



CINEMA UNBOUND: THE CREATIVE WORLDS OF POWELL + PRESSBURGER

The End of the River

The End of the River

Director: Derek Twist

Production Company: Archers Film Productions, Independent Producers

Assistant Producer: George R. Busby

Production Manager: John Alderson

Assistant Director: Geoffrey Lambert

3d Assistant Director: Lawrence G. Knight *

Script Supervisor: Doreen North

Screen Play by: Wolfgang Wilhelm

Author of the Original Work: Desmond Holdridge

Director of Photography: Christopher Challis

Editor: Brereton Porter

Art Director: Fred Pusey

Assistant Art Director: E.G.C. Scott

Music: Lambert Williamson

Conductor: Muir Mathieson

Sound: Charles Knott

Dubbing Crew: George Croll *

Cast:

Sabu (*Manoel*)

Bibi Ferreira (*Teresa*)

Esmond Knight (*Dantos*)

Basil Appleby (*ship's officer*)

Dennis Arundell (*Coutinho*)

Nicolette Bernard (*Dona Serafina*)

Minto Cato (*Dona Paula*)

Antoinette Cellier (*Conceicao*)

Raymond Lovell (*Porpino*)

James Hayter (*Chico*)

Maurice Denham (*defence counsel*)

Eva Hudson (*Maria Gonsalves*)

Milo Sperber (*Ze*)

Nino Rossini (*Feliciano*)

Torin Thatcher (*Lisboa*)

Andrea Malindrinós (*officer of India Protection Soc*)

Alan Wheatley (*Irgoyen*)

James Harcourt (*the judge*)

Arthur Goulet (*the pedlar*)

Peter Illing (*ship's agent*)

Robert Douglas (*Jones*)

Orlando Martins (*Harrigan*)

Charles Hawtrey (*Raphael*)

Zena Marshall (*Santa*)

Russell Napier (*the padre*)

Lucius Blake (*stevedore*) *

UK 1947

102 mins

35mm

* Uncredited

A BFI National Archive print

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The Love Test + Something Always Happens

Tue 19 Dec 20:20

Projecting the Archive: The End of the River +

intro by film scholar Dr Kulraj Phullar

Tue 5 Dec 18:20

The Phantom Light

Wed 6 Dec 20:30; Sun 17 Dec 12:30

Peeping Tom

Thu 7 Dec 20:45 (+ intro by Kiri Bloom Walden, author of *Peeping Tom Devil's Advocates*); Sat 9 Dec 15:00 (+ Doesn't Exist magazine launch and panel discussion hosted by Victor Fraga); Fri 15 Dec 20:50; Mon 18 Dec 20:45; Thu 21 Dec 18:00; Sat 23 Dec 18:00; Fri 29 Dec 18:15

+ intro by film scholar Dr Kulraj Phullar

'Who is guilty, the twig or the current?' asks a courtroom lawyer, making a plea for clemency for a native Brazilian (played by Indian star Sabu) whose fate has led from his jungle village to a murder trial. Produced by Powell and Pressburger, and directed by Powell's one-time editor Derek Twist, the presented-in-flashback drama was released soon after *Black Narcissus*, but replaces its studio-created exoticism with black and white location footage shot by Archers-regular Christopher Challis.

James Bell, bfi.org.uk

Sabu's last two British films, both from 1947, reunited him with Michael Powell, one of the directors of *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940). The first, *Black Narcissus*, gave him a relatively small role as the young general, but he played the lead in *The End of the River*, released a few months later. But this time, Powell and Emeric Pressburger were merely the producers, being busy with *The Red Shoes* (1948), and the director was first-timer Derek Twist, an editor who had earned Powell's undying gratitude for working miracles on the mass of footage making up *The Edge of the World* (1937) – or, as the director put it, 'he made sense of our ravings'.

In 1946, Twist approached Powell with Desmond Holdridge's novel *Death of a Common Man*. Neither Powell nor Pressburger thought much of the story, but they were struck by the Brazilian setting and decided to package the project as a vehicle for Sabu. Unfortunately, as Powell ruefully acknowledged:

It looked a good proposition, but it wasn't. Derek, as a director, was dull, and to be dull with the river Amazon as your backdrop, is to be very dull, indeed.

Powell was overly harsh, though he was right to blame the over-ambitious script, which combines a coming-of-age story, a sociological study of Amazonian Akuna Indians, a saga of political and union corruption, a romance, murder mystery, courtroom drama and even musical (there are several onscreen songs). Unfortunately, these elements cancel each other out, not helped by a convoluted multiple flashback structure whereby the characters tell their stories in court to Maurice Denham's kindly defence counsel. Twist's difficulties are perhaps summed up by the fact that the genuine Brazilian locations fail to come near to matching the extraordinarily exotic charge of the studio-shot *Black Narcissus*.

However, it did at least have a strong cast – Esmond Knight's swarthy, disease-ridden foreman Dantos, Bibi Ferreira's appealingly ingenuous Teresa, Torin Thatcher's gruff but kindly ship-owner Lisboa, and Sabu himself in what may have been the most challenging role of his career as the hapless Manoel – as well as historical interest in the way it transplants the themes of Alexander Korda's 1930s British Empire films to a Latin American context and is just as patronising towards 'the natives'. Significantly, even Manoel's legal defence is that he's merely 'a twig in a current', clearly incapable of grasping the machinations of the 'white man's world'.

Michael Brooke, BFI Screenonline, screenonline.org.uk

The Red Shoes

From Fri 8 Dec

The Red Shoes in the Spotlight

Fri 8 Dec 18:00

Bluebeard's Castle (Herzog Blaubarts Burg)

Fri 8 Dec 20:40; Fri 15 Dec 18:10 (+ intro by writer Lillian Crawford); Sat 23 Dec 13:30

Crown v. Stevens + Behind the Mask (aka The Man Behind the Mask)

Sat 9 Dec 12:40; Sat 23 Dec 15:00

The Tales of Hoffmann

Sat 9 Dec 17:30; Tue 12 Dec 20:20 (+ intro by Andrew Moor, Manchester Metropolitan University); Sat 16 Dec 14:45; Sat 30 Dec 17:30

Honeymoon (Luna de miel)

Sun 10 Dec 13:25; Thu 28 Dec 20:40

The Small Back Room

Sun 10 Dec 18:30; Sat 16 Dec 20:45; Fri 22 Dec 18:20; Wed 27 Dec 20:30; Sat 30 Dec 15:00

Queering Powell + Pressburger

Tue 12 Dec 18:00

Experimenta: Michelle Williams Gamaker and Powell + Pressburger + Michelle Williams

Gamaker in conversation with Dr Kulraj Phullar
Wed 13 Dec 18:05

Oh... Rosalinda!!

Wed 13 Dec 20:45

They're a Weird Mob

Sat 16 Dec 17:45; Fri 29 Dec 20:40

Espionage: Never Turn Your Back on a Friend / A Free Agent + intro

Sun 17 Dec 15:15

Library Talk: The Glass Pearls

Tue 19 Dec 19:30 BFI Reuben Library

Lazybones + Her Last Affaire

Wed 20 Dec 17:50

Age of Consent

Fri 22 Dec 20:45; Wed 27 Dec 18:15

A Matter of Life and Death

Sat 23 Dec 15:00 BFI IMAX

Black Narcissus

Sat 30 Dec 14:30 BFI IMAX

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HARRY BELAFONTE: MOVIES RACE DEFIANCE

Carmen Jones

Tue 5 Dec 20:45; Wed 20 Dec 20:50; Fri 22 Dec 18:00

The World, the Flesh and the Devil

Sat 9 Dec 15:20; Tue 19 Dec 20:45

Kansas City

Sat 9 Dec 18:10; Sun 17 Dec 18:20 (+ intro by season curator Burt Caesar)

Buck and the Preacher

Sun 10 Dec 18:20; Sat 23 Dec 15:50; Wed 27 Dec 20:40

Seniors' Free Talk: Harry Belafonte – A Veces Miro Mi Vida (Sometimes I Look at My Life) + intro by season curator Burt Caesar and post-screening Q&A

Wed 13 Dec 11:00

Seniors' Free Archive Matinee: Island in the Sun + intro by film historian Marcus Powell

Wed 13 Dec 14:00

BlackKkKlansman

Thu 14 Dec 18:00; Fri 22 Dec 20:20; Thu 28 Dec 17:50

Odds Against Tomorrow

Thu 14 Dec 20:45

Harry Belafonte in Concert and Conversation

Sat 16 Dec 15:00

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BIG SCREEN CLASSICS

The Umbrellas of Cherbourg (Les Parapluies de Cherbourg)

Fri 1 Dec 14:40; Wed 13 Dec 18:20 (+ intro by Geoff Andrew, Programmer-at-Large); Sun 17 Dec 18:45; Wed 20 Dec 20:55

The Passenger

Sat 2 Dec 20:20 (+ pre-recorded intro by Jason Wood, BFI Executive Director of Public Programmes & Audiences); Sun 10 Dec 15:45; Wed 27 Dec 17:50

After Life (Wandafuru Ralfu)

Sun 3 Dec 12:45; Tue 12 Dec 17:15; Wed 27 Dec 14:40; Sat 30 Dec 20:20

My Night with Maud (Ma Nuit chez Maud)

Mon 4 Dec 18:15; Thu 14 Dec 20:50; Thu 28 Dec 18:15

Five Easy Pieces

Tue 5 Dec 14:30; Sat 9 Dec 20:55; Tue 19 Dec 18:15; Fri 29 Dec 18:20

White Material

Wed 6 Dec 18:10 (+ intro by film curator Abiba Coulbaly); Fri 29 Dec 20:45

Boyz n the Hood

Thu 7 Dec 20:35; Sat 16 Dec 18:15; Sat 23 Dec 20:40

Meet Me in St Louis

Fri 8 Dec 18:10 (+ intro by writer Richard Dyer); Wed 20 Dec 14:30; Thu 21 Dec 18:10; Sat 23 Dec 11:50

It's a Wonderful Life

Wed 13 Dec 18:10; Sat 16 Dec 20:25; Mon 18 Dec 20:25; Wed 20 Dec 18:10; Fri 22 Dec 14:30, 20:25; Sat 23 Dec 18:10

The Shop around the Corner

Fri 15 Dec 18:20; Mon 18 Dec 14:30; Thu 21 Dec 20:45; Sat 30 Dec 12:20

Remember the Night

Sun 17 Dec 12:15; Tue 19 Dec 20:40

Fanny and Alexander (Fanny och Alexander)

Sat 23 Dec 14:20; Fri 29 Dec 13:30; Sat 30 Dec 13:00

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