards.



Letters



Letters can be sent by post to Editor The Veteran, 13 Tennyson Court, Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath RH16 1EZ or by email to bctv.veterans@btpenworld.com – and may be edited

THE WRATTEN 85

Some readers may have been mystified by the expenditure on garden furniture at Glebelands in memory of Dennis Wratten [last issue, page 28]. When Eastman colour single negative became virtually the only film stock to be universally used, Eastman colour stock was balanced for incandescent light. To shoot exteriors in daylight, all had to use a conversion filter, famously known worldwide as the Wratten 85.

Later, it emerged that one could leave off the 85 filter because, when the lab was processing Eastman colour negative, they could compensate if it was shot outside without the Wratten 85 in front of the lens. This provided a little bit of extra 'speed' for the cameraman in low light conditions.

SIR SYDNEY SAMUELSON CBE BSC
By handwritten note

THE CINEMA PROJECTIONIST

We have been working on our new site – and digital archive – which hosts the virtual projection box [Issue 151, Summer 2016, page 12]. The new site makes available online the Projection Project's collection of research materials on the history of cinema projection in Britain. It is now live here: <https://www.cinemaprojectionist.co.uk>

The Cinema Projectionist contains no physical objects but is a digital collection of:

- audio recordings of the memories of projectionists working in British cinemas from the 1940s to the 2010s including during the transition from 35mm to digital projection
- audio recordings of sounds of the projection box recorded by Michael Pigott
- hundreds of photos of the projection boxes of cinemas from all over the UK from the 1910s to the 1960s – most of them scanned from cinema exhibition trade journals
- a special issue of the *Journal of British Cinema and Television* written and edited by the Projection Project team and outside contributors dedicated to projection
- a 'virtual projection box' which is an online exhibit you can use to explore the projection box and discover the functionalities of various bits of equipment as well as other details about the workspace of the projectionist
- an online version of the photographic exhibition staged by Richard Nicholson – *The Projectionists* – which opened 2016's Flatpack Film Festival and was covered in the national media.

We welcome current and former projectionists, researchers, journalists, historians and archivists to use The Cinema Projectionist and to give us feedback or ask questions about the collection.

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PRUDISH DELETIONS

While the virtues of being able to watch some older, often obscure films via the Talking Pictures television channel is much appreciated, it is worth pointing out that their editorial team regularly sound edit their output, pre and post watershed.

Films like *The Brink's Job*, *The Chase* and *The Games* have been edited down via often highly noticeable sound drop outs, deletions which the channel insists "no-one notices". Hermione Baddeley's tirade in 1959's *Jet Storm* features a particularly severe yet indecipherable drop out. Racial epithets are particular targets. TV series such as *Gideon's Way* are also not immune.

Despite employing a cautionary pre-screening notice, hopefully aimed at children, stating that films may potentially contain language deemed offensive or inappropriate – this seems never to be enough to stop Talking Pictures from dropping out sound wherever they feel a patronisingly parental concern to their target audience – ironically, statistically made up of parents and grandparents.

Thus, each time you hear the curmudgeonly mature man thanking you for having watched a film on Talking Pictures and so supporting film history, he is often in reality thanking you for supporting their censored version of it.

ARTHUR ELLIS
By email

SARAH CRONIN-STANLEY, Managing Director, Talking Pictures TV, responds:

As Veterans of the industry I would hope that your members are all well versed in the strict broadcasting code that all broadcasters must adhere to, set by Ofcom.

These are not personal decisions – they are edits made for compliance reasons under the terms of the code set, which specifically mentions certain words cannot be broadcast prior to watershed (and we have a minimal under 18 audience, by the way), also words which cannot be broadcast at any time of day. Every single piece of content is viewed by us to make sure we are complying with the code.



Virginia Maskell, Hermione Baddeley and Paul Carpenter in *Jet Storm* (1959).
(Courtesy of The Cinema Museum, London.)

I would like to correct your writer, though: there were no compliance edits made at all in *Jet Storm*.

I am personally overjoyed (as are three million others) that these gems are being aired again and not stuck away in dusty archives never to be seen by anyone. Also, that they are available for FREE to viewers. If this means that some words that members of today's audiences will find offensive (and Ofcom have received complaints – which jeopardises our broadcasting license) have to be sound dipped, then I feel this is a very small price to pay to enable us to see series and films that would otherwise be forgotten.

New Members



These are some of the latest members to have been approved by the Executive Committee of the British Cinema and Television Veterans to join our ranks and they are warmly welcomed. The following short profiles have been compiled from details on application forms and supplementary research where necessary.

JULIA FRATER, London W6

An assistant film editor from 1975/6, she formed a post production company, Silverglade Associates, with her husband in 1982 and ran it until 2015. Her editing credits for BBC, Channel 4, LWT, Sky and others include *Young Musician of the Year* (1994), *Theatreland* (1996, 1998), *This Wonderful Life* (1998), *A Place in France* (2002), *A Place in Italy* (2004), *Long Way Down* (2007), *By Any Means* (2009) and *Extreme Frontiers* (2011).

JANICE HEALEY, Motttingham

She joined the BFI in 1973, working in the Membership Department. In 1978, she moved to the Information and Documentation Department as Microfilm Officer, microfilming clippings and publicity handouts, also answering telephone enquiries and working behind the counter of the Reading Room dealing with researchers. The job became Materials Officer (Film) and included inputting data onto the BFI's database and indexing some film periodicals in what was renamed the BFI National Library. She left the BFI in 2011.

DONALD MACKENZIE, Aylesbury

He has been the cinema organist of the Odeon Leicester Square since 1992, performing at film premieres, special events including numerous Royal Film Performances, and organ concerts as well as radio broadcasts. He led the team that carried out work on the Compton organ during the Odeon's recent refurbishment and normally performs there on Fridays and Saturdays. He has also played the organ at numerous other venues both in the UK and abroad and specialises in improvised accompaniments to silent films – as in his debut at age 14 at Paisley Town Hall.

CHARLES PALMER, London WC2

Starting in 1985 as a runner at Mag Masters, he worked a year later as a location scout on *Clockwise* and in the camera department at Samuelsons in Cricklewood, then became a camera assistant. From 1991 he worked first as a clapper loader, then focus puller and finally as a camera operator on TV and film productions. He has been a director since 2001 on such TV series as *Doctor Who*, *Poldark*, *Poirot*, *Silent Witness*, *Midsomer Murders*, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, *Lewis*, *Death in Paradise* and *Doc Martin*.

JOHN PARK, Hayling Island

He took an apprenticeship as a carpenter and joiner at Pinewood and worked on numerous films including *James Bonds* and *Carry Ons*. He worked on commercials for ten years at WaterButt. He was an assistant construction manager and co-ordinator on such productions as *Enemy at the Gates* (2001), *Reign of Fire* (2002), *The Five* (2015, TV series) and *The Mummy* (2016). As construction manager and co-ordinator, work includes *Shanghai Surprise* (1986), *A Handful of Dust* (1988), *The Mighty Quinn* (1989), *The Vicar of Dibley* (1994, TV series), *Chaos and Cadavers* (2003), *The Truth About Love* (2005), *Eragon* (2006) and *Love in the Time of Cholera* (2007). He is now retired.

DAVID PEREGRINE, Stratford-Upon-Avon

He worked for the various Midlands ITV contractors from 1964 to 2005, starting as a junior trainee. Then came Engineer - Design and Maintenance for ATV (1968/73), Engineer, then Senior Engineer, Studio Vision department for ATV, then Central (1973/85), Head of Vision (1985/9), Technical Operations Manager (1989/91), Engineering Operations Manager (1991/3), News Operations Manager (1993/4), Manager of News and Technical Operations (1995/6), Head of Technical Resources for Central, then Carlton (1996/2005). In 1992 he became the management representative on the CTBF Central England committee, eventually becoming chairman until the group folded. Since retiring in 2005, he has been a volunteer visitor to beneficiaries of the CTBF, now the Film and Television Charity.

CHARLES PREECE, London SW4

He joined BBC TV in the early 1970s working on news, current affairs and documentaries as well as a script editor in the drama department on such strands as *Premiere* and *Play for Today*. He became script development head for The Who Films and worked on features *McVicar* (1980) and *Buddy's Song* (1991). He was a founder of Jacaranda Productions in 1987, a corporate production company, and researched, wrote and directed films for many large companies. He wrote numerous TV documentaries including *Bra Wars* (2000), *The Other Loch Ness Monster* (2000), *Dario Argento: An Eye for Horror* (2000), *Mario Bava: Maestro of the Macabre* (2002, also directed), and *Bra Wars: Boom or Bust* (2005).

LEONTINE RUETTE, London SW1

Between 1974 and 1979 she worked for Sandy Lieberman as a researcher at Goodtimes Enterprises and 20th Century-Fox, then as reader/researcher/PA to Mark Shivas at Southern Pictures (1980/5). At Channel Four she produced *The Zip* (1988) and co-produced *Bearskin - An Urban Fairytale* (1989). She also produced *Rosebud* (1996) and was line producer of *How Do You Want Me?* (1998, TV series), *Ten Minutes Older: The Trumpet* and *The Cello* (2002), *Things To Do Before You're 30* (2005) and *Chromophobia* (2005). Recently, she worked as a film assessor for North West Vision and on development funding for Snowball Pictures and since 2009 has been a freelance film consultant to producers and financiers.

DEREK STURT, Horsham

He began working at the Capitol in Horsham in 1984 and was part of the team that put films back into the building which had been the Ritz cinema. He retired as a Duty Manager on 27 July and his membership of the Veterans is a parting gift from his colleagues.

NEIL TUOHY, Twickenham

After work as a runner on *Amadeus* (1983), others, and casting assistant on *Valmont* (1990), he became third assistant director on *Warlock II* (1982) and *Return of the Living Dead III* (1992), second assistant director on *The Big Freeze* (1993), *Richard III* (1995), *Nil By Mouth* (1996), *Waking Ned* (1997), etc., then first assistant director on *Puckoon* (2000/1), *Highlander - The Source* (2005), *Dungeons and Dragons III* (2010, also associate producer), *Damascus Cover* (2017), others. He was special effects buyer on *Solo - A Star Wars Story* (2018), *The Voyage of Dr. Dolittle* (2019), *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019), etc.

VANESSA WHITE, Thames Ditton

Her career as a make-up and hair designer includes, for television, *In Your Dreams* (1996), *One Foot in the Grave* (1994/2000), *The League of Gentlemen* (1999/2000), *Jonathan Creek* (1998/2000), *The Catherine Tate Show* (2004/6), *After You're Gone* (2007/8), *TV Burp* (2007/10), *Red Dwarf* (2016/7), *Tracey Ullman's Show* (2016/8), *Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs* (2014/8), *Harry Hill's Alien Fun Capsule* (2018/9) and *Soon Gone: A Windrush Chronicle* (2019). Film work includes *Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa*, *The Harry Hill Movie* (both 2013) and *All Is True* (2018).

DAVID WILLIAMS, Leigh-on-Sea

Having been a sports reporter, he joined Pathe Pictorial as a scriptwriter and researcher in 1963, rising to assistant director. After five years, he worked as a freelance scriptwriter for World Wide Films, Services Kinema Corp., COI etc. He became a writer-director for the BBC and government departments in Singapore. As a producer of documentary and short films his work extended to Europe and the Far East. He retired in 2004 and now leads walks around London as well as lecturing.

In Memoriam

MICHAEL CARMODY, London

23 April 1941 - 30 May 2019

JULIA CAVE, London

1 June 1937 - 21 October 2019

ROSAMUND DAVIES, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne

- 29 June 2019

ROY FOWLER, London

10 March 1927 - 26 August 2019

DAVID GORRINGE MBE, Chertsey

6 October 1923 - 26 August 2019

DORIS HORWOOD, Cirencester

- August 2019

JAMES CELLAN JONES, Wells

13 July 1931 - 30 August 2019

CHRIS KENNY, Old Amersham

15 October 1945 - 26 September 2019

KENNETH LOCKE, Greenford

15 February 1939 - 2019

HELEN MORRIS, London

- 13 September 2019

JOHN MULLAN, Rickmansworth

11 March 1946 - April 2019

OLIVE TREVETT, London

15 February 1929 - 21 August 2019

COLIN WOOD, Huntingdon

14 May 1941 - 19 September 2019

ANSWERS TO GREAT SLOGANS QUIZ

1 Anna Christie. 2 Bride of Frankenstein.
3 Ninotchka. 4 Adventure. 5 Kind Hearts and Coronets. 6 Whisky Galore! 7 Bwana Devil.
8 Doctor in the House (1954) and Genevieve (1953). 9 The Magnificent Seven. 10 Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? 11 Bonnie and Clyde.
12 The Wild Bunch. 13 Easy Rider. 14 Love Story.
15 Carry On At Your Convenience. 16 Freebie and the Bean. 17 Monty Python and the Holy Grail. 18 Taxi Driver. 19 Superman: The Movie.
20 Alien. 21 Die Hard 2. 22 Thelma & Louise.
23 Groundhog Day. 24 Jurassic Park.
25 Ed Wood. 26 The Shawshank Redemption.
27 Johnny English. 28 Shaun of the Dead.
29 The 40-Year-Old-Virgin. 30 The Social Network.

Newsletter

Winter 2019

RETURN OF THE ROYAL FILM PERFORMANCE™

We were thrilled to bring the 71st Royal Film Performance™ to the ODEON Luxe, Leicester Square, on 4th December - a World Premiere of Sam Mendes' stunningly crafted film *1917*.

At the height of the First World War, two young British soldiers, Schofield (*Captain Fantastic's* George MacKay) and Blake (*Game of Thrones'* Dean-Charles Chapman) are given a seemingly impossible mission. In a race against time, they must cross enemy territory and deliver a message that will stop a deadly attack on hundreds of soldiers - Blake's own brother among them. *1917* also features Mark Strong, Andrew Scott, Richard Madden, Claire Duburcq, with Colin Firth and Benedict Cumberbatch.

In a heritage spanning almost 100 years, the Royal Film Performance™ has raised vital funds to support the dedicated people to help bring stories to our screens. We were founded in 1924 and, in many ways, our film and television industry has changed beyond recognition in nearly a century. But it is

just as true now as it was then that stories like *1917* are a powerful part of our culture and our society. And we are still a people industry like no other: reliant on the passion, creativity and commitment of nearly 200,000 people, two-thirds of whom are freelance, in the enormous variety of roles you will see in the end credits of this film.

For the first time, to accompany the Royal Film Performance™, we hosted a Gala Screening of *1917* at Cineworld Leicester Square on the same night. The funds raised from these events will mean that we can continue to support the dedicated people working in film and TV with services like our 24-hour support line, talent awards and hardship grants.

A new industry hub in the heart of Soho

The redevelopment of our headquarters in Golden Square, Soho, will create an open and accessible hub for the film, television and cinema industry, where everyone will be welcome. A work café will be created on the ground floor that will be open to those



working in the industry, and event space and meeting rooms will be available to hire.

We're really pleased to announce that The National Film & Television School (NFTS) and the British Independent Film Awards (BIFA) will also join the charity, taking space in the building.

The refurbishment is part of our 6-year strategy designed to offer more support to people working in the industry. We know that people feel passionately about their work, but they tell us it can be lonely and isolating too.

Our aim is to create a welcoming space for everyone who works behind the scenes of film and TV to meet, work and exchange ideas. We're looking forward to moving back in the new year, when our friends at the British Cinema & Television Veterans will be joining us.

Looking forward to 2020

We've had an incredible year in 2019 and have a lot on the horizon. We'll publish the findings of our ground-breaking wellbeing and mental health research *The Looking Glass* early in the new year as well as our programme of activity to drive change and offer practical solutions to the issues we've uncovered. We are working hard to build industry support to fund this crucial work.

We'd like to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Don't forget to visit us on Facebook at [facebook.com/FilmTVCharity](https://www.facebook.com/FilmTVCharity) or Twitter @FilmTVCharity

KIMONO: KYOTO TO CATWALK



On 29 February 2020 the V&A at South Kensington, London, will open Europe's first major exhibition on the kimono. The V&A states: "The kimono is often perceived as traditional, timeless and unchanging. *Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk* will present the garment as a dynamic and constantly evolving icon of fashion."

The main image is the 1977 Costume for Obi-Wan Kenobi, designed by John Mollo, as worn by Alec Guinness in the 1977 film *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope* (scene image courtesy of The Cinema Museum). "Japan's long history, coupled with its futuristic technology, gives the kimono a timelessness and ambiguity that make it an ideal costume for film. Nowhere is this more powerfully realised than in the George Lucas *Star Wars* films. For the costume of Obi-Wan Kenobi, a character that was equal parts Buddhist monk and noble samurai, John Mollo designed a light brown robe of threadbare cloth that was referred to as a 'kimono'."



The display will also include the outfit worn by Toshiro Mifune in *Sanjuro*, Oscar-winning costumes from *Memoirs of a Geisha*, and the Jean Paul Gautier ensemble worn by Madonna in her video *Nothing Really Matters*.

KIMONO: KYOTO TO CATWALK
Gallery 39 and North Court, V&A
Cromwell Road, South Kensington,
London SW7 2RL
vam.ac.uk/kimono
29 February – 21 June 2020
Tickets £16

