



JAMES BOND AT 60 WEEKEND

The Living Daylights

35th Anniversary Screening

The first Bond film to star Timothy Dalton, *The Living Daylights* is a familiar mixture of popular elements from the series, given a certain political relevance through allusions to glasnost and the Soviet policy of 'détente'.

Dalton's Bond is a grittier and more subdued figure than Roger Moore's. He is leaner and more intense, dispensing with the regular one-liners and concentrating on a more gently ironic humour. He also seems more cynical, at one point indicating unhappiness with his employment. Although he still clearly enjoys the company of women, there is little misogyny and only two obvious sexual partners – he even seems unhappy at the idea of Kara (Maryam D'Abo) caring about another man. Dalton was criticised for his underplaying, but it comes across very effectively here. He is particularly impressive in the fight scenes, which are exciting and noticeably more brutal than usual. There are considerably fewer physical comedy scenes than in the previous two films and fewer gadgets, while the interplay with M (Robert Brown) and Moneypenny (now played by newcomer Caroline Bliss) is kept to a minimum.

The film, written when Dalton had yet to be cast, sticks to the usual formula of globetrotting locations and elaborate action. The plotting is intelligent and compelling, with the rival Soviet generals subplot of *Octopussy* (1983) expanded to include the decline of the Cold War, contemporary events in Afghanistan and the recently instituted policy of glasnost. The villainous Koskov (Jeroen Krabbé) and Whitaker (Joe Don Baker) are amusingly characterised and, as Necros, Andreas Wisniewski makes the most impressively sinister henchman for some time. There is obvious simplifying as you would expect; as in the near-contemporary *Rambo 3* (1988), the Mujehadin are romanticised as anti-Communist cavalymen, and their victory over high technology is particularly emphasised. But the careful construction of the story ensures that the film never collapses into a series of set-pieces.

John Glen's direction is adept and well-paced, allowing Dalton the space to develop his own version of the character. Although this was a new beginning for the series, it was also an ending for one of the major contributors to Bond's success. John Barry provides his last score for the series and it is a good farewell, with plenty of emphasis given to his lush, romantic arrangements and his immortal orchestration of Monty Norman's James Bond Theme.

Mike Sutton, BFI Screenonline, screenonline.org.uk

A contemporary review

In the quarter-century since *Dr. No* (1962), the Bond films have increasingly opted for a mood of nail-biting exuberance, closer to the old serial spirit-somewhere between *The Perils of Pauline* and *The Mask of Fu Manchu* – than to Len Deighton or John Le Carré. Q's death-dealing gadgetry is often as hilarious as it is awesome; the stunts generate a festive air, like a three-ring circus; Bond's seduction of, and by, the various Bond girls has less to do with the serious business of espionage than with the daydreams of cheery virility; and the extravagant villains, with their grandiose schemes for world disruption, have a built-in improbability which, while it never prevents suspense from breaking in, subverts any real suspension of disbelief. Descriptions like 'camp', 'tongue-in-

cheek', or 'winking at the audience' risk understating these films' appurtenance to a curiously overlooked genre: the self-aware spectacle, whose happy self-reflexivity, far from 'subverting the illusion', actually celebrates the show qua show.

The original Bond novels (from 1952) are interesting enough, at least by the standards of what one might call 'easy reading' or 'upmarket pulp fun'. They mix a toughly patriotic gentleman-spy with new perceptions of politico-bureaucratic cynicism; old snobberies with modern affluence-and-anomie; Sapper with Nigel Balchin. Probably Bond's secret agenting does metaphor a new sense of social life as continuous deception all round. Compared to the novels, the movies are brasher, broader and more down-market. The Roger Moore Bond, in particular, far from seeming secretive, had all the swagger of a car salesman relishing an unexpectedly huge expense account.

While Fleming's novels contained a stiff mix of chauvinism and *realpolitik* – in a phrase, the spirit of Eden at Suez – the movies merely perpetuate the cocky hedonism inaugurated with the Swinging Sixties (*The Avengers* amidst the *Playboy* 'philosophy'). The more relaxed screen tone usually extends as far as a worldly tolerance of Russia's adversarial role. The enemy Number One is rarely World Communism, but mischief-making by egomaniacal, often conspicuously capitalistic, masterminds. In *Billion Dollar Brain*, a 'cousin' to the Bond films, via their co-producer Harry Saltzman, the same basic formula tilts in favour of Russian imperialism against U.S. interventionism; and the final flourish on behalf of détente in *For Your Eyes Only* was audibly protested by a London preview audience, impressed by the invasion of Afghanistan.

Although *The Living Daylights* involves heavier references to Second World oppression (not inappropriate in a Czechoslovakian setting), it eschews any further concessions to Cold War revival, *Rambo*-style, instead attributing trouble to collusion between deviationist ultras on both sides. (A significant omission: Libyans, in the style of *Back to the Future*.) Here, Afghanistan, ambivalence and amorality call the tune. If the plot is rarely coherent, let alone plausible, its penultimate twists are quite fascinating. They happily mix, into a moral chiaroscuro worthy of Machiavelli himself, (a) a mercenary-capitalist dressed as a U.S. general (virtually an incarnation of the 'contra' spirit), (b) a Russian equivalent of Irangate, and (c) freedom fighters who keep going by dealing dope. Almost as a compensatory concession to our finer feelings, Bond's affair with the gentle, doe-eyed, cello-playing victim of love is more sensitive than heretofore, even faintly romantic. The new Timothy Dalton version of Bond is relatively sleek, tough and thoughtful; his occasional flash of a fey, pixie-ish expression oddly evokes another multimorphous British hero, Dr. Who.

Until the 'Afghanisgate' revelations, the film rather suffers from its imperfect compromise between the usual spectacular elements, which can be exhilarating however implausible, and its more intimate, smaller-scale tendencies, a la Frederick Forsyth, where an air of horrid ingenuity is indispensable. But if the film probably won't be among the biggest-grossing Bonds, it contains some highly enjoyable set-pieces, notably, the hilarious notion of whisking a fugitive along a pipeline as if he were a pneumatique, and the penultimate rodeo mixing cavalry and aircraft, bulldozers and saboteurs, all performing wildly eccentric manoeuvres. The film is essentially an 'action circus', Douglas Fairbanks swashbuckle updated by secret-agent costume (cloak-and-gadget), and sex-with-everything.

Raymond Durnat, *Monthly Film Bulletin*, August 1987

THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS

Directed by: John Glen
©: Danjaq S.A., United Artists Company
Made by: Eon Productions
Made for: Danjaq S.A.
From: United Artists
Produced by: Albert R. Broccoli, Michael G. Wilson
Associate Producers: Tom Pevsner, Barbara Broccoli
Production Supervisor: Anthony Waye
Production Controller: Reginald A. Barkshire
Production Co-ordinators: Pam Parker, Janine Lodge, Daniela Stibitz, Ihsanne Khalafaoui, Brenda Ramos, Dawn Severdia, May Capsaskis
Production Managers: Philip Kohler, Sparky Greene, Arno Ortmaier, Leonhard Gmür, Denise O'Dell
Unit Manager: Iris Rose
Location Managers: Nick Daubeny, John Bernard, Arie Bohrer, Stefan Zürcher, Driss Gäidi
2nd Unit Directed by: Arthur Wooster
Assistant Director: Gerry Gavigan
2nd Unit Assistant Director: Terry Madden
Continuity: June Randall
2nd Unit Continuity: Jean Bourne
Casting by: Debbie McWilliams
Screenplay by: Richard Maibaum, Michael G. Wilson
Director of Photography: Alec Mills
Additional Photography: Phil Pastuhov, Tom Sanders
2nd Unit Photographed by: Arthur Wooster
Camera Operator: Michael Frift
2nd Unit Camera Operator: Malcolm MacIntosh
Stills: Keith Hamshire, George Whitear
Video Effects Supervisor: Richard Hewitt
Special Visual Effects: John Richardson
Special Effects: Chris Corbould, Joss Williams, Brian Smithies, Ken Morris, Willy Neuner
Editors: John Grover, Peter Davies
Assistant Editors: Matthew Glen, John Nuth, Wayne Smith
Production Designed by: Peter Lamont
Art Director: Terry Ackland-Snow
Additional Art Directors: Michael Lamont, Ken Court, Fred Hole, Bert Davey, Thomas Riccabona, Peter Manhard
Set Decorator: Michael Ford
Property Master: Bert Hearn
Construction Manager: Anthony Graysmark
Costumes Designed by: Emma Porteous
Costume Supervisor: Tiny Nicholls
Hats: David Shilling
Make-up Supervisor: George Frost
Make-up: Naomi Donne, Eric Allwright, Edwin Erfmann
Hairdressing Supervisor: Ramon Gow
Hairdressers: Helen Lennox, Barbara Sutton
Main Title Designed by: Maurice Binder
Title Opticals by: Screen Opticals
Music Composed and Conducted by: John Barry
Music Performed by: Austrian Youth Symphony Orchestra
Cello: Stefan Kropfitch
Conducted by: Gert Meditz
Orchestrations: Nicholas Raine
Music Editor: Alan Killick
Music Mixer: Dick Lewzey
Music Recorded at: CTS Studios (Wembley)
The James Bond Theme Written by: Monty Norman

Sound Recording: Derek Ball
Additional Sound Recordists: Brian Marshall, Roby Guever
Boom Operator: Ken Nightingall
Re-recording Mixers: Graham Hartstone, John Hayward
Sound Editors: Colin Miller, Vernon Messenger, Derek Holding, Peter Musgrave
Stunt Supervisor: Paul Weston
Armourer: Simon Atherton
Horse Master: Greg Powell
Horses Provided by: Societe R.E.H.A.
Unit Publicist: Geoff Freeman
Made at: Pinewood Studios

Cast

Timothy Dalton (*as Ian Fleming's James Bond 007*)
Maryam d'Abo (*Kara Milovy*)
Joe Don Baker (*Brad Whitaker*)
Art Malik (*Kamran Shah*)
John Rhys-Davies (*General Leonid Pushkin*)
Jeroen Krabbé (*General Georgi Koskov*)
Andreas Wisniewski (*Necros*)
Thomas Wheatley (*Saunders*)
Julie T. Wallace (*Rosika Miklos*)
Desmond Llewelyn (*Q*)
Robert Brown (*M*)
Walter Gotell (*General Anatol Gogol*)
Caroline Bliss (*Miss Money Penny*)
Geoffrey Keen (*Minister of Defence*)
Virginia Hey (*Rubavitch*)
John Terry (*Felix Leiter*)
Nadim Sawalha (*chief of security, Tangier*)
John Bowe (*Colonel Feyador*)
Kell Tyler (*Linda*)
Catherine Rabett (*Liz*)
Dulice Liecier (*Ava*)
Alan Talbot (*Koskov's KGB minder*)
Carl Rigg (*imposter*)
Tony Cyrus (*chief of Snow Leopard Brotherhood*)
Mohamed Atik (*Achmed*)
Michael Moor, Sumar Khan (*Kamran's men*)
Ken Sharrock (*jailer*)
Peter Porteous (*gasworks supervisor*)
Antony Carrick (*male secretary, Blayden*)
Frederick Warder (*004*)
Glyn Baker (*002*)
Derek Hoxby (*Sergeant Stagg*)
Bill Weston (*butler, Blayden*)
Richard Cubison (*trade centre toastmaster*)
Heinz Winter (*conciierge, Vienna hotel*)
Leslie French (*lavatory attendant*)
Odette Benatar, Dianna Casale, Sharon Devlin
Femi Gardiner, Patricia Keefer, Ruddy Rodriguez, Mayte Sanchez, Cela Savannah, Karen Seeberg, Waris Walsh, Karen Williams (*the girls*)
uncredited
John Barry (*orchestra conductor*)
Michael Wilson (*man touching balcony in Vienna opera*)

USA/UK 1987©

131 mins

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Programme notes and credits compiled by the BFI Documentation Unit

Notes may be edited or abridged. Questions/comments? Email prognotes@bfi.org.uk

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