

The Main Feature

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40 years to the day that the film had its general release, we present:

UK

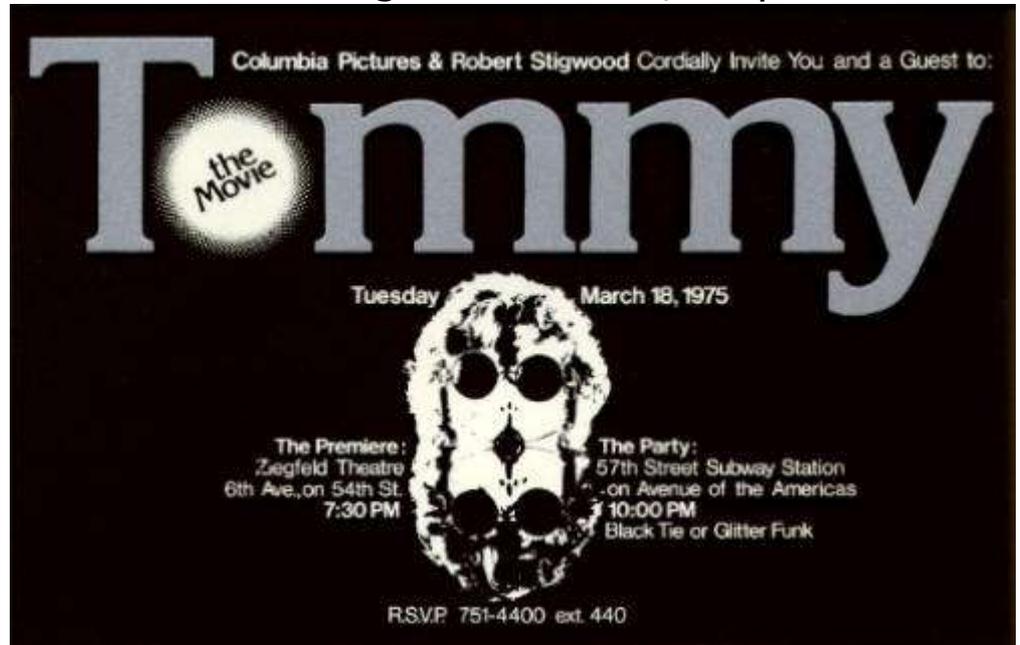
(As per the poster the World premiere was 18.3.75)

108 minutes Cert PG

Director, co-producer and screenplay – Ken Russell
Cinematography – Dick Bush and Ronnie Taylor
Editor – Stuart Baird

Starring

Ann-Margret as Nora Walker Hobbs
Oliver Reed as Frank Hobbs
Roger Daltrey as Tommy
Elton John as Pinball Wizard
Paul Nicholas as Cousin Kevin
Tina Turner as Acid Queen



Keith Moon as Uncle Ernie

Jack Nicholson as The Specialist

Robert Powell as Capt. Walker

Eric Clapton as Preacher

Arthur Brown as Priest

Tommy was the fourth studio album by the rock band the Who, a double album first released in May 1969. The album was mostly composed by guitarist Pete Townshend as a rock opera that tells the story about a deaf, dumb and blind boy, including his experiences with life and the relationship with his family.



Russell insisted on having a known cast, though Townshend wanted people who could sing the material, and was particularly disappointed at not being allowed to cast Stevie Wonder as the Pinball Wizard. In several cinemas, the film supported a multi-track soundtrack billed as quintaphonic sound, which placed speaker banks in the four quadrants of the house and directly behind the centre of the screen. The film and its soundtrack album featured six new songs, all written by Townshend, and an alteration to the running order compared to the original album.

In his commentary for the 2004 DVD release of the film, Ken Russell stated that the opening and closing outdoor scenes were shot in the Borrowdale valley of the English Lake District, near his own home, the same area that he had used to double for Bavaria in his earlier film *Mahler*, in which Robert Powell had starred.

Much of the film was shot on locations around Portsmouth, including the scene near the end of the film featuring the giant 'pinballs', which were in fact obsolete buoys found in a British Navy yard, which were simply sprayed silver and filmed in situ. The Bernie's Holiday Camp ballroom sequence was shot inside the Gaiety Theatre on South Parade Pier. Exterior shots were filmed at Hilsea Lido. The Sally Simpson interior sequence was filmed in the Wesley Hall in Fratton Road Portsmouth. The exterior intro sequence to the scene however shows Sally Simpson buying a badge and entering South Parade Pier.

On 11 June 1974, the pier caught fire and was badly damaged while the production was filming there; according to Russell, the fire started during the filming of the scene of Ann-Margret and Oliver Reed dancing together during the "Bernie's Holiday Camp" sequence, and smoke from the fire can in fact be seen drifting in front of the camera in several shots; Russell also used a brief exterior shot of the building fully ablaze during the scenes of the destruction of Tommy's Holiday Camp by his disillusioned followers.



The Pinball Wizard sequence was shot at the Kings Theatre in Southsea, others on Portsdown Hill, which overlooks Portsmouth and local churches were used. All Saints in Commercial Road was used for the Sally Simpson Wedding scene whilst the meeting in the same sequence was filmed at the Wesley Hall in Fratton Road. The Eyesight to the Blind sequence was filmed at St Andrews Church in Henderson Road in Southsea. The other church featured was Warblington Church near Havant in Hampshire.

The scene in which Ann-Margret's character hallucinates that she is cavorting in detergent foam, baked beans and chocolate reportedly took three days to shoot. Russell also recalled that Ann-Margret's husband strongly objected to the scene in which she slithers around in melted chocolate. During the filming, she accidentally struck her hand on the broken glass of the TV screen, causing a severe laceration, and Russell had to take her to hospital to have the wound stitched, although she was back on set the next day.



Elton John initially turned down the role of the Pinball Wizard and among those considered to replace him was David Essex, who recorded a test audio version of the "Pinball Wizard" song. However, co-producer Robert Stigwood held out until Elton John agreed to take the part, reportedly on condition that he could keep the gigantic Dr. Martens boots he wore in the scene.

Ann-Margret received a Golden Globe Award for her performance, and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actress. Pete Townshend was also nominated for an Oscar for his work in scoring and adapting the music for the film.

The New York Times review stated

"The performers are extravagantly fine, particularly Ann-Margret who, as Tommy's mother, ages 20 years in the course of the film (largely through the increased application of blue eye shadow) and sings and dances as if the fate of Western civilization depended upon it. She is tough, vulgar, witty and game. The Who's lead singer, Roger Daltrey, plays the grown-up Tommy with a drive that matches Ann-Margret's while successfully simulating show biz innocence. Oliver Reed is, correctly, almost a cartoon as the opportunistic stepdad. He also sings quite nicely.

As I said, it's all fairly excessive and far from subtle, but in this case good taste would have been wildly inappropriate and a fearful drag."

Iain McGlashan

PS I am told by someone who would know that the Physics O level paper in 1975 started with a question based on a diagram of a pinball machine which the students thought remarkably "with it" by the examiners.

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Track listing for Tommy

All songs written and composed by Pete Townshend, except where noted.

Side one

No.	Title	Lead vocals	Length
1.	"Overture"	Townshend	3:50
2.	"It's a Boy"	Townshend	2:07
3.	"1921"	Townshend, Roger Daltrey on chorus	3:14
4.	"Amazing Journey"	Daltrey	3:25
5.	"Sparks"	Instrumental	3:45
6.	"The Hawker" (Sonny Boy Williamson)	Daltrey	2:15

Side two

No.	Title	Lead vocals	Length
1.	"Christmas"	Daltrey, Townshend in middle eight	5:30
2.	"Cousin Kevin" (John Entwistle)	Entwistle and Townshend	4:03
3.	"The Acid Queen"	Townshend	3:31
4.	"Underture"	Instrumental	9:55

Side three

No.	Title	Lead vocals	Length
1.	"Do You Think It's Alright?"	Daltrey and Townshend	0:24
2.	"Fiddle About" (Entwistle)	Entwistle	1:26
3.	"Pinball Wizard"	Daltrey, Townshend on bridge	3:50
4.	"There's a Doctor"	Townshend, with Daltrey and Entwistle	0:25
5.	"Go to the Mirror!"	Daltrey and Townshend	3:50
6.	"Tommy Can You Hear Me?"	Daltrey, Townshend and Entwistle	1:35
7.	"Smash the Mirror"	Daltrey	1:20
8.	"Sensation"	Townshend	2:32

Side four

No.	Title	Lead vocals	Length
1.	"Miracle Cure"	Daltrey, Townshend and Entwistle	0:10
2.	"Sally Simpson"	Daltrey	4:10
3.	"I'm Free"	Daltrey	2:40
4.	"Welcome"	Daltrey, Townshend ("more at the door") and Entwistle (spoken part)	4:30
5.	"Tommy's Holiday Camp" (Keith Moon)	Townshend	0:57
6.	"We're Not Gonna Take It"	Daltrey, Townshend and Entwistle	6:45

Comments and reactions to: **Django Unchained**

Improbable fantasy, OTT violence and yet (somehow!) enjoyable with at times brilliant humorous moments

Quite a load of rubbish but well done rubbish

An entertaining evening

Not sure what John Wayne would think

So violent, too much blood

Exciting – but just a little too much blood

Too much tomato ketchup

How unpleasant can it get – no more than this

Not for me. thanks

“8” although “enjoyable” is not quite the word

Only Tarantino could do this!

Improbable – excellent photography and acting – beautiful scenery

Surprisingly amusing and entertaining! Great music too!

Great character acting – with humour and pathos

By turns amusing, appalling and outrageous – who else but Tarantino?!

I’ll remember the laugh out loud send up of the KKK rather than the concluding shoot out

One thing about Tarantino – he always keeps your attention: no nodding off with this film

Score **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**
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No of reaction slips received = 30

Average Score = 6.57

Position	Film	Average Score
1 st	Captain Phillips	8.1
2 nd	The Rocket	7.85
3 rd	Saving Mr Banks	7.78
4 th	A Royal Affair	7.76
5 th	All Quiet on the Western Front	7.19
6 th =	Wadjda	7.06
6 th =	Sunshine on Leith	6.92
8 th	Un Secret	6.92
9 th	Behind the Candelabra	6.47
10 th	Le Weekend	5.97
11 th	Mintras Duermes	5.8

**Our next
film**

**Thursday
9 April
2015:**

An American classic, this Oscar winning film by director John Ford is an affecting and moving literary adaptation.

