

B R I G H T O N R O C K (1947)

Cast: Richard Attenborough (Pinkie); Hermoine Baddeley (Ida Arnold); William Hartnell (Dallow); Carol Marsh (Rose Brown); Nigel Stock (Cubitt); Harcourt Williams (Prewitt); Wylie Watson (Spicer); Alan Wheatley (Fred Hale)

Screenplay: Graham Greene and Terence Rattigan

Director: John Boulting

Producers: Boulting Brothers for Associated British

"Brighton Rock" is noteworthy for a number of reasons. Firstly, Graham Greene worked on the screenplay based on his hugely successful novel. This he regarded as an "entertainment"; albeit a tough and "seedy" one concerning as it does a vicious adolescent who runs a racetrack gang and in the process commits murder. He then gets himself an alibi and marries her but murder is still on his mind and the marriage does not stay happy for long

When it was first shown, the film was both acclaimed for its realism and attacked for its violence. The Boulting Brothers - Roy and John - produced and directed it with great gusto and it established them as a force to be reckoned with in the English cinema. Three years later they again caused quite a stir with "Seven Days To Noon" in which an atomic scientist all too realistically threatens to blow up London. In the second half of the 1950's they scored some highly amusing bulls-eyes, accurately satirizing the army ("Privates Progress") the law ("Brothers-in-law") and industrial relations in their biggest hit "I'm All Right Jack" - thanks in no small way to Peter Sellers.

But the Boultings greatest debt of gratitude must be to the star of "Brighton Rock" - Richard Attenborough. He first played the murderous Pinkie and came into the public eye on stage at the age of 20 in 1943. The following year Attenborough met the Boultings in the R.A.F. and worked with them and Edward G. Robinson on the little known "Journey Together". The Boultings put Attenborough under contract and for the next 15 years he put the seal of success on many of their films with a whole range of fresh characterizations but his performance in "Brighton Rock" remains one of his finest although there are so many other memorable ones - the 13 year old schoolboy in "The Guinea Pig" (1949); the psychopath in "The Man Upstairs" (1958); the factory worker in "The Angry Silence" (1959); the Sergeant-Major in "Guns of Batasi" (1964) and Christie the murdering landlord of "10 Rillington Place" (1970) - to name just a few.

From acting, Attenborough has gone on to producing and directing with "Gandhi" being his latest and perhaps greatest achievement. It is interesting to note, on the other hand, that two of Attenborough's colleagues in "Brighton Rock" were content in subsequent years to become type-cast - William Hartnell as a Sergeant-Major and Alan Wheatley as the Sheriff in T.V.'s "Robin Hood".

Like "American In Paris" shown 2 weeks ago, "Rock" is very much of its time - just before and after the 1939-45 war. How different Brighton was then - double the number of piers and no mods and rockers. There's no Brighton Belle either but its still worth a trip into the past to get the flavour of "Brighton Rock"!

TONY ROZELAAR

P.T.O.

March 24th - THE DOUBLE FEATURE PROGRAMME THAT DEFIES DESCRIPTION!

Bela Lugosi in, reputedly, the worst film ever made - "Plan 9 From Outer Space" PLUS the doubtfully titled Divine in the unspeakable "Pink Flamingos" which has been described as an "exercise in poor taste". Please heed this warning if you are of a sensitive disposition.

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Another date of your diary - 26th May - An evening of short films -
to be held at The Cotteridge Hotel, Constitution Hill, Woking

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