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The Distribution and Exploitation of Popular European Film in British Cinemas, 1960 – 1975

A thesis submitted to the University of Sussex for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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School of Media, Film and Music

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:

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Abstract

The history of British cinema is often approached from the perspective of charting and analysing the history of British film production, taking in the contribution made by directors, actors, writers and studios. In this thesis I assert that a history of British cinema ought to take into consideration what was being presented to British audiences in cinemas. During this period independent distributors imported hundreds of European films into the UK to fill the constant need cinemas had for new product, a need which could not be met from Hollywood or the British film industry alone. This thesis focuses on specific popular genres; the peplum, or sword-and-sandal film, the Eurospy thriller and sexploitation. The latter is further divided into loose sub-genres; the prostitution drama, the “Mondo” documentary and the sex education film.

Taking the lead from the New Film History and the work of Sarah Street in document analysis, material is used from several different archives to reveal information about the practices of these chosen distributors, which enables an original view on the way independent distribution worked in the 1960s and 1970s. Oral history interviews with people who either worked in the sector or who had direct contact with the distributors under discussion are also included, offering new information and historical data. These interviews provide a unique insight into a part of the film industry which has otherwise been neglected by official histories of British cinema. Analysis of some of the key texts has also taken place, in order to present a wider understanding of the genres and the way the marketing material and exploitation techniques often served to misrepresent the texts themselves. Issues around Imperialism and Orientalism have been explored in relation to some of these texts to contextualise the genres under discussion.

The findings of this thesis demonstrate that, for historians, the field is still open to new areas of research.

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The library at the University of Sussex and the archives of the BBFC, BFI, National Archives, London Metropolitan Archives, the British Library and the Cinema Museum were invaluable sources of information, providing the bulk of the archival and referenced material, and I am tremendously grateful for all the help I received from staff on my many visits.

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“You never can tell... your next million could be lying in a tin
can in Europe.”

Joseph E. Levine¹

¹ George W. Clarke, “TV to Exhaust All Films in 4 Yrs,” *Boston Daily Record*, 19 April 1958

Introduction: Operation ‘Y?’

A 1966 report on the British cinema industry described the role of the distributor thus:

A distributor enters into a contract with a producer to perform all the duties following the completion of a film. He books it to exhibitors and makes out the exhibition contracts, arranges trade shows and dates of exhibition, sees to the dispatch and collection of copies of the film and checks that they are in good condition, controls advertising, watches copyright, and collects the cash. From this money he deducts 20 to 30 per cent. Next he takes off the cost of prints and publicity which he had previously advanced... To cover overheads a substantial and regular flow of work is necessary. (Kelly, 1966: 23-24)

Barbara Klinger’s concept of the “synchronic” film history laid out a geographic space “in which cinema exists historically.” (1997: 110) This space tends to be divided into three main areas: production, distribution and exhibition. These latter two, the business end of film, tend to hold little appeal for historians, perhaps on the assumption that this research is all ledgers, accounts and profit margins. Distribution in particular can be said to remove the art of film, reducing it purely to a commercial transaction. This was summarized in the experiences of writer and director Michael Armstrong, who when sitting in a Soho screening room at some point in the 1970s, the (un-named) distributor turned to the projectionist and asked, “What reel are the tits on?” “I think they're on reel two,” came the reply. “Just put that one on then.”²

The world of independent distribution in the 1960s and 1970s was full of fascinating characters taking every available opportunity, including the occasional potentially dubious business practice, to exploit the films they were handling. Michael Armstrong, whose low opinion of distributors and the money-men of the film industry is particularly evident in his script for the satirical sex comedy *Eskimo Nell* (1975, Martin Campbell, UK: Salon productions), described distributors as “vegetables.” He explained that:

When they talked about films all they would talk were units... It really makes you want to give up the business and think ‘Why on earth do I bother, why does anyone bother?’ They have absolutely no interest in the films, they have no interest, almost contempt, for anybody who makes them... I don’t think they cared about film, as such... they didn’t know anything about them, and they didn’t quite know how they happened, it was a mystery... Basically a good film was one that made money.³

² Interview with Michael Armstrong, 15 April 2015. See appendix p.302

³ *ibid.* 301-302

Many British distributors developed relationships with international studios through film markets and buyers, encouraged budding directors and even befriended the chief censor himself, John Trevelyan. The aims of this thesis are to contextualise and analyse some of those who were involved in film distribution in the 1960s and 1970s, with a specific focus on those importing European film. One purpose of this research is to demonstrate how diverse British cinemas were during that period, with films being shown in mainstream cinemas from all around the world, especially Europe. This will provide new understanding into British film distribution and British film audiences, as well as insights into how foreign films were marketed.

Hollywood and British films of this period have been documented and analysed many times over.⁴ What appears to have been less regarded is the concept of British audiences being exposed to a much wider variety of international cinema. Whether from Italy, France, Germany or even South America, were often either retitled, dubbed or subtitled. For the average British cinema-goer at the time, the experience was potentially barely British at all.

The intention here is to focus primarily on three independent film distributors who imported dozens of foreign films and repackaged them for either general distribution or cinema clubs: Compton Films, Gala and E.J. Fancey. These distributors also sometimes produced their own films, most notably Compton who were responsible for producing Roman Polanski's first English-language film, *Repulsion* (1965, UK Compton), amongst many others.

By identifying relevant film texts, I will be examining the output of some of the main national contributors to European cinema during that time, including Italy, Germany and France. As will be seen, Italy was one of the most prolific producers of popular film during this period. German films tended to be co-productions with other countries. Those film texts selected will be mainly from popular genres, rather than the more traditional view of world cinema as art-house films. The distributors selected here were distributing

⁴ See Murphy, R. ed. (1997) and Chibnall, S. & McFarlane, B. (2009) for examples of analysis of British filmmaking in the 1960s, and Hall, S. & Neale, S. (2010) for a US perspective.

popular film as well as a more recognisable art cinema, although there was often a crossover between the two, which will be explored in relation to what Mazdon and Wheatley described as the “sex/ art binary” (2013: 113). This dichotomy or opposition between the original film texts and their British distribution will be analysed in relation to examples of now-respected European films which were distributed as adult entertainment.

Statistical analysis will be necessary throughout this thesis to communicate some sense of the scale of the contribution international films made to British cinema. Existing research, such as that by Elena Macarini (2001), gives an initial sense of the potential scope. She surveyed Italian film distributed across a fifty-year period using a variety of sources, in particular the film review publication *Monthly Film Bulletin*. Table 1.1 reveals that from 1960 to 1975, the period covered by this study, 714 Italian films appeared in British cinemas, including co-productions. This example of the output of just one country demonstrate the importance of European and international film in Britain in the 1960s and 1970s. A small percentage of these would have been what would be described as art-house film, but the evidence I present in this thesis suggests that the majority would have been the more popular and genre products which this study will focus on.

Italian films distributed in the UK, 1960 – 1975. Total: 714															
'60	'61	'62	'63	'64	'65	'66	'67	'68	'69	'70	'71	'72	'73	'74	'75
31	35	45	70	47	52	37	35	46	46	57	41	35	51	46	40

Table 1.1 (Macarini, 2001: 6)

The statistics in Table 1.2 show the importance of international distribution to the British film market. Removing those from the USA reveals that there were still a significant number of films from abroad: around 35% from 1961 – 1965, 40% from 1966 – 1970 and 42% from 1971 – 1975. This shows that this business model grew and flourished throughout the period I am exploring. The practice of importing and repackaging films for a British audience, and the personalities involved, will be at the core of this thesis.

Years	UK	Italy	USA	France	Germany	Other	Total foreign	Total foreign minus USA	Total
1961 – 1965	532	249	713	196	40	199	1,398	685	1,930
1966 – 1970	442	221	615	175	65	239	1,315	700	1,757
1971 – 1975	468	213	802	219	125	352	1,711	909	2,179

Table 1.2 (ibid.: 7. I have added the column showing the totals with films from the USA removed)

Finally, in Table 1.3 Macarini gives an overview of the 1960s and 1970s, which shows that the cinema of Germany, Italy and France had a share of 25% of the UK market, against the UK's market share of a slightly smaller 24%.

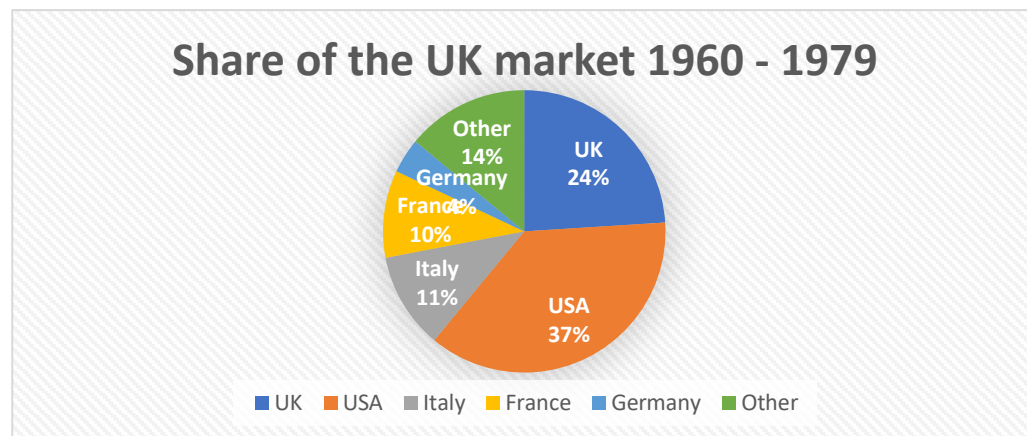


Table 1.3 (ibid.: 18)

These figures demonstrate why it is important to research the place of international film in British cinemas. As I will demonstrate in Chapter One, this is an under-researched area of film history, yet it was this practice, much of it conducted by independent distributors, which helped keep the industry buoyant.

I will also be looking at issues of the national, but will be taking the film texts out of their national context. These are films which for the most part had their nationality removed by the time they reached UK cinemas; they had gone through a process of “de-ethnification.” (Bergfelder, 2005: 218), including retitling, anglicising names in the credits and dubbing. Many of the films themselves deliberately avoided a “clear historical or geopolitical context” (ibid.) in order to sell to as many countries as possible. Issues of

national identity will be addressed, such as the way the James Bond films influenced British ideas of the exotic, and how this was exploited by other spy film producers. Although the national cinemas of many countries have been studied from a cultural and industrial perspective, what happened to the film texts once they arrived in Britain needs further analysis. Therefore, an attempt to define 'British cinema' needs to consider the films that were available to the public. Higson argues that "cultural diversity within a national film-culture may just as easily be achieved through encouraging a range of imports as by ensuring that home-grown films are produced," (2006: 20-21) and I intend to prove that cultural diversity was achieved in the 1960s through this process.

The research for this thesis relies on surviving archival material, which in some instances has proven challenging, particularly when some of the families concerned have not kept archives related to this period. As such, there are gaps in what was available, but there is still much to draw on in relation to the texts under discussion in each chapter. Of especial value is the archive at the British Board of Film Classification, where documentation in the form of letters between distributor and censor were sometimes preserved and allow something of the character of those involved to come through, along with details of censorship requirements. These enable a better idea of how the films would have looked by the time audiences saw them, and the final certificate awarded tells us something about the intended audience.

I have grouped the chapters of this thesis around genres, presented in the incremental stages of the BBFC certification system of the period: 'U', 'A' and 'X.' From 1951 to 1970 the ratings were as follows:

'U' – "Universal," first introduced in 1913.

'A' – "No admission to under 16s unless accompanied by an adult."

'X' – "Incorporated old H and limited audience to those over 16 years," introduced in 1951. The 'H' certificate was introduced in 1932 in the wake of the Universal horror films, and stood for "Horrific."⁵

⁵ History of the age ratings symbols, <http://www.bbfc.co.uk/education-resources/student-guide/bbfc-history/history-age-ratings-symbols> accessed 13 September 2017.

In 1970, following a great deal of public scrutiny and pressure from both the film industry and campaign groups the BBFC overhauled the certification system, providing further guidance for parents whilst granting filmmakers greater freedom:

‘U’ – “Universal”

‘A’ – “Advisory, parents cautioned that film may be unsuitable for young children.”

‘AA’ – “Admission to children of 14 years or over.”

‘X’ – “Raised from 16 to 18 years.”⁶

With the exception of private cinema clubs, not-for-profit exhibitions (e.g. trade shows, press screenings) or current newsreels, no film could be shown in the UK without a certificate, awarded either by the BBFC or the local authority. Therefore, certification was a vital process which each distributor went through. Exploring classification issues and decisions, as well as using archival material from the BBFC, will enable me to provide further industrial context and give needed detail.

Concluding this introduction, each of the three main contributors will be introduced and sketched out, relying on both archival evidence and interviews. Some of the people involved, such as Michael Klinger and Tony Tenser of Compton, have had aspects of their careers documented and analysed elsewhere, but new insights will still be uncovered here. The other two distributors under examination here, Kenneth Rive of Gala and E.J. Fancey and his family, have not been so well researched, so the information I have uncovered here presents much which is formerly undocumented.

Chapter One will provide an overview of both current and historical debates and critical thinking in the field. The main theoretical approach taken is that as espoused by Chapman, Glancy and Harper in *The New Film History* (2009) and this will be explored in some detail. Also under consideration are studies of exhibition history in the UK and work on film marketing. The tension between studying popular cinema and arthouse cinema, and the overlap between the two, particularly in marketing terms, will be discussed. The impact of European cinema on British audiences is central to this thesis, and available research does give some initial evidence, but as will be seen there is still much to be learned.

⁶ *ibid.*

Chapter Two focuses on the distribution of the peplum, or sword-and-sandal film, in the early to mid-1960s. These were for the most part rated ‘U,’ with occasional exceptions, and were generally aimed at a young audience. I will be analysing examples of marketing and censorship documentation, from the monumentally successful *Hercules* (1958, Pietro Francisci, Italy/ Spain: Embassy Pictures, Galatea Film, O.S.C.A.R.) and *Hercules Unchained* (*Ercole e la regina di Lidia*, 1959, Pietro Francisci, Italy/ France/ Spain: Galatea Film, Lux Film, Lux Compagnie Cinématographique de France) through to some less well-known films within the genre. The two most common critical readings of the peplum will be explored in relation to these texts, which are a viewing based on homoerotic longing, and a comparison with and rejection of Fascism.

Chapters Three and Four cover the distribution of the Eurospy film in the UK, often rated ‘A’ for a teenage audience. Chapter Three explores the concepts of Orientalism and Colonialism and how they can be applied to the Cold War adventures of James Bond’s European colleagues, using examples of films from Italy, Germany and France. The marketing and censorship of these titles is covered more fully in Chapter Four, along with a discussion on the role of women and depictions of sex and sexuality in the Eurospy. The historical concept of the Orient as a feminised place ripe for sexual conquest by the West will be applied to the films to scrutinise and place historically these womanising secret agents.

Chapter Five moves to the ‘X’ rated European sexploitation films imported in vast quantities. For the most part this chapter stays within the 1960s, drawing on examples of prostitution dramas and comedies, shocking documentaries and explicit Scandinavian explorations of sexual expression. The clashes and crossovers between arthouse and sexploitation, what Mazdon and Wheatley label the “sex/ art binary” (2013: 113), will be applied to these chosen texts, alongside the many lengthy clashes between the requirements of the BBFC and the commercial interests of the distributors.

Initially my intention for this project was to focus purely on the 1960s, but the legal case uncovered during my research as detailed in Chapter Six prompted a reassessment. As previously discussed, the BBFC ratings system changed in 1970, and the raise in age from sixteen to eighteen for the ‘X’ certificate allowed for more explicit material which would

have formerly been rejected. Chapter Six discusses the huge number of sex films which were imported into the UK following this alteration, and focuses particularly on E.J. Fancey, as he was one of the most prolific distributors. They experienced legal troubles in 1975 over the legal distribution of Swedish sex education film *More About the Language of Love* (*Mera ur kärlekens språk*, 1970, Torgny Wickman, Sweden/ Denmark: Merry Film, Swedish Film Production (SFP)). Ironically this was also the year of their greatest success, with the acquisition of *Emmanuelle* (1974, Just Jaeckin, France: Trinacra Films, Orphée Productions). This chapter will investigate the role of the sex education film as entertainment in British cinemas, and the impact of *Emmanuelle* on Britain, and on the Fancey family.

The Main Distributors

As I previously explained, three independent distributors will form the basis for the case studies analysed throughout this thesis. Of the dozens of potential distributors of the 1960s I could have chosen, these three were selected based on their overall significance to the industry at the time; Compton for their rapid growth and vertical integration, Gala for spearheading the growing popularity of European art-house cinema in the UK, and E.J. Fancey for his dominating personality and the sheer number of film titles distributed by his family's empire. In order to give the references to each distributor some context, I present a brief overview of each here:

Compton Films

Compton, sometimes operating under the name Compton-Cameo, are the most well documented independent company in this thesis,⁷ so only need a brief introduction here. What has been less well documented is their role as importers of European film, and original archive material and new interviews will offer some new information throughout this thesis.

The Compton group were run by Michael Klinger and Tony Tenser. As their advertising liked to boast, they were “the largest independent group in the British film industry.”⁸ From a private cinema club on Old Compton Street in Soho in 1960 they built a vertically integrated empire. As well as distributing, they also produced a significant number of films, some under the company name Tekli British Productions, and owned cinemas in several British cities. Klinger was previously the owner of a string of clubs in London and Tenser had previously worked in publicity for Miracle Films. (fig. 1) This was a potent combination and the business thrived until they parted ways in 1966. Compton were bought out by shareholders and became Cinecenta, an exhibition chain responsible for the first purpose-built multi-screen cinemas in the UK. Tenser formed Tigon, which focused primarily on production, and Klinger became an independent film producer making ambitious projects such as *Baby Love* (1968, Alastair Reid, UK: Avton Films) and *Get Carter* (1971, Mike Hodges, UK: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer British Studios).

⁷ See Hamilton (2004), Ahmed, M. (2011) and Spicer, A. and McKenna, A.T. (2013)

⁸ Full page ad for the Compton Group, *Variety*, 9 February 1966, p.19



Fig. 1: Detail from the press book for *His Women* (*Il mantenuto*, 1961, Ugo Tognazzi, Italy: MEC Cinematografica), distributed by Miracle Films in 1963. A typical example of Miracle publicity, following a template set by Tony Tenser of Compton Films. The cover image has holes cut out showing her head, arm and legs. The book opens to reveal her underwear.

The Compton Cinema Club was born as a consequence of the ‘Logging and Barring’ system, a practice by which “a cinema secures from a distributor the temporary sole right to show a film in its locality.” (Kelly, 1966: 20) Michael Klinger’s son Tony explained how this system affected his father’s business:

We couldn’t get any films, so the consequence was, “Okay, so we’ll get films that are otherwise banned.” I remember going there and [there were] literally queues outside, and people were thinking you were giving it away. It was full, every performance, because there were no outlets for a guy to watch a film with a woman in it. It just didn’t exist.⁹

An *AA London Guide* for 1971 confirms that the Compton Club was still in operation on Old Compton Street, although under different management.¹⁰

Gala Film Distributors

Some academic attention has been paid to Gala in relation to the company’s role in importing quality European cinema to the UK, most notably by Lucy Mazdon and Catherine Wheatley (2013), but there is still much about Gala which is undocumented. Through interviews and archival research a more detailed picture of Gala will be revealed here.

Kenneth Rive had an early start in the film industry. His father was a camera operator and Rive acted in some silent films whilst still a child. He worked for British Intelligence during the war, and then became a cinema manager, eventually forming Gala Film Distributors in 1951.¹¹ Like Compton, Gala also operated a Cinema Club in London whilst acting as a distributor across the UK; the Gala Film Theatre Club was held at La Contentale on Sunday afternoons, where membership was required in order to see uncut versions of films such as *The Fruit is Ripe* (*Les filles sèment le vent*, 1961, Louis Soulanes, France/ Italy: Contact Organisation, Paris Interproductions (PIP), Transmonde Film) and *Call Girls of Rome* (*I piaceri del sabato notte*, Daniele D'anza, Italy: Donati-Carpentieri/ Dino De Laurentiis Cinematografica). Although they imported many different types of film Gala made a name for themselves by creating an audience in

⁹ Interview with Tony Klinger, 30 May 2017. See appendix, p.357

¹⁰ “Entertainment: Cinemas,” *AA London Guide*, London: The Automobile Association, 1971, p.135

¹¹ See Smith, 2017: 212 for further information.

Britain for French New Wave films. Kenneth Rive developed a personal relationship with Francois Truffaut and was the first to bring his films to the UK.

Kenneth Rive lived next door to Michael Klinger during the 1960s, but they were not friends. Tony Klinger recalled:

He wasn't really friendly as he saw what my dad did as competition. Dad didn't see it at all. At one stage, we imported and distributed a lot of foreign films which he thought were his by right. Because we went into that market at that point it kind of upped the prices he had to pay, because they suddenly had more than one buyer for England. I was part of that because I used to go and buy films from Italy, France and Germany. Ken got really upset.¹²

There was a much more amicable relationship between Kenneth Rive and other business associates, including the Cohen family who ran the Jacey cinema chain. John Cohen recalled:

He did become quite a good friend of the family for many years and he was certainly what one would call a live wire... I don't think he ever got divorced, but every time at the Cannes Film Festival he had another bright starlet with him! Rather than his wife! He was a character, no question about it, and very amusing, and very charming. The friendship that grew with him and my father, because he was more my father's age really, the idea became a good one to change from what had become cartoon cinemas rather than news theatres to showing continental films.¹³

Rive cemented this friendship by forming Gala-Jacey Enterprises in 1959 with Joseph Cohen, which by 1961 comprised joint ownership of the Gala Royal and the International Film Theatre in London, with the Cohens providing the "Luxury and Comfort" whilst Rive would supply "the cream of Continental Films." (fig. 2). Expanding further, in 1965 he joined forces with Leslie Grade to form Grade-Rive, a small cinema circuit with the intention of exhibiting specialised British and foreign films, building on Gala's existing chain of fourteen cinemas.¹⁴ This demonstrates Rive's continued interest in arthouse cinema. Many of his obituaries detailed his work as a distributor of quality European

¹² Interview with Tony Klinger, 30 May 2017. See appendix p.354. Michael Klinger and Kenneth Rive were next-door neighbours for a while. See appendix, p.342

¹³ Interview with John Cohen, 18 July 2015. See appendix, p.310

¹⁴ "Obituaries: Kenneth Rive" *The Telegraph* (London, England) 15 January 2003, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1418877/Kenneth-Rive.html> accessed 13 September 2017.



Fig. 2: Joseph Cohen and Kenneth Rive raise a glass to the creation of Gala-Jacey Enterprises. *Kine Weekly*, undated Gala 10th Anniversary Special, 1959. (Used with the permission of John Cohen)

cinema throughout the 1980s and 1990s, including *A Short Film About Killing* (*Krótki film o zabijaniu*, 1988, Krzysztof Kieslowski, Poland: Zespół Filmowy "Tor"). None of them mentioned that a significant proportion of Gala's income derived from distributing European erotic and popular films such as *Girls For Pleasure* (*Dossier Prostitution*, 1970, Jean-Claude Roy, France: Les Productions René Thévenet, O.C.F., TV Cinema).

E.J. Fancey

The final distributor to be introduced here has had the least well-documented career.¹⁵ Chibnall & McFarlane (2009) discuss some of his early film production in their survey of low budget British production, and he gets one brief mention in Matthew Sweet's (2006) otherwise excellent and thorough examination of the "Lost Worlds" of the British film industry.¹⁶ E.J. Fancey's importance as an independent distributor has been virtually ignored in historical and academic research until now. To give context to the many mentions of E.J. and his family throughout this thesis, some of his history is presented here:

Edwin John Fancey was born in 1902, and began working in film distribution in the early 1940s. During his career he operated several companies including D.U.K. Films,¹⁷ E.J. Fancey Productions, New Realm Entertainments, S.F. Distributors,¹⁸ and Border Films. It was a family business, with his children Adrienne and Malcolm, his wife Beatrice Fancey, and his common-law wife Olive Negus-Fancey all working for him. He also had two children with Olive, Charles Negus-Fancey and Judith Smith, who with their mother worked mainly at the Border Films office during the 1970s. The family appear to have all been happy with this somewhat bigamous arrangement, or at least tolerated it, although as long-serving Fancey employee Paul Hennessey recalled, the cracks occasionally showed:

She did start to call herself Olive Negus-Fancey. There was a dispute in the office one day. Some poor sod went into E.J.'s office and said "Mrs. Fancey's been on the

¹⁵ David Ryder (2008) included a chapter on the early years of E.J. Fancey's career as a producer, but his book is out of print and appears to only exist in one UK local history library, so is virtually inaccessible.

¹⁶ The claims made in that brief mention will be revealed shortly.

¹⁷ Do U Know Films.

¹⁸ Small Films, and not 'Science Fiction' as many thought, or Scott-Fancey, Scott being E.J.'s mother's maiden name.

phone,” and he was chased out of E.J.’s office by Beatrice. She was screaming at him, “She’s not Mrs. Fancey. I’m Mrs. Fancey!”¹⁹

By the late 1960s Olive and E.J. lived on a farm near Worthing with stables. Michael Armstrong recalled with fondness shooting an unfinished short on the property:

When I went down to the farm to do *The Hunt*, I got to know them much better. They treated me like a son and they were delightful. They were devoted to each other and Judith was down there as well. It was like a real family when I was down there.²⁰

Having produced many ‘B’ films during the 1940s and 1950s, including the *Goon Show*-inspired *Down Among the Z Men* (Maclean Rogers, 1952, UK: E.J. Fancey Productions), the 1960s saw E.J. focus almost entirely on film distribution. Adrienne Fancey had acted in several of their productions²¹ before moving on to production and distribution. Both Adrienne and Malcolm became responsible for the running of New Realm and S.F. Distributors.

As a distributor E.J. Fancey was incredibly prolific. Unlike Kenneth Rive he made very little pretense towards quality cinema: He seemed happy to import cheap product and evidently did well financially although not necessarily with full legitimacy; Charlie Chaplin once publicly threatened to sue E.J. Fancey for distributing his early films without holding the rights. (Winner, 2004: 68)²²

E.J. Fancey had his first public brush with the law in 1940; a story in *The Times* details a fraud case where he was accused of receiving stolen cheques totalling around £16,000 from a man named Arthur Ruppen. Fancey was “apparently connected with the film trade. He was the proprietor of a business called Pall Mall Enterprise and of a company called ‘New Realm Pictures.’” It was claimed that Ruppen needed funds to develop a “flying

¹⁹ Interview with Paul Hennessey, 12 December 2016. See appendix, p.335

²⁰ Interview with Michael Armstrong, 15 April 2015. See appendix, p. 297

²¹ Under the name Adrienne Scott.

²² On a brief visit to the UK in the 1960s Charlie Chaplin was asked by reporters why he was back after so many years. He allegedly replied, “To sue that bastard E.J. Fancey who’s been making money by pirating my films.” According to Michael Winner E.J.’s characteristic response was “I’ll sue the git for libel!” (Winner, 2004: 68) Winner’s directing career began with E.J. Fancey.

bomb,” and that he also had an idea for a “portable ray.” Fancey plead not-guilty, and he was described by a witness as being a “straightforward, honest man... He was a gullible man.”²³ Ultimately Fancey was found not guilty, but Ruppen and one other conspirator were sentenced to seven years and three years’ hard labour respectively.²⁴

E.J. Fancey's career in film was already underway as a minor distributor and producer of short films by the time he was in court. His first feature film, distributed under the New Realm Pictures banner, was war time comedy *The Balloon Goes Up* (1942, Redd Davis, UK: E.J. Fancey Productions). Averaging at around an hour long, his films qualified as ‘B’ films; quota-quickies that would appear on a double-bill and provide mild entertainment between the newsreel, cartoons and the main feature. He continued to produce, and occasionally direct into the 1950s, sometimes under the name Edwin Scott.

In 1945 E. J. Fancey was sentenced to twelve months’ imprisonment for causing grievous bodily harm to the New Realm Pictures accountant John Whitbread Richards. Richards had told his brother Sidney Fancey that he did not approve of their method of business. In his first statement to police Richards had claimed that Sidney held him down whilst E.J. came at him flourishing “a short, double-edged sword or dagger.”²⁵ When he got up his leg was bleeding badly, and medical evidence related in court suggested that because his sciatic nerve had been severed he would most likely lose his leg from the thigh.²⁶ Once on the stand in the Marlborough Street Magistrates Court Richards began to tell a different story, suggesting that he had been pressured by the Fanceys. Writer and director Ray Selfe remembered an accountant with a “peg leg” working for the Fancey group of companies more than twenty years later, suggesting that Richards had been offered a job for life if he changed his story.²⁷

²³ “Alleged city cheque conspiracy,” *The Times*, Wednesday 14 February 1940, p.10

²⁴ “Director Acquitted. Penal Servitude for Two Others,” *The Manchester Guardian*, 20 February 1940, p. 2

²⁵ “Film Renter’s Directors Charged,” *Kinematograph Weekly*, December 7, 1944, p.31

²⁶ “Renter’s Director For Trial,” *Kinematograph Weekly*, December 14, 1944, p.29

²⁷ Related in an email from David M. Ryder, a close friend of Ray Selfe, 4 February 2017. In a varied career Selfe produced a number of short documentaries before directing films such as *White Cargo* (1973, UK: Border Film Productions), produced by Olive Negus-Fancey, and producing *Under The Bed* (1976, David Grant, UK: New Realm), the third film in the Alan Street series, executive-produced by Malcolm Fancey.

It is not clear from the record whether E.J. served his full twelve-month sentence, but Ryder (2008) notes that New Realm's film output slowed down from 1945 to 1946, as if without E.J. at the helm the company just bided their time and waited.

With offices on Wardour Street, Berners Street and in Queens House on Leicester Square, Fancey and his family maintained a presence in Soho for decades, with New Realm only finally being dissolved in 2012, a year before Adrienne died at the age of 80. In the late 1970s Malcolm Fancey went into business with David Hamilton Grant, a man with whom he had already made some shorts and feature films for New Realm. They created World of Video 2000 to exploit the opportunities available in the then unregulated home video market, and achieved notoriety when they were successfully prosecuted for the distribution of the uncut version of *Nightmares in a Damaged Brain* (1981, Romano Scavolini, USA/ Italy: Goldmine Productions). Grant was sentenced to eighteen months, twelve suspended, and Fancey was given a nine-month suspended sentence and fined £250.²⁸ Following this adventure he retired from the film industry and refuses to discuss his family and his film career.

David McGillivray, who worked with the Fanceys on several occasions, speculated as to why the family now refuse to talk about E.J. and the business: "They think you're going to ask embarrassing questions about stuff they don't want to talk about because the crossover between the entertainment business and the criminal world was rife."²⁹ Former employee Paul Hennessey speculated that it might be because they never paid any tax.³⁰ Tony Klinger, son of Compton's Michael Klinger, met E.J. Fancey on more than one occasion:

"He didn't have a nice reputation, but I don't know quite what it was he did that everybody... there were people that were upset by him, but I don't know what he did."³¹

²⁸ "Distributor jailed in horror video test case," David Cross, *The Times*, (London, England), Saturday 4 February 1984, p. 3.

²⁹ Interview with David McGillivray, 15 April 2015. See appendix, p.365

³⁰ Interview with Paul Hennessey, 12 December 2016. See appendix, p.319

³¹ Interview with Tony Klinger, 30 May 2017. See appendix, p.355

The very image of a Soho film mogul, E.J. Fancey would, according to some who knew him, grab a man by the balls when they went to shake hands.³² Matthew Sweet repeats the rumours he heard from Michael Winner and actor John East that E.J. had “fraud and murder on his C.V.” (2006: 263); an extraordinary claim which no one in the Fancey family has tried to refute.

Soho in the 1960s and 1970s was full of fascinating, important, eccentric and occasionally dangerous independent filmmakers and distributors who rubbed shoulders with the major studios, the censors and the pornographers, whilst clip joints, strip clubs, sex cinemas and prostitutes hustled locals and tourists alike.³³ It was a febrile, grubby and lucrative time to be part of the British film industry, and it was in this atmosphere that the deals were made which enabled the films discussed in the next six chapters to reach British cinemas. To begin with, I will assess the existing literature on this area of research and establish a methodology for my own analysis.

³² As related to me by a business associate who wishes this comment to remain anonymous.

³³ As documented in Compton’s “mondo” documentaries *London in the Raw* (1964, Arnold Louis Miller, UK: Searchlight Films/ Troubadour Films) and *Primitive London* (1965, Arnold Louis Miller, UK: Searchlight Films/ Troubadour Films).

CHAPTER ONE

A Shadow of Evil: Contexts and Approaches

With a reliance on a range of ephemera, interviews and archival data as my primary texts, this thesis falls under the banner of “The New Film History,” as described by Chapman, Glancy and Harper (2009, p.6-8). They identify three features that distinguish new approaches to traditional film history. This characterisation is particularly helpful to the structure of the research this project will be undertaking. The first is what is deemed a more sophisticated level of methodology. Rather than simply focus on the history of film as an art form or a mirror to society, the new film history establishes a complex and dynamic set of relationships between producers and consumers. Films are studied within the context of the constraints of their production, including industrial practices and external bodies. Wider sources are used, and an extension into reception studies is made, looking at evidence of audience responses and locating them within the context of time, place and identity. This approach allows for a historical study of film where the film texts themselves are not the primary focus. I will be following this model by focusing on the historical practices of film distribution and exhibition alongside some analysis of available film texts.

The second feature of “The New Film History,” and perhaps the most significant in relation to this project, is the central importance of primary sources. They cite some important studies which were based on archival research, such as Tony Aldgate's *Cinema and History* (1979), but what distinguishes the “New Film History” is an expanded view of the range of primary sources available to the researcher. They compare the new film historian to an archaeologist, uncovering new materials and available sources which shed new light on the understanding of the subject under investigation. These sources can be filmic or non-filmic, the latter of which is going to be of the most importance to this project. The sources cited in *The New Film History* include production files, scripts, censors' reports, publicity materials and fan magazines.

“The New Film History” provides a useful framework for establishing a methodology for this research project. It will be exploring mostly primary sources, many of which have generally been viewed as ephemera, and as such have not received much serious critical

attention. For example, it appears that an analytical approach to film posters has not been tackled in great length. Neil Jackson (2012)³⁴ stated that he was unable to find any kind of work that offers a sustained level of theoretical engagement with the form and function of film posters. He was discussing the violent iconography of posters from the 1970s, in an attempt to lay a theoretical foundation for a discussion of the poster as a promotional tool. This highlights one of the challenges within this research work using promotional materials as a primary source of study. Jackson points out that a film being promoted is a work of creative endeavor that has to be marketed in specific territories according to local appeal, showing that there are levels of adaptation and shifts of focus with the material that can say just as much about the audience as they do about the promoter.

Film industry ephemera is not only the realm of the historian and archivist, as David Church (2016) discusses in his work on the material legacies of adult cinema. He investigates the importance of the fan collector in preserving material which was designed to be discarded. His observation on the importance of engaging with the surviving ephemera of the past, that “The physical tangibility of the collection itself... might offer historiographical clues for understanding its film-related objects as uneasily positioned between fantasy and reality,” (Church, 2016: 64) allows for a historian to have a more direct connection “to the film’s original moment of consumption.” (ibid.) Effectively, by engaging with marketing ephemera, these artifacts become paratexts replicating the strategies of the original filmmakers and distributors. Where the film texts are no longer available, as is the case with several of the texts in this thesis, ephemera is the only connection to the film, as well as to the intended consumer.

Film posters and marketing materials are all created to advertise a film to a potential audience, and as such some analysis ought to be possible using tools for understanding advertising. Gillian Dyer discusses how to read photos used in advertising, with an especial focus on the portrayal of women. She notes that cropping is a device often used to draw attention to specific parts of the body; legs, eyes, lips, and so on. (1982: 7) Dyer claims that women are more frequently portrayed this way, “as if their bodies are made up of spare parts.” (ibid.: 107) Commercials on television also use sex-role stereotypes,

³⁴ “Stained with the blood of the marketing department,” Neil Jackson, *Cine Excess*, 26-28 May 2011, London: Brunel University

with women more likely to appear in ads for kitchen or bathroom products, personal hygiene products, or in ads depicting children. As a brief look through any film poster collection for the 1960s will tell you, women also appear to be used disproportionately, frequently in some state of undress or in a sexually alluring pose. This research project will involve looking at issues of representation and gender, as it is possible that this may be involved in discussions of advertising techniques used by distributors and exhibitors to attract an audience.

Dyer also discusses the hypodermic model and its use in sociological research into why audiences respond to advertising and media products. The model still potentially has some validity, with the proposal that audiences are essentially passive, open to whatever message being given them. This could apply to the work on the popularity of certain imported film titles, and whether, particularly when films were the lower-half of a double-bill, audiences were truly engaged and there out of choice or whether they were in the cinema for the social experience and maybe the main feature to come. In terms of advertising and audience response, the Uses and Gratifications model has more to offer to this study, as it posits that the audience is essentially active and chooses to interact with media based on meeting needs of either finding information and security, reinforcing personal identity, social interaction and entertainment.³⁵

In order to properly assess the significance of documents and ephemera that are used here the methodology as laid out by Sarah Street (2000) will be applied. The first step is to categorise the type of document and examine the type of language it uses. There can be a hierarchy at play which can be misleading to researchers looking for cultural implications. Secondly one has to identify the authorship of the document, and who the intended reader was. This can apply equally to marketing materials or internal memoranda. Next you have to identify why the document was written. What was the intended purpose? This requires a critical awareness of the politics and ideologies behind whomever created the document, such as the perceived cultural capital of the BBFC. Street goes on to stress the importance of placing the document into context. This includes when it was written as well as whether it was public, institutional or private. One then assesses the impact of the document. This

³⁵ <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/short/usegrat.html>, accessed 23rd July 2013

can be divided into short-term impact, or its intended purpose, and long-term impact, as documents can acquire or lose meaning and influence over time.

The next step is to assess the place the document has within the archive in which it sits. Meaning can be divulged from its place in a chain of events or discourse. Finally, and this step is perhaps the most subjective, the historian must assess the significance of the document within their own argument. This methodology will enable a more thorough interpretation of the material amassed for this project as well as that researched in other archives. This personal archive includes a large collection of press books, lobby cards, film stills, posters and other ephemera, as well as internal documents from the former offices of the Compton group.

Justin Smith (2010) highlights the potential pitfalls of an empirical approach to history, reminding researchers that archives cannot tell the whole story. Pointing out that archives can be a rich source of information if handled judiciously, they still cannot tell the entire story. He states, “Key evidence may be partial or missing, and sometimes fragments of broken 'fact' resist piecing together.” (2010: 8) It is therefore wrong to assume that this research will yield a definitive account, although to paraphrase Smith, one can only hope that it will offer the best account available.

Stigsdotter and Bergfelder (2007) have provided a case study which is similar in design to the intentions of this project. They compare the marketing and reception of Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* (1966) in Britain with Sweden, where the film was produced. They highlight the international dimension of film as a medium, something that is often ignored, particularly when looking at national cinema movements. When the film was released in Sweden, little was made of the sexual frankness of some of the dialogue, or the lesbian subtext in the plot. They acknowledge that in the 1960s Swedish cinema had a reputation for sexual explicitness, despite pornography being illegal in Sweden until 1971. Bergman's films in particular were noted for the strong sexual overtones and dialogue. Although most European films were still released in dubbed versions at that time, *Persona* had subtitles, which suggested to audiences that it was a film to be taken seriously. The explicitness of the dialogue was toned down in the subtitles, and a flash

frame of an erect penis was removed from the opening sequence.³⁶ UK reviewers did their best to discourage audiences who may only have been interested in the film for its potentially sexual nature. This contrasts from *Persona*'s release in Brazil, where distributors renamed the film *When Women Sin* in order to fool audiences into thinking it was from the domestic genre '*pornochanchada*.' This is something that often occurred when non-English-language films were released in Britain, but not usually for an 'auteur' director such as Ingmar Bergman.

Stigsdotter and Bergfelder have used archival material including publications by the Swedish Film Institute and UK trade magazines in their analysis of the marketing and reception of *Persona*. Whilst their findings suggest that on its initial release in both countries the film was taken seriously, the subtle differences in reception caused through censorship, the changing of dialogue and the experience of viewing a film with subtitles mean there were differences in audience reception. They also argue that The New Film History has tended to bypass non-English-language modes of film-making, with this area instead becoming part of the traditional study of art cinema, which focuses on directorial intention or issues of national cinema. Further work can be done using this marketing and reception-led approach in non-English-language cinema, which is what this project intends to do. Stigsdotter and Bergfelder's essay provides a useful template to follow, with some possible adaptation. For instance, they compare the reception of the film on its initial release in the UK with a reissue by the BFI in 2003, looking at how attitudes in audiences may have changed in the intervening years. This project will be solely concentrating on the audiences of the 1960s and 1970s, although there will be room to discuss the impact this research could have on further study which could include looking at current industrial practice.

Barbara Klinger argues for a "total history" of film which explores the synchronic and the diachronic, the former being "those areas most closely associated with the production of a film... ending with social and historical contexts circulating through and around its borders," (Klinger, 1997: 110-111) the latter being more concerned with the way a film

³⁶ BBFC documentation suggests that the erection was removed by the UK distributors before the film was submitted for certification. THE BBFC only requested the amendment of some subtitles for *Persona* to receive an 'X' certificate. BBFC Archive, *Persona* file.

has developed and its meaning altered over time. This thesis will touch on elements of both, through a study of the distribution practices and contemporary reception, whereas recurring elements within sexploitation films, such as the use of rape as a narrative shorthand for a woman submitting to the will of another, or the Colonial discourse of the Eurospy film, will be critiqued from the perspective of 21st century analysis.

Klinger goes on to argue for the need for “crosscultural reception” studies. She gives examples of the appeal female Hollywood stars had for British women in the 1940s and 1950s, and explains that “Such perspectives emphasize how malleable film meaning is by demonstrating the difference national contexts make to how texts are appropriated.” (ibid. 122-133) It is precisely this type of crosscultural reception which will be explored within this thesis, and Klinger’s approach gives this study a theoretical underpinning.

The 1960s was a turbulent time for UK exhibitors, and one key text which examines this in detail is Stuart Hanson's work on British cinema exhibition (2007: 117-121). He covers the entire history of exhibition in the UK, and notes the decline in the industry towards the end of the 1960s. He argues that it is too simple to simply attribute this to the rise in popularity of television, stating that the industry itself was also to blame. There was a great population shift during the decade from the cities to the suburbs, and cinema chains were slow to catch on and did not build enough cinemas in the new population centres. People therefore began to diversify their leisure interests and generally made less visits to the cinema than before. Cinemas around the country, mostly in town centres, began to close or were sub-divided in a process called twinning or tripling, where cinemas were split from their traditional one large screen into two or three smaller screens. This was inspired to a certain extent by the multiplex model that was beginning to proliferate in the United States, where cinemas would be built into shopping malls and have multiple screens available, with fewer staff. Hanson points out that one of the companies to buck the trend was Compton. Earlier in the decade they had been one of the only companies to build new cinemas, opening large buildings in places like Birmingham and Derby. When Leslie Elliott took control of the company and rebranded it as Cinecenta he began building what were known as boutique cinemas; screens with a smaller number of seats aimed squarely at the “more adventurous movie-goer” (Turner, 2000: 9) and introduced glamorous usherettes in futuristic uniforms called “Cinegirls.” (ibid.: 10) The twinning and tripling of cinemas meant that the number of available screens remained more or less

constant, but the number of actual buildings decreased, meaning that cinema availability in some parts of the country became less and less. Smaller screens meant smaller box office returns for individual films, which became part of the struggle the British film industry was having to fight in the 1960s.

Hanson describes in detail how cinema grew to become a major way of life for the British public, with 1946 being the year with the highest ever cinema attendance. A survey at the time estimated that the annual expenditure of the civilian population of Great Britain in the cinema was over £100 million. Film producers, distributors and exhibitors struggled after that to try to get back to those heights, and the 1960s were a time where many strategies for recovery were attempted, some of which I will be explored in this thesis.

Exploitation

Exploitation is a key term in this thesis, and it is a term which can be defined in several different ways. David Church defines exploitation as “films commonly associated with imitation, excess and crass commercialism.” (2015: 3) Eric Schaefer's epic history (1999) and exploration of what he termed the exploitation film of the United States raises some interesting issues in comparison with the British film industry. His definition of the exploitation film is relevant here when he discusses its original usage, explaining that the term is derived from “the practice of exploitation, advertising or promotional techniques that went over and above typical posters, trailers and newspaper ads.” (Schaefer, 1999: 4) Where films lacked identifiable stars or other recognisable elements the films needed an extra edge, which traditionally consisted of a forbidden topic, such as drug use or sexual transgression. The films were cheaply made and independently produced. His study highlights one of the main differences between the US and British film industry, and explains why the American model of exploitation cinema as discussed in his book was not replicated here. Essentially the film industry in the US was self-regulated, meaning that anyone could distribute anything without legal intervention. The Production Code was introduced in the early 1930s in order to control mainstream cinema, effectively dealing with the constant cries of moral outrage from organisations like the Catholic League of Decency about immorality in Hollywood. This meant that producers were working under a strict set of guidelines as to what was permissible in films and what was

not.³⁷ Outside of this system, enterprising independent producers could take films from town to town that featured sex, drug use, miscegenation, medical footage and anything else that would shock and draw audiences. They were able to offer something that the regular movies could not.

The exploitation film is closely associated with the body, and as such presents parallels with the horror film. Philip Simpson (2004) discusses Joan Hawkins in relation to how mainstream critics associate horror with other “body genres.” This can explain the blurred boundaries between horror, exploitation, sexploitation and pornography; genres that can also be encompassed by the term ‘cult.’ Cult can play into discussions of high and low culture, with physical responses to films falling under the latter as opposed to an intellectual response associated with ‘respectable’ cinema. Simpson discusses a possible shift in critical responses to horror, with a move away from essentialist arguments on universal characteristics to “an analysis of how the horror genre is an ever-changing system determined more by the interplay of different audiences in different times than by any inherent meaning or formulaic structures in the text itself.” (ibid.: 87) This idea of audiences changing generic definitions through time period or geography can explain the reception of some of the films in this thesis. It can also apply to more than just the horror genre. Part of the argument through this investigation is that the way international cinema is perceived now is different from the 1960s, and the way it was distributed and marketed certainly is.

Joan Hawkins’ (2000) discussion of body genres ties in with Linda Williams work (1995), describing the films concerned as directly addressing the spectator's body. She describes these films as “subversive” cinema. She cites Garrett (1996) who referred to foreign films of the 1960s as “erudite skin flicks.”³⁸ Schaefer also confirmed this when he described how exploitation cinema distributors in the 1940s and 1950s in America would show European films such as *Club de Femmes* (*Girls Club*, 1936, Jacques Deval, France: Les Films Jacques Deval) and *Ekstase* (*Ecstasy*, Gustav Machatý, 1933, Czechoslovakia/Austria: Elektafilm). (1999: 332-33) This form of distribution helped to cement the idea

³⁷ For more information on the Production Code, sometimes referred to as The Hays Code, named for Will Hays, the Postmaster General who was tasked with bringing order to Hollywood, see Miller (1994).

³⁸ Stephen Garret, Andre Balazs (1996: 85)

in American audiences' minds that European films were salacious and titillating, an attitude which audiences in Britain would begin to develop in the 1950s through imported nudist films, and would become a fully-fledged belief by the end of the 1960s.

Andrew Spicer has presented research on Michael Klinger on the Klinger Archive website³⁹ including interviews with people who worked with Klinger. He is presenting this work within the framework of The New Film History, explaining that it “stresses that cultural phenomena are the result of a plurality of causal factors rather than looking for a single explanation.”⁴⁰ By using a methodology that covers a variety of correspondence, scripts, financial documentation and publicity material Spicer is able to argue that we need “a more inclusive reconfiguration of film history as an uneven 'messy' cultural history.”⁴¹ By drawing on the work of Geoff Eley he relates this type of methodology to the ‘new cultural history,’ contending that New Film History needs to be re-conceived as part of a broader and more inclusive cultural history. Eley (2005) stresses general epistemological uncertainties, meaning that historians should no longer be searching for grand narratives and totalising histories. This switch from a macro to a micro approach through which to filter this research feels particularly liberating, as it allows for unexpected discoveries.

International Examples

Guback felt that the international co-production, most specifically those with Hollywood or British involvement, was detrimental to European cinema. Of these films he stated:

Their shallowness and cardboard characters are camouflaged with dazzling colors (sic), wide screens, and directorial slickness... Films of this genre are not a form of cultural exchange. In reality they are anti-culture, the antithesis of human culture. (1969: 165-66)

This attitude reveals Guback's own assumptions of the cultural capital of European film over English-speaking cinema. He has demonstrated a preference for foreign-language art-house cinema, assuming that the more 'low brow' popular cinema is somehow less

³⁹ <http://michaelklingerpapers.uwe.ac.uk>, accessed February 21st, 2013

⁴⁰ Spicer (2010) “Understanding the Independent Film Producer: Michael Klinger and the New Film History,” a paper given at The Centre for Cinema and Television History, De Montfort University, Leicester, 17 November 2010

⁴¹ *ibid.*

valid on the world stage. There is some validity in this, in so far that one accepts that popular European cinema was a cinema without borders. Italian films in particular were designed to appeal to an international audience, whether it was using Hollywood or British stars or passing off the deserts of Almeria as the American West. Guback's assertion is somewhat narrow-minded, perhaps made because in 1969 he was too close to his subject to have any real perspective. With the benefit of hindsight, one can see that a cultural exchange was taking place, which is after all one of the main tenets of this research.

Four of the main European countries which provided films for import to the UK were Italy, France, Spain and West Germany. Italy would appear to be one of the main European producers of popular film during the 1960s according to initial findings. The research of Marcarini identifies four hundred and seventy-one Italian films distributed in the UK between 1960 and 1970. (Marcarini, 2001: 356-395) It is perhaps no surprise then that so much has been written on Italian cinema. The writing has often tended to be focused on the post-war neo-realist films like *Bitter Rice* (*Riso amaro*, 1949, Giuseppe De Santis, Italy: Lux Film) and *The Bicycle Thieves* (*Ladri di biciclette*, 1948, Vittorio De Sica, Italy: Produzioni De Sica). These were prestige productions for Italy that travelled the world's art house cinemas. According to Mark Betz *Riso amaro* linked neo-realism to the popular Italian melodramas of that period and lead to the rise of major female stars of the 1950s. (2013: 449) Mira Liehm referred to these leading ladies as “pink vamps.” (1984:142) With their sexy peasant clothing and “carefully unkempt hair... the pink vamp was the Italian version of the American pin-up.” (ibid.) As Betz points out, it could have been the fact that *Bitter Rice* was part-financed by an American studio that could have encouraged the filmmakers to focus so heavily on star Silvana Mangano's legs. He refers to Silverman's analysis of a specific scene in the film:

“As [Mangano] moves to the middle distance she raises her skirt out of the water to just below her buttocks. Our eyes... take in the movement of the skirt, the revelation once again of her body. Not only voyeurism and the gaze... but the documentable trace of American capital investment is marked by the movement of that skirt.” (Silverman, 1984: 43)

As will be discussed in further detail in later chapters, films like this helped to establish the international reputation of European cinema for “sexationalism.”⁴²

Christopher Wagstaff (1998) wrote about another Italian cinema, that of the genre films, and since then others have focused in this side of the industry. Austin Fisher (2014), for instance, has explored the political subtext evident in the Italian Spaghetti Westerns, finding that often the films were a product of the radical left-wing politics of 1960s Italy. Following the war, the Italian studio system was in a state of near collapse, and Chibnall (2013) proposes that it was an influx of British producers that actually helped the industry get back on its feet and back into self-sustained production. From a practical point of view this makes absolute sense, as the British technicians, producers, directors and talent who came to Italy to shoot British films worked alongside Italian crews and encouraged the industry to get back to producing films on an industrial scale. The use of locations also helped to spread the impression back in Britain and around the world that Italy was recovering from the war, and was a beautiful country. This helped to dispel the public's collective memory of war time horrors and opened audiences up to the idea of Italian film. It also demonstrated the value of shooting in Italy, and paved the way for Hollywood to come in in the mid-1950s to begin shooting epics such as *Quo Vadis* (1951, Mervyn Leroy, USA: MGM), which would provide even wider exposure and inspire the Italians to shoot epics of their own.

Church gives an important explanation of the cyclic nature of the Italian exploitation industry, known in Italian as *filoni*, where earlier successes were imitated. It is the concept of *filoni* which enables the historian to see the Italian popular film industry of the 1950s to the 1970s in genre terms; the *peplum*, the western, horror, the giallo, *commedia erotica* (the sex comedy) and the *poliziotteschi* (action crime films). When examining their popular output through the lens of *filoni*, often the Italian industry was producing a greater volume of films than Hollywood. (Church, 2015: 1) Dalle Vacche summarised the diminishing nature of the *filone*:

Rather than ‘genres’ in the Hollywood sense, [*filoni* are] well-planned investments of the industry into a regulated, but also stimulating,

⁴² Borrowing from Stuart Ryan's description of ways “a film can become a sexation.” (Ryan, 1973: 116)

oscillation between repetition and difference, convention and invention. Unlike the Hollywood genre, the Italian *filone* has a brief life span and a hypertrophic size. It would seem that the *filone* is a genre that degrades itself into empty redundancy. (1992: 56)

The way Vacche stresses the industrial element of the Italian film industry here is indicative of the attitude many scholars have had in the past to popular cinema: a mass-produced form of entertainment with little in the way of creativity or redeeming features. It cannot be denied that the *filoni* were indeed an oscillation between repetition and difference, with sets, costumes and characters in a constant process of recycling. It is perhaps a little simplistic to argue in return that some of these films were still able to achieve artistic successes, indeed an aesthetic appreciation is beyond the remit of this research, yet it is surely undeniable that many *filone* films represent artistic achievement despite being part of a production machine.

Christopher Wagstaff explains that the Italian public were not enamoured of the neo-realist films, and in an attempt to woo audiences away from mainstream Hollywood fare, a strategy of the systematic exploitation of popular genres was implemented during the 1940s, mainly melodramas, comedies, musicals and adventures. By the mid-1950s 40% of the industry's earnings were from foreign box office takings, and between the years 1960-1965 over 117 billion lira (around £50,700,000 in UK currency at the time) were earned from exporting Italian films. (1998: 74) This was a major industry. Production practices were developed which enabled an easier route into foreign cinemas, such as casting American or British actors, anglicising names of Italian actors or directors (although this was mainly done to fool Italian audiences into thinking they were watching Hollywood movies⁴³) and post-sync dubbing of films into English or other languages as required. According to Wagstaff Britain became a major importer of Italian adventure films in the 1960s, partly with a B-movie function. Often the films were cut to fit a double-bill requirement sometimes by as much as forty minutes, and the titles could be changed. This form of filmmaking highlights “cultural cross-breeding and interpenetration, not only across borders but also within them.” (Higson, 2006: 19) Koichi Iwabuchi refers to these type of cross-bred films as “culturally odourless” products, where often Italian films disguised their otherness in an attempt to pass as British or American. (2002: 27)

⁴³ Adrian Smith, “Cowboys and Cannibals: an interview with Ruggero Deodato,” *Diabolique*, Issue no. 8, Jan/ Feb 2012

Romana Film were particularly good at producing cheap, popular films, often using the same sets for more than one film. The films became known as peplum or sword and sandal movies. Other studios got involved too, and Rushing estimates that around three hundred peplum films were made between 1957 and 1965. (2008: 163) The heroes' names were interchangeable too, and Goliath, Maciste, Hercules and Samson were often swapped around with seeming abandon when dubbed into English.⁴⁴ Wagstaff demonstrates how the industry transformed from being a producer of "Italian" films, or films that were specifically about Italian subjects, to being a major exporter of popular genre films aimed at an international audience. Rushing points to the appeal that the peplum exuded was in part due to its nonheteronormative attractions, most notably the well-oiled musclemen filling out the title roles. He goes on to point out that the films are however essentially prepubescent, not recognising either sexual or racial difference, or to put it succinctly, "the 'men in miniskirts' with enormous chests are matched by the women in miniskirts - also with enormous chests." (2008: 187) This cross-appeal and essential childishness undoubtedly contributed to the massive success of the genre, especially overseas. Like most popular Italian cinema *filoni*, the peplum burned bright but only for a short number of years.

Popular Italian cinema is explored further in a new collection of essays edited by Louis Bayman and Sergio Rigoletto, which delves further into the dichotomy of most writing of Italian film history being focused on neo-realism and the art cinema of Visconti et.al, despite the major part the industry played in world genre and popular cinema. They point out that Italians were the most voracious film consumers at the time when compared with the rest of Europe. In 1965 513 million cinema tickets were bought in Italy, compared with 259 million in France and 326 million in the UK, countries with comparable populations. (Bayman & Rigoletto, 2013: 3) So although the industry was looking outwards internationally, they were also providing home audiences with a huge variety of product. From 1949 to 1971 the percentage of Italian films in Italian cinemas went

⁴⁴ *Zorro contro Maciste* (1963, Umberto Lenzi, Italy,) became *Samson and the Slave Queen*, and *Maciste contro il vampiro* (1961, Sergio Corbucci and Giacomo Gentilomo, Italy,) became *Goliath Against the Vampire*. Other popular Romana Films included *Hercules and the Masked Rider* (*Golia e il cavaliere mascherato*, 1963, Piero Pierotti,).

from 17.3% to 65%, a statistic which would no doubt make jealous British film producers weep with envy. (ibid.)

The significance of Italian films in this study cannot be understated. O'Brien points out that according to industry magazine *Films and Filming* (1961) *Hercules Unchained/ercole e la regina di Lidia* was the most popular film in Britain in 1960 according to box office receipts. This is despite featuring "a former Mr. Universe, scantily clad bimbos, and a cast of fifth-rate actors, from whom we are further distanced by poor dubbing." (O'Brien, 2013: 198) The film was also a huge hit in America, the success helping fuel the peplum genre. This highlights a point which helps strengthen the main thrust of the argument here, which is that popular international film played a hugely important role in British cinemas. This fact also demonstrates that *Films and Filming* is another vital archival source, alongside *Monthly Film Bulletin*.

Wagstaff (2013) raises an important point when discussing this notion of popular cinema. Although I am attempting to paint a broad picture of the distribution of European cinema in Britain, it is becoming apparent that a great deal of the films will fall into this potential category, as opposed to the more usual application of the "art film" tag to foreign-language films. Wagstaff attempts to define exactly what popular is, particularly whether it is a quantitative measure or a qualitative one. He suggests the dangers of basing it purely on box office receipts, as in order to deduce from box-office statistics the size and type of the actual audience for a given film you would need to factor in the ticket price for individual screenings. He is relating this specifically to a study of popularity within Italy itself, but this is also a consideration when looking at box office statistics for the UK.

Bergfelder has written about a previously neglected area of European film studies, that of German popular cinema in the 1960s, which features details of productions and co-productions. He explains that this period was one of "intense cultural hybridisation and internationalisation in European cinema at large, in terms both of production practices and industrial contexts, and of audience preferences." (2005: 10) This is a summation which will be expanded upon by looking at a wider European context. Many of the films

were distributed around the world, from the Eurospy films of 'Kommissar X',⁴⁵ the sex film boom spearheaded in part by the *Schulmädchenreport* (*Schoolgirls Report*) series⁴⁶ and the Edgar Wallace 'Krimi'⁴⁷ series; films which were deliberately made with an eye on the international market, specifically the British market. Most of the films were set in Britain and based on works by the prolific British author, and sometimes that of his son Bryan Edgar Wallace. Several of these were co-productions with Harry Allan Towers.⁴⁸

Bergfelder also explains how co-productions between European countries works, and noted that there was a far better relationship between Italy and France in that period than existed between other countries, due to an agreement signed in 1949. (ibid.: 55) Co-productions were potentially lucrative, and this explains why there were so many. State support could be found from each contributing country if approved. The levels of bureaucracy in West Germany made co-productions far more difficult than with others, and West German producers and their co-production partners frequently complained about state intervention. With both the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Trade

⁴⁵ The 'Kommissar X' films were based on a series of books about private detective Jo Walker. They are attributed to "Bert F. Island", a pseudonym for Paul Alfred Mueller. Over 620 titles were published in Germany between 1959 and 1970. Seven films were produced in this period with either German or Italian directors. See Tim Lucas, "'We Love You, Jo Walker...': The Kommissar X Legacy," *Video Watchdog*, No. 175, Jul/Aug 2013.

⁴⁶ The first film, *Schulmädchen-Report: Was Eltern nicht für möglich halten*, (*Schoolgirl Report: What Parents Don't Think Is Possible*) was released in 1970 in Germany and by 1980 there were a total of thirteen films, plus many copycat films such as *Urlaubsreport* (1971, *Holiday Report*) and *Krankenschwestern-Report* (1972, *Nurse Report*). Several of the Schoolgirl Report films were released in the UK in an unconnected series. The first film was distributed by New Realm (one of E.J. Fancey's companies) in 1976 as *Confessions of a Sixth Form Girl* in a cut version. For more information see Bergfelder (2005: 225).

⁴⁷ 'Krimi' is the term given to a particular set of German crime films from the 1950s and 1960s, derived from 'kriminalfilm,' which were usually crime and murder thrillers. <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kriminalfilm>, accessed 13th April 2015, translated from the German. The krimi are credited by some as inspiring those Italian crime thrillers which became known as 'giallo.'

⁴⁸ Bergfelder identifies thirty-eight Edgar Wallace films produced between 1959 and 1972, and a further ten based on Bryan Edgar Wallace stories. Titles such as *The Dead Eyes of London* (*Die toten Augen von London*, 1961, Alfred Vohrer, Rialto Film: West Germany), *The Phantom of Soho* (*Das Phantom von Soho*, 1964, Franz Josef Gottlieb, West Germany: Central Cinema Company Film (CCC)) and *The Body in the Thames* (*Die Tote aus der Themse*, 1971, Harald Philipp, West Germany: Rialto Film Preben-Philipsen, Rialto Film) demonstrate the intended cross-channel appeal of these German-produced films. See Bergfelder (2005) for full details.

getting involved through every stage of production, and even demanding cuts or reshoots, it made West Germany a lesser partner in European film-making. Despite the hurdles to be jumped, it was still considered worthwhile, the most notable example being British producer Harry Alan Towers, who with his company Towers of London launched a slew of co-productions with Germany, occasionally broadening the arrangement to include Spain, such as his pair of *Fu Manchu* films directed by Jess Franco⁴⁹. The German national industry was one which made a significant contribution to British cinemas, and in the early 1970s a co-production agreement was signed between Britain and West Germany after Britain became part of the EU. Bergfelder notes that during the 1960s West Germany entered into co-productions with countries as far away as Thailand, South Africa and Hong Kong, in a reaction to the demand for adventure thrillers and Eurospy films. The industry became genre-focused, which perhaps led inevitably towards the low-budget sex film and sex comedies.

Edward Lamberti (2012) presents an overview of film censorship in the UK, which has followed a remarkably different path to that of America. Since the establishment of the Cinematograph Act of 1909 any cinema needed to be licensed by the local authority, for safety purposes, following several outbreaks of fire owing to the flammability of nitrate film. The act began to be used for censorship purposes, which was why the industry fought back by creating the British Board of Film Censors in 1912 as a form of self-regulation. Local authorities quickly began working with the BBFC, adopting their certificate or recommendations for the films being screened in their area.⁵⁰

In 1977 the Criminal Law Act was used to extend the Obscene Publications Act to cover films in cinemas. Prior to this a ‘common law test of indecency’ was applied, which was stricter but more difficult to define. The Obscene Publications Act (originating from 1857, and updated in 1959 and 1964), made it virtually impossible for filmmakers to show explicit material like that seen in the exploitation films of America. The 1959 act, the most relevant to this thesis, states that “an article shall be deemed to be obscene if its

⁴⁹ *The Blood of Fu Manchu* (1968, Jess Franco, Spain, West Germany, UK, USA: Ada Films, Commonwealth United Entertainment, Constantin Film) and *The Castle of Fu Manchu* (1969, Jess Franco, West Germany/ Italy/ Spain/ UK/ Liechtenstein: Balcázar Producciones Cinematográficas/ International Cinema/ Italian International Film)

⁵⁰ For a full history see Lamberti, 2012

effect or (where the article comprises two or more distinct items) the effect of any one of its items is, if taken as a whole, such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it.”⁵¹ An interesting exception is stated, in that “It is hereby declared that the opinion of experts as to the literary, artistic, scientific or other merits of an article may be admitted in any proceedings under this Act either to establish or to negative the said ground.”⁵² This “high culture” loophole, also applied prior to 1977, allowed for films deemed to have artistic merit, which in the eyes of the BBFC generally meant European directors with critically established reputations, to include material which British directors were denied. Therefore, the first film to contain full-frontal female nudity was the Swedish film *Hugs and Kisses (Puss and Kram)*, 1966, Jonas Cornell, Sweden: Sandrews), and the first full nudity allowed in a British film was *Blow Up* (1966, Michelangelo Antonioni, UK/ Italy/ U.S.A., Bridge Films, Carlo Ponti Production, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), which was directed by an Italian. (Trevelyan, 1973: 115) Once the floodgates were open many British distributors imported European and international explicit films, some of which will arise in this thesis.

David Andrews also traces the reputation that European cinema developed for sex back to *Ekstase* (also known as *Extase*, *Ecstasy*, and in some countries as *Symphony of Love*, 1933, Gustav Machatý, Czechoslovakia/ Austria: Elektafilm), although he wrongly identifies it as a German production (it was in fact shot in three different languages, Czech, French and German). A romantic drama starring Hedy Kiesler (later Hedy Lamarr) as a frustrated wife who meets a younger lover, *Ekstase* was controversial not only due to a scene of the then nineteen-year-old Hedy running and swimming naked, but because it was the first film to feature a woman achieving an orgasm. The young engineer she meets performs cunnilingus, the camera remaining in close-up on her ecstatic expression. The film caused a sensation when it was screened at the second Venice Film Festival, with the Vatican in uproar, and Hedy Kiesler's tycoon husband Fritz Mandl spent \$280,000 (US) trying to buy up every available copy and production still. (Miller (1995: 102) The film was refused a certificate by the BBFC, only finally receiving a UK release

⁵¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/7-8/66/contents>, accessed 20th July 2013

⁵² *ibid.*

in 1997, where it was laughably granted a 'PG' certificate.⁵³ In the U.S. in 1935 *Extase* was the first film to be blocked by customs, but a modified version was screened around the country before being refused an MPPDA (Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America) certificate in 1937. (Andrews, 2014: 57)

Despite the difficulty in seeing the actual film, *Extase* was instrumental in forming the collective notion in English-speaking countries that 'foreign films' meant sex. Andrew Sarris refers to this as the "ooh-la-la factor."⁵⁴ This factor was something that film distributors would trade on and exploit for decades to come, and arguably it is an attitude that has never quite left us. Andrews quotes American exploitation director Barry Mahon, who summarised this attitude when he said, "It's European, therefore it's artistic and consequently it's risqué." (2014: 59) This attitude was not just reserved for sexploitation. Tohill and Tombs credit Italian gothic horror films with demonstrating "the Italian taste for classy sex and violence." (1995: 31) The early gothic films of Mario Bava, notably *Black Sunday* (*La maschera del demonio*, 1960, Italy: Galatea Film/ Jolly Film)⁵⁵ and *Black Sabbath* (*I tre volti della paura*, 1963, Italy/ France: Emmepi Cinematografica/ Galatea Film/ Alta Vista Film Production)⁵⁶ were noted at the time for going further in their horror imagery and sexual frankness than either their Hammer or Roger Corman's Poe series counterparts. This is in part evidenced by the fact that it took almost eight years for the British Board of Film Censors to pass the former.⁵⁷

Audience research published by Matthew Jones and Melvyn Stokes on memories of 1960s British cinemas confirms that "to many sections of the British population in the 1960s, the word 'continental' was synonymous with 'pornographic,'" (Stokes & Jones, 2017: 80) with one respondent remembering a local cinema "that showed continental and nudist films (which seemed to go together then) including stills from the films in its outside display, a magnet for pubescent boys," and another recalling the Paris cinema in

⁵³ Distributed by Eureka Video. <http://www.bbfc.co.uk/releases/ekstase-1997> accessed March 10, 2015

⁵⁴ "SUMMER FILMS: INTERNATIONAL; Why the Foreign Film Has Lost Its Cachet," *New York Times*, 2 May 1999, New York, NY

⁵⁵ Released in the UK as *Revenge of the Vampire* by Border Films in 1968 and in the US as *Black Sunday* by A.I.P. in 1961.

⁵⁶ Released in the UK by Anglo-Amalgamated and in the US by AIP in 1964.

⁵⁷ *Revenge of the Vampire* received an 'X' certificate on 15 May 1968. <http://bbfc.co.uk/releases/revenge-vampire-1968> accessed 1 February 2018.

Coventry in which was screened “foreign language films in its double bills, usually programmed for the nudity they included.” (ibid.) Stokes and Jones conclude that the boundaries between what they term “mainstream” or “more serious European films” and “pornographic” remain “permeable in memory.” (ibid.) It appears from their phraseology that they are the ones concluding that these films were pornographic, the interview subjects using more euphemistic descriptions like “Continental films [were] a bit ‘racier’ than mainstream British and Hollywood films.” (ibid.) They make no attempt, in this article at least, to distinguish between their idea of pornography and “serious” films which were distributed as sex films. The distinction may seem subtle, but nevertheless I will attempt to identify the differences in this thesis.

The current critical reading in this area suggests that there is still much to be learned. A history which explores what British audiences were consuming in cinemas will tell a very different story to that which focuses on the British film production industry, as conventional histories tend to do. This thesis will bring us closer to understanding of the cultural experience of cinema for regular audiences, and the important role that distribution played within it.

CHAPTER TWO

Unbelievable Power and Staggering Strength! Swords-and-Sandals on British Screens

For seven years from 1959 an Italian genre⁵⁸ known as the peplum gave British audiences images of well-oiled strongmen and scantily-attired women in epic adventures across vast swathes of history and mythology. During this brief period, from the release of *Hercules* (*Le fatiche di ercole*, 1958, Pietro Francisci, Italy: O.S.C.A.R. Film/ Galatea Film) to the time the *filone* died out on a mass scale in favour of the spaghetti western, Burke (2011) claims that around 200 films were produced. Solomon (2014) proposes that between 1960 and 1965 three or four dozen peplum films were produced in Italy per year, which would put the total nearer to 300. Bondanella estimated a slightly more conservative 170, using the dates 1957 – 1964. His research suggests approximately 10% of all Italian film produced in this period belonged to the peplum genre. (Bondanella, 2001: 159)

They became known as ‘peplum’ films because of the association French film critics made with the type of Greek tunic often worn by the characters on screen, and peplum is the most common word used when discussing the genre with any degree of seriousness. According to Rushing (2016) it was the French who were among the first to take the genre seriously, with most critics and film historians taking a less constructive view. Historian Gerald Mast dismissed them as “cheap, trash films.” (Mast, 1976: 364) A more disparaging term often used is ‘sword-and-sandal,’ again with reference to the costumes, and props, seen onscreen. Tim Lucas, referring to the genre as “Italian spectacle films,” describes them as “thinly veiled excuses to recycle leftover sets, props, and wardrobe from costly international co-productions like *Helen of Troy*, *Esther and the King*, *The Colossus of Rhodes* and *Sodom and Gomorrah*.” (Lucas, 2007: 373) Solomon refers to the films as “Ancients,” (2014: 163) meaning films set in classical antiquity. Rushing notes that in Italy film critics used the phrase “*film mitologico* (mythological films),” (2016: 2) in a somewhat critical tone, although it could be argued that this is one of the most accurate descriptions of the genre. Ennio De Concini, the co-writer of *Hercules*,

⁵⁸ Genres are often referred to as *filone* in Italian, which directly translates as “vein,” suggesting a long connected, flowing series of films.

claimed that with that film he invented “the so-called *sandaloni*,” (Lucas, 2007: 193) which appears to be a portmanteau of ‘sandal’ and ‘filone,’ and one British film reviewer in 1960 fittingly dubbed the genre an “Italian series of comic strip Greek legends.”⁵⁹ Also sometimes known as ‘gladiator movies,’⁶⁰ in this chapter these *film mitologico* will be referred to as ‘peplum.’

The main theoretical and analytical approaches to the peplum are to view them through either a lens of haptic homoeroticism and sexuality, such as the work of Rushing (2008 & 2016) and Hunt (1993), or as prime examples of camp, as epitomised in the writing of Susan Sontag (1978). Rushing focuses on the way that the action within the peplum often halts so that the camera can spend time lingering over the taught muscular frame of the hero. Rushing notes that in ancient Greece the peplum was “an article of *female* clothing,” (2008: 164, italics in original) which adds a further layer of transgressive sexuality to the films. These strong, heroic men are effectively wearing drag.

Susan Sontag’s “Notes on Camp” explains how the peplum is a quintessential example of Camp: “Clothes, furniture, all the elements of visual décor, for instance, make up a large part of Camp. For Camp art is often decorative art, emphasising texture, sensuous surface, and style at the expense of content.” (Sontag, 1978: 287) It is difficult to argue against the suggestion that the plots are often secondary to the visual style, even when those visuals look quite cheap. The peplum film, with the genre name itself being derived from the tunics worn by both men and women, stresses the visible, whether it is the sets, costumes or the sensuous musculature of the hero.

Sontag goes on to explain that, “There is Camp in such bad movies as *The Prodigal* and *Samson and Delilah*, [or] the series of Italian color [sic] spectacles featuring the super-hero Maciste... because, in their relative unpretentiousness and vulgarity, they are more extreme and irresponsible in their fantasy – and therefore touching and quite enjoyable.” (ibid.: 285) She also identifies the “exaggerated he-man-ness of Steve Reeves,” when

⁵⁹ “Ercole a la regina di lidia (Hercules Unchained), Italy/ France, 1959,” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, August 1960, p.112

⁶⁰As demonstrated by the distinctly inappropriate Captain Oveur when he asks, “Joey, do you like movies about gladiators?” in *Airplane!* (Jim Abrahams/ David Zucker/ Jerry Zucker, USA: Paramount Pictures), perpetuating the homosexual subtext of the peplum.

explaining that camp celebrates an exaggeration of sexual characteristics and personality mannerisms. (ibid.: 279) The peplum genre has specific elements which are used time and time again; at some point in the proceedings everything will stop for a choreographed dance number, and throughout opportunities will be taken for the camera to linger on the glistening “beefy bodybuilders in even scantier costumes.” (Rushing, 2016: 2)

Although acknowledging these viewpoints, this chapter will argue that a sexualised, camp view of the peplum ignores the fact that in almost every case, when repackaged in the UK these films were distributed and exhibited for young audiences. To illustrate this argument this chapter will draw on archival evidence in the form of publicity materials, censorship records and contemporary reviews to explore the distribution and reception of the peplum in the UK. Censorship records are particularly revealing as they are one of the main sources of contemporary documentation related to the films in question and the distributors behind them, given that no archives have been kept by the families of the independent distributors under discussion in this thesis. The fact that these films were also intended for young audiences is also evidenced by the information on table 2.1, which reveals that forty-six out of the fifty-five titles mentioned were released with “U” certificates, with many being cut to achieve that rating.

Drawing on the work of Burke (2011), Dyer (1997) and others, critical analyses of the film texts will also be discussed in relation to readings of imperialism, fascism and Italian political subtexts. Italy’s recent experience of Fascist dictatorship under Benito Mussolini, his dismissal by King Victor Emmanuel III and subsequent establishment of the short-lived Italian Social Republic, or Salò Republic, in the North had been a traumatic one, and Mussolini’s downfall dramatic. These were difficult memories for the Italian people, whether they had been supporters of fascism or not, and the battles of Hercules and his brethren to remove tyranny and restore rule and order to kingdoms far and wide were an opportunity for audiences to revisit social and political history, securely held in the reassuring muscular arms of a true hero.

When looking at the mass of European films distributed in the UK in the 1960s, the Italian film industry was one of the most prolific European producers of popular films at that time. For example, Italy was either solely responsible for, or involved through co-

production, in fifty-five films which were distributed in the UK in 1960 alone.⁶¹ France was a close second with fifty-two films in that same year. Given that 113 films of non-English speaking origin were distributed in 1960, this means that Italy was responsible or partly responsible for 62% of the non-British or American films playing in British cinemas in that one year. When considering every film reviewed by *Monthly Film Bulletin* for this period, a total of 455, the Italian studios were involved in 12% of the total films distributed in the UK. This included, as will be discussed later, the most popular and financially successful film of the year.

Although around 200 - 300 peplum films were produced in Italy from 1959 to 1966, only around a quarter of these were imported into the UK.⁶² The information in table 2.1 identifies around fifty peplum films in British cinemas, from the release of *Hercules* in 1959 to the popularity of the genre diminishing in 1966. The table uses specific, mainly nominative search terms to demonstrate the ubiquity of Hercules and his colleagues in British cinemas, and is not a definitive list of peplum titles. 1963 appears to be the height of the peplum boom in Britain, with sixteen films appearing on Table 2.1, compared with only five for 1962 and fourteen for 1964. These films were very important to independent distributors, as noted in the Institute for Economic Affairs report on the British film industry in 1966: “Many of them deal in second features or dubbed continental works. The musclemen, monsters and maniacs of many of the latter, if of debatable artistic merit, provide a vital reserve of screen material for lean times which makes independent cinema-owners anxious to keep such distributors in business.” (Kelly, 1966: 70)

There were many other peplum films released during that period which did not feature any of the search terms and so do not appear on Table 2.1, such as *Head of a Tyrant* (*Giuditta e oloferne*, 1958, Fernando Cerchio, Italy/ France: Vic Film/ Explorer Film)⁶³ and *Blood of the Warriors* (*La schiava di Roma*, 1960, Sergio Greco, Italy: Atlantica Cinematografica Produzione Films).⁶⁴ As such Table 2.1 should be taken as an overview

⁶¹ See Table 5.1 for *Monthly Film Bulletin* data from 1960.

⁶² Evidence presented by Kinnard & Crnkovich (2017) suggests that the number of peplum films sold to America was much higher, but this includes television packages. There is little current evidence to suggest that the peplum film was screened on British TV screens in the 1960s in anything like the same level.

⁶³ Released in 1963 through New Realm Entertainment.

⁶⁴ Released in 1962 through Compton-Cameo.

of the popularity of the peplum, rather than as a definitive list of films distributed. Compton imported eleven of the titles in the Table 2.1, and Golden Era came a close second with ten, and were the last distributors to give up on the peplum film in 1966.⁶⁵ Tony Klinger, son of Compton co-founder Michael Klinger, recalled the work the peplum sometimes required before release:

We called them Italian films I guess. They would be almost identical to the American films, with a similar title, and then with the voices. Films like *Fury of the Vikings*.⁶⁶ Actually, the films weren't that bad. I remember doing the pos-cutting of some of those, because we had to pos-cut it because the sequences didn't make sense.⁶⁷ We had to help them a bit, and we'd get them re-voiced as we got better at it.⁶⁸

The information in Table 2.1 shows that Hercules was the most popular name used for a peplum hero in the British versions of the films, appearing in fifteen titles, with Goliath starring in seven films. Gladiator was used eleven times. Maciste was the hero at the centre of many of the films in their original Italian, but they were often retitled in Britain and the USA fearing a lack of name recognition, such as *Colossus of the Stone Age* (*Maciste contro i mostri*, 1962, Guido Malatesta, Italy: E.U.R. Cinematografica), distributed by Compton in 1964. Maciste did still appear in four films in Britain, the first two appearing in 1963. The slippery nature of character names and changing titles often reflected the historical indifference of the films themselves, as will be addressed later.

Christopher Wagstaff explained that although the Italian popular genres grew out of “an original operation carried out by artists: in the case of the peplum, the innovation was carried out by Ennio De Concini and Petro Francisci... After that, the waves that followed were producer-driven.” (Wagstaff, 2014: 151) Italian director Sergio Corbucci explained regarding the Western genre, although the same process can be equally applied to the peplum, “I hardly had time to finish one before I had to start on the next... Our films were so much presold on foreign markets that their budgets were amply covered right from the start.” (Quoted in *ibid.*) The genre films were market-driven, their overseas popularity

⁶⁵ No titles appeared in 1967, but three belated titles were distributed in 1968. See table 2.1.

⁶⁶ *Fury of the Vikings* is now better known as *Erik the Conqueror* (*Gli invasori*, 1961, Mario Bava, Italy/ France: Galatea Film, Lyre Films, Critérion Film).

⁶⁷ Pos-cutting means editing the actual 35mm film prints.

⁶⁸ Interview with Tony Klinger, 30 May 2017. See appendix, p.357

fuelling the production-line. Wagstaff also identified ingenious production methods companies such as Romana Film would use to maximise efficiency; films would be made “one ‘inside’ the other,” meaning that a scriptwriter would be asked to develop a script using existing sets from another film. Thus, in 1963 Romana Film made five films featuring heroes such as Goliath, Maciste and Samson, with some films destined for export whilst others made “inside” were for the customary local market. (Wagstaff, 1998: 83-84) This technique could also be used to offset an expensive production; what was known as a “*film di recupero*” (recovery film). (Curti, 2017: 152) One Maciste film came about because one of the production companies behind *Marco Polo* (*Marco Polo – L’avventura di un italiano in Cina*, 1962, Piero Pierotti/ Hugo Fregonese, Italy/ France: Alta Vista/ Filmorsa/ Panda Film), commissioned a script specifically to exploit the impressive sets and number of extras hired, the result of which was *Samson and the 7 Miracles of the World* (*Maciste alla corte del Gran Khan*, 1961, Riccardo Freda, Italy/ France: Panda Film/ Gallus Films). (ibid: 153)

With two exceptions, the films under discussion here will be those handled by the distributors introduced in the opening chapter. Both *Hercules* and *Hercules Unchained* (*Ercole e la regina di lidia*, 1959, Pietro Francisci, Italy/ France: Lux Film/ Galatea Film) were so fundamental to the success and popularity of the peplum that they must be explored, despite not being distributed by Compton, Gala or E.J. Fancey. The former had a small independent release from Archway, whereas the latter had the full power of Warner-Pathé behind it. As a result, *Hercules Unchained*, according to published box office figures, was the most popular film in Britain in 1960.⁶⁹ This remarkable fact will be discussed in more detail later. Examining other peplum films from the distributors mentioned also provides an opportunity to see how they handled films for a young audience, contrary to most of the other examples discussed elsewhere in this thesis.

From Compton the films *Samson* (*Sansone*, 1961, Gianfranco Parolini, Italy: Cineproduzioni Associate (Rome)) and *Jason and the Golden Fleece* (*I giganti della tessaglia*, 1960, Riccardo Freda, Italy/ France: Alexandra Cinematografica/ Société Cinématographique Lyre) will be explored, and from Gala *Goliath and the Vampires* (*Maciste contro il vampiro*, 1961, Giacomo Gentilomo, Italy: Società Ambrosiana

⁶⁹ *Films and Filming*, 1961: 29, as quoted by O’Brien (2013: 198)

Cinematografica), one of very few peplum films Gala appear to have handled, and the only film in table 2.1 to be rated 'X' by the BBFC. E.J. Fancey did not import many peplum films, which does seem unusual given their keen sense of exploiting popular trends. Scouring the releases by each of Fancey's companies has revealed only three titles: the aforementioned *Head of a Tyrant* and two older films repacked to cash in on the peplum trend, *The Fighting Gladiator and Fabiola* (*Fabiola*, 1949, Alessandro Blasetti, Italy/ France: Franco London Films/ Universal Film) and *Spartacus the Gladiator* (*Spartaco*, 1953, Riccardo Freda, Italy/ France: Associati Produttori Indipendenti Film/ Rialto Film), the latter better known as *Sins of Rome*. English prints and marketing materials for any of these three titles are not currently available, so to concentrate on the themes of the films, their marketing and classification, the Fancey family must remain on the periphery of this chapter.

Film historians divide the Italian peplum into three distinct periods, identified as the silent era, the mid-century peplum, and the films made post-*Conan the Barbarian* (1982, John Milius, USA: Univeral Pictures/ Dino De Laurentis Co.) which O'Brien dubs "neo-peplum." (2013: 183) The mid-century peplum is the period of most interest to this chapter. One of the most famous mid-century peplum characters in Italy was Maciste, as previously mentioned. His was a name familiar to audiences through a series of films made from 1915 to 1926. Former dockworker Bartolomeo Pagano first played the Roman slave Maciste in *Cabiria* (1914, Giovanni Pastrone, Italy: Itala Film), before starring in *Maciste* (1915, Luigi Romano Borghetto & Vincenzo Denizot, Italy: Itala Film) and twenty-seven other films over the next decade. Like the later herculean heroes of the mid-century peplum, which covered a wide range of "historical and metahistorical subjects," (Solomon, 2014: 163) Maciste was not restricted by anything so mundane as geographical or chronological consistency, which meant he could be equally at home fighting against ancient Roman tyranny or the Austrian army of WWI. This latter clash was the plot for *Maciste Alpino* (1916, Romano Luigi Borghetto/ Luigi Maggi, Italy: Itala Film), one of the few distributed in the UK at the time, under the title *Maciste as Alpine Soldier*. A positive contemporary review stated that "The whole personality of Maciste is as invigorating as a day at Margate,"⁷⁰ surely the highest praise any actor could hope for. It

⁷⁰ "The Last of the Giants, 'Maciste as Alpine Soldier,' Review of Walturdaw Trade Show," *The Bioscope*, 2 August 1917, p.528

is possible that some older members of the British audience in the 1960s may have remembered this “invigorating” strongman from five decades earlier. Maciste was such a well-known name to Italian audiences that when the mass-production of the peplum began post-*Hercules* many of the films still featured him as the lead character, but the name was often changed for the British release. It was not only Maciste of the silent era who was untethered by reality. This would also continue in the mid-century productions, Richard Dyer explaining that “the co-ordinates of space and time get looser still when one recognises sets and costumes that are prehistoric in one film show up in Roman times in another.” (Dyer, 1997: 166)

Although drawing on a rich cultural and mythological history, it cannot be ignored that a prime motivation for filmmakers to make peplum films was financial. The mid-century peplum existed because it enabled Italian filmmakers to recycle costumes, sets, props and production expertise from the historical and Biblical epics which Hollywood produced in earnest during the 1950s and 1960s, paralleling “Cinema’s search for strategies to outdo television.” (Hunt, 1993: 67) Rome became known as “Hollywood on the Tiber,” (Burke, 2011: 29) and Gili (2014) explains that some reasons for this included high quality production facilities and low labour costs, especially for extras; the required number of which could often run into the thousands. One other financial incentive was that it allowed American studios to reclaim ‘frozen’ revenue from the Italian market that currency control laws otherwise prevented. (Nowell-Smith, 1998: 8-9)

Exploiting technical innovations in colour and widescreen technology, such as Cinerama and Todd-AO,⁷¹ the Hollywood studios could present spectacle on screen as never seen before. Basing films on stories from *The Bible*, especially the *Old Testament*, allowed traditionally conservative American audiences to revel in depictions of forbidden behaviour as God would always prevail in the end. The one-sheet poster for *Sodom and Gomorrah* (*Sodoma e Gomorra*, 1962, Robert Aldrich, Italy/ France/ USA: Titanus/ Pathé Consortium Cinema/ Twentieth Century Fox), a Hollywood and European co-

⁷¹ Developed by Mike Todd, the third husband of Elizabeth Taylor, who died in a plane crash in 1958. One of the most significant films to be shot using the Todd-A process was *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1956, Michael Anderson, USA: Michael Todd Company), and it was later used for historical epics including *Cleopatra* (1963, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, USA: 20th Century-Fox).

production, claimed that audiences would see the “Pagan pleasures of the Sodom Court!... Sins so infamous the centuries have never forgotten them!” They would also be exposed to “The pleasures of sin! [With] Beauties gathered from the four corners of the world!” The advantage of the peplum was that it could build on audience familiarity with the classical world, and audiences could “enjoy action and half-naked protagonists without the preachy morality” (Chapman, 2002: 42) found in the Biblical films. That is one reading of it. It can also be argued that the peplum does in fact conform to “a model of religious authoritarianism” which accorded with “a still deeply Catholic Italy.” (Burke, 2011: 30) After all, the corrupt, authoritarian rulers with their dancing girls and imprisoned princesses are usually punished and destroyed for their decadence and immorality.

Combined with other developments such as 3D, the studios made films which could compete against the drop in audience figures through the 1950s, partly blamed on television. *Hercules* was recognised as being the catalyst for the peplum explosion as early as 1959 when the *New York Times* wrote that the film “has set a new high water mark in mass response for a comparatively cheap film of its kind. It has forced American and Italian companies to launch crash programs for the production of legendary and Biblical spectacles, and it has sent American distributors scurrying to Italy to buy up gimmick films.”⁷²

The success of *Hercules* in Britain and the US was in large part due to the promotional talents of the American independent producer and distributor Joseph E. Levine. He had already experienced great financial returns on his acquisition of *Gojira* (1954, Ishirô Honda, Japan: Toho Film), which he cut, dubbed and added additional sequences to before releasing it as *Godzilla, King of the Monsters!* (1956, Ishirô Honda & Terry O. Morse, USA/ Japan: Toho/ Jewell Enterprises). Having developed relationships within the Italian film industry through such acquisitions as *Atilla* (1954, Pietro Francisci, Italy/ France: Compagnie Cinématographique de France/ Lux Film) in 1958, Levine was in the perfect position to buy the rights to what could be his next big thing. He told a reporter at

⁷² Richard Nason, “*Hercules* Starts Flood Movies,” *New York Times*, 24 October 1959, as quoted in McKenna (2016: 54)

the time, “You never can tell... your next million could be lying in a tin can in Europe.” (quoted in McKenna, 2016: 43)

Joseph Levine bought the distribution rights to *Hercules*, a “foreign, badly dubbed, and shoddily-made” (ibid.: 44) film, starring American bodybuilder and former Mr. Universe Steve Reeves, for only \$120,000. He spent a further \$120,000 on dubbing and reediting. He exceeded his own reputation for showmanship when he launched a then unheard of unheralded \$1 million exploitation campaign which ran for a month before releasing the film on 635 prints, which according to McKenna (2016) took the record for being the highest number of prints of a single film in circulation. During its circulation *Hercules* was shown on around 11,000 American cinema screens. Levine targeted as wide an audience as possible, creating tie-in comics and a soundtrack album, (fig. 3) and placing full-page ads in 132 magazines (Chapman, 2002: 12) including “under-the-counter beefcake magazines” to specifically target the gay audience. (McKenna, 2016: 47) This campaign paid off, making a success not only of the film but of Joseph Levine himself, propelling him into the limelight and securing his lasting reputation as a skilled promotor. That level of saturation marketing and exhibition was ground-breaking for its time, and would not be taken up seriously by the Hollywood studios as a business model until the mid-1970s.

Joseph E. Levine successfully demonstrated that it was indeed possible to find your next million in a tin can in Europe, something which Michael Klinger noticed, and which gave him the encouragement to move into film distribution. Tony Klinger explained:

It was the *Hercules* film that convinced my dad that there was legs in it if you did the right marketing and publicity, hence his relationship with Tony Tenser. That’s what Tony did, he was very good at that kind of stuff, PR stunts, stuff like that. He wasn’t so good at production or other stuff, but he was very good at spotting a marketing opportunity. The deal that [Joseph E.] Levine did, I can’t remember what it was, but I remember that they had a \$1 million thing for *Hercules* and did a brilliant job. He made this little film into a huge film, and Steve Reeves into a star. He showed the way those things could be done.⁷³

Hercules was picked up in the UK by Archway Film Distributors, a small Soho company run by two men: Arthur Gelardi and Sydney Goodman. According to their official

⁷³ Interview with Tony Klinger, 30 May 2017. See appendix, p.357



Fig. 3: *Hercules* soundtrack release, RCA Victor, 1958.

biographies published in 1959, Gelardi had previously worked as a representative for Lux Films and, it is claimed, had been “Executive producer of several British films in recent years.”⁷⁴ Evidence suggests that by 1959 he had only actually been credited for one film, *The Spaniard’s Curse* (1957, Ralph Kemplan, UK: Wentworth Films, Independent Film Distributors), and would only go on to make one more a year later, *Not a Hope in Hell* (1960, Maclean Rogers, UK: Parkside Productions).⁷⁵ Sydney Goodman formed Archway in 1948 and acted mainly as Sales Director. *Hercules* would have been just another of the European films they handled, and did not appear to come packaged with anything near the level of ballyhoo Levine was using in the States, as evidenced by the rather lacklustre campaign booklet.⁷⁶ They had no idea of the film’s potential and put it out as part of a roster of imported films and British B-pictures.⁷⁷ Although Archway lost out on the *Hercules* sequel, they would still acquire other peplum films, including *Slave Women of Corinth* (*Afrodite, dea dell'amore*, 1958, Mario Bonnard, Italy: Schermi Produzione), in the following years.

The Italian title of *Hercules*, *Le fatiche di ercole*, translates as “The Fatigues...” or more directly “The Labours of Hercules,” and the opening credits state that the screenplay is “Freely adapted by Pietro Francisci from The Argonauts by Appolonius of Rhodes (Third Century B.C.).” The film is a combination of some of Hercules legendary labours; he fights a (threadbare) lion, recalling the Nemean Lion which the legendary Hercules skinned and wore as a helmet and cloak, and he also defeats a large bull, which refers to the Cretan Bull (March, 1998). The narrative switches halfway through the film to a compressed version of the story of Jason and his voyage on the Argonautica, with Hercules as a crew member. At the climax of the film Hercules performs what would become the trademark of all peplum strongmen and, obliquely, refers to The Pillars of Hercules. To help defeat the evil King’s forces, Hercules stands between two pillars of

⁷⁴ Information taken from Arthur M.G. Gelardi’s entry in *The British Film and Television Yearbook 1959*, p.136

⁷⁵ Maclean Rogers directed more than 100 films over thirty years, including several “quota quickies” for E.J. Fancey. *Not a Hope in Hell* was to be his last film.

⁷⁶ *Hercules* press campaign booklet, Cinema Museum archive

⁷⁷ In 1959, alongside *Hercules*, Archway also distributed war film *Frogman Spy* (*Mizar*, 1954, Francesco De Robertis, Italy: Film Costellazione Produzione), “quota quickie” *Sweet Beat* (1959, Ronnie Albert, UK: Flamingo Productions) and Italian comedy *The Usual Unknown Persons* (*I soliti ignoti*, 1958, Mario Monicelli, Italy: Cinecittà, Lux Film).

the front of the temple and pulls them down using huge chains, showering the soldiers in rubble. Although this does recall The Pillars of Hercules, it is more directly taken from the unfortunate demise of Biblical strongman Samson,⁷⁸ a character who would also achieve peplum immortality, perhaps because of the connection made in *Hercules* between Biblical and Greco-Roman legends. The image of Hercules pulling at chains wrapped around the pillars, his muscles straining, “defines the peplum genre as a whole: a tensed, built male body performing a miraculous or superhuman feat of strength, not as mere narcissistic display or demonstration of brute force, but in the service of the forces of good.” (O’Brien, 2013: 191)

Leon Hunt stated that the peplum film presents “Masculinity as (homoerotic) spectacle and as a world of passionate heterosexual relationships between men,” (Hunt, 1993: 65) suggesting that the peplum allows men to be together onscreen, looking at each other’s bodies, whilst retaining, on the surface at least, their own heterosexuality. Supporting this, Robert Rushing asserts that *Hercules* is replete with same-sex desire, the shot of Hercules at the training arena in the first portion of the film being “a campy vision of gay erotica, with the massive, bearded Hercules flanked by the decidedly prettier twins Castor (Fulvio Carrara) and Pollux (Willi Colombini), scantily clad and well oiled, arranged precisely as if they were on an Olympic medal platform... Hercules’ body as spectacle commands our gaze, and this is a gaze that is saturated by same-sex desire.” (Rushing, 2008: 170-171) Steve Neale suggested that there were complications in the way the peplum celebrates male narcissism, positing that the perfection of the male lead may cause feelings of inadequacy in the male viewer as well as admiration. (Neale, 1983, cited in Hunt, 1993: 69) This may have been the case for some adult males in the audience, but this argument does not consider the possibility that it was less emotionally complicated for children and adolescents, other than perhaps for those who felt their first stirrings of homosexual desire towards the muscular star.

This “campy vision of gay erotica” reading denies the heteronormative relationship Hercules is invited into early in the film as his affection for the beautiful Iole (Sylva Koscina) grows, which also enables the plot to drive forward. She is the daughter of a

⁷⁸ Judges 16: 25-30 describes the moment Samson takes hold of two pillars in a Philistine building and pulls it down, killing himself and over 3000 men and women.

corrupt king, and encourages Hercules to become involved in the political struggles of Thessaly as he pledges to restore Jason (Fabrizio Mioni) as the rightful ruler, something which was a recurring narrative in the peplums to come. Hercules accompanies Jason on the quest to locate the legendary Golden Fleece, which will help to restore Jason on the throne. Once aboard the *Argonautica* Hercules steps aside and the narrative focuses more closely on Jason. It is Jason who must deal with the legendary Amazonian women, and it is he who fights the monstrous dinosaur protecting the fleece.⁷⁹ Hercules is something of an observer during this section, not joining the fight, and not participating in the wine-fuelled revelries of the Argonauts as they frolic with the Amazon women. He could be keeping his distance because of his love for Iole, but Rushing also suggests that there is a sexless and childlike aspect to Hercules, who often deliberately refuses to engage in any sexual activity. Hercules is “essentially a giant, albeit ferociously strong, baby.” (ibid.: 180) This is as close as Rushing gets to identifying another relatable aspect of Hercules’ character: this “giant baby” side to his personality enabled children, particularly young boys, in the audience to relate to and enjoy the adventures of the heroic strongman without having to deal with potentially off-putting romantic subplots. Richard Dyer proffers a more practical explanation to the sidelining of Hercules in his own film: “Given the hero performers’ ignorance (in the main) of Italian, their inexperience as actors and their limited availability, it was clearly often easier to keep them out of filming that involved interaction with others.” (Dyer, 1997: 167)

Hercules received a ‘U’ certificate from the BBFC in 1959, without cuts. Archway’s publicity described the film as being “The mighty saga of the world’s mightiest man!”⁸⁰ The main poster image used is of Hercules pulling against chains, his muscles bulging and veins popping, one which would be consistently repeated in future peplum promotional material. Little original promotional material for the UK release of *Hercules* still exists, likely because it was a relatively minor release from a small distribution company. The film was shown briefly in London’s West End before receiving “a few

⁷⁹ *Hercules* depicted these adventures five years before Ray Harryhausen’s *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963, Don Chaffey, USA: Morningside Worldwide/ Columbia Pictures). In that film, the character of Hercules (played by a less physically imposing Nigel Green) appears as a member of the ship’s crew but plays only a minor role in the narrative.

⁸⁰ *Hercules* campaign booklet, Cinema Museum archive.

scattered showings in independent cinemas.”⁸¹ It did receive some critical notice, described by one British critic as “an adventure yarn for all ages, though hardly recommended to Hellenists.”⁸² *The Times* noted that *Hercules* actor Steve Reeves had “a remarkable physique but no noticeable acting ability.”⁸³

Hercules may have been a small film in the UK, but the same cannot be said for its US release, where it was the fourth-highest grossing film in 1959, making a profit of \$5 million. (Lucanio, 1994: 27 & 13, cited in O’Brien, 2013). This stateside success encouraged Joseph E. Levine to try a bigger UK release for *Hercules Unchained*, which was distributed by Warner-Pathé with a budget and reach to match his enthusiasm for showmanship. A huge fold-out campaign booklet was made for prospective exhibitors which informed them that “Starting July, the doors open on the mightiest advertising campaign ever accorded an entertainment in the United Kingdom!” This advertising campaign would include:

- Whole page advertisements in national daily newspapers
- Whole page advertisements in national Sunday newspapers
- Nationwide outdoor publicity campaign (Using 500 48 sheets)
- Whole page advertisements in National magazines
- Gigantic exploitation campaign
- Whole page advertisement in provincial evening newspapers
- Whole page advertisements in London evenings
- Nationwide television advertising campaign⁸⁴

With “the biggest saturation campaign that the United Kingdom had ever seen,” (McKenna, 2016: 61), the public were “blinded by the ballyhoo, stunned by the sales talk and pummelled by the propaganda,”⁸⁵ until they caved in, making *Hercules Unchained* “the most successful film shown in Britain’s 4,000 cinemas during the 12 months ended

⁸¹ “Most Successful Film in Britain,” *The Times* (London, England), Thursday, Dec 08, 1960; pg. 18

⁸² “FATICHE DI ERCOLE, LE (Hercules), Italy, 1957” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, June 1959, p.71

⁸³ “Thriller and Social Study: An Awkward Film Mixture,” *The Times* (London, England), Friday, May 08, 1959: p.6)

⁸⁴ *Hercules Unchained* campaign book, Cinema Museum archive

⁸⁵ “The Man Who Sold *Hercules*,” *Daily Herald* (London), 7 December 1960

October 21, 1960.”⁸⁶ McKenna’s research shows that with Warner- Pathé’s help Joseph E. Levine broke a British record for the number of prints of a single film in simultaneous circulation: more than 500. (McKenna, 2016: 55) It was reported that the saturation marketing campaign, with “Newspaper advertisements, posters, handouts and ‘tie-ups’ with various goods on sale in the shops at the time,” and “Television advertising on a scale hitherto undreamt of for a cinema film,” cost over £50,000, or “More than most of the French ‘New Wave’ films actually cost to make.”⁸⁷ *Films and Filming* were derisive, claiming that “This is a classic example of the public being forced to like what it gets and being powerless to get what it likes.”⁸⁸

Hercules Unchained demonstrates the type of market saturation which is now commonplace in mainstream 21st century cinema. No matter where you were in 1960, you were never far from *Hercules Unchained*. The fact that a European film was so successful is truly remarkable. Available box office data for the 1960s shows that only twice in the entire decade did a European film appear in the top ten most popular films of the year,⁸⁹ *Hercules Unchained* in 1960 and *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (Il buono, il brutto, il cattivo)*, 1966, Sergio Leone, Italy/ Spain/ West Germany: Produzioni Europee Associati (PEA), Arturo González Producciones Cinematográficas/ S.A/ Constantin Film) in 1968, when the popularity of the Spaghetti Western was at its height. This demonstrates again the significant role Italian popular cinema played in British cinemas during the 1960s, and proves just how successful the marketing of *Hercules Unchained* was in 1960, when the peplum film was yet to reach its cinema screen saturation in 1963.

Like its predecessor, *Hercules Unchained* also received a “U” certificate from the BBFC without cuts. For a film sold on “Spectacles of massive might beyond any ever known before!”⁹⁰ it is strangely inert for a lot of its running time, although the lack of action clearly had no negative effect on the British audience. The main plot sees Hercules

⁸⁶ “Most Successful Film in Britain,” *The Times* (London, England), Thursday, Dec 08, 1960; pg. 18

⁸⁷ *ibid.*

⁸⁸ Quoted in “The Man Who Sold *Hercules*,” *Daily Herald* (London), 7 December 1960

⁸⁹ Official box office statistics for the 1960s are difficult to locate. Lists were published in trade publications such as *Films and Filming* and *Kine Weekly* but the results vary. This data was collated by Dr. Laura Mayne at the University of York and is currently unpublished.

⁹⁰ *Hercules Unchained* campaign book, Cinema Museum archive.

accidentally drink from the waters of forgetting and, losing his memory, he falls under the power of Omphale, Queen of Lydia (Sylvia Lopez), a woman in the habit of tricking men into serving her until she tires and has them killed. Hercules spends most his time lying on couches, drinking wine and waiting for massages. Omphale tricks him into believing he is her husband, the King of Lydia. He loses his strength as well as his memory and it is only eventually through the intervention of Ulysses that he returns to his full self, enabling him to wrestle tigers and hold back spiked walls of death.

The global financial success achieved by *Hercules* and *Hercules Unchained* served to encourage the studios of Italy to produce peplum films on an industrial scale. Wagstaff estimates that the production of *Hercules Unchained* cost approximately 323,000,000 lire, and earned around 890,000,000 lire in gross box-office receipts. Adjusted for inflation to 1983 USD, the film cost \$1,788,235 and in returns the producer earned an estimated \$3,005,675 plus French receipts and subsidies. (Wagstaff, 2014: 155) Wagstaff admits there are many gaps in the records, giving limits to the research potential in this area, and offers the caveat, “There is a lot we don’t know.” (ibid.: 162) Despite this the available data does explain why Italian producers were keen to make more peplum films, and suggests that Hollywood producers had one eye on what was happening in Europe; historical and fantasy epics in this period included *Spartacus* (1960, Stanley Kubrick, USA: Universal), effectively a remake of Riccardo Freda’s *Spartaco*, and *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963, Don Chaffey, USA: Morningside Worldwide/ Columbia Pictures), its plot drawing heavily on the latter half of *Hercules*.

As explained in the introduction, dozens of peplum films followed *Hercules* and *Hercules Unchained* into Britain, many through independent distributors such as Compton-Cameo, who having opened the Compton Cinema Club in October 1960, moved quickly from importing adult films to also providing family entertainment. Both Tony Tenser and Michael Klinger were skilled in spotting and exploiting cinematic needs, and one of the first European films they imported in 1961 was *The Adventures of Remi* (*Sans famille*, 1958, André Michel, Italy/ France: S.P.C.E./ Francinex), which appeared on the bill at Saturday morning children’s cinema clubs. (fig.4) The first peplum film distributed by Compton was *Blood of the Warriors*, released after cuts with an ‘A’ certificate a year later. This was the only peplum film they distributed in 1962, but in 1963 they picked up



Fig. 4: 1961 Compton poster for a Saturday children's club release of *The Adventures of Remi*.

at least six, according to Table 2.1. and the research of John Hamilton (2005). *Samson and Jason and the Golden Fleece* were both distributed in this year.

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly what caused the increase in peplum films in 1963. It is possible that the production of peplums was at its peak in Italy around 1962, but as Table 2.1 illustrates, not all the films distributed in 1963 were new productions: *Goliath Against the Giants* (*Goliath contro i giganti*, 1961, Guido Malatesta, Spain/ Italy: Cinematografica Associati (CI.AS.), Procusa), for example, was produced in 1961 but distributed by Compton in 1963, as was *Rome in Flames* (*Cartagine in fiamme*, 1960, Carmine Gallone, Italy/ France: Compagnie Cinématographique de France, Lux Film, Produzione Gallone), produced in 1960. A noticeable decline in audience figures had begun post-WWII, when audience figures were at their peak at over 1,635 million. By 1960 cinema admissions were down to 501 million, but by 1963 that figure had decreased further to 357 million. This still translated to a gross box-office of £57 million. (Kelly, 1966: 1) Admissions were seemingly locked in a downward spiral, which saw audience admissions at 289 million by 1966, the end of the peplum cycle.⁹¹ It is therefore possible that this increase in the distribution of the peplum was part of a strategy by distributors to combat declining audience figures. Being cheap to acquire, and appealing to a wide audience, the peplum would be an important element in keeping cinema seats filled.

Another of the six peplum films distributed by Compton in 1963 was *Samson* starring Brad Harris; “The strongest athlete in the world.” (fig. 5) Harris would be portraying, as stated in the campaign book: “The unbelievable power... the staggering strength... the fantastic feats of... Samson.” Under the “Exploitation and Showmanship” section suggestions are made for creating a “bold, colourful Front-of-House” by making full use of blow-ups and star portraits available from the Exploitation Department, along with the usual selection of stills and a quad poster. Overprinted paper bags and throwaways were also available to supply to local grocers, newsagents and other stores. Encouraging creativity, they also invite every exhibitor, or “Showman” to formulate their own publicity campaign and submit a plan to Graham Whitworth at Compton-Cameo.

⁹¹ Source: Dyja, E. 2003 (ed.) *BFI Film and Television Handbook 2003* (London: British Film Institute), cited in Hanson (2007: 93).

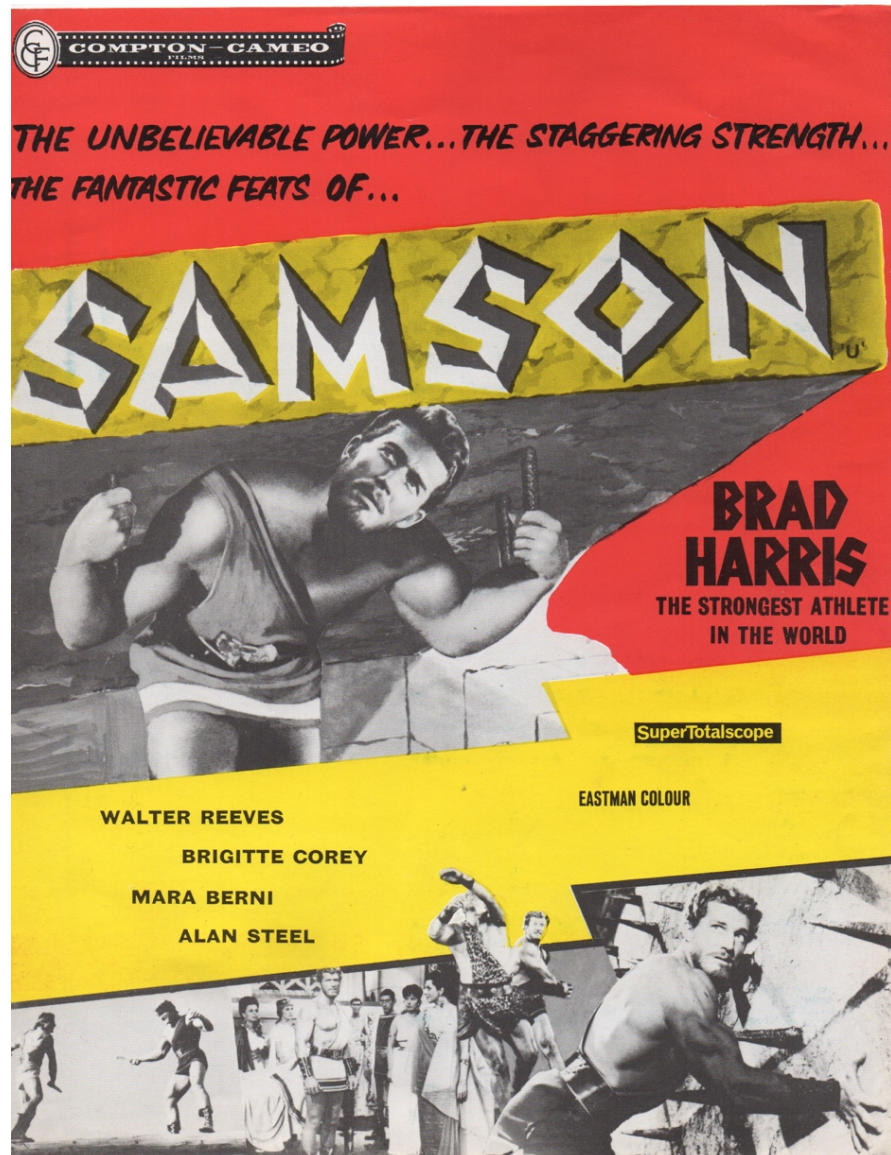


Fig. 5: 1963 press book for the Compton Cameo release of *Samson*.

Potentially an agreement that the costs would be shared on a 50/50 basis could be made. Unfortunately, any documents detailing such submissions have since been destroyed so it is impossible to know how many took them up on the offer. *Samson* was distributed with a 'U' certificate after cuts, but documentation related to this is also missing.

Before delving further into an analysis of *Samson*, it is necessary to view the wider Italian context of the peplum. For British audiences peplum films were an entertaining programme-filler, a "kind of modern pantomime with a muscle-bound hero,"⁹² but some academics argue it comes from a far darker place: the peplum can be read in terms of the then recent and very turbulent political history of Italy. The films contain imagery redolent of Fascism, and the recurring plots of unstable rule and resistance relive the recent authoritarian regime, as will become apparent in the analysis of the plots of the films discussed here, including *Samson*. The constant attention paid to the perfected male physique is a reminder of Mussolini's own obsession with the imperative that everyone ought to have the body of a twenty-year-old. To prove his adherence to this imperative he would often pose bare-chested, whether skiing, swimming or working alongside peasants in the fields.⁹³ (Dyer, 1997) The Olympic stadium built in Rome under Mussolini's direction in 1938 contains dozens of giant marble statues of muscular athletes; the idealised athletic body being consistent with the recurring imagery of Fascism and Nazism.

The mid-century peplum film, coming just over a decade after the end of Fascist rule in Italy, presents within a fantasy construct the Fascistic ideals of physical perfection for an audience old enough to remember, and perhaps even to have supported fascism. This is not to say that the films celebrate Fascism; when one explores the recurring plots and archetypes of the peplum, this notion becomes more complicated. The plots of mid-century peplum films are constructed to provide plenty of opportunities for these bodybuilding heroes to demonstrate their strength. Tim Lucas describes Hercules, the first of the strong demigods in the peplum revival, as "A denial of the *Urbemensch*: he was Mussolini rescinded, a new and cleansing symbol of the recuperative powers of humility and righteousness." (Lucas, 2007: 193) Hercules may have physically embodied

⁹² "Erocole al centro della Terra (Hercules in the Centre of the Earth), Italy, 1961" *Monthly Film Bulletin*, February 1963, p.21

⁹³ Much like Vladimir Putin, current President of Russia.

the Fascist ideal, but early in *Hercules* he rejects his immortality in an impassioned plea to the goddess Cybele: “I’m tired of being sent out to do the bidding of all the gods! I’m no puppet, not even for the great Jupiter!... If immortality must make me unhappy, then I don’t want it! I want to love like other men... I want to have a family.” The “cleansing” mentioned by Lucas is a literal one: Cybele grants Hercules his desire, and a rain fall washes his god-given powers away; he will fight like a man, and eventually die like a man. The rejection of his powers does not remove his physical strength; demonstrating the possibility of retaining those less objectionable elements of Fascism – the desire to achieve physical excellence - whilst rejecting the absolute power the ideology caused its adherents to pursue.

Understanding the historical ideological tension present in the peplum allows for a better understanding and analysis of their construction. The films almost always follow the same basic narrative construct: a fascist ruler has taken a kingdom by force or other nefarious means and Hercules, Samson, Maciste, et. al. are required to use their strength to overthrow the villain and restore the rightful leader, receiving the gratitude of the kingdom. Often the hero has travelled from afar and is not native to this kingdom. Once order is restored he returns home, or continues to search for new adventures. In some the hero is bestowed with magic powers and appears where needed like a genie, the most bizarre example of this possibly being *The Witch’s Curse* (*Maciste all’inferno*, 1962, Riccardo Freda, Italy: Panda Film), in which Maciste is summoned to 17th century Scotland.

An outsider being required to intervene and help restore order through strategy and superior strength was a narrative from Italy’s very recent past, from the position of the late 1950s, and the overthrow of Mussolini by Allied forces can easily be read into the peplum films. The fact that this plot occurs in around 200-300 peplum films over a period of less than ten years suggests that it was a narrative from which Italians sought catharsis; a collective bedtime story that the horrors of their national past would not be repeated. Indeed, this narrative of a rescue from the West also works on a directly practical level: as argued by Steve Chibnall (2013) British film producers helped save the Italian film industry following the end of WWII, and Hollywood’s 1950s epics then enabled an expansion in scope and production facilities. The global success of the peplum in the late

1950s and 1960s effectively saved the popular Italian film industry, paving the way for other popular trends including the Eurospy and the Western.

Applying this concept of Western liberation to the narrative itself, at the centre of the peplum film the lead was usually played by a bodybuilder who was often American.⁹⁴ In this sense Italian audiences saw an American representing physical perfection. This American actor, in the guise of a classical hero, would be responsible for saving the city or kingdom from the internal corruption or dictatorship that the native population are unable to rid themselves of. During this struggle, the American hero often collaborates with some form of local resistance movement who provide valuable information and assistance in the quest for freedom. This neatly parallels Italy's own resistance movement, The CLN: National Liberation Committee, which largely consisted of former Italian troops who had avoided capture following the armistice in 1943 and then cooperated with the Allies, including Americans.⁹⁵

These historical parallels are evident in *Samson*, where he meets a man known as Millstone (Alan Steel),⁹⁶ and they quickly become friends when they realise they are on the same side; they wish to restore Queen Mila (Irena Prosen) to the throne, having been usurped and imprisoned by her sister Romilda (Mara Berni) under the influence of her evil advisor and captain of the guard, Warkalla (Serge Gainsbourg).⁹⁷ Millstone is a literal underground movement, spending most of his time hiding and living in caves and tavern

⁹⁴ In the main films covered by this chapter Hercules is played by Steve Reeves, Samson by Brad Harris and Goliath by Gordon Scott, all Americans, although the latter was discovered as a lifeguard rather than a professional bodybuilder. The one exception is Roland Carey, star of *Jason and the Golden Fleece*, who was Swiss-French.

⁹⁵ Information taken from the European Resistance Archive, <http://www.resistance-archive.org/en/resistance/italy/> accessed 15 June 2017.

⁹⁶ Alan Steel was an anglicised name for Italian bodybuilder Sergio Ciani, who would go on to play Hercules, Samson and Maciste in a variety of peplum films before going into Westerns and Poliziotteschi films.

⁹⁷ Serge Gainsbourg appeared in two other peplum films around this time: *The Revolt of the Slaves* (*La rivolta degli schiavi*, 1961, Nunzio Malasomma, Italy/ West Germany/ Spain: Società Ambrosiana Cinematografica/ C.B. Films), released in the UK in 1962 by United Artists, and *Fury of Hercules* (*La furia di Ercole*, 1962, Gianfranco Parolini, Italy/ France: Cineproduzioni Associate (Rome)/ Comptoir Français du Film Production) released in the UK in 1963 by Miracle Films. The latter is a good example of film recycling, as not only were the director and most of the main cast back from *Samson* but the plot was as well, with only names changed.

basements, and his sister Jamine (Luisella Boni, credited as Brigitte Corey) works as handmaid to the Queen. Between the three of them, and with help from Samson's chubby comedic sidekick Carabenthus (Vladimir Lieb), Samson saves Mila, restores order and feeds Warkalla to the crocodiles. There are similar historical parallels with the resistance in *Goliath and the Vampires*, where Goliath becomes involved with Kurtik (Jacques Sernas), the true heir to the stolen kingdom who now lives in a cave; another literal representation of underground resistance. Kurtik is the leader of a group of blue-skinned freedom fighters and recruits Goliath to enable his revolution.

The notion of needing an outsider to clean up local political or cultural problems also raises issues of colonialism and imperialism, something which is also evident in the Eurospy films discussed in the next two chapters. The peplum suggests "that political problems cannot be resolved through mechanisms internal to a society, but only through the importation of power from without." (Burke, 2011: 29) No matter how strong and well-organised the underground resistance movement, it is only ever successful with support from the imported liberator. The argument that a culture needs imperial rule because it is unable to properly govern itself is one which weaves throughout imperialist expansion, particularly that of the British Empire. *Goliath and the Vampires* touches in more violent terms on what it is like to be at the receiving end of imperialist brutality. The film opens with a raid on a village by a slave ship; the men are killed and burned whilst the women are captured and taken to the kingdom of Salmanak to be sold into slavery. In an interesting twist on the horrors of real history, the slaver is black whilst the women are white. En route, to further demonstrate the brutality of the slavers, the older women are thrown to sharks. When Goliath (Gordon Scott) returns to his village he discovers his own mother dying, and learns that his fiancé Giulia (Leonora Ruffo) is amongst those women taken. He swears vengeance and sets off to save her. When Goliath makes it to Salmanak he discovers a kingdom ruled over by the sadistic Sultan Abdul (Mario Feliciani). Abdul is revealed to be under pressure from Astra (Gianna Maria Canale), who is both his advisor and lover. She in turn is in league with Kobrak (Guido Celano), a vampire who is feeding on the blood of the slave women. It is a complicated, multi-layered dictatorship founded in horror and exploitation.

Along with the imperialist underpinning, exoticism and Orientalism also come to the fore in this film through the Eastern stylings of the costumes and décor, and the fact that it is

a Sultan who sits upon the throne. Orientalism was not unusual in the peplum, as Solomon (2014) notes. As Edward Said (1978) explained, historically Orientalism allowed the notion to develop that these people were unfit to govern themselves and therefore needed a modernising Western rule. This concept fits well with its use in the peplum, and in *Goliath and the Vampires* in particular, where the Orientalist-style ruler is truly unfit to govern and must be overthrown by the Western power, ie. Gordon Scott as Goliath. *Goliath and the Vampires* combines Orientalist elements from within the Roman Empire with imagery from further afield in the form of Mongolian-style armour worn by the slavers. The use of exotic locations within the Roman Empire such as Babylon or Egypt “inspired even greater villainy in the tyrants and sensuality in the femmes fatales for the musclemen to overcome.” (Solomon, 2014: 167) Orientalism as a depiction of sensuality and sexuality is not uncommon throughout cinema, and will be discussed in relation to both the Eurospy and the sexploitation film later in Chapters Three and Four. The use of Mongolian-themed imagery also gives some form of historical context for the brutality of *Goliath and the Vampires*, invoking in the audience a recollection of the real-life tyranny of Genghis Khan.

Censorship records give an insight into the industrial processes distributors had to navigate before a film reached the audience. The extant documentation related to *Goliath and the Vampires* is detailed and demonstrates how the BBFC judged films on an individual basis rather than within the context of genre. The film appears to be in the minority in terms of its intended target audience, as it is the only film on Table 2.1 to be awarded an ‘X’ certificate, and this was after some negotiation with the BBFC. In June 1964 Phil Kutner, managing director of Miracle Films, wrote to John Trevelyan to complain about the cuts required, which were:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Reel 1 | You should remove the whole of both episodes in which Amal, the negro captain, goes down to the female prisoners in the hold, including all shots of their screaming and being manhandled, all shots of their fighting together and all shots of blood being drawn from them. |
| Reel 2 | Remove shots of man impaled on spikes.
In the fight between Goliath and the soldiers remove the very low blow.
You should remove the shots of Kobrac drawing his claws across Magda’s throat and the shots of blood flowing from it. |
| Reel 5 | Remove shots of soldiers on fire and reduce their screams. |

Reel 6 You should remove shots of Kobrac's head and face after he has fought Goliath and his mask comes off.⁹⁸

Kutner's argument was that given this was a horror film it ought to be able to go out with an 'X,' and as such, "In these circumstances I do not think that there will be any necessity for any cuts."⁹⁹ In a letter two weeks later he went on to state, "I have seen many 'X' films which contain practically identical scenes which the Board require deleted in GOLIATH AGAINST THE VAMPIRE." He cites *Spartacus*, *Phantom of the Opera* (1925, Rupert Julian, USA: Universal Pictures) and "Mystery of the Wax Works"¹⁰⁰ as comparable texts, the latter two in reference to the removal of the vampire Kobrac's mask to reveal a hideous visage underneath. John Trevelyan replied, "After some years of experience of working with me I think you know I am not prepared to accept as an argument comparisons with scenes in other films."¹⁰¹ This highlights a problem caused by the BBFC because, unlike now, they had no published guidelines, making it difficult for filmmakers and distributors to know what may or may not be acceptable within a category. The argument against guidelines which is touched upon in Trevelyan's memoirs (1973) is that context was everything. A film was judged on its merits rather than by prescription, which, as discussed elsewhere in this thesis, often meant that if a film had a prestigious director or heritage it would be given more leniency than it might otherwise receive. Kutner continued to make his point, writing, "There is, after all, particularly in horror films some general standard of acceptance, and I do feel most strongly that the cuts required by the examiners are unreasonable."¹⁰² After reviewing the reels in question again, Trevelyan eventually relented and agreed to waive the cuts to Reels 1 and 6, perhaps reluctantly agreeing with Kutner that the final mask-removal was not going to cause any major shocks to an audience of adults.

⁹⁸ BBFC Archive, *Goliath and the Vampires* file

⁹⁹ BBFC Archive, *Goliath and the Vampires* file. Letter from Phil Kutner to John Trevelyan, 5 June 1964. The film was first submitted by Miracle Films under the title "Goliath Against the Vampires."

¹⁰⁰ BBFC Archive, *Goliath and the Vampires* file. Letter from Phil Kutner to John Trevelyan, 23 June 1964. Presumably referring to *House of Wax* (1953, André de Toth, USA: Warner Bros.) or the earlier *Mystery at the Wax Museum* (1933, Michael Curtiz, USA: Warner Bros.).

¹⁰¹ BBFC Archive, *Goliath and the Vampires* file. Letter from John Trevelyan to Phil Kutner, 24 June 1964.

¹⁰² BBFC Archive, *Goliath and the Vampires* file. Letter from Phil Kutner to John Trevelyan, 29 June 1964.

As evidenced in the publicity the film was a joint release from Miracle and Gala, to whom the final 'X' was awarded in July 1964. It is not clear when the name was changed to *Goliath and the Vampires*, but in the BBFC documentation when the final exceptions were printed it was under the title "GOLIATH AND THE VAMPIRE" with no 'S.' This would be more accurate as there is only one vampire in the film. *Goliath and the Vampires* was described as a "handsomely decorated spectacle," with "first-rate editing." It was "pleasingly imaginative," yet the reviewer felt it missed "the guiding hand of a Bava or Cottafavi."¹⁰³ This is an interesting early acknowledgment of the vital contribution Mario Bava made to the visual poetry of Italian fantasy cinema, and it is reasonable to assume that the reviewer had, by October 1964, become very familiar with the peplum genre and its proponents. Ironically Tim Lucas posits that the film did have uncredited special effects work from both Mario Bava and his father Eugenio (Lucas, 2007: 375).

The large campaign book for the film offers "Monster vs Goliath [in] the mightiest battle of them all!" (fig. 6) Much is made of the fact that the film was shot in Totalscope¹⁰⁴ and Technicolor. The centre pages consist of a collage of black and white stills from the film and promises "Suspenseful, Action packed spectacle... Horror and death roamed the countryside! While this vampire lived." This is very clearly not a peplum for a family audience, and the distributor is keen to stress the horror angle to the exhibitor.

To All Showmen... Exploitation Pointers

This film offers unlimited scope for exploitation. Here is YOUR opportunity to punch home the advantages of colourful and exciting screen entertainment.

¹⁰³ "MACISTE CONTRO IL VAMPIRO (*Goliath and the Vampires*), Italy, 1961" *Monthly Film Bulletin*, October 1964, p. 150. Experienced director Vittorio Cottafavi directed a handful of peplum films including *Goliath and the Dragon* (*La vendetta di ercole*, 1960, Italy/ France: Achille Piazzi Produzione/ Produzione Gianni Fuchs/ Comptoir Français du Film Production) and *Hercules Conquers Atlantis* (*Ercole alla conquista di Atlantide*, 1961, Italy/ France: SPA Cinematografica, Comptoir Français du Film Production). In their *Hercules in the Centre of the Earth* review from February 1963, *Monthly Film Bulletin* stated that Cottafavi was a superior director to Mario Bava in this genre, yet Bava is now considered to be one of the greatest artists of popular Italian cinema. See Lucas (2007).

¹⁰⁴ Totalscope was a system used in Italy from 1956 – 1966 for hundreds of films and made Cinemascope almost obsolete. It was replaced by Techniscope. (source: www.cinematographers.nl/FORMATS3.html, accessed May 9, 2017)



Fig. 6: 1964 press book for the Gala release of *Goliath and the Vampires*.

One idea is that “with a little ingenuity, you can make your own ‘Vampire’... by using paper-maché (sic.) or crepe-paper for the batwings, and a ‘horror’ mask for the face. Across the wings, catch-lines.” Catch-lines were phrases which exhibitors should write on large displays in the foyer, in this case “A spectacle of glorious colour and thrilling action,” and “Horror and death roamed the countryside, while this vampire lived.” Anecdotal evidence as to whether anyone did produce their own vampire to hover proudly in the foyer would be valuable, but is yet to be uncovered. This type of home-made ingenuity was also encouraged in exploitation advice for sex films, as will be explored in chapter 5. Ad blocks, full-colour quad posters and FOH stills were available, all to be ordered from the Accessories Manager at Miracle Films. The poster points out, lest there be any confusion, that the film is an “X [for] adults only.” The hand-painted quad poster is an incredibly detailed piece of work, and appears to have used the same reference imagery as that for the American International Pictures release poster in America, which suggests that this was supplied from the Italian studio as part of the film acquisition. The cluttered action and list of claims – “See the revolt of the faceless humanoids! See the torture chamber of the blue men! See the virgin-harem of the vampire god!” – demonstrates the convoluted, frequently nonsensical plot of the film itself. This fits with Christopher Wagstaff’s historical examination of cinema, stating that Italian popular cinema was destined to be seen in inner city and rural cinemas or touring shows, where they were watched amidst an atmosphere of socialising and moving seats. (Wagstaff, 1992, cited in Dyer, 1997: 166) This allows for a type of cinema which prefers “action and display, immediately and vividly recognisable characters and settings, and the principle of variety: feats, dances, playlets, slapstick, speeches, tableaux.” (ibid.) *Goliath and the Vampires* works as a series of circus performances and entertaining moments rather than as a cohesive, plausible whole, as do many of the peplum films. Evidence collected by the “Cultural Memory and British Cinema-going of the 1960s” project proposes that British cinemas of the 1960s were a similar space, with noise from socialising, eating, seat-changing, usherettes, late arrivals and even the occasional fight breaking out.¹⁰⁵ In this environment the strongman acts of the peplum hero could be enjoyed without having to worry too much about following the story.

¹⁰⁵ As evidenced in the public screening of *One Million Years B.C.* (1966, Don Chaffey, UK: Associated British-Pathé/ Hammer Films/ Seven Arts Productions) held at the Picturehouse Central, Piccadilly, London, June 29, 2016, where actors played roles to recreate a typical 1960s evening at the cinema. “Cultural Memory and British Cinema-

Goliath and the Vampires was only one of two peplum titles Gala handled as shown in Table 2.1, the other being *The Invincible Gladiator* (*Il gladiatore invincibile*, 1961, Alberto De Martino, Anthony Momplet, Italy: Films Columbus/ Atenea Films/ Variety Film Production) submitted to the BBFC in 1965, but not reviewed in *Monthly Film Bulletin* until December 1966. Either the review copy was submitted very late or, more likely, the film was not actually distributed until late in 1966, when the popularity of the peplum was already waning. The reviewer points out that the film “has the same kind of gladiatorial fights, chariot races and mysterious goings-on in underground passages as a dozen films before it.”¹⁰⁶ Audiences, critics and distributors were growing tired of the peplum, with Golden Era being the only company on Table 2.1 to submit films in 1966. Gala’s European imports around this time were generally either French New Wave, arthouse, or sex films. Two late peplum films, of which one was a co-presentation with Miracle Films, suggests they had no real interest in the genre. It is more likely that the two films were acquired as part of a package rather than being individually picked up.

Jason and the Golden Fleece was distributed by Compton-Cameo in 1963. (fig. 7) The film was originally submitted to the BBFC under the direct translation from the Italian *I giganti della Tessaglia* (*Gli argonauti*): *The Giants of Thessaly*. This is also the title it was distributed under in the US, and in other countries the title was also a translation of the Italian, except for Germany where it was inexplicably given the title *Das Schwert des Roten Giganten* – “The Sword of the Red Giant” – despite there being no red giant in the film. After submitting the film for classification, Compton opportunistically changed the name to *Jason and the Golden Fleece* to capitalise on the release of *Jason and the Argonauts* earlier that year.¹⁰⁷ Compton appear to have been alone in the world in making this decision despite the obvious opportunity it presented to capitalise on name recognition. The film received a ‘U’ certificate following two cuts; one for violence and one for sexual violence; when the villain threatens to rape Jason’s wife, the Queen:

going of the 1960s” was an AHRC-funded project with University College London and involved collecting cinema audience memories from over 1000 people. (source: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cinemamemories>, accessed May 9, 2017)

¹⁰⁶ “Gladiatore Invincibile, il (The Invincible Gladiator), Italy/ Spain, 1961” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, Dec. 1966, p.186

¹⁰⁷ Although *I giganti della Tessaglia* (*Gli argonauti*) was released in Italy three years earlier.



Fig. 7: 1963 press book for the Compton Cameo release of *Jason and the Golden Fleece*.

- Reel 5 Reduce to a minimum the scene in which the Argonauts attack and kill a monster.
- Reel 7 Shorten the scene in which a man forces a woman on to a couch; remove “I could have forced you” and “I could have had you earlier.”¹⁰⁸

Documentation of Compton’s reaction to this request no longer exists, but the film was released with these cuts. The two scenes the cuts refer to are quite strong: although not specifically mentioned above, a close-up of a spear being thrust into the single eye of the monster followed by a spurt of blood must have surely been removed. With Jason (Roland Carey) away on his quest for the golden fleece, Queen Creusa (Ziva Rodann) is left at the mercy of Adrasto (Alberto Farnese), his cousin who he has left in charge until he returns. Adrasto secretly desires both the throne and the Queen, who he refers to as “Cousin,” for himself. When he finally makes his intentions known he presses himself down violently upon her, stating effectively that he could have raped her before, and if she does not agree to be his wife he will murder her son. It is an unpleasant scene, although his intention might not have been clear to younger audiences.

Jason and the Golden Fleece differs slightly to other peplum films explored in this chapter in that it is not focused on one main character with Herculean strength. Jason is the king of Thessaly, but he is an ordinary mortal with regular strength. He has the Argonauts with him, so called because they are sailing aboard the ship built by Argo, and together they perform most of the feats described as “STUPENDOUS EXCITEMENT – DAZZLING THRILLS – BREATHTAKING ADVENTURE” in the campaign book.¹⁰⁹ The “Giants of Thessaly” referred to in the film’s original title are, as the second title in the opening credits – “The Argonauts” – makes clear, the Argonauts themselves, who are giants among men because they represent the bravest, strongest citizens of Thessaly, with Jason as their king. In the original versions of the legend Hercules himself sailed with the Argonauts but he is missing here, perhaps because Riccardo Freda wished to distance this film from the dozens of other Hercules films out at the same time.

Throughout the film Jason is portrayed as possessing the expected traits of a noble king; intelligent, wise and athletic, but he is not a strong man like other peplum heroes, and he is not solely responsible for saving the kingdom. He uses his brain more than his strength,

¹⁰⁸ BBFC Archive, *Jason and the Golden Fleece* entry in 1963 Exceptions volume

¹⁰⁹ Press book for *Jason and the Golden Fleece*, author’s collection

but he still sometimes needs to be rescued by his crew, such as when he has not yet realised that Gaia (Nadia Sanders), the beautiful queen of an island solely populated by women, is in truth an evil witch intent on turning all the men into sheep. The most physical feat Jason is required to do single-handedly is to climb to the top of a giant statue at the temple of Colchis to retrieve the golden fleece, which he achieves with a minimum of drama. Even during his climactic sword fight with Adrasto it is Orpheus (Massimo Girotti) who strikes the final blow with a spear. Star Roland Carey was not an American bodybuilder but a professional actor of Swiss-French nationality, and as such does not have the same muscular build as someone like Steve Reeves. He has a good athletic body, but the camera and the characters around him do not spend time gazing in awe at it. Despite the difference in narrative and hero, the familiar peplum narrative of an unjust ruler usurping a throne is still woven throughout as the film switches back and forth between Jason's quest and the trials of his wife and his kingdom at home. Roberto Curti acknowledged that the film's director, Riccardo Freda, had a complicated relationship with Fascism, but for the most part he used his films to highlight the power of the individual will over "The tragicomic traits of Fascism, the intellectuals' submission to the dictatorship and their opportunism in shedding skin and changing sides whenever the wind blew in one direction or another." (Curti, 2017: 5) Thus many of his films, *Jason and the Golden Fleece* included, feature a hero who fights social order and unjust authority; the classic peplum narrative.

Compton's campaign book gives suggested catchlines for exhibitors to use in their cinemas to grab audience attention:

SEE – The exciting adventures of Jason in his search for the Golden Fleece!
 SEE – The Island of beautiful women – but there was evil in their embrace!!!!
 SEE – The hideous monster whose anger was appeased with human offerings!!
 SEE – The savage cruelty of the usurper in Jason's court!!
 SEE – The hidden temple in the mountain where the sacred Golden Fleece is hidden!!
 SEE – The lovers banished on a raft to the high seas!!
 SEE – The fury of the Giants as they smash the terror of the mercenaries!!¹¹⁰

Notice that the point about beautiful women was given four exclamation marks, stressing the potential sex appeal the film might have for any adults in the audience. The usual set

¹¹⁰ Press book for *Jason and the Golden Fleece*. Author's collection

of eight stills, blow-ups and posters were available, and like in other Compton press books Graham Whitworth offers to potentially pay 50% of costs for approved publicity campaigns. These catchlines act as both advertisements and a useful plot summary, distilling the film down to its essential moments and demonstrate Compton's typical hyperbole and exaggeration.

Robert Rushing's thesis on the latent homosexuality of the peplum, along with Susan Sontag's identification of them as camp does have some merit; although the films were primarily family entertainment, the films under discussion here do contain moments which comfortably fit these designations. The often-voyeuristic camera gaze on male skin is one obvious example, and this does occur in most of the films. The ridiculously short peplum skirts of the men are often a source of unintentional comedy and as such are fittingly camp, along with the compulsory dance numbers which occur in almost every film. There are scenes where either by design or, more likely, through awkward translation and dubbing, conversations become imbued with double-meaning. In *Jason and the Golden Fleece*, for example, Orpheus reclines, gold adorning his otherwise bare chest, describing to the young Euristeo (Luciano Marin) his doomed visit to the Underworld. Euristeo asks, "What is real love Orpheus?" In the foreground of the shot is a length of rope, positioned so that it stretches up from Orpheus' loins directly to Euristeo in a manner which suggests that the real love here is between these two men. The suggestive nature of this moment would reflect more accurately the mythology of the crew of the *Argonautica*, of which Hercules was a member and sailed with his squire and lover Hylas. (March, 1998)

When discussing his evil plans with Astra in *Goliath and the Vampires*, Kobrak explains "I want Goliath alive. His magnificent body can serve as a model for the army of slaves with which I shall conquer the Earth. The army of indomitable giants, subservient to my will." Then, as if becoming self-conscious of the comedic value of his statement, he defensively asks Astra "Why are you looking at me like that?" Even to his enemies, Goliath's body is "magnificent," and Kobrak's statement is laden with homosexual intent. Kobrak's desire for Goliath becomes so strong that at the climax of the film he takes on his physical form, and Goliath is forced to wrestle with his own double: Kobrak's desire to be inside that "magnificent body" taken to its logical conclusion within the confines of the genre. From ancient depictions of naked Greek wrestlers to modern-day wrestlers in

tiny black leather underwear and thigh-high boots, wrestling is ripe with barely-concealed homosexual desire and attraction. The act of wrestling occurs in many peplum films. Early in *Samson*, he stumbles into Millstone's cave and they fight each other, but whilst they do so they laugh and talk, the wrestling taking on the appearance of a courtship ritual or even foreplay. It is only the interruption of enemy soldiers which brings the wrestling to a premature conclusion.

The critical reading of a disguised homoerotic longing in the peplum has become the dominant academic discourse, as demonstrated through the work of Rushing (2016) and others. This reading ignores the originally intended audiences, which in Italy itself were "a poor and often illiterate audience... with rural viewing experiences." (Burke, 2011: 31) O'Brien posits that, in Italy, the films would have appealed to the "chiefly uneducated, male manual labourers" who were being excluded from the new economic boom, as the peplum offered a world which still valued "the enduring worth – moral, social and economic – of male physical strength." (O'Brien, 2013: 193) In the US, where they often found audiences in drive-in theatres or on television, or in the UK where they were shown theatrically, the peplum's irreverent, bricolage approach to classical history and mythology did not require an educated audience, and younger or adolescent audiences might view them as self-parody if not as straight-forward action-adventure films.

There is also no acknowledgment of the female viewer in a homoerotic reading. Like most of the film titles themselves, academic analysis is almost exclusively male-centric, perhaps reflecting, with the exception of Susan Sontag, the gender of the academics such as Robert Rushing or Daniel O'Brien, who have paid the peplum any attention. There is also the possibility that the films were appealing to a heterosexual male audience; after all, the peplum skirts of the women in the films were often just as short as those of the men. Many young female adolescents and women in the audience could also have found the oiled and muscular heroics appealing, something which Robert Rushing's haptic analysis of a homoerotic viewpoint neglects to address.

The peplum film enjoyed great theatrical success in the UK, particularly with independent distributors who could acquire rights relatively cheaply and exploit the films in cinemas throughout the country. For an adult audience, the popularity of the genre could in part

be attributed the fact that the films “reaffirmed the worth of the individual male power – and potency – at a time when radical social, economic and political transformation, in Italy and elsewhere, was generating a sense of instability and corresponding anxiety.” (O’Brien, 2013: 184) For the child and adolescent in the audience the peplum film offered a strong hero unencumbered by troubling romantic distractions and a sense of moral rectitude, and for older audiences there were the visual pleasures on offer, whether it was the body of “The strongest athlete in the world,”¹¹¹ or the opportunity to witness “Beauty sacrificed to wild beasts!”¹¹²

O’Brien described the peplum as “one of the most important genres in the history of Italian cinema in relation to international distribution and commercial success.” (ibid.: 183) Demonstrating to both filmmakers and the studios that it was possible to produce vast quantities of films in one genre, the peplum paved the way for further genre-aping in the 1960s, where the hyper masculinity of Hercules was replaced a few years later by the spurs-wearing cowboy of the Spaghetti Western, where outstanding feats of physical strength were replaced by sharp-shooting. Even the standard plot of the Spaghetti Western borrowed heavily from the peplum narrative; a mysterious stranger enters a frontier town and is ultimately required to overthrow local criminals or corruption to save the townsfolk, before walking alone into the sunset.¹¹³

The growth of the Italian industry attracted investors and studios from around Europe, which lead to co-productions becoming the standard position for another prolific genre which arose from the ashes of the peplum. The sword-and-sandal hero morphed almost seamlessly into the suave, womanising secret agent of the Eurospy film, whose international adventures and contemporary glamour gripped British audiences and tapped into a need for global certainty in an increasingly unpredictable decade.

¹¹¹ Press book for *Samson*. Author’s collection

¹¹² Press book for *Colossus of the Stone Age (Maciste contro i mostri)*, 1962, Guido Malatesta, Italy: E.U.R. Cinematografica), distributed by Compton-Cameo in 1964. Authors collection

¹¹³ One example being the influential *Django* (1966, Sergio Corbucci, Italy/ Spain: B.R.C. Produzione, Tecisa), it’s director having previous experience in the peplum genre, notably *Goliath and the Vampires*.

CHAPTER THREE

From the Orient With Fury: Western Imperialism and Geo-Politics in the 1960s Eurospy Film

By the early 1960s post-war Britain's Empire had all but crumbled; its standing as a military power was diminished by the nuclear arms race, India had gained independence and the Suez Canal crisis caused waves across what remained of the Empire, all of which contributed to a gradual withdrawal from the other territories and dominions. The British were collectively licking their wounds in the 1950s, and culturally it was not going so well either. According to Arthur Marwick Britain was not only perceived by Europe as "a philistine nation in high culture, but her popular culture was derivative and second-rate, coming almost exclusively from America and, in the case of youth fashion, also from Italy." (Marwick, 1998: 35) The early 1960s saw a cultural revolution in which it became great to be British again: "Britain was, relatively speaking, an empty vessel in the realm of cultural creation." (ibid.: 36)

This empty vessel was filled as Britain achieved a cultural supremacy during that decade, and the figurehead of this shift, in terms of cinematic influence, was James Bond, a man for whom the world was still small and the reach of British power and influence large. The novels and *Daily Express* adaptations had been popular domestically,¹¹⁴ but it was *Dr. No* (1962, Terence Young, UK/ USA: Eon) that made the world wake up to Bond, "a nostalgic bandage for England's wounded pride in the 'post-colonial'- era." (Baron, 2009:153). Ian Fleming's spy, based in small part on his own wartime experiences (and in large part on his own fantasies), was a return to a type of traditional British colonial values of power and authority over others. It is surely no coincidence that those who conspired against British interests for criminal gain were invariably foreign, or at least

¹¹⁴ *Casino Royale*, the first James Bond novel, was original published in 1953 by Jonathan Cape Ltd. By the release of the film adaptation of *Dr. No* in 1962 eight more novels and one collection of short stories had also been published. The *Daily Express* comic strip adaptations began with *Casino Royale* in 1958, and continued to adapt most of Fleming's novels and short stories until 1966, two years after his death.

expatriate, and often physically deformed. Bond was a return to the notion of the Empire as an adventurers' playground.¹¹⁵

Britain's loss of Empire was not the only crisis with which the 1960s was dealing with. The post-war optimism of the European Economic Community was struggling against a backdrop of "the waning of American economic strength; the rise of Japan; the rapid expansion of decolonisation; new superpower hostility with the Cuban missile crisis; the slowing down of economic growth and indications of problems to come." (Urwin, 1995: 103) In 1963 Britain had applied for membership of the EEC, which at that point was also known as the Six, consisting of Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, West Germany and the Netherlands. Britain's application was vetoed by French President Charles de Gaulle, due to his doubts as to the political will of the UK and a fear that English would become the common language of the community.¹¹⁶ This rejection from Europe, and from France in particular, contributed to Britain's already fragile self-image¹¹⁷ and fuelled the need for heroes like James Bond who still played an integral role in European politics.

Yet Bond was not the only heroic, lone-wolf figure to be involved in espionage and intrigue for his country during this period. France, Germany, Italy and many other countries were also producing spy-themed action films which collectively became known retrospectively as the Eurospy. This chapter will focus on some of these films which were distributed in the UK in the 1960s. The films will be discussed in relation to notions of colonialism and "Orientalism," as well as addressing issues of misogyny and sexual exploitation in the spy film. The first films to be discussed are two of the Agent 077

¹¹⁵ Something which was later directly parodied in the series of *Flashman* novels by George MacDonald Fraser, in which Sir Harry Flashman, V.C., the finest soldier in the Empire, was actually a womanising coward who through luck and accident succeeded in battles and intrigue across the globe, seducing dozens of voluptuous, dark-skinned and "Oriental" women along the way. There are twelve *Flashman* novels in total, spanning from 1969 to 2005, which purport to be the memoirs of Flashman's sixty-year career in the 11th Regiment of Light Dragoons, from 1840 to 1900. Fraser also wrote the screenplay for the Bond film *Octopussy* (John Glen, 1983).

¹¹⁶ 1973: Britain joins the EEC, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/january/1/newsid_2459000/2459167.stm, accessed June 14, 2016

¹¹⁷ For examples of the British reactions to Charles de Gaulle's veto see "It all depends on de Gaulle" *The Guardian*, Manchester, Nov 19, 1966, p. 8 or "Wilson in 'summit' talks with the six leaders," Victor Knight, *Daily Mirror*, London, Nov 11, 1966, p. 2-3

trilogy; *Mission Bloody Mary* (*Agente 077 missione Bloody Mary*, 1965, Sergio Grieco, Italy/ France/ Spain: Fida Cinematografica, Époque Films S.A., Les Productions Jacques Roitfeld) and *From the Orient With Fury* (*Agente 077 dall'oriente con furore*, 1965, Sergio Grieco, Italy/ France/ Spain: Fida Cinematografica, Les Productions Jacques Roitfeld, Époque Films S.A.). (fig. 8) These films were distributed in the UK by Compton Film Distributors. The French spy Agent OSS 117 starred in several films, some of which were distributed in the UK during the period covered in this study. One of these, *OSS 117* (*OSS 117 se déchaîne*, 1963, André Hunebelle, France: Globe-Films) was released in the UK by S.F. Film Distributors in 1964, and another, *Shadow of Evil* (*Banco à Bangkok pour OSS 117*, 1964, André Hunebelle, France/ Italy: Compagnie Industrielle et Commerciale Cinématographe, Da Ma Produzione (Rome), P.A.C.) was released by Gala in 1966. These will be the only OSS 117 titles to be analysed here.¹¹⁸ Not all Eurospy films revolved around a returning agent. There were many secret agents who made just a single appearance. In 1968 Gala distributed *Operation "Y"* (*Ypotron*, 1966, Giorgio Stegani, Italy/ Spain: Dorica Film/ Euro International Films), featuring the adventures of Agent Logan, and the final film to be discussed is another solo outing. *Bonditis* (1967, Karl Sutter, Swiss/ West Germany: Turnus), an early attempt at spoofing the James Bond films, was acquired by Compton for international distribution, although strangely not in the UK itself.

In keeping with the emphasis placed elsewhere in this thesis on archival research this chapter will draw on surviving promotional material for the films and what information can be gleaned from these regarding distribution practices in the UK. Owing to the ephemeral nature of promotional material, it has not always been possible to find as many original documents as one might hope, but enough has been located to give a clearer picture of how these distributors worked. This will enable patterns and methods of distribution to become apparent in relation to those under discussion in this thesis.

¹¹⁸ The other films released in the UK were: *O.S.S. 117 Is Not Dead* (*O.S.S. 117 n'est pas mort*, 1957, Jean Sacha, France: Globe-Films) released in the UK in 1959 by Eros Films, *Mission for a Killer* (*Furia a bahia pour OSS 117*, 1965, André Hunebelle, Italy/ France, P.A.C.) and *Terror in Tokyo* (*Atoute Coeur à Tokyo pour OSS 117*, 1966, Michel Boisrond, Italy/ France, P.A.C./ Victory Film), both distributed in the UK by Miracle Films, and *OSS-117 – Murder For Sale* (*Niente rose per OSS 117*, 1968, Renzo Cerrato, Jean-Pierre Desagnat, André Hunebelle, Italy/ France: Da. Ma. Cinematografica/ P.A.C.) in 1970 by Rank Film Distributors.



Fig. 8: *From the Orient With Fury* Front of House still. One of eight stills available.

As with most popular genres during the 1960s filmmakers around the globe, and Italy in particular, increased exponentially the number of spy-themed films in production. The Eurospy film consisted of hundreds of spy and espionage-themed movies which generally took their lead from Bond himself, or from Hitchcock's 'wrong man' films epitomised by *North by Northwest* (1959, Alfred Hitchcock, USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM)).¹¹⁹ Throughout the 1960s it was an enduring genre, and was clearly appealing to audiences who could not seem to get enough exotic spy adventures. The information collected in Table 3.1 gives an indication of the popularity of the secret agent, with the words "spy" or "spies" appearing in film titles twenty-eight times between 1960 and 1969.

The key difference between these and other popular genres of the time, such as the western or the gothic horror, was that these were about contemporary life, albeit a life that ordinary people did not live. The contemporaneity of the Eurospy allowed for location shooting in major cities, with gun-toting heroes surrounded by gleaming glass buildings contrasted with local landmarks, and contributed to the feeling that the 1960s was truly a modern age. Richard Rhys Davis, curator of an exhibition of original posters and other promotional material, described it as the "golden age of the spy film, social conditions being just right for the fine tuning of the genre." Pointing out that in 1966 Italy alone produced seventy-three spy films, he explains that "The Cold War, sexual liberation, pop art, nuclear paranoia, co-production tax breaks and musical revolution were the ingredients for the cocktail." (2011: 9) A contemporary report highlighted the popularity of the genre when discussing the arrival of a Hollywood star in Rome:

His code number: "Agent 009." His off-screen name: Stewart Granger. His mission: To film yet another epic of sex and espionage.
A profitable business this. Thanks to Bond, spy films are flourishing in the Italian and Continental market. In Rome, for example, Bond's latest, "Thunderball", is showing in four cinemas. Competing in mayhem at a dozen others: "007 – From the Orient With Fury," "Agent OSS 117 – Fury in Bahia," and "077 Mission Bloody Mary."

¹¹⁹ Itself essentially a remake of his earlier *The 39 Steps* (1935), which was in turn based on an Edwardian novel by John Buchan (1915), which neatly brings us back to the adventure novels of the Empire discussed later in this chapter.

Agent 009 Granger now treads portentously on to the screen.¹²⁰

The article begins in the comic-style of introducing a spy and his mission, and the sardonic tone employed here (“another epic of sex and espionage”) suggests that even by 1966 people were growing tired of the Eurospy film. James Bond had “provided a way for Britishness to continue to be defined in opposition to the ‘dark’ people of the world,” (Baron, 2009: 154), but the question has to be asked as to whether national imperialism was also being reinforced when the films had a European origin, or if pastiching Bond meant the flag-waving was lost. As we will see with Agent 077, could an American secret agent as written and directed by Italians conflate his own national identity with “racial sovereignty?” (ibid.)

There are three Agent 077 films directed by Sergio Grieco (under the pseudonym Terence Hathaway): *Mission Bloody Mary* (1966), *From the Orient With Fury* (1967) and *Special Mission Lady Chaplin* (released in Italy in 1966).¹²¹ The latter title did not receive UK distribution so will not be considered in this chapter. Agent 077, aka Dick Malloy, was a CIA agent played by American actor Ken Clark. His looks and sun-bleached hair seem better suited to a surf movie or a western, and as such he seems an unlikely spy hero. Clark did actually play in many westerns in Italy as well as war films and spy thrillers. He made all three Agent 077 films in 1965 and then starred in another spy film by the same director, *Tiffany Memorandum* (1967), as a character named Dick Hallam. He also appeared in Grieco’s final spy film *The Fuller Report* a year later, as Dick Worth.¹²² *Tiffany Memorandum* was released in Italy in 1967 and in France and Spain in 1968¹²³ but not in the UK. *Fuller Report* was released in Italy in 1968 as *Rapporto Fuller, base Stoccolma*, and in France in 1969, but not in the UK until a VHS release in 1986.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ “The Inside Page,” *Daily Mirror*, 18 January 1966, p.11. Note how *From the Orient With Fury* is mistakenly identified as a 007 film, an understandable error given the number of Eurospy films based on agents with numerical monikers.

¹²¹ All UK release dates are taken from the BFI Collections database unless otherwise noted.

¹²² Dick clearly being the name to give an all-American hero, perhaps because it is as common a name as James.

¹²³ According to the IMDB, accessed December 3, 2015

¹²⁴ Released again by Video Programme Distributors Ltd, with a 15 certificate.

Perhaps the diminishing support for the spy genre towards the end of the decade may explain why only the first two Ken Clark spy films received a release in UK cinemas. 1960s audiences were not only faced with spy thrillers in cinemas but they were also negotiating their way through the over-stuffed television schedules, facing amongst others American shows *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* (1964 – 1968, NBC) and *I Spy* (1965 – 1968, NBC), and *Danger Man* (1964 – 1966, ITV Television) and *The Avengers* (1961 – 1969, ITV Television) in the UK. It is not unreasonable to assume that audiences grew tired of tough secret agents. As the box office suffered other genres rose in prominence, and gritty crime thrillers and gory horror films took over the film factories of Europe by the end of the 1960s. This allowed James Bond to get on with what he did best, more or less unhampered by spy-themed competition. As Blake and Deal hypothesise, by the 1970s, “the exotic, fantastical spy film seemed out of place in these increasingly sceptical times... The Bond series did limp on, and new espionage movies were produced, but they didn’t have the same *feel*.” (emphasis in original, 2004: 13) Just what exactly the “*feel*” of a 1960s Eurospy film is not explained, but it does suggest a tacitly to the genre, or an instinctual recognition by the audience. They know a Eurospy film when they see one. This could be because the parts that make up a Eurospy film are very prescribed and familiar. To watch one is to see an entire genre in microcosm. As the plots are elaborated upon it could actually be describing the plot of any Eurospy film: the name of the secret agent may change, but the films remain the same.

This series of Agent 077 films are a co-production between France, Spain and Italy, and consequently the plots generally involve Dick Malloy having to travel speedily between locations in the three countries. The locations tend to be shared between France and Spain, with the interiors being shot at Cinecittà Studios in Rome, along with all post-production. Through the dubbing process the individual elements of distinct nationalities are virtually removed. Characters speak English with non-specific European accents. Although Ken Clark was himself American it is not entirely clear whether he dubbed his own voice. When compared with one of his non-Italian performances, his starring role in *Attack of the Giant Leeches* (1959, Bernard L. Kowalski, USA), it certainly could be his own voice. It was common practice for Italian films to shoot without sound and dub everything later, with the actors often being replaced in the sound studio, so if Clark was already off shooting another movie somewhere else he could have been replaced. The films were also shot with the intention of being dubbed into English, so Ken Clark would have said all

his lines in English, but the Italian, French and Spanish actors, unless they could speak English, would have spoken in their own language, or learnt to speak English phonetically. In certain scenes one can tell when actors are not speaking English by the moments when lip-sync goes out completely, contrasted with when Ken Clark speaks, which is by and large fairly accurate. Roger Browne, another American actor who found success in Rome in the 1960s, and often hung out on the beach with Ken Clarke, claimed to have been involved in dubbing over 800 films in Italy, so perhaps he may have provided a voice for Agent 077.¹²⁵

This process of dubbing, along with occasional retitling to make them more commercially exploitable, meant that a film was almost totally devoid of any national context once it made its way into British cinemas. Bergfelder (2005) describes the way that national boundaries and identities are removed in cinema as de-ethnification, and the Agent 077 films, indeed Eurospy films at large, are perfect examples of this. This is in part due to a shift from national cinema to a more homogenised European cinema during the 1950s and 1960s thanks to an increase in bilateral or multinational co-productions. Bergfelder points out that in West Germany between 1963 and 1964 the number of co-productions more than doubled, “and for the rest of the decade they consistently out-numbered purely indigenous films.” (2005: 53) The concept of the European co-production, often now somewhat disparagingly referred to as the Europudding,¹²⁶ will be explored in more detail later. The Agent 077 films are good examples of the practical benefits of the European co-production, as they spend a lot of time travelling between (usually) Paris, Rome and Barcelona. Despite this the European accents remain the same, and the visual trappings are representative of a homogenous concept of ‘Europe,’ where our hero could be anywhere on the continent. *From the Orient With Fury* goes one step further; whereas the other films in the series present an American against virtually the whole of Europe, this film positions the West against the East, with the West being America and Europe, and the East being a version of the Orient as represented by Istanbul and the Asian cast members.

¹²⁵ Koch, D. (2016) #006 – A chat with actor Roger Browne (*The Fantastic Argoman*) [podcast] Dorado Films Podcast. Available at <http://doradofilms.libsyn.com/dorado-films-podcast-006-a-chat-with-actor-roger-browne-the-fantastic-argoman> [Accessed 1st July 2016].

¹²⁶ A term which according to the OED was first used in *The Guardian* in 1985: Seumas Milne, “Europe is plotting rival to Dallas”, Jul 25, 1985: p.30

Mission Bloody Mary begins with a swinging pop theme composed by Ennio Morricone over graphics and images that instantly remind the audience of a Bond film. Within five minutes we have a military pilot stabbed by a beautiful Chinese woman in the rain, a secret experimental plane downed in the ocean, a stolen nuclear weapon (the Bloody Mary of the title), a meeting with the CIA, and a call out for Agent Malloy: “The best man we’ve got”. Malloy is quickly tracked to the bed of a beautiful lingerie-clad blonde, where he receives his mission over the telephone. All of the elements of the Eurospy film, purloined from Bond, are thus presented in very short order, and the audience would have felt comfortable being presented with these familiar genre elements. A supervillain known as The Black Lilly is blamed for the crime, currently based in Paris, which gives the filmmakers the necessary starting point to criss-cross the continent. At a time when foreign travel was still something mainly enjoyed by the wealthy, part of the appeal of the international spy was in his travelling as well as his sex appeal and tough-guy persona. Adding to the exotic, high-class appeal in *Mission Bloody Mary* is the Black Lilly’s cover as a plastic surgeon, carving the noses of rich old women into more appealing shapes.

From The Orient With Fury is a slower film compared to *Mission Bloody Mary*. There may have been a need to establish spy film credentials quickly in *Mission Bloody Mary*, allowing the audience to get to know Agent 077 as quickly as possible. In this film he is a known quantity, and ten minutes pass before the reintroduction of Malloy, who is enjoying a bar-room brawl whilst on holiday. The film then follows the familiar pattern of car chases, seductive femme fatales, espionage and a final shootout around a Frank Lloyd Wright-style cliff-top house. Once again most of the film was shot on location across France and Spain, with studio work shot at Cinecittà Studios in Rome. Unlike *Mission Bloody Mary*, which stays relatively grounded in reality, the “MacGuffin” in *From The Orient With Fury* is a ray gun which causes items, structures and even people to vanish into thin air. Straying into fantastical science fiction demonstrates the crossover ability of the Eurospy film with other elements of then current popular culture, including Italian comic books like *Diabolik* (Angela and Luciana Giussani, 1962 to present day, Astorina) and *Kriminal* (Magnus and Max Bunker, 1964 – 1974, Editoriale Corno).¹²⁷

¹²⁷ These themselves inspired film adaptations and a whole genre which combined the Eurospy with Mexican masked-wrestler films which perhaps reached their peak with films like *Argoman* (also known as *The Incredible Paris Incident* or *Argoman*

From the Orient With Fury is a very misleading title. The original Italian-language title translated as “Fury on the Bosphorus”, and an American trailer was prepared with this title before it was changed. There is no archival evidence to suggest why the title was altered, both in the US and the UK, but perhaps audiences would have been put off by the word ‘Bosphorus’ in the title. It is not necessarily a place that general audiences in the 1960s would have been familiar with. The Bosphorus is the waterway that splits Istanbul so that there is a European half and an Asian half. Turkey is on the border between East and West, something which made it an ideal location for political intrigue.¹²⁸ The tension between East and West, a city at odds with itself, is loaded with narrative potential, and has been exploited in movies, yet the use of the term Orient in this film’s title fundamentally misleads the audience. It is an example of the kind of geographic misappropriation that is common in the 1960s spy movie. Shohat and Stam point out that the Western/Eastern divide grew historically from political, cultural and religious sedimentation, from the division of the Roman Empire to the West as Judeo-Christian and the East as Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist. Thus Turkey, a predominantly Islamic country, is East, whereas Israel, actually further East geographically, is West (1994: 13). It is therefore only a mild stretch to equate Eastern with “Oriental” in the minds of an enterprising film distributor.

There is currently no archival evidence to identify who came up with the alternative title, but it was clearly distributed as *From The Orient With Fury* in both the UK and the US, although the US trailer and rather cheap-looking one-sheet does feature the original title, suggesting that the change there came a little late in the day. One could also ask as to who exactly is ‘furious’? The original title *Fury on the Bosphorus*, accompanied by the imagery in the US one-sheet makes it very clear that Agent 077, Dick Malloy, is the furious super-secret agent. *From the Orient With Fury* as a title is less clear. It suggests that the extreme anger is coming out of Turkey to meet the arriving Agent 077. Perhaps one should not read too much into a title; ‘To the Orient With Fury’ would be more accurate in terms of the actual plot of the film. Taking the accusations of imperialism and

superdiabolico, Sergio Grieco (again credited as Terence Hathaway), 1967) and *The Three Fantastic Supermen* (*I fantastici 3 supermen*, Gianfranco Parolini, 1967).

¹²⁸ As witnessed in the James Bond film *From Russia With Love* (1963, Terence Young, UK: Danjaq S.A./ Eon Productions/ United Artists).

orientalism into account, the new title *From the Orient With Fury* unintentionally suggests that the Orient is furious at decades of oppression and is out for revenge. That would be a far more exciting, and for the time more subversive plot for a Eurospy film than a disappearing ray.

Another popular entry in the secret agent world came from a series of books from France which actually originated prior to Ian Fleming's first Bond novels, the first being published in 1949. Jean Bruce wrote many O.S.S. 117 novels, and when he died his wife and then his children continued writing, meaning there are currently over two hundred in total. Working for the Office of Strategic Services, 117 is the code name for Hubert Bonisseur de La Bath, described as a French-speaking American who also sometimes works for the CIA. The film *O.S.S. 117 Is Not Dead* (*O.S.S. 117 n'est pas mort*, 1957, Jean Sacha, France: Globe-Films) was distributed in the UK three years before *Dr. No* by Eros Films, and therefore had more in common with his fellow Frenchman Lemmy Caution, an FBI agent played by Eddie Constantine in a series of French films, several of which also appeared pre-1962.¹²⁹

The second O.S.S. 117 film to have appeared in British cinemas was also the first to star American actor Kerwin Matthews. This was clearly an attempt on the part of the French filmmakers to enable the series to break out to English-speaking audiences. *OSS 117* was released in the UK by S.F. Distributors. Originally shot in French, a dubbed English version was distributed. What does seem a little strange however is that in the French language version of the film Kerwin Matthews' dialogue seems to be in perfect sync with his lips, suggesting that the film was shot in French, begging the question as to the virtue of casting an English-speaking star in the first place. It is possible that the decision to shoot it in French was made because this film was not a European co-production. It is also a reasonable assumption that the English dub was probably achieved using different actors. Unfortunately, it is difficult to be certain given that the English language version is no longer in circulation. The casting of a well-known American actor would have however enabled the film to travel to English-speaking territories, despite the film being in black and white, which by 1964 when compared with the Technicolor James Bond

¹²⁹ There were twelve Lemmy Caution films starring Eddie Constantine according to Terry Rowan (Rowan, 2015: 43-45), including five prior to *Dr. No*.

releases must have already felt a little old fashioned; the film feels more like film noir than a typical Eurospy adventure. The character of Agent OSS 117 is an interesting contrast to Dick Malloy's 077. The latter is almost parodical in his aping of James Bond's mannerisms, chauvinism and sense of entitlement. In contrast Hubert Bonisseur de La Bath (a name which does conjure up the nostalgia of a once-privileged heritage), who goes by the pseudonym Hubert Landon, is the very model of restraint and seriousness. This is not to say that he does not have an eye for the ladies, as he certainly does, but this is limited to playful flirtatious banter with an airport check girl, his main focus being towards the character of Brigitta (Nadia Sanders).

OSS 117 is a far more serious film when compared with the Agent 077 films. Our hero spends most the film trying to solve a murder and locate a secret base, along the way meeting Brigitta, a femme fatale who soon becomes an ally. It might barely qualify as a Eurospy film at all, in that generic expectations are not all fulfilled, were it not mainly for the final act where a secret experimental radar base in a cave becomes the focus of a shoot-out. In contrast *Shadow of Evil*, Kerwin Matthew's second entry in the OSS 117 series, fits the Eurospy template far more clearly.

Another significant film examined in this chapter, *Bonditis*, is a Swiss-German co-production. (fig. 9) The filmmakers intended for it to serve as both a spoof of the genre and as a spy film in its own right. *Bonditis* was the result of three young filmmakers hiking through the Swiss Alps in the mid-1960s whilst discussing the popular vogue for spy films. The film was officially a Swiss-German co-production, and they managed to raise a \$200,000 budget, shooting in Technicolor and Techniscope. They had one eye on the international audience, so they decided to shoot the film in German and dubbed it into English. The problem of 'Bonditis' is summarised in this statement:

'Bonditis' is the disease of our time, the nightmare of every good citizen. The sufferer from 'Bonditis' is chased in bed by Gangsters - forced into bed by blondes. At the first symptom of 'Bonditis', an immediate visit to the psychiatrist is recommended.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Press book for *Bonditis*. Author's collection.



Fig. 9: *Bonditis* press book published by Compton.

The plot finds a hapless young man Frank Born (Gerd Baltus) suffering from constant nightmares that he is James Bond, alternating between violent confrontations and erotic encounters; as he explains to his psychiatrist: “Let me tell you, before I get to the interesting part I've had to fight off sharks bare-handed, been thrown into a live volcano, been frozen to death, even riddled with bullets, been whipped and tortured, and flogged! I can't take it! I'm turning into a nervous wreck.” His amused psychiatrist sends Born to recover in the Swiss village of Margogün, where, unbeknownst to them both, an international conference is taking place between Russian, American and African powers. Lurking in the shadows are spies from the Russian Secret Service, the CIA, the Chinese and a private espionage agency known as The Harp Gang. Born soon meets the beautiful American spy Hata Sari (Marion Jacob) who believes him to be her contact, Agent 006½, whereas Born thinks she must also be suffering from 'Bonditis'. In an effort to help her recovery, he plays along, and before he can stop it he is caught up in the kind of full-blown James Bond action he has been trying to get away from. With this snow-bound Swiss setting, *Bonditis* actually beat the similarly-themed *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969, Peter Hunt, UK: Eon Productions) into cinemas by a year. *Bonditis* is a useful comparative text with the earlier selected titles, in that it attempts to directly address the clichés and conventions of the genre thus assisting in an identification of these tropes for a textual analysis of the Eurospy film.

Edward Said's work on Orientalism can be used to explain how Bond gained such rapid appeal. He explained that as “a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient,” Orientalism “depends for its strategy on this flexible positional superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand.” (1978: 3, 7) One could substitute the term Orient for “former colonies”, or indeed the world at large. Ian Fleming's Bond draws on this embedded cultural need for the British (and by extension Westerners in general) to retain political superiority, regardless of global realities. The Bond films appeal to Western audiences because they reinforce ideologies of power alongside the more basic gender-based wish-fulfilment on offer. The spy film can place the audiences as “conquistadores, affirming our sense of power while making the inhabitants of the Third World objects of spectacle for the First World's voyeuristic gaze.” (Stam & Spence, 2004: 4) The films are escapist fantasies, with James Bond serving almost as an action movie successor to Charlie Chaplin's tramp; the little man defeating authority and

adversity at overwhelming odds, only this time the little man has a Walther PPK. Real international spy drama was never far from the news headlines in the 1960s either, so depicting imaginary intrigue on screen was something that strongly resonated with contemporary audiences.

Edward Said captured the essence of western feeling towards “The Orient” when he quoted from Lord Evelyn Baring Cromer, whose two-volume work *Modern Egypt* (1916) was based on personal experience, but is clearly rooted in the Victorian view of the British as Empire builders; that those who were colonised ought to be grateful for the civilising process imposed upon them. Cromer stated:

The European is a close reasoner; his statements of fact are devoid of any ambiguity; he is a natural logician, albeit he may not have studied logic; he is by nature sceptical and requires proof before he can accept the truth of any proposition; his trained intelligence works like a piece of mechanism. The mind of the Oriental, on the other hand, like his picturesque streets, is eminently wanting in symmetry. His reasoning is of the most slipshod description. Although the ancient Arabs acquired in a somewhat higher degree the science of dialectics, their descendants are singularly deficient in the logical faculty. They are often incapable of drawing the most obvious conclusions from any simple premises of which they may admit the truth. (1916, cited in Said, 1978: 38)

Cromer goes on to describe “Orientals” as inveterate liars, “lethargic and suspicious,” who in everything oppose the “clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race.” (ibid. 39) It was this kind of thinking that helped rationalise colonial rule, although as Said points out, this is an over-simplification, and that the concept of Orientalism had been centuries in the making. This distinction between East and West on ideological grounds meant that colonisation was perhaps inevitable. The construction of Orientalism allowed the imperialist, patriarchal notion to develop that these people were unfit to govern themselves and therefore needed a modernising Western rule. Although this is mostly associated with the British Empire, the crumbling edifice being propped up by James Bond in his 1960s adventures, other European nations were equally responsible in colonising and subjugating the Orient and elsewhere. This chapter will address later how the European incarnation of the international super-spy assimilates differing historical accounts of Empire, something which is potentially muddled when films were co-produced between nations.

The concept of the Orient meant that the East could be generalised and compartmentalised. It was seen as “Other”, something understood through a Western prism. Politically this had many ramifications, and arguably still does, but here it is the influence the concept of the Orient continued to have culturally into the 1960s which is of primary interest. Even children’s toys were not immune from resorting to patronising stereotypes; Waddington’s *Sorry!* was first produced in 1951 and then reissued in 1963, an Orientalised board game “From the land of politeness” (fig. 10), with the East imagined as a humble, softened and non-threatening space. As Said later pointed out, “All cultures tend to make representations of foreign cultures the better to master or in some way control them.” (1993: 120) Whilst he was applying this to the literature and art produced during the Victorian heyday of the Empire, one can see how this could equally appertain to the filmic representations of imperial conquest produced during the European Empire’s death rattle. Cinema helped to accentuate “essentialist positions in European culture proclaiming that Europeans should rule, non-Europeans be ruled.” (ibid.)

This cultural imperialism was not restricted to Britain, something which Andrew Syder points out in his discussion of Italian zombie and cannibal movies of the 1970s and 1980s, where he draws parallels between Italy’s colonialist history and dozens of exploitation films such as *Cannibal Holocaust* (Ruggero Deodato, 1980, Italy: F.D. Cinematografica), or *Zombi 2* (aka *Zombie* or *Zombie Flesh Eaters*, Lucio Fulci, 1979, Italy: Variety Film Production). The films depicted the Latin American region and its inhabitants as superstitious and backward, and the white people who visited them were either “good colonialists” who reinforce the official policies, or the bad “Colonial Other”, usually Americans, who exploit the locals and their resources. (Syder: 2009: 79). It is therefore possible that echoes of cultural imperialism can be unearthed in other examples of European popular cinema. The imperialist threads of the Eurospy film, although perhaps inspired initially by Britain’s James Bond, do not have to be tugged very hard before they unravel Europe’s history of Empire-building. Italy itself primarily focused on Africa in its own Empire-building colonialist expansions, although it did hold a group of islands off the coast of Turkey for a number of years before ceding them to Greece after World War II.¹³¹ An official repression of Italy’s colonialist history post-war meant that there

¹³¹ The Dodecanese Islands, including Rhodes and Kos, had originally belonged to Turkey, and were ruled by Italy from 1912 to 1947. They were known during this period as the Italian Islands of the Aegean.



Fig 10: *Sorry*, “From the land of politeness.” Published by Waddington’s, 1951. Reissued 1963.

was little in the way of criticism within Italian society and culture until the truth began to emerge in the 1970s (ibid.) This is perhaps why films such as those Eurospy films to be discussed here are framed through a lens of the colonialism of the British, and Europeans as a whole, whereas Italian colonialism is ignored, or at best viewed as benign.

Mission Bloody Mary fulfils the generic requirements of the Eurospy: a smart secret agent, a sinister villain whose plan has world-altering implications, at least two or three beautiful women with whom the lead can interact, gun play, foreign locations, action and a pop-styled soundtrack. Perhaps in part because of the dubbing, Ken Clark does come across as rather wooden. The script credits are shared between two Italians (Sandro Continenza and Marcello Coscia) and one Spaniard (Leonardo Martin) who were most likely translating the script into English as they went along, knowing that the film was to be primarily distributed abroad. With post-synced, clunky dialogue, it is no wonder that Clark's performance appears to suffer.

Both *Mission Bloody Mary* and *From The Orient With Fury* had been picked up for distribution in the UK by Compton Film Distributors Ltd. Unlike their counterparts in the United States, Compton may have supervised an English dub (although not necessarily as the English dub for a film produced in Italy was sometimes recorded there), created a new title and advertising material, and made cuts at the request of the BBFC, but they otherwise left the films themselves intact. Independent distributors in the US such as K. Gordon Murray or American International Pictures would often take foreign films and shoot new material and edit and change the order of scenes, as well as creating a new American dub and new score, effectively re-writing the film so that its international origins were barely recognisable.¹³² By contrast the Eurospy film as released in the UK usually merely underwent an English dub. The films often lost any individual international identity, which was all part of that de-ethnification process previously mentioned. This is how some of these films became referred to as 'Europuddings,' and concern over European co-productions having this effect was voiced at the time by Sidney

¹³² K. Gordon Murray specialised in importing Mexican horror films, inserting his own footage or splicing different films together. See Syder, A. and Tierney, D. (2005) for more details. AIP famously cut Mario Bava's *La maschera del demonio*, gave it a new score, by Les Baxter dubbed it into American English, and released it as *Black Sunday*. It released in the UK as *Revenge of the Vampire* by Border Films, one of EJ Fancey's companies.

Cole, a founding member of the Association of Cinema and Television Technicians (ACTT):

The kind of cosmopolitan film which has been made in great numbers in Europe in the last few years, highbudgeted [sic] spectaculars with international casts, many of which might have been made on the moon for all the relation they bear to any recognisable specific European culture and tradition... the deathly elimination of the best kind of native film, that springs from the roots of a country and expresses something of the living reality of its people.¹³³

European co-production did raise concerns at a national level that the artistic ‘voice’ of an individual country would be lost as a homogenised ‘Euroland’ arose on the silver screen. This attitude assumes that the film output of a nation is always an attempt to consciously further art and culture, rather than the commercial imperative that the co-production was often for. Popular cinema made up a significant proportion of these films. Bergfelder points out that between 1964 and 1966 adventure films, spy thrillers and westerns made up more than half of all co-productions with West German involvement. He also explains that many co-productions would often have one country take a lead role in initiating and producing a film, but the spy genre was one “where a dominant national involvement is almost impossible to determine... where investment, cast and crew involvement, and production locations were evenly spread between France, West Germany, Italy and Spain.” (ibid.: 65) This plays out on the screen in the Agent 077 films, where his missions require him to spend time on location in France and Spain, with the majority of the interiors shot in studios in Italy.

OSS 117 was made at a time when France was fighting the Algerian War of Independence, and it is hard not to imagine the impact such a protracted struggle must have had on French society and culture. *OSS 117* depicts a man of breeding, Hubert Bonisseur de La Bath, becoming personally involved in a struggle between French hegemony and political subversion. A secret radar base is being constructed which allows communists to locate the position of western submarines. These communists are evidently French fifth columnists, a small group within France dedicated to the overthrow of the ruling authority. This is not dissimilar to the reality of the Algerian resistance fighting against

¹³³ Cole, S. “Danger Ahead,” *Film and Television Technician*, January 1962, p. 4, quoted in Bergfelder, 2005: 57

French colonialism, a war which ended in 1962. The film chooses to pit Agent OSS 117 against communists rather than revolutionaries, relating the film to the Cold War, that perennial struggle of the 1960s spy film, and perhaps something which was more commercial a plot device than a narrative which dealt explicitly with France's recent difficulties. Audiences in France only had to look back twenty years to a time when they themselves were invaded and small bands of resistance fought back against the invading power. This cultural memory could serve to colour a reading of OSS 117 where instead of being the hero, American CIA agent de La Bath is working on behalf of hegemonic forces to crush resistance and subversion. This is of course somewhat fanciful, and neglects the importance of audience identification with a protagonist, which de La Bath is. However, it highlights the fact that characters like James Bond are only the hero depending on whose side you are on.

Two years later Gala distributed another OSS 117 film in the UK, and unlike the former film this one does resemble more closely a James Bond film. Released as *Shadow of Evil*, the film is set almost entirely in Bangkok, with only a brief scene of Hubert Bonisseur de La Bath taking target practice in Washington before receiving his mission. He is sent to Bangkok to investigate the murder of another agent, Christopher Lemon (Raoul Billerey), and on arrival he passes himself off as Hubert Barton. He at least has the sense to use an alias, unlike James Bond. One interesting aside is that according to the *Monthly Film Bulletin*, he is known as Robert in the English dub.¹³⁴ This is strange as in the only dubbed version of the film currently available he does clearly introduce himself as Hubert. Either a different English dub was made for the UK than that released in the US, which seems like an unnecessary and unlikely expense, or the reviewer simply misheard. Hubert is mostly referred to in the film as Mr. Barton.¹³⁵

Shadow of Evil fits well with the themes of this chapter regarding Orientalism. The opening credits feature a re-working of the OSS 117 song to an instrumental woodwind version which sounds distinctly 'Eastern.' A long shot of a man driving through Bangkok at night is overlaid with text using a font which is aping a traditional style of Eastern

¹³⁴ "Banco à Bangkok pour O.S.S. 117 (Shadow of Evil)," *Monthly Film Bulletin*, December 1966, p. 184-185

¹³⁵ To add further confusion, the IMDB credits Kerwin Matthews as playing "Hubert Bonisseur de La Bath / OSS 117 / Tony Burt."

lettering. This man, who we later discover is also an OSS agent, parks his car and is then shot. This launches the narrative, in which OSS 117 is dispatched to investigate, and he uncovers a plot to infect the world with a new strain of plague, thus solving overpopulation and allowing a new world order to rise and take power. The villain behind this plot is Dr. Sinn, played by noted French film actor and director Robert Hossein. Sinn is as a character who “makes his entrance as a turbaned quack mouthing dubbed profanities about the mysterious Orient, and exits in modified batman drag devoured alive by plague-infected rats.”¹³⁶ It is an odd costuming decision to have him initially be presented wearing a turban, attending a reception at the American embassy, when in most other scenes, until the “batman drag” is donned for the finale, he is an urbane, sophisticated westerner in a suit and tie. He is accompanied by his sister Lila (Pier Angeli) who is dressed in what appears to be a sari. (fig.11) The overall effect is that they are presenting themselves as Indian, or Pakistani. Hubert Barton is introduced to Dr. Sinn at this lavish party. Sinn says “Mr. Barton, I’m delighted to welcome you to Bangkok. Are you fond of the East?” “I like mystery,” he replies. This plays on the popular “orientalist” perception of the “mysterious East.” Bangkok comes to symbolise everything “Oriental” in the film. This dressing of the villain and his sister in vaguely Eastern dress is similar to the conflation of Japan and China in *Mission Bloody Mary*. That is not to say that there is no Indian connection in the film however. Although never visited as a location, India is mentioned as a place where mysterious outbreaks of plague have occurred. On hearing this news Hubert exclaims, “A large population, lousy standards, the filth. Is there anything so exceptional about that?” Perhaps not, but these have broken out following the distribution of a cholera vaccination which originates in a British-owned laboratory in Bangkok, and uncovering the truth becomes OSS 117’s mission.

The notion of colonial powers still clinging on in the East is suggested during the film, most notably through the fact that it is a British company who are inadvertently responsible for distributing the plague through their cholera vaccine. On his visit to the CEO and chief scientist Professor Hogby (Jacques Hilling), Hubert’s colleague Leacock (Henri Virlojeux) becomes frustrated at Hogby’s unwillingness to believe that anything could be amiss. Leacock exclaims, “I know too much about Britishers [sic] to waste my

¹³⁶ “Banco à Bangkok pour O.S.S. 117 (Shadow of Evil),” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, December 1966, p. 184-185



SEVEN ARTS through KENNETH RIVE presents
 Kerwin Robert Pier
 MATTHEWS • HOSSEIN • ANGELI

SHADOW OF EVIL
 FRANSOPE - EASTMAN COLOUR. A Gala RELEASE (U)

Fig. 11: Front of House still for *Shadow of Evil*, featuring Hubert Barton (Kerwin Matthews) and Lila Sinn (Pier Angeli) in “oriental” dress. (Used with the permission of Richard Rhys Davies)

time trying to make you accept the evidence.” Hogby, with handlebar moustache and a harrumphing air of entitlement, represents everything that is wrong with colonialism. Historically Thailand, or Siam as it was previously known, had been an area of contention between the British and the French. The Franco-Siamese treaty signed in 1893 had caused concern owing to British interests, and talks between the two superpowers resulted in the Joint Anglo-French declaration of 1896, which meant that parts of Siam would not be invaded by either side. This helped maintain some Siamese independence despite the presence of the French and the British. (Webster, 1998) *Shadow of Evil* brings together some of these concerns, having an American secret agent team up with locally-based officials (western, and one assumes French although it is never explicitly clear) and loyal Thai locals to uncover a plot for world domination. This plot is masterminded by an undesirable foreigner, Dr. Sinn; although as has been pointed out his actual ethnic origin is never made clear despite his penchant for turbans and cloaks, and an office filled with Oriental décor. Dr. Sinn is using the British company as an unwitting stooge in his plot, to use his doctored version of the vaccine for testing in India, another former British colonial nation.

The climax of the film takes place in the underground secret base of Dr. Sinn. It is located under a well-guarded ancient Thai temple, and is full of Sinn’s followers: the faithful devotees who will inherit his new world. These followers are mostly Thai, and the armed guards are all also Thai. This means that to get to Sinn, and in his escape, Hubert is required to shoot a lot of Thai men. Evincing higher production values than the earlier *OSS 117* the finale of *Shadow of Evil* is rather explosive. Once back above ground, and clearly shooting in a genuine temple location, there is a protracted scene of gunfire and grenade-dodging. Hubert is fighting and protecting Lila, and is assisted by Leacock’s colleague Sonsak (Akom Mokranond) and his friend Prasit (Sing Milinthasat), who all shoot at Thai soldiers with abandon. This is the French and the Thai joining forces to fight back against foreign aggressors within a traditional setting of peace and tranquillity.

Although the original French title roughly translates as “Bank in Bangkok” or “Gamble in Bangkok for OSS 117,” the film was known in the UK under the oddly unsuitable *Shadow of Evil*. Even the alternate U.S. title of *Panic in Bangkok* is more appropriate, although it does appear that in some U.S. territories at least it was also known as *Shadow of Evil*, where the one-sheet declared in bold red “YOU MUST DESTROY DR. SINN

BEFORE HE DESTROYS THE WORLD!” It is also strange that the name OSS 117 was not used in the title, given potential audience familiarity with the character by 1966. This is however in tune with the releases of two OSS 117 films by Miracle Films around this time which also dropped the numerical identifier: *Mission For a Killer* (*Furia à Bahia pour OSS 117*, 1965, André Hunebelle, France/ Italy: Da.Ma. Cinematografica, P.A.C., P.C.M.) and *Terror in Tokyo* (*Atout coeur à Tokyo pour OSS 117*, 1966, Michel Boisrond, France/ Italy: CMV Produzione Cinematografica, Compagnie Cinématographique de France, P.A.C.). In the UK the film was distributed on a double-bill with an old peplum film, *The Invincible Gladiator* (*Il gladiatore invincibile*, 1961, Alberto De Martino & Antonio Momplet, Italy/ Spain: Films Columbus/ Atenea Films). The quad poster declares that *Shadow of Evil* is “In the Bond and U.N.C.L.E. tradition!” The film is being identified with James Bond, as might be expected. *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* reference is interesting given that it was a popular television series, although some of the episodes had been edited to make theatrical films for non-American audiences. In this guise, the U.N.C.L.E. films *To Trap a Spy* (1965, Don Medford, USA: MGM) and *The Spy With My Face* (1965, John Newland, USA: MGM) had already played in British cinemas. Much is also made of the fact that both films are rated ‘U’ meaning suitable for everyone, but would potentially be read by audiences as meaning this was a double-bill for children.¹³⁷

When Compton picked up the distribution rights for *Bonditis* (1968, Karl Suter, Switzerland/ West Germany: Turnus Film) at Cannes they appear to have fully intended it for international distribution, although not for UK distribution. The reasons for this are not quite clear, but perhaps they felt that the Eurospy was on its way out as far as British audiences were concerned. The marketing materials for this film will be examined in the next chapter, but it is worth mentioning here the film’s portrayal of non-Westerners, as it plays into some of the stereotypes and clichés of Orientalism and Western Imperialism.

Bonditis is the story of Frank Born, an ordinary man who is plagued by exhausting nightmares that he is James Bond. He is recommended full rest and relaxation by his psychiatrist, so heads to the quiet village of Margogün in Switzerland. When Born arrives

¹³⁷ The ‘U’ certificate had been in existence since 1913, being one of the earliest certificates created by the BBFC.

at the station he passes a Chinese man and laughs to himself, “There are no Chinese in a Swiss village the size of a postage stamp.” Little does he realise that the village is currently home to a delegation of Nigerians, wearing traditional African tribal dress, involved in meetings with representatives from around the world to discuss international aid. A conversation ensues about whether they will accept aid from the Americans or the Russians, with the term “American imperialism” used by one character. Eventually the Africans accept aid from the Russians. The film depicts Russians, Americans, Chinese and a gang which appears to be European, but not specifically from any country. The Chinese agents do not seem to have much to do in this film. They speak to each other in Chinese, with no subtitles. One female agent is dressed in a traditional golden silk outfit with embroidered symbols, and she smokes using a cigarette holder. In the muddled climax of the film, when the MacGuffin of the film, an egg containing microfilm, is believed lost, all the agents sit together and decide that they will all defect. American agent Hata Sari (Marion Jacob) explains to the female Chinese agent that she will put in a good word for her with the Americans. The egg then miraculously turns up again, and they begin to fight. Finally, only Hata Sari and the Chinese agent are left standing, the latter holding the egg. She then hands it to Hata Sari, explaining “I’m beginning to work already for the new boss.” Despite being in a position of power, holding all the chips as it were, she capitulates to “American imperialism.”

The African delegation are celebrating in the village, wearing tribal masks, headdresses and grass skirts. Born goes out to watch the spectacle, and it is again clearly an imagined Western version of what a traditional African spectacle might look like, and as such is similar to the tribal dances found in *Slave Girls* (also known as *Prehistoric Women*, 1966, Michael Carreras, UK: Hammer) or the Bond film *Live and Let Die* (1973, Guy Hamilton, UK-USA: Eon-MGM). One attractive female dancer proceeds to chase Born up to his hotel bedroom, where she continues to dance whilst removing layers of clothing. Before anything can happen between them a young male African, in grass skirt, comes into the room and carries her out over his shoulder. Some audiences may have been familiar with the depictions of African tribal life from earlier 1960s documentaries.¹³⁸ Again, the

¹³⁸ Including *Mondo Cane* (“dog’s world”, 1962, Paolo Cavara & Gualtiero Jacopetti, Italy: Cineriz), *Mondo Cane 2* (*Mondo pazzo*, or “Crazy World” 1963, Gualtiero Jacopetti & Franco Prosperi, Italy: Cinematografica Federiz) or *Africa addio* (also known as *Africa*

exoticism here is played primarily for laughs. Whereas Bond would travel all over the globe to be involved in such events, here the entire world has descended on a small Swiss village “the size of a postage stamp.” The Bond experience of exoticism, Orientalism, rampant sexuality and cold war interplay is found in microcosm in Margogün.

The 1960s was a time when “British society seemed to have broken out of the straitjacket of dullness and conformity which had pinioned it since Victorian times.” (Marwick, 1982: 152) British cinema was an exciting, action-packed place, filled with secret agents flying the flag, contributing towards that break away from “dullness and conformity.” (ibid.) With plots frequently obsessed with either the British or the American secret service and pan-European travel, and through the process of post-synced dialogue, usually English, this de-ethnification process often rendered the films geographical origins neutral. Like 1960s radio DJs with mid-Atlantic accents, they do not belong anywhere. The Italian filmmakers in particular were keen to disguise their films so as to fool native audiences into believing they were watching a British or Hollywood movie, hence Sergio Grieco became Terence Hathaway. However, when the film hit British shores, it is doubtful all British audiences would have been fooled. They may have believed they were watching a British or American movie, and yet the films do retain a sense of something European; undefinable yet tantalisingly present.

There is currently a lack of firm audience data in this area. Oral histories gathered by Emma Petts on 1960s British cinema audiences¹³⁹ suggest that despite a film being given an English title, they still knew they were going to see something “foreign”, with the implicit expectation that this meant they would see something with “progressive sexual attitudes.” (Schaefer, 2014: 208) It would be interesting to compare this with audience research into Italian audiences of the same period, to see if they were fooled by this de-ethnifying, homogenising process of filmmaking. Did Italians, or for that matter any

Blood and Guts or Farewell Africa, 1966, Gualtiero Jacopetti & Franco Prosperi, Italy: Cineriz).

¹³⁹ ‘Memories of Sexploitation Cinema in 1960s Britain’, a paper given by Emma Petts at the ‘Global Exploitation Cinemas: Historical and Critical Approaches’ conference at the University of Lincoln, 29 May 2015. Her research is from an AHRC-funded project into cinema audiences at University College London: ‘Cultural Memory and British Cinema-Going of the 1960s’, which will be published at some point in the future. Some information can be found on their website: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cinemamemories>

Western Europeans, truly believe that when they were watching Agent 077 up there on the flickering screen that he was a Hollywood hero? Or did they see if for what it was: B-grade American beefcake running around Europe playing Bond?

The once hugely successful Eurospy genre seems to have gone the way of the peplum film. The film factories of Europe, with Rome at the centre, dominated genre film production in the 1960s, able to produce carbon copies of whatever was popular at a fraction of the price. This was a studio system in full swing, mirroring and outnumbering Hollywood, which towards the end of the 1960s was struggling and fracturing. Thomas Schatz describes the heyday of Hollywood in terms which also could be used to explain the success of the European studios: “There had been a marvellous symmetry to that system, a balance of power and industrial forces which was evident throughout: in the creative give-and-take at every stage of the production process, in the symbiotic accord between the studio’s front office and the home office.” (Schatz, 1998: 492) This was a studio system with little nostalgia for the genres that were left behind, as commercial imperatives forced filmmakers to move on to the next popular film to exploit. Perhaps this constant shift allowed popular consciousness to forget also, causing the Eurospy to languish unattended in the bottom of a filing cabinet in a dusty corner of Cinecittà. Or perhaps Professor Kurtz’s ray gun has been put into effect, firing on piles of film cans one by one until they had all disappeared.

It is easy to accuse the genre of often being homogenised and derivative, and perhaps criticism such as this is complicit in marginalising the Eurospy film within academic research. Yet the films were attuned to the wider political landscape of their day, with cold war concerns and a changing European political landscape, as well as reflecting contemporary cultural development. No study of cold war culture or European cinema would be completed without addressing the popularity of this genre. In this chapter I have focused on the European political dimension and the way that this incarnation of secret agent engaged with the world, and the East in particular. The next chapter will consider the actions of the spy towards the women who, like those far away countries, lined up to be conquered.

CHAPTER FOUR

International Sexpionage: Marketing, Censorship and Sexual Politics in the Eurospy Film

The previous chapter discussed the relationship between the Eurospy film and “Orientalism,” or Colonialism. In the Eurospy film the hero, a government representative, struts like a peacock around the globe with the authority to kiss or kill anyone he likes in the national interest. Where that chapter focused broadly on a nationalistic, post-colonial view of the films under analysis, here the other side of the “Oriental” coin, the notion that the East is a world of exotic, sensual delights, will be explored here in greater detail, and how this relates to the adventures of Agents 007, 077, OSS 117 and their other professional contemporaries. The film titles under discussion in this chapter will be the same titles as in Chapter Three: from Agent 077 *From the Orient With Fury* and *Mission Bloody Mary* (*Agente 077 missione Bloody Mary*, 1965, Sergio Grieco, Italy/ France/ Spain: Fida Cinematografica, Época Films S.A., Les Productions Jacques Roitfeld), from OSS 117 *Shadow of Evil* and *OSS 117*, as well as standalone films *Bonditis* and *Operation “Y.”*

Pauline Kael named one of her books *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (1970) having seen the title on a film poster. She explained on the opening page her reasoning thus: “The words ‘Kiss Kiss Bang Bang,’ which I saw on an Italian film poster, are perhaps the briefest statement imaginable of the basic appeal of movies. This appeal is what attracts us, and ultimately what makes us despair when we begin to understand how seldom movies are more than this.” (Kael, 1970: i) The film in question was *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (*Bacia e spara*, 1966, Duccio Tessari, Italy/ Spain: Produzioni Cinematografiche Mediterranee, Rizzoli Film, Producciones Cinematograficas Balcázar), a Eurospy adventure not released in the UK.¹⁴⁰ Kael’s expression that this Eurospy title is a distillation of the basic appeal of all movies, and how ultimately this is somewhat depressing, speaks volumes about the typical critical dismissal of popular cinema in its first period of release. This chapter will draw on critical reception which sometimes reveals the gulf between the critics and the intended

¹⁴⁰ The phrase itself is first attributed to the song “Mr Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang,” sung by Shirley Bassey on the *Thunderball* (1965, Terence Young, UK: Eon Productions) soundtrack.

audiences. Kael's observation particularly addresses the basic appeal of the Eurospy film, and it is this combination of sex appeal and violence that this chapter will address.

The films under discussion often feature violence towards women, so it seems appropriate to discuss the BBFC censorship requirements alongside a discussion of the way women are depicted and treated by both heroes and villains. Imagery of women, often in various stages of undress or as victims of violence, were used in the marketing of the films in the UK, so where relevant marketing materials will also be analysed here.

The British view of the East as a world of exoticism and sensuality was perhaps first epitomised in *Arabian Nights* (first translated and published in English in 1706), and later in the opium-infused writings of Thomas De Quincey (1821) and others.¹⁴¹ Whether huddled in a Chinese opium den in London's East End or sharing a hookah whilst enjoying a display of belly-dancing in some far outpost of the Empire, the Victorian British gentleman was acquainted with the exotic either for himself or vicariously through literature and imagery inspired by such hedonistic experiences. Popular writing of the day, whether it be the paternal imperialism of Edgar Wallace,¹⁴² the 'yellow peril' xenophobia of Sax Rohmer,¹⁴³ the anthropomorphism of Rudyard Kipling¹⁴⁴ or the boys' own adventures of H. Rider Haggard,¹⁴⁵ attempted to place a cloak of respectability on

¹⁴¹ De Quincey exhibited the same imperialist disdain for the colonised as Empire builders like Cromer when he wrote, "I question whether any Turk, of all that have entered the Paradise of opium-eaters, can have had half the pleasure I had. But, indeed, I honour the Barbarians too much by supposing them capable of any pleasures approaching the intellectual ones of an Englishman." (1821: 40) Essentially, he believed that the Englishman used their drugs better than the Turks did.

¹⁴² Such as *Sandi the Kingmaker* (1922), an African-set tale of mystery and romance. The British film *Sanders of the River* (1935, Zoltán Korda, UK: London Film Productions)) was based on these stories and depicted the Nigerians as needing colonisation. The film is dedicated to "The handful of white men whose everyday work is an unsung saga of courage and efficiency." (Korda and Empire, Screen Online, accessed 3rd December 2015) Harry Allan Towers produced a remake in 1963, *Death Drums Along the River* (Lawrence Huntington, West Germany/ UK: Big Ben Films/ Constantin Film Production/ Hallam Productions).

¹⁴³ Sax Rohmer's series of thirteen *Fu Manchu* novels were written between 1913 and his death in 1959.

¹⁴⁴ Notably *The Jungle Book* (1894) and the *Just So Stories* (1902).

¹⁴⁵ *King Solomon's Mine* (1885) remains an influential and popular adventure story. *She* (1887), in which darkest Africans worship a white-skinned, blonde woman, is a somewhat problematic tale, as the blurb for the 1965 Hodder reprint tie-in with the Hammer film version makes clear: "The beautiful White Queen – mysterious, cruel, captivating, who

the notion that the exotic places of the world were placed there for the Englishman to tame or exploit. This cultural hegemony was reinforced by work such as Edward William Lane's *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (1836), in which he claims that the oppressive heat "excites the Egyptian to intemperance in sensual enjoyments." Edward Said summarised Lane's depiction of the Orient as being a place which "offended sexual propriety; everything about the Orient... exuded dangerous sex, threatened hygiene and domestic seemliness with an excessive 'freedom of intercourse'." (1978: 162, 167)

This exotic sensual and sexual freedom was brought even more to public consciousness through Oscar Wilde's *Salome* (1891), whose titular seducer's 'Dance of the Seven Veils' came to symbolise Eastern eroticism and is said to have given birth to the concept of the striptease act. It is no wonder then that the average British gentleman treated the Orient in similar terms to the contemporary concept of "What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas:" a hedonistic, lust-filled space where the strictures of polite Victorian society could be left behind, and they were doing it for Britain. The West "metaphorically rendered the colonized land as female to be saved from her environ/ mental disorder," whilst also perpetuating "the rape and rescue trope, by which virginal White women, and at times dark women, are rescued from dark men." (Shohat and Stam, 1994: 156) Therefore the Westerner could retain a political and sexual superiority over conquered lands and peoples, and these attitudes have been filtered through to the image of the heroic spy fighting, and loving, for Queen and country.

Shohat argues that the concept of rescue plays a significant part in colonial discourse, as indeed it does in many spy film narratives, where the Westerner has "metaphorically rendered the colonized land as a female to be saved from her environ." (Shohat, 1997: 39) This notion of the East being feminised through colonialism, that the female, "as a metaphor for her land, becomes available for Western penetration and knowledge," (ibid.: 33) is reprised over and over again throughout post-colonial literature, and provides an intriguing explanation for the motivating factor in the adventures of James Bond and other red-blooded secret agents; by participating in espionage and adventure in exotic locales they are restoring an imbalance and reinforcing masculinity as the dominant gender. The

ruled over a *dark* and savage people, and who held the secret of love, and of life itself – She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed." (emphasis added)

culmination of their mission is the ‘weaker sex’ being put back in her place. Some Eurospy films take this more literally than others, something which will be addressed later.

Women in the 1960s Eurospy films generally follow the “Bond girl” archetype, as established in *Dr. No* and *From Russia With Love* (1963, Terence Young, UK: Danjaq S.A./ Eon Productions/ United Artists). They are, “for the most part, undeveloped, one-dimensional, and unsophisticated.” (Caplen, 2010: 87) Often cast because of their status as models or beauty-pageant winners rather than for their acting prowess, “adornment is a key – and perhaps the sole – Bond Girl attribute.” (ibid.: 176) There is no denying that in Bond films, and in the Eurospy films which emulated them, the women are beautiful, which feeds the view “that these characters are solely intended to enhance male sexual fantasy.” (ibid.) As we shall see in the examination of Agent 077 and others, the interactions with women are often sexually loaded, their physical beauty being a talking point or motivation for action.

The world of James Bond has become known as much for its glamour and ‘Bond girls,’ described as sometimes being nothing more than “animated Barbie dolls,” (Ladenson, 2009: 224) as it is for its action set pieces. Although often played by talented actresses, the women in the 1960s Bond films tended to conform to the “limited female roles of the fifties and the attendant feminization and glamorization of females,” (Neuendorf et.al. 2010: 757) and the films have proven to be resistant to change. Even in the more recent Bond films:

“The women of Bond continue to be portrayed in a rather limited and sex-stereotyped manner. As a result, seasoned Bond fans and new viewers alike are exposed to homogenous portrayals of women within old or new Bond films.” (ibid.: 758)

The Bond films contributed to the sexualisation of the Orient on many occasions, an early example being the Japanese secret agent Kissy Suzuki in *You Only Live Twice* (1967, Lewis Gilbert, UK: Danjaq S.A./ Eon Productions/ United Artists), who was assigned to “marry” Bond in order to allow him to go under cover. She spends most of the film in nothing more than a white bikini, almost *de rigueur* for a Bond girl. In this film “The ‘East’ may be said to serve as a figure to be dominated, and this early Bond film as one

which depends on... a ‘flexible *positional* superiority,’ in which the Westerner is placed ‘in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing... the relative upper hand.’ (Gehlawat, 2009: 268, referencing Said, 1978: 73) Not unlike the title character in the ‘Black Emanuelle’ series of 1970s Italian sexploitation films,¹⁴⁶ the heroic spy figure is “a modern Westerner who has the privilege of travelling to foreign lands as a kind of erotic imperialist.” (Syder, 2009: 75) It was not until the parodic Roger Moore films that “Oriental” women began to find parity with Bond, such as his encounter with the kung fu-kicking schoolgirls of *The Man With the Golden Gun* (1974, Guy Hamilton, UK/ USA: Eon). If the James Bond films were to be perfectly at home in a sexualised East, then it should come as no surprise that the Eurospy would follow suit.

“Orientalist” attitudes can therefore lead to misogynist behaviour, and James Bond and his secret agent colleagues can be prime examples. The masculine conquest of a feminised East is often taken literally, and when coupled with the casual misogyny of the era when violence and inappropriate sexual advances towards women were tolerated, the Eurospy film can occasionally become quite uncomfortable viewing. Labelled sexist and misogynist, Bond as described in Fleming’s novels “regards women as being ‘for recreation’ (*Casino Royale*) and his views on what women really want from sex would be enough to leave some feminists apoplectic with rage.” (Chapman, 2007: 32)

Dick Malloy, hero of the Agent 077 films, is no exception, and takes every opportunity to make sexual advances towards Dr. Elsa Freeman (Helga Liné) in *Mission Bloody Mary* whilst she is nothing but professional. She constantly tries to avoid his kisses and lecherous pawing by reminding him of their objectives, once pushing him away and exclaiming “Calm yourself! This wasn’t in the orders I was given,” to which he replies, “You’re not a child anymore.” He then forces her to strip in front of him under the pretence of seeing two moles on her left breast, conveniently listed in his documentation as being amongst her distinguishing features. Despite the humiliation she apparently finds this kind of behaviour seductive as the scene ends with them becoming even more intimately acquainted. The following scene begins with a close-up of the scars on her breast where she has had the moles both removed (taking advantage of working

¹⁴⁶ There are several ‘Black Emanuelle’ (one ‘m’) films made during the 1970s and into the 1980s by various directors, but mostly by including Joe D’Amato. Indonesian actress Laura Gemser was the star of most of them.

undercover in a plastic surgery clinic), causing the audience to align with Malloy's gaze. Dick Malloy has once again asserted himself physically and sexually over the women his professional life brings him into contact with.

Mission Bloody Mary contains the only direct reference to the Orient in the entire Agent 077 trilogy, in a scene where Malloy meets Elsa Freeman in The Capricorn, a basement cocktail bar. Together they watch a dancer dressed as a Geisha and holding a traditional paper parasol, strip down from her kimono to a small bikini. This dancer's name is Kuan (Mitsouko), a contact for Malloy (and the same girl who stabbed a military pilot in the opening scene). She turns her back to Malloy and encourages him to undo her bra, where he finds a concealed message. Dr. Freeman asks, "Do you like her?" Malloy replies, "I've always found the Orient fascinating." When the dance is over she says, "You seem rather nervous. It can't be the first time you've seen the breast of a woman?" He retorts, "For the record it's the second time, and the first time was my wet nurse."¹⁴⁷

The fact that this second contact is a stripper, with clues hidden in her bra, confirms the traditional notion that the Orient is feminised and ready for sexual conquest. Malloy unhooking her bra barely raises an eyebrow from his female companion Dr. Freeman, towards whom he has already made sexual advances. Perhaps Dr. Freeman is unthreatened by the presence of this exotic dancer because, using a colonialist reading, the dancer is "Oriental" and therefore passive sexually and less enticing than a real Western woman like her. Malloy's comment, equating the dancer's breasts to that of his wet nurse, distances him from seeing her as an object of desire and instead identifies her as a woman through her biology. Of course, he is likely being somewhat facetious here, perhaps to play down any sexual attraction he may have felt towards the dancer in front of his actual date for the evening. Like his fellow agent James Bond Malloy undoubtedly enjoyed the company of Eastern as well as Western women. In 1964 Bond spent quality time in the "exotic Orient... in the arms of the most enticing heroine Fleming ever created, the delightful KISSY SUZUKI."¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ This line, if containing a truth, seems to reveal something interesting about Dick Malloy. Perhaps he grew up an orphan like James Bond.

¹⁴⁸ Taken from the back of the US paperback publication of Ian Fleming's *You Only Live Twice*. This story first appeared in an abridged, serialised form in the US edition of *Playboy*, April 1964.

Malloy's contact being an exotic dancer is also reminiscent of James Bond's close encounter with a belly dancer concealing a clue in her belly button in *The Man With the Golden Gun* (1974, Guy Hamilton, UK/ USA: Eon), or the dancing Turkish gypsy woman in *From Russia With Love*. This latter film in fact shares many similarities with *From the Orient With Fury* (including the title), being that they also both use Istanbul as their prime location, offering exotic and hedonistic imagery and the fantasy of global travel.

The filmmakers reveal a disregard for racial authenticity and cultural specificity in this scene in *Mission Bloody Mary* as the dance of the Geisha is from the Japanese tradition, whereas in the film Dr. Freeman refers to Kuan as a "Chinese girl". This casual misidentification reveals to an observant audience a typical post-colonial attitude towards the Orient; the geographical and cultural differences between individual countries is not deemed to matter. Through this mimetic inaccuracy, *Mission Bloody Mary* uses this dance sequence primarily to add to the sex appeal of the film, inserting exotic sexualised imagery into what would otherwise be a scene of two people simply talking and drinking cocktails. The fact that Kuan is Chinese (or Japanese) serves to enhance the well-travelled impression the Eurospy film gives audiences. The actress herself, Mitsouko,¹⁴⁹ is of mixed heritage: born in Tianjin, China, her mother was French-Chinese and held a French passport. Nothing is known about her father, but the fact that Mitsouko looked more Chinese than her mother suggests that her father was also Chinese.¹⁵⁰ Mitsouko became a model before being cast in her first film in 1962, at the age of nineteen. In her short film career in France she appeared in eleven films, at least eight of which qualify as Eurospy titles.¹⁵¹ Contrary to claims in online biographies, she was not a stripper in Paris, but inevitably because of her beauty and willingness to do so she was required to strip on more than one film set. Perhaps her own mixed "Eurasian" heritage meant that Mitsouko was less reluctant to appear in a potentially culturally insensitive Orientalist scene than

¹⁴⁹ Sometimes credited as Maryse Guy Mitsouko.

¹⁵⁰ Biographical information for Mitsouko taken from an interview with her son Sébastien Blondeau, 10 May 2016. See appendix, pp.305-306

¹⁵¹ Most famously she appears (uncredited) in the pre-credits sequence of *Thunderball* (1965, Terence Young) as a member of the French Secret Service. She also had a role in an unrelated Agent 077 film, *Killers Are Challenged* (1966, *A 077, sfida ai killers*, Antonio Margheriti (as Anthony Dawson), Italy/ France: Zenith Cinematografica/ Flora Film/ Regina Films) starring American actor Richard Harrison as CIA Agent Bob Fleming.

she may have otherwise been, or more likely was in no position to have done anything about it if she wished to maintain a career as an actress.

The inclusion of a striptease act in *Mission Bloody Mary*, traditionally being a performance in which audiences can look but not touch,¹⁵² is typical of what Schaefer refers to as the “observational/ retrospective” mode (Schaefer, 2014: 210), the observational reflected in the touristic gaze of Malloy. He is a foreigner in a strange land observing local customs such as exotic dancing, which also enables the audience to be voyeurs, otherwise unlikely to find themselves in a far-flung basement strip club. The retrospective element comes through the dancer Kuan’s performance as a Geisha, evoking a tradition of the East which no longer existed for modern Western audiences.

Conforming to the Bond tradition, because Kuan had tried to help the secret agent against the wishes of her nefarious employers, she ends up dead, murdered off screen as Malloy was on his way to receive more information. Most women in the James Bond films who help him, if they have some connection with the villain at the heart of the plot, are dead by the end of the film, particularly if they have slept with him first. Whereas James Bond is venerated for his sexual conquests, women are constantly punished for being promiscuous and *Mission Bloody Mary* merely follows this template. She may not have slept with him, but Kuan did encourage him to remove her bra, and offered him information to help his mission. As per the James Bond template, it is the secondary female characters who usually suffer this fate, one main female character surviving to walk away arm in arm, or be found in bed with, the hero in the final scene.

Reviewing the censorship records for these films enables us to get some notion of how the genre was considered by the British film industry at the time. *Mission Bloody Mary* was submitted to the BBFC and given an ‘X’ certificate on April 21, 1966, despite the violence and sexual content being similar in tone and frequency to the average James Bond film. By way of comparison, *From Russia With Love* was given an ‘A’ certificate in 1963 and *Thunderball* an ‘A’ in 1965.¹⁵³ The ‘A’ certificate meant a film was generally

¹⁵² Unless you are a secret agent of course.

¹⁵³ Although *Thunderball* did require one cut to achieve the ‘A’ certificate: “Remove the first of the two scenes in which James Bond is seen stroking with a mink glove the back

suitable for a family audience, in that anyone under sixteen had to be accompanied by an adult. Because the average Eurospy did not enjoy the same prestige they tended to be treated far more harshly by the BBFC, as evidenced in the letter below from John Trevelyan. Four cuts were required in total for *Mission Bloody Mary* to receive an 'X' certificate:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Reel 4 | Remove all but three blows in the beating up of a man to make him talk: deletions must include blow on the throat. |
| Reel 5 | Remove all indications that man's head has been shut in broken glass of train window, and shorten fight of which this episode forms a part. |
| Reel 8 | Remove all shots of Molloy (sic), helpless with face to some crates, being hit in the back. |
| Reel 12 | Remove all shots of blows in the beating-up of Molloy (sic), leaving only the sound of blows out of frame. ¹⁵⁴ |

Unlike the next film in the sequence, *Mission Bloody Mary* was relatively light on its violence towards women, with the death of Kuan taking place off screen. The violent elements to be cut here are all between men, with Malloy mostly on the receiving end.

Documentation in the BBFC archive gives an indication as to why the Eurospy often received harsher treatment than the Bond films. Eight cuts were requested by the BBFC for *From The Orient With Fury*, and the Compton sales agent queried this with John Trevelyan:

Be the first to admit that I am the last to argue; but I am quite sure when you look at the exceptions slip, on a film which is so typical of hundreds today, and typical of countless others that can be seen on television, I am more astonished to see the list of exceptions which reduce the picture to something very much worse than it is at the moment – and believe me, it is not 'GONE WITH THE WIND' to start with....¹⁵⁵

It is not unusual to find this level of self-deprecation when distributors are discussing European films with the BBFC which they have submitted for certification. The sales agent closes his letter:

of a partially nude girl on a bed." *From Russia With Love* was also cut before the 'A' certificate was issued. BBFC Archive, Exceptions Report, 1966

¹⁵⁴ BBFC Archive, *Mission Bloody Mary* file

¹⁵⁵ BBFC Archive, *From the Orient With Fury* file. Letter from Alan Kean to John Trevelyan, 13 December 1966.

I do not, of course, want to get into any area of crossing swords or arguing with you. I think this is futile. However, it may be that a re-examination could throw a little fresh light on these rather savage cuts.¹⁵⁶

In John Trevelyan's reply two days later the attitude of the censors towards the Eurospy are laid bare:

These Continental imitations of James Bond give us much more trouble than the originals since they have less wit and lightness of touch, and at the same time over-do the violence and sex.¹⁵⁷

It is hard to argue with his point that these films did often have "less wit and lightness of touch," yet once again it seems that the European popular genres were subject to stricter censorship when the films are relatively anonymous or appeal predominantly to a popular audience, and not from a respected art-house director or featuring a star cast. Trevelyan had admitted as much in an interview the previous summer when he stated, referring in this instance to horror and sex comedies, "That is the sort of criticism we just cannot afford to bring on ourselves, unless we feel that it is in the cause of something culturally worthwhile and that we shall have the support of the intelligent minority in what we do."¹⁵⁸ It is clear that Eurospy films were also not, in the mind of John Trevelyan at least, supported by the "intelligent minority."

From the Orient With Fury required even more cuts than *Mission Bloody Mary*, as it appears that Compton wanted to achieve an 'A' certificate enabling to achieve a wider distribution:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Reel 4 | Remove blows which Mulloy (sic) gives to Simone.
Shorten the fight in the bar, and remove rabbit-blow. |
| Reel 5 | Remove blows on Mulloy (sic) when he is held.
Remove shots of gangster firing round Mulloy's (sic) head. |
| Reel 6 | Reduce fight, removing kicks and rabbit-blows. |
| Reel 7 | End the scene between Mulloy (sic) and the Spanish girl before she is seen holding a towel against her bare body, resuming on arrival of the gang. |
| Reel 8 | Remove shots of girl apparently naked behind the glass door. |

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ BBFC Archive, *From the Orient With Fury* file. Letter from John Trevelyan to Alan Kean, 15 December 1966.

¹⁵⁸ John Trevelyan interviewed by Arkadin in Film Clips, *Sight and Sound* v.34 (1 April 1965) Spring

- Reel 9 Remove all the shots in which girl's breasts are partly visible under her pyjama-top.
Shorten the fight between Mulloy (sic) and gangster with knife, removing kicks; and reduce the throttling.
- Reel 10 Shorten the fight, removing kicks head-butting and rabbit-blows.
- Reel 11 Shorten the fight, removing kicks in the stomach; remove the ensuing stomach-punches on Mulloy (sic).¹⁵⁹

These BBFC-required cuts would not have presented many continuity problems as far as the plot is concerned, although with Malloy's beatings reduced to a minimum it is likely the British audience would not be as desperate for violent retribution against his enemies as those who saw the full movie. Without the full violent content the film must have seemed particularly bland. This serves as a reminder that British audiences experienced a different version of the film to that seen elsewhere.

Some of the requested cuts here refer to either moments of violence towards women or to partial female nudity. Malloy himself was not averse to hitting women: in *From the Orient With Fury* he slaps Simone (Fabienne Dali) so hard he sends her cigarette flying, yet because he is instantly forgiven we the audience are expected to also. (fig. 12) Perhaps because he uses the back of his hand rather than his fist it is not considered that serious. This is the casual misogyny of the Eurospy at its most uncomfortable and unjustified. At least this was recognised by the BBFC, who requested in their desired cuts that they "Remove blows which Mulloy (sic) gives to Simone."¹⁶⁰

It has been difficult to locate any archival or promotional material regarding *Mission Bloody Mary* so it is not clear how well the film was distributed in UK cinemas. Perhaps the 'X' certificate made it difficult to market.¹⁶¹ The film was reviewed in the trade press however so it was obviously screened somewhere, albeit briefly. *Daily Cinema* described *Mission Bloody Mary* as "Routine wine-women-and-wallops piffle on the international cloak-and-dagger circuit,"¹⁶² whilst *Monthly Film Bulletin* said it was "undistinguished

¹⁵⁹ BBFC Archive, *From the Orient With Fury* file. Note that they were still unable to spell Dick Malloy's name correctly.

¹⁶⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Richard Rhys Davies of the Kiss Kiss Kill Kill Archive has not sourced any UK marketing materials either, so it is difficult to be certain whether anything actually exists.

¹⁶² "Mission Bloody Mary," *Daily Cinema*, 18 May 1966, p.6



Fig. 12: Malloy (Ken Clark) slaps the cigarette out of Simone's (Fabienne Dali) mouth. Front of House still, one of eight available.

espionage hokum... played out against a nice assortment of backgrounds.”¹⁶³ It is no surprise to find the reviews being so dismissive. Even the most generous of reviewers could be forgiven for becoming jaded by the sheer volume of Eurospy films at that time. This reference to the backgrounds in the *Monthly Film Bulletin* review highlights another generic expectation of the genre, which is that the films should be well-travelled and offer a kind of touristic experience for audiences that were generally beyond their reach in their own lives.

Marketing materials do exist for *From the Orient With Fury*, which had a new poster commissioned by Compton. (fig. 13) This suggests a more successful distribution for this, the second Agent 077 film, enabled because of the more accessible ‘A’ certificate. Compton often used independent poster artists, their main choice being John Payne (who also provided artwork for Gala Film Distributors). Payne worked for Compton until 1966 when Tony Tenser left to form Tigon Films, so this new poster could have been one of his designs (Branaghan, 2006: 215). He usually signed his work however and there is no evidence of that on this poster. It also compares quite poorly to some of his known work, such as the poster for *Devil Doll* (Lindsay Shonteff, 1964, UK: Galaworldfilm Productions/ Gordon Films), so it could have been one of the many other poster artists working in Soho in the period. A side by side comparison of *From the Orient With Fury* posters from Europe shows that the artwork used in both Italy and Turkey is far more exciting and dynamic than that used for the British quad poster. It is similar in style to the Italian one-sheet poster for *Dr No*, and captures the essence of the spy thriller far more adequately than the British poster. The UK poster uses none of this imagery.

Using a moment of violence towards a woman, the female figure in the poster is a gagged and bound Evelyn Stone (Margaret Lee), helpless and in need of rescue from Agent 077, to whom her gaze is drawn. She is being held down by an unknown assailant in a suit, and her prone position reveals her legs, giving the poster some requisite glamour. Perhaps wishing to tone down overt sexuality due to the ‘A’ certificate, she is wearing a thick red outfit, rather than a bikini as is the standard for women in a James Bond poster of the period. The clothing is taken directly from the scene in the film this references, although

¹⁶³ “Agente 077 – Missione Bloody Mary (Mission Bloody Mary), Italy/ Spain/ France, 1965,” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, July 1966, p. 106



Fig. 13: *From the Orient With Fury* quad poster.

in the film the colour of her outfit is bright turquoise. Ken Clark's clothing in the poster is unusually casual: with a long light brown jacket and red scarf, along with his gun raised towards the viewer, Agent 077 looks more like a cowboy than a secret agent. The scale is also odd: his head appears to be too small for his body. With some crude brush strokes of red and black separating him from the plain yellow background, this poster is rather slapdash and lacking in John Payne's usual style. The only part of the design evocative of the Eurospy thriller is the title block itself, with the white writing set against a black and red striped background. Many of Compton's posters for European releases seem equally cheap and hurried in style, such as the design for *Colossus of the Stone Age* (*Maciste contro i mostri*, 1964, Guido Malatesta, Italy/ Yugoslavia: Incir De Paolis Studios)¹⁶⁴ which used a crudely painted image of the star Reg Lewis fighting a monster, with smaller, even more badly-rendered hand-drawn stills from the film along the bottom.

When a distributor picked up a foreign film they would sometimes be supplied with existing promotional imagery and this does seem to be the case regarding *From The Orient With Fury*. This can be deduced from the fact that the front-of-house stills of are at different angles to the frames from these same moments in the movie. A stills photographer is listed in the film's closing credits as "Vaselli Studios." The frame size also suggests that whereas the film was shot in Technicolor and Techniscope, the stills were shot in full frame on 35mm film. This raises the question, unlikely to ever be answered, that if this was the case why did they commission a brand new, inferior quality poster if they had been sent the reference imagery and posters direct from Italy?

Occasionally the promotional material provided by the film studios was not considered appropriate or good enough by the distributor, and an alternative approach was taken. John Cohen, part of the family who ran the Jacey cinema chain explained how the process worked. He was responsible for front-of-house and advertising publicity for their cinemas, and often worked closely with independent distributors. Occasionally he would be asked to help:

They said 'John, can you come up with how best to advertise and put a display on the front of the cinemas?' And when we looked at the material that they had got from France, or various countries in Europe, we felt, quite frankly, 'It leaves me

¹⁶⁴ Which coincidentally also co-starred Margaret Lee.

cold, it doesn't appeal, I don't think that's going to bring any customers in!' I would view the film and select different stills. We kept the title but sometimes I would introduce a catch line to make it more appealing to the British. Because I had done that a fair amount for people like Phil Kutner [at Miracle Films], these other smaller companies basically gave me a free hand, and said 'Do what you can with it!'¹⁶⁵

Once created by John, these new publicity materials would be used by the distributors in every cinema they managed to get the film booked in, not just Jacey cinemas.

We didn't charge them. I was paid to run the advertising side and to create the front of house image, and I didn't feel right in charging them to do this. All I was doing was not using what they had got, and trying to improve on it!¹⁶⁶

It would appear with regards to *From the Orient With Fury* that a similar process was taken, at least in regard to the poster design. The final example from Compton, *Bonditis*, is a better demonstration of the level of marketing commitment Compton could go to with a European acquisition, possibly because they picked up the worldwide distribution rights to the film so were creating artwork and material that could be used everywhere instead of just playing on double-bills in British cinemas. Following an analysis of the film itself in relation to the role women play, these extant marketing materials will be explored. (fig. 14)

Bonditis, parodying James Bond conventions, raises some issues of Orientalism and Imperialism, dealt with in the previous chapter, and features an interesting exploration of sexuality and sexual politics. The film fulfils the sexual expectations of Bond, and although played for parody is occasionally more explicit than the Bond films themselves. When the hapless hero Frank Born (Gerd Baltus) is confronted in a dream by a gun-toting, negligee-clad "Blonde Seductress"¹⁶⁷ (Jerry Brawand) and told to get onto the bed, the camera moves behind a net curtain as she removes her baby doll nightdress. The camera holds this shot of her topless for a few seconds before it cuts to a shot of her from behind as she kisses Born. This woman fulfils one sexual stereotype of the typical female Bond

¹⁶⁵ Interview with John Cohen, July 15, 2015. See appendix, p.309

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.* p.310

¹⁶⁷ Credited as "Blonde Seductress" in the English print, and "Traumblondine" in the original German, which translates as "dream blonde."

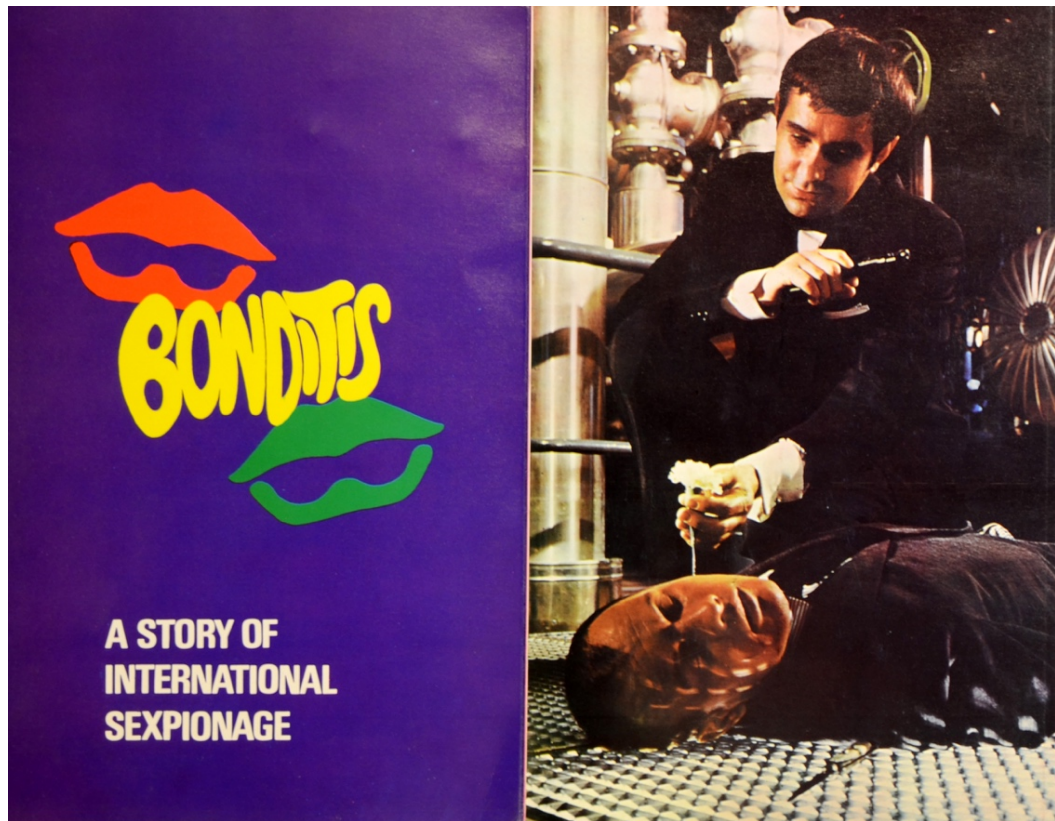


Fig.14: Detail from Compton press book for *Bonditis*.

villain; she is simultaneously aggressive and seductive.¹⁶⁸ The fact that she is literally a fantasy *femme fatale* serves to present as acceptable this arousing image. She is beautiful and literally unattainable, proven by the swift reveal that Born is on his psychiatrist's couch, and has inadvertently pulled the doctor in for an embrace. Later in the film when Born strays into a barn he comes across a naked blonde woman (Christiane Rucker) luxuriating in a tin bath, who confidently asks him to scrub her back. She is credited as "The Blonde," demonstrating again either a singular lack of imagination on the part of the writers or a witty distillation of James Bond women to their constituent parts. Christiane Rucker explained almost fifty years later that playing a blonde was a typical role for her at that time: "It was always these kind of movies; the blonde in a bikini or in a dirndl (traditional Bavarian-style dress) in the so-called Heimat films, playing in the mountains."¹⁶⁹ Heimat translates as "Home," and the Heimat films were those which reflected a more traditional German, often Bavarian, way of life. There is also some brief nudity in this scene, more than would be found in a Bond film of the period. This may in part be because, as will be discussed in more detail later, the film did not receive a UK release so was not subject to the rigours of the BBFC, who would almost certainly have requested cuts to the nudity in *Bonditis*.

Early in the film the audience is introduced to the real secret agent of the film, CIA spy Hata Sari (Marion Jacob),¹⁷⁰ who is briefed by her chief, played somewhat surprisingly by British actor Sydney Arnold.¹⁷¹ During the conversation she is professional and he is what could be best described as lecherous, with dialogue including painful lines like: "You're quite a girl. I'd like to be your enemy!" This casual sexism from male employer to female employee is played for audience laughter, but feels now like an embarrassing

¹⁶⁸ One prime example being Xenia Onatopp (Famke Janssen) in *Goldeneye* (1995, Martin Campbell, UK/ USA: Eon Productions/ United Artists), who killed mid-coitus by crushing her victims between her thighs.

¹⁶⁹ Not a natural blonde, she was relieved to discover that she could buy hair bleaching cream up in the Swiss mountains during the shoot. Interview with Christiane Rucker, 21 June 2016. See appendix, pp.366-367

¹⁷⁰ According to Christiane Rucker, Marion Jacob was the director Karl Suter's girlfriend, which might explain her starring role in *Bonditis*. She only appeared in a handful of supporting credits throughout the 1960s. See *ibid*.

¹⁷¹ A stalwart of British television shows like *Doctor Who* (1963 – 1989), *Eastenders* (1985 to present) and *The Benny Hill Show* (1955 to 1991), Sydney Arnold was a comedy actor most memorable for being under 5 feet tall. How he came to be cast in a Swiss Eurospy film is a mystery that must remain unanswered for now.

reminder of the everyday sexism that women in the 1960s had to put up with. When the chief calls in the gadget expert she is supplied with a specially adapted feminine range, including poisoned perfume, a gun disguised as lipstick, and finally “Instant anti-birth pills, for all our female agents!” It is difficult to assess Hata Sari’s reaction here as the only available copy of the film has both sides of the image cropped off, but one can easily imagine her frustration. This idea of “anti-birth pills” could be read satirically, as a comment on her male counterpart in the James Bond films who would impregnate women all over the world with no child-bearing consequences.

Later in the film Hata Sari sunbathes in a bikini outside her mountain chalet and is suddenly attacked by the Harp gang. Wearing a bikini halfway up a mountain seems incongruous, but does fulfil generic expectations. The fact that she is the main secret agent in this story does not prevent the filmmakers from using her as another “Bond girl.” The gang tie her up and one of them attempts to kiss her, the scene implying an attempted rape. She bites him on the nose, asserting some level of control in the situation despite being bound and prone.

Frank Born and Hata Sari eventually team up and take shelter in a small hotel, where they are forced to share a single room. Hata Sari is seemingly unconcerned about her body, treating Born as a fellow professional. When he walks in on her undressing he is embarrassed and turns away; “Oh, I do beg your pardon!” he apologises. “It’s alright,” she replies, making no hurried attempt to cover herself, not because she is being seductive but because she does not appear to consider the situation as sexually charged. She gets into bed and invites Born to join her. He fears this might all be another James Bond dream, but She calls him Frank instead of James and he begins to believe this situation might be real. He gets into bed and they kiss as the scene fades out, leaving the audience to assume that this relationship has been consummated. In this instant Agent Hata Sari is both Bond and Bond Girl; she is the one proactively seducing her victim, perhaps ensuring his compliance as her accomplice in this mission, or merely as a way of passing the time. James Bond was known to sleep with fellow agents with some form of unspoken arrangement between them that it had with no strings attached; his relationship with Jinx (Halle Berry) in *Die Another Day* (Lee Tamahori, 2002, UK/ USA: Eon Productions, Danjaq, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) being a prime example.

In an extraordinary encapsulation of the sexualised Orientalism of the Eurospy film, *Bonditis* features a lecherous Arab threatening a white woman. On the train to Margogün Born begins to daydream, and when the man sitting opposite him glances at a woman passing their carriage Born thinks to himself, “Thinks he’s Casanova. He’s probably got a wife already. But that’s not enough for him. He wants a harem.” This white man then transforms into a sinister Arab, complete with beard and traditional tunic. He leaves the compartment and Born follows him, now in a tuxedo. Suddenly there are Arab men everywhere and Born fights them, climbing along the outside of the train. He makes it to the next carriage where the woman is being forced out of the window by a man in a fez. Born fights him and the first Arab and rescues her. She is so grateful that they immediately embrace before Born is rudely interrupted by some sort of Nazi officer with a gun, who transforms into the train conductor looking for a ticket.

This entire sequence draws on colonialist imagery of the white man needing to defend white women from lascivious Arabs. The concept of the harem is drawn upon, as though Arab men kidnap and force women to be their sexual subjects. Born is the hero, killing Arabs and rescuing the white woman, and his reward is sexual, suggesting that for her the idea of sex with Arabs is horrifying but with a white stranger is acceptable. Although this scene is parodying what occurs in the James Bond films, most notably the Eastern setting of *From Russia With Love*, it is played straight and again suggests that *Bonditis* was conforming to the spy film conventions as well as joking about them.

Bonditis also features a flamboyant, openly gay character, who is a member of the Harp Gang. He wears colourful open shirts and he likes wearing disguises. This character is credited as “The Sweetie,” (Albert Mol). His portrayal is relatively progressive, given that the character is never punished for his homosexuality unlike gay characters in James Bond films, who are always villains and inevitably do not survive to the end of the film.¹⁷² One notable exception is the lesbian character Pussy Galore (Honor Blackman) in *Goldfinger* (1964, Guy Hamilton, UK-USA: Eon/ MGM). She lives, but her

¹⁷² Examples include the comedic hitmen Mr Kidd and Mr Wint (Putter Smith and Bruce Glover) in *Diamonds Are Forever* (1971, Guy Hamilton, UK/ USA: Eon), who are brutally killed by Bond in a botched assassination attempt, and Silva (Javier Bardem) in *Skyfall* (2012, Sam Mendes, UK/ USA: Eon/ Sony), who is stabbed in the back by Bond not only for his sexuality but also for having serious mummy issues.

homosexuality does not survive. In the novel, Pussy confidently states, “All men are bastards and cheats,” suggesting that lesbianism is a choice made by women because of a hatred for men. Having heard this “Bond felt the sexual challenge all beautiful lesbians have for men.” (Fleming, 1959: 44) In both the novel and the film version Pussy puts up a perfunctory resistance before yielding to his advances, giving up both her sexuality and life of crime. In this instance sexuality is played for easy laughs, from the character’s name (“I must be dreaming!” Bond exclaims when he is introduced) and appearance (an obvious black leather fetishist) through to her being cured by the overt predatory heterosexuality of James Bond, who finds time for seduction despite being in the middle of a siege on Fort Knox.

Arguably The Sweetie in *Bonditis* is there to ‘camp it up,’ providing a safe environment for the audience to find humour in homosexuality, rather than being forced to take it seriously. Susan Sontag (1978: 275) defines “Camp” as a love of “artifice and exaggeration,” (1978: 275) and The Sweetie’s performance and line delivery is extremely exaggerated. His own love of wearing disguises can be attributed to a love of artifice and self-awareness of his own conforming to the expectations of “Camp.” When a member of the gang who is watching Born through a telescope points out that he is now getting undressed, both The Sweetie and the beautiful blonde seen earlier in a bathtub run across the room shouting “Let me see! Let me see!” The Sweetie gets there first and The Blonde leans against a wall next to him, teasing him. “He will never go for someone like you,” she hisses, to which he replies, “He won’t go for a dumb blonde either!” Her barbed “Like you” comment is clearly meant as an insult, appearing to represent some disgust on her part for his sexuality, yet the filmmakers themselves do not appear to be taking this opportunity to condemn homosexuality. If anything, they are attempting to normalise it by having this character’s sexuality go unpunished, although it is still ostensibly played for laughs. Homosexuality was not decriminalised in West Germany until 1969, and was technically still illegal until 1994.¹⁷³ In Switzerland, however, the laws were more relaxed, homosexuality having been decriminalised in 1942.¹⁷⁴ This may explain the

¹⁷³ “Germany to quash historical convictions of gay men,” Kate Connolly, *The Guardian*, 11 May 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/11/germany-quash-historical-convictions-gay-men-criminalised-law>, accessed 17 July 2017

¹⁷⁴ “Switzerland,” Craig Kaczorowski, GLBTQ, 2015, www.glbtqarchive.com, accessed 17 July 2017

slight ambiguity on the part of *Bonditis* to either condemn or celebrate homosexuality, demonstrating a cautious approach given that they may have known that times were changing, but it was still not deemed publicly acceptable.

The Blonde does not take offence at Sweetie's misogynistic "dumb blonde" dismissal and continues to smile and watch, until he somewhat perversely reaches out and begins caressing her bare midriff with his hand whilst still watching Born through the telescope. He states "Superb figure. That's an athlete for you." It is only then that she seems a little disgusted, or perhaps is just tired of waiting for a turn with the telescope, and walks away. This is a strange moment: there is a hint of sex and sensuality, perhaps suggesting an element of bisexuality in the character of The Sweetie, or it could be a veiled reference to masturbatory voyeurism. His own homosexuality is not referred to again in the film with any specificity, although he continues to be camp at every opportunity, including when he confronts Born in the village whilst dressed as a priest.

At no point is Born's sexuality brought into question, and the same can be said for James Bond and all his many clones in the 1960s. The spy in these films was a poster boy for athletic heteronormativity, and Born is depicted as being someone every woman wants, despite being of distinctly average looks. It took another forty years before filmmakers were confident enough to suggest Bond's sexuality may be more ambiguous than audiences first thought,¹⁷⁵ but there were other secret agent-types who were more fluid in their sexuality. Although Bond uses sex to get information from women, in Pete Walker's *Man of Violence* (1970, UK: Miracle Films) the Bond-style hero Moon (Michael Latimer) sleeps with men as well as women if it gets him closer to solving the case.

Sex itself is used as a source of comedy throughout *Bonditis*. Upon his arrival at the hotel Born meets the receptionist Heidi (Bella Neri), whom he learns is also a patient of Doctor Brandmeyer. She is not a fellow 'Bonditis' sufferer, but is in fact a sex addict. A difficult and potentially life-ruining problem, here it is played strictly for laughs and provides an excuse for another woman to constantly throw herself at Born, at one point jumping into bed with him explaining that it is "Doctor's orders!" Once Born teams up with Hata Sari

¹⁷⁵ In *Skyfall* the villain Silva (Javier Bardem) runs his hands up James Bond's (Daniel Craig) thighs, smiling as he says "Well, there's a first time for everything." Bond replies, "What makes you think this is my first time?"

this nymphomaniac sub-plot is abandoned, with Heidi presumably heading for the hills, or back to reception.

Where Compton particularly excelled as a company was in marketing, a vital skill when dealing with often less than stellar movies. As their operation expanded they began brokering deals for global distribution for certain foreign titles, which is how they came to acquire the worldwide distribution rights to *Bonditis* from Turnus Film. Compton distributed this film around the world in 1968, although not in the UK, which seems an odd decision given that Bond was still popular at the time. The archival material does not indicate as to why this was the case, but it could be assumed that they felt the Eurospy craze was waning in the UK.

Bonditis was picked up by Compton sales manager John Henderson¹⁷⁶ at Cannes in May 1968, and, with an almost total disregard for the English language, the publicity proclaimed: “*Bonditis* is the biggest, funniest, colourfullest, zaniest, actionfullest, sexiest film comedy of all time.”¹⁷⁷

Compton clearly expected the film to do well and created very glossy advertising materials. The poster is now considered a classic of 1960s poster design,¹⁷⁸ (fig. 15) and there was also a large full-colour press-book and sets of lobby cards and front-of-house stills. As the film was clearly aimed at the international market the main poster was created in the dimensions of the American one-sheet: 27” x 40”. It features a combination of cut up stills and cartoons aside the main image of a yellow-tinted black and white cut-out of Hata Sari in a bikini top holding a gun. The two jagged images in the bottom left corner are of Frank Born. They stretch out almost as if the *Bonditis* logo is a sun and they are the rays. The sunlight emanating from the logo appears to be bathing Marion Jacob in yellow. The background of the poster is a series of circles, as if to represent a target,

¹⁷⁶ John Henderson still holds the rights to this film and many others in the Compton catalogue, and has worked with Screenbound Entertainment on a series of DVD releases.

¹⁷⁷ *Bonditis* press book. Author’s collection

¹⁷⁸ As evidenced by its inclusion on the front cover of an exploitation film poster compilation book published by TASCHEN, alongside *Chelsea Girls* (Paul Morrissey & Andy Warhol, 1966) and *I Am Curious (Yellow)* (original title *Jag är nyfiken - en film i gult*, Vilgot Sjöman, 1967): Nourmand, T., Marsh, G., eds. (2006) *Film Posters: Exploitation*, Singapore: Evergreen (an imprint of TASCHEN)



Fig. 15: One-sheet poster for the international release of *Bonditis*.

emanating from the yellow circle behind the *Bonditis* logo outwards in red, pink and then a purple, which on closer inspection was created by printing very small black dots on top of the pink base colour. The *Bonditis* logo consists of the lettering overlaid with a hand-drawn gun, next to the black silhouette of a naked woman. This again conforms to the two main elements of audience appeal in a spy film: violence and sex.

Advertising material was also created in some of the other countries that picked up the film from Compton, including Australia, Germany and Spain. It was all produced to a very high quality and is packed with information and imagery. This optimism could have been based on the success the film had in its native Switzerland. Early screenings were favourable, and an internal company document from Turnus states:

Bonditis. Major Swiss city: very good business. Press reviews highly favourable. Audience very enthusiastic. Another major Swiss city: We're packing them in! A hearty laugh for the audience. A film that does not only live up to promise, but gives excellent reviews. Held over for more than six weeks.¹⁷⁹

Switzerland Today pointed out how rare it was to have a film produced by the Swiss film industry that had more than just local appeal.¹⁸⁰ Considering that at the time the Swiss industry only made around three films a year, it is perhaps no surprise that *Bonditis* was popular at home. For traditional appeal an alternate title was created for the Austrian audiences; “Küsse und schüsse am heuboden,” which translates as “Kissed and shot in the hayloft.” (fig. 16) The poster design attempts to pass the film off as a Heimat-style sex comedy, the tagline reading “der heimatfilm für starke nerven,” or “The Heimat Film for strong nerves.”¹⁸¹

S.F. Distributors imported less spy films than Compton, but did pick up one significant film in 1963: *O.S.S. 117* (*O.S.S. 117 se déchaîne*, 1963, Andre Hunebelle, France/ Italy: P.A.C./ Compagnie Industrielle et Commerciale Cinématograp). Playing as a more

¹⁷⁹ Compton company communication documents, *Bonditis* file, author's collection.

¹⁸⁰ *Switzerland Today* quotation taken from *Bonditis* press book. No reference given. Author's collection.

¹⁸¹ *Küsse und schüsse am heuboden* poster, author's collection.



Fig. 16: Alternative Heimat-style poster for *Bonditis*, under the title *Küsse und Schüsse am Heuboden* (*Kissed and Shot in the Hayloft*). It is “The Heimat Film for strong nerves.” Note the Austrian distributor, Iris Film Wien.

serious, straight spy thriller than the examples already discussed, it nevertheless conforms to some of the genre conventions.

There is little sex in this film, but there is some violence directed towards the lead female character Brigitta (Nadia Sanders). Unlike Bond, whose relationships with women rarely go beyond the inevitable love-making as the credits roll, American secret agent Hubert Landon, aka Hubert Bonisseur de la Bath (Kerwin Matthews) is depicted as a real gentleman who does not toy lightly with a woman's affections. This can be seen even more in the other OSS 117 film, *Shadow of Evil*, which will also be discussed in this chapter.

The required cuts for *OSS 117* to achieve an 'A' certificate were as follows:

- Reel 2 Considerably reduce the fight, especially removing the kicks and the use of a bottle as a weapon.
- Reel 6 Remove "I kept my eyes shut. I didn't see anything – practically. I didn't see anything unusual."
- Reel 8 After Hubert returns to motor launch, remove his two slaps on Brigitta's (sic) face.
- Reel 11 On motor launch reduce shots of Hubert choking Sacha with hand-cuff chain.¹⁸²

That second requested cut refers to a scene where Brigitta wakes up in Hubert's apartment, wearing his pyjamas. She is shocked, having no memory of how she got there. She jumps out of bed and the camera quickly pans down to reveal her bare legs and a brief glimpse of white underwear, before she gasps and jumps back into bed, Hubert laughing. This scene may be what one reviewer was thinking of when they wrote, trying to find something positive to say about the film, "On the other hand, the film does have Nadia Sanders, who is as tastily glamorous as any morsel that ever tempted Bond."¹⁸³

Although the dialogue in the English dub quoted by the BBFC appears to be slightly different from the original French language track (currently the only version available), it was clearly felt to be too suggestive by the BBFC. After covering herself with the blanket, Brigitta looks down at the pyjama top and asks:

¹⁸² BBFC Archive, 1963 Exceptions Report

¹⁸³ "O.S.S. 117 se déchaîne (O.S.S. 117), France/ Italy, 1963," *Monthly Film Bulletin*, April 1964, p.58-59

Brigitta: Did you...?
 Hubert: (nods) Mmm hmm.
 Brigitta: Oh, and...?
 Hubert: No, no no. (Gestures to a chair) I slept on that. I had sweet dreams. I merely saved your life.

After explaining that she had been drugged the previous night and he had found her soaking wet, he continues:

Hubert: You were half frozen, you could have died of pneumonia, so I rubbed alcohol on you from your head to your feet.
 Brigitta: (Gasps) So you...
 Hubert: No, on my honour. I closed my eyes. Almost. I saw nothing anyway. Well... nothing unusual.

This scene is the closest *O.S.S. 117* gets to a suggestion of sex or promiscuity. If this dialogue took place in a James Bond film one might doubt the spy's protestations of innocence, but in this film Hubert Landon is depicted as being a trustworthy, decent individual who can be relied on morally, even if his "I closed my eyes. Almost," line is a little tongue in cheek.

Although helping Hubert Landon solve the murder of one of his fellow agents, Brigitta is secretly working for the organization that had him killed because they have threatened her family. Landon slaps Brigitta across the face and shakes her before throwing her to the floor when he suspects her involvement in an attempt on his life by divers armed with spears. The BBFC clearly objected to the brutality towards Brigitta in this scene. Once their requested cuts were enacted the scene would have still shown Hubert throw her roughly to the floor in the boat. Following this assault, she bursts into tears and the scene crossfades to her apartment, where she is now in bed and Hubert is looking after her. He does not apologise as such, but he appears to have developed a genuine affection as she tells him the truth about her predicament. They forgive each other and passionately embrace. After the inevitable destructive climax of the film, Hubert and Brigitta drive away in a speedboat. He calls her sweetheart, and after breaking the fourth wall to say "au revoir" to the audience, they kiss passionately again as the theme song plays and the credits roll.

This final scene does fulfil generic expectations of the typical James Bond ending, although it is worth bearing in mind that this film was released just a year after *Dr. No*, which also ended with the hero and his lover, Honey Ryder (Ursula Andress) kissing in a boat having successfully defeated and blown up Dr. No's base. This choice of ending for *O.S.S. 117* is therefore not likely a coincidence, although Hubert's talking directly to the audience does lend it some originality.

Where *O.S.S. 117* also differs from the James Bond films is that the main villain Mayan (Roger Dutoit) does have a beautiful woman working alongside him, called Lucia (Irina Demick), but, unlike Bond, there is no real interaction between her and Hubert Landon, and certainly no sexual attraction. She is very close to Mayan both personally and professionally, and opts to die with him at the end, blowing themselves up inside their secret radar base rather than be taken alive.

O.S.S. 117 was distributed by S.F. Distributors, one of E.J. Fancey's companies, in 1964. It has proven difficult to locate a UK quad poster in any archive, but some front-of-house stills have survived. According to the *Monthly Film Bulletin* review, advertising material for this film declared that it was "The French answer to James Bond."¹⁸⁴ S.F. were clearly keen to capitalise on the cultural impact of James Bond; the recent successes of *Dr. No* and *From Russia With Love*, as well as the novels¹⁸⁵ and *Daily Express* comic strip.

Action is the prime element which is being exploited in the surviving marketing materials, some of which highlight the violence towards women seen in the film. Two of the UK front-of-house stills focus on violent acts being perpetrated on Brigitta, the first by Sacha (Daniel Emilfork), the henchman who once loved her but now wants to kill her. Another front-of-house still depicts Brigitta having just been thrown to the floor, slapped and shaken repeatedly by Hubert aboard her boat. Another action moment is captured in one of the stills, when a diver appears to have been shot by a speargun. (fig. 17) This is a

¹⁸⁴ "O.S.S. 117 se déchaîne (O.S.S. 117), France/ Italy, 1963," *Monthly Film Bulletin*, April 1964, p.58-59

¹⁸⁵ By April 1964 twelve James Bond novels had been published, *You Only Live Twice* (Fleming, I. (1964) London: Jonathan Cape) as recently as March.



Fig. 17: Front of House still for *O.S.S. 117*, one of eight available

moment of pure violence which is a typical image to use for promoting a film in a Bond style.

Front-of-house stills were part of the advertising for a film, and perhaps S.F. Distributors chose the image of Hubert striking Brigitta as it conforms to the expectations of the spy-hero figure as man of action, even if in this instance it is a violent act towards a woman, deemed an acceptable convention of the genre. Reviewers picked up on the violent aspect of the film, with one summarising that “With its trail of corpses and frequent gun and fist fights this film has schoolboy attraction.”¹⁸⁶ It is a pity that such little evidence of the campaign marketing by S.F. for this film is unavailable, but comparisons could be made with press books and material they were producing in this period for other European genre films.

In late 1966 or early 1967 S.F. Distributors released a double-bill of *The Blood Suckers* (*La isla de la muerte*, 1966, Mel Welles (as Ernst von Theumer), Spain/ West Germany: Orbita Film S.A./ Tefi Films)¹⁸⁷ and *Slaughter of the Vampires* (*La strage dei vampiri*, 1964, Roberto Mauri, Italy: Mercurfilm), both with an ‘X’ certificate. A press book was produced with the two films together on the cover showing a version of the UK poster artwork. The book opens out to reveal a still from *The Blood Suckers* alongside a plot summary on the left half, with *Slaughter of the Vampires* on the right. Somewhat confusingly although the first film was submitted to the BBFC as *The Blood Suckers*, and it is written as such on the cover, the interior has it written as one word. Beneath the still is the main cast, the director and technical details (Length 7150 ft., Regd. No. F32046). The plot summaries for both are detailed and give away every main story detail including the ending, in the assumption that exhibitors would use this information to decide whether to book the film, perhaps not having time to watch every film they book in advance. Advertising accessories for this “combined programme” are:

¹⁸⁶ *Kine Weekly*, 20 February 1964, p.15

¹⁸⁷ Also known as *Island of the Doomed* and released in the USA as *Maneater of Hydra*. Mel Welles was an American writer and actor who flourished under the tutelage of Roger Corman before spending part of the 1960s making exploitation films in Europe. He directed here under the pseudonym Ernst von Theumer, taken from the name of the film’s German producer, Ernst Ritter von Theumer. To add to the confusion, Welles’ real name was Ira Meltcher, the name he used for the writing credit. See appendix, pp.344-345, where Tony Klinger relates his experience of picking up the distribution rights for this film when he was sent on his first European buying trip at the age of fourteen.

TRAILERS**STILLS:** set of 8, Black and White, 10" x 8"**QUAD CROWN POSTERS** illustrated in full colour. These may also be used as d/c posters by separating**ADVERTISEMENT BLOCKS:** 3" d/c

These materials were available to order direct from S.F. Film Distributors Ltd., 1/2 Berners Street, London, W.1.¹⁸⁸

There are many other examples of S.F. putting two of their European releases on a double-bill, but they did also occasionally give something a more prestigious release. Earlier in 1966 they released *Galia* (Georges Lautner, France/ Italy: Ciné-Alliance/ Spéva Films) with a more stylish and creative press book using a collage of press quotes and black and white stills to accompany an in-depth plot summary, which gives away the shock ending. (figs. 18 and 19) The advertising accessories are available in the same forms as the previous example, except this time interested exhibitors will find S.F. Film Distributors in Queen's House on Leicester Square. This office had been E.J. Fancey's base of operations for many years, and had even been used as a shooting location for some of his own film productions.¹⁸⁹ This fluidity of office bases persists across the Fancey business empire, as examples from the BBFC archive demonstrate, where companies often change name when dealing with the same film, as though it all depended on which piece of headed paper was picked up and placed in the typewriter first. Or perhaps when dealing with a slightly more 'prestigious' arthouse picture, Fancey wanted the address of his company to sound more impressive.

It is difficult to know whether *O.S.S. 117* was advertised as a double-feature or not but it is safe to assume that the standard S.F. set in their advertising material, a standard consistent across E.J. Fancey's companies, would have applied here, and that a set of stills, a quad poster and advertising blocks to be used in the local press would have been supplied.

¹⁸⁸ Press book for *The Blood Suckers*. Cinema Museum archive.

¹⁸⁹ One example being the opening sequence with Eamon Andrews in *London Entertains* (1951, E. J. Fancey, UK: E.J. Fancey Productions). You can clearly see from the window that the Odeon on Leicester Square is showing the James Mason film *Rommel - Desert Fox* (1951, Henry Hathaway, USA: Twentieth Century Fox).



Fig. 18: Press book for *Galia*, published by S.F. Distributors



Fig. 19: Collage of *Galia* stills inside the press book

Shadow of Evil (*Banco à bangkok pour oss 117*, 1964, André Hunebelle, France/ Italy: Compagnie Industrielle et Commerciale Cinématograp, Da Ma Produzione (Rome), P.A.C.), another OSS 117 film starring Kerwin Matthews, was released in the UK in 1966, this time distributed by Gala Film Distributors. In the earlier film *Agent OSS 117* was less sexually aggressive, unlike James Bond's flirtatious and womanising manner, so when Hubert does act like that in this film it comes as a surprise, almost out of character. On his arrival at an office, where he is meeting a contact, he spots Eva (Dominique Wilms). He pulls out a small camera, says "Watch the birdie," and takes her photo. He then follows her into a lift and begins to harass her, saying she can come to his hotel room to get a copy of the photo, "Almost any hour of the day, or the night," or if she will give him her address he will take it to her: "I have absolutely got to see you again." She gives him the cold shoulder and calls him a "Candid Camera Casanova," before discovering that she is to be his secretary and must begin making phone calls and appointments for him. It could be that Hubert already knew who she was and was just playing around with her, but his behavior just seems like he could become a stalker. She seems justifiably unhappy at the thought of having to work for him.

Hubert does not help the cold between them thaw, as at an embassy reception he whistles and kisses her hand. "There's a man who knows how to speak to a woman," she says sarcastically, but still dances with him. As they dance cheek to cheek, he tells her, "You're a blonde with green eyes Eva. The girl of my dreams is always a blonde with green eyes." "You're a fast worker Hubert," she retorts. "For that reason they pay me so well," he replies. One assumes Eva will become the romantic interest in the film, but only a minute later Hubert meets Lila (Pier Angeli) and is dancing with her instead. He tells her "You're a brunette with green eyes Lila. You know, it's a very odd thing, but the woman of my dreams is always a brunette with green eyes." Despite this clearly being a line he must use all the time; she seems to fall for it and smiles lovingly. Meanwhile we learn that Eva is in league with the evil Dr. Sinn. Whilst dancing together his prowess is under discussion. "What does he do between meals?" Dr. Sinn asks. "Flirts with all the women," Eva replies. This kind of playfulness is reminiscent of Bond and can be read as a power play between the sexes.

Hubert Bonisseur de la Bath, this time undercover as Hubert Barton, has had something of a character change between the production of this film and *O.S.S. 117*, made just a year

apart. Whereas in the former film he is a serious, chaste agent only interested in a meaningful relationship, here he has become more sexually gregarious and playful. This difference is also reflected in the change from black and white, evoking film noir, to colour. His character has literally become more colourful. These early scenes of *Shadow of Evil* enable the audience to learn almost the entire range of Hubert Barton's sexual powers. He can comically harass women, and he has some chat up lines which he can deploy with varying degrees of success.

Moving further towards the James Bond template, an attempt is also made to equip him with useful spy gadgets, although they are not particularly imaginative (a small camera and a radio transmitter hidden in a cigarette packet), but again it enhances the Eurospy credentials. Despite this playboy image in the opening scenes, for the remainder of *Shadow of Evil* Hubert seems genuinely devoted to Lila Sinn, even when she tries to drug him and send him back to America. He declares his love to her on more than one occasion.¹⁹⁰ An "Orientalist" approach was taken to Lila's wardrobe for the film, in keeping with the wardrobe of Dr. Sinn (Robert Hossein). Along with the sari she wears during her introduction to Hubert, she also wears a variety of silk jackets and kimonos in an "Oriental" style.

Shadow of Evil is a less violent spy film than *O.S.S. 117*, which along with the move to colour and the raised comedic tone evidences a desire on the part of the filmmakers to move away from the grittier realism towards a family-friendly spy film. This is also reflected in the BBFC 'U' certificate, following just two cuts, one of which was clearly made with children in mind:

Reel 6 Shorten fight between SINN and BARTON.
 Remove shots of rats running around and over LILA's feet.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ Kerwin Matthews would be reunited with Pier Angeli five years later for the low budget science fiction film *Octaman* (1971, Harry Essex, USA: Filmers Guild/ Heritage Enterprises). Apparently depressed that her career after moving to Hollywood was not going in the right direction, Angeli took her own life before the film was released. One of the first films legendary special effects artist Rick Baker worked on, *Octaman* is now considered a cult classic.

¹⁹¹ BBFC Archive, *Shadow of Evil* file

The film was released on a double-bill with *The Invincible Gladiator* (1961, Il gladiatore invincibile, Alberto De martino/ Antonio Momplet, Italy/ Spain: Films Columbus, Atenea Films, Variety Film Production), “BOTH IN COLOUR” and presented as “A GREAT DOUBLE ‘U’ PROGRAMME!” As was standard practice for Gala a set of eight black and white front-of-house stills were produced along with a quad poster. It is likely that a campaign book was also available, but if so one has proven difficult to trace. According to the poster and the front-of-house stills the film was a Seven Arts presentation through Kenneth Rive, although both also feature the statement “A Gala release.” The tagline on the poster for *Shadow of Evil*, repeating a similar marketing strategy by S.F. for O.S.S. 117 states that it is “In the Bond and U.N.C.L.E. Tradition!” The artwork features a large depiction of Hubert raising his gun, towering over a smaller image of Lila Sinn reclining in front of a Bangkok temple amidst action and explosions. This black and white artwork is based closely on the colour French poster, which suggests that Gala acquired copies of the French publicity materials for reference as part of their acquisition.

The front-of-house stills offered a selection of moments from the film, including the character of Christopher Lemon (Raoul Billerey) dying in a hail of bullets, OSS 117 wrestling with a Thai assassin, dancing with Eva and meeting Lila, as well as some of him running and pointing his gun in various directions. There is little suggestion of the more playful and flirtatious character of OSS 117, except perhaps the still of him kissing Lila Sinn’s hand, but even this appears extremely chaste when compared with the athletic sexual conquests of James Bond. When compared to the French publicity stills, which were printed in full colour, Gala’s choice of images seems a little muted. They could have chosen an image of Hubert and Lila in a full passionate embrace, although this may have not fitted well with the image of the ‘U’ audience they were hoping to attract. *Monthly Film Bulletin* were openly hostile towards the film, describing *Shadow of Evil* as being a “turgid new adventure of ‘the French James Bond,’” before going on to state that “Nobody in the cast evinces the minutest interest in this preposterous farrago,” and that “the fights are unconvincing and the gadgetry [is] sub-standard.”¹⁹² How audiences may have responded to the film it is difficult to say. It is listed as playing for seven days at the Prince of Wales on Harrow Road, London in the week of 31 December 1966.¹⁹³ A dubbed

¹⁹² *Monthly Film Bulletin*, December 1966, pp.184-185

¹⁹³ “General Release,” *The Tatler*, London, 31 December 1966, p. 43

European double-bill featuring a spy thriller and a sword-and-sandal adventure might have been a fun time-filler in the Christmas holidays, but mostly likely nothing more.

The final film to be discussed here focuses on an Agent Logan (Luis Dávila).¹⁹⁴ He is the hero of *Operation "Y"* (*Agente Logan – missione Ypotron*, 1966, Giorgio Stegani, Italy/ Spain/ France: Atlántida Films, Dorica Film, Euro International Film (EIA)), and is an outrageous womaniser, veering close to parodic proportions. The beginning of the film sees him testing infra-red glasses and a bulletproof vest at headquarters before going on holiday. The Spanish co-producers may have influenced his destination: "Paradise, and for my money, that's Acapulco. Olé!" A destination actually in Mexico, it is more likely that they shot the following scenes at a Spanish coastal resort. The credits then roll over a sequence of Logan in a speedboat with a trio of beautiful, willing women in swimwear. The women take it in turns to steer the boat whilst the others cavort with him at the back. This builds to a somewhat extraordinary shot of Logan in the middle with women on each side and one in his lap, and they tousle his hair whilst he kisses each of them in turn, going in a circle. Even James Bond was generally a one-woman-at-a-time kind of secret agent. Following the credits Logan is seen chasing a fourth woman, wearing a silver bikini, up a beach. "Does the heat stimulate you?" she asks as they collapse down on to beach towels. His eyes glance towards her chest and he replies, "Sure does." They run towards the hotel, when Logan suddenly spots a fifth woman, this time in a red bikini, glaring at him. "Meet me in the bar," he tells his current squeeze before striking up a conversation with this new woman, who, it transpires is angry with him: "You said wait a few minutes. It's now been six long months." She forgives him and within seconds they are running towards his hotel room. Within the opening five minutes of *Operation "Y"* we have seen Logan in sexualised contact with five separate women, as if the film is determined that the character's Bond-like qualities are rammed home to the audience; only Logan is even more Bond than Bond.

The complicated science-fiction-informed plot sees Logan called back early from his holiday to investigate a mystery involving a rocket programme. Logan claims to be American; an agent for the security service of N.A.S.A. with the codename of Cosmos One.

¹⁹⁴ Robbie Logan in the English dub, Lemmy Logan in the original Italian.

Later in the film Logan discovers Carol (Janine Reynaud), a mysterious woman who may or may not also be a spy. He immediately compliments her on her blonde hair (an unconvincing wig) and then undoes her dress so that it falls to the floor, revealing a bikini. She escapes to the swimming pool, where Logan soon catches up with her. “Who is this man, Carol?” another man asks. “Just someone who makes women strip for the pleasure of looking,” she replies. Unlike *Bonditis*, which sets out its intentions as a spoof right from the beginning, *Operation “Y”* is clearly meant to be a straight Eurospy film, although its over-the-top hero prefigures the more comedic James Bond as portrayed by Roger Moore. Fitting the role of the Bond girl as discussed earlier, Carol does end up dead after trying to help Agent Logan.

Operation “Y” was distributed by Gala in 1968, at a time when demand for the Eurospy thriller was beginning to wane, in part evidenced by Compton’s reluctance to distribute *Bonditis* in that same year. It was first submitted for certification in January 1968 under the title *Ypotron*, with the request for an ‘A’ certificate. Several cuts were requested:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Reel 3 | Reduce as far as possible shots of Jean almost naked. |
| Reel 4 | Considerably reduce bullfight; leaving only enough to establish that instructions are given to Jean: in particular remove shots of bull’s bleeding side, and shot of the kill. |
| Reel 9 | Considerably reduce fights, in particular removing sequence of blows on Robbie when he is helpless, and blow on man’s face which draws blood, with shot of his face afterwards. |
| Reel 10 | Reduce fight; in particular removing as many as possible of the kicks. ¹⁹⁵ |

For reasons not clear in the documentation Gala did not distribute the film at that time, resubmitting these four reels to the BBFC again in June 1968. They were requesting an “A” for the film and a “U” certificate for the trailer, under its new title *Operation “Y”*. One cut was required from the trailer:

Remove all shots of strip dance.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ BBFC Archive, *Operation “Y”* file

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.*

Like previous examples, the cuts reduce the sexual elements. However, Agent Logan stands out amongst his contemporaries because he does not hit women. The cuts requested from the bullfight sequences draw attention to the Spanish element of the co-production, featuring footage that would have been very familiar to British audiences through documentaries such as the *Mondo Cane* series. *Monthly Film Bulletin*'s review is brief and to the point:

Another pallid imitation of the Bond films (complete with strident music, striptease, and the hero's inevitable suitcase of explosive gadgets), as lacking in subtlety as it is in suspense.¹⁹⁷

The Eurospy film offered audiences glamour and excitement; a glimpse of the forbidden and exotic where a man with a gun and a licence to kill can freely commit violent and erotic acts in which they are complicit. Table 3.1 indicates that 1966 was the height of the Eurospy craze in the UK, before it began to tail off towards the end of the decade. Perhaps this spike of European secret agents appeared to fill the gap left between the releases of *Thunderball* in 1965 and *You Only Live Twice* in 1967. Whatever the reason, like the peplum before it the genre was short-lived as the film studios of Europe moved on to the mass-production of the spaghetti western, where many of the main Eurospy stars became cowboys.

In these last two chapters I have provided evidence that Eurospy films are open to interpretation through a lens of exoticism and Orientalism which offers insight into contemporary, post-colonial attitudes within Europe in the 1960s. More specifically, British audiences were reassured that despite the realities of their nation's diminished global influence, on screen at least the world was in safe hands, even if those hands occasionally slapped or groped the women they were trying to save. The often-ungentlemanly behavior of the secret agent towards the opposite sex in the films discussed in these last two chapters was however relatively tame compared to the hundreds of erotic films imported by Compton, Gala, E.J. Fancey and their competitors which would stretch and eventually break the bounds of the 'X' certificate, as we will discover in the next two chapters.

¹⁹⁷ "Agente Logan, Missione Ypotron (Operation 'Y')"
Monthly Film Bulletin, October 1968, p.153

CHAPTER FIVE

Dolls of Vice: Prostitution and European Erotica as Popular Entertainment

This chapter covers a selection of European films distributed by Compton, E.J. Fancey and Gala, most of which depicted sex or sexual situations of some form. There were many films released in the UK at that time from Europe of this type, often dramas but also occasionally thrillers, horror films, documentaries or even comedies which were repackaged and exploited for British audiences as sexualised entertainment. Many European films, particularly those from a neo-realist tradition, dealt with the subject of prostitution, and were often hard-hitting dramas highlighting the socio-economic plight of women in that profession. Once in the UK the films were taken, and sometimes altered, to appeal to a predominantly male audience with expectations that the films would be sexually explicit. For example, *Adua e la compagne* (1960, Antonio Pietrangeli, Italy: Zebra Films), the title meaning “Adua and her Friends,” was distributed by Gala in 1961 under the far more salacious *Hungry For Love*, a pun on the plot, given that the film is about ex-prostitutes who go into business running a restaurant. Other examples include two distributed by Compton; *The Call Girl Business* (*Anonima cocottes*, 1960, Camillo Mastrocinque, Italy: Titanus) and *I, A Woman* (1965, *Jeg – en Kvinde*, Mac Ahlberg, Denmark/ Sweden: Novaris Film). Original marketing material and contemporary reviews can give an indication of how these films were being sold and how their theme of prostitution was exploited. Other prostitution dramas including *Dolls of Vice* (*Gefährdete Mädchen*, 1958, Wolfgang Glück, West Germany: Rex-Film GmbH), distributed by Gala, and *Victims of Vice* (*L'amour à la chaîne*, 1965, Claude de Givray, France: Comptoir Français du Film Production), distributed by D.U.K., will be discussed in relation to the surviving marketing materials.¹⁹⁸

The archival material found during this research suggests that sex films were a big part of the business model of independent cinemas in London in the 1960s and 1970s. A traditional British prudishness in the 1950s meant that most of this sex came from abroad, very often Europe. An attitude which equated sex with the continent had developed in the

¹⁹⁸ The only surviving film elements of *Dolls of Vice* appear to be a 35mm Dupe Negative held in the BFI National Archive which is unavailable to researchers.

hearts (and loins) of the British public, what Andrew Sarris referred to as the “Ooh-la-la factor.”¹⁹⁹ Distributors such as Gala, Compton and Fancey were only too happy to provide as much cheaply made and marketed ‘Eurotica’ as they could get their hands on. This chapter will focus on key examples of texts which were brought to the UK. Where press and publicity materials are available these will be explored to interpret how these films may have been received and what this says about British film-going culture, attitudes, perspectives and ideologies. Archival material from the BBFC also provides an indication of reaction to these films, from a moralistic and regulatory point of view.

Former BBFC examiner Audrey Field commented that this period saw an arrival of “a huge army of naked ladies and gentlemen from all over Europe and the USA, who shall be nameless, for the very good reason that in their class of alleged acting the name does not matter.” (Field, 1974: 153) These films were often critically derided. David McGillivray, film critic and screenwriter, stated that sex films, either European or British, “were characterised by inane writing, hack direction, amateurish performances, technical inadequacy and a consequent deficiency of entertainment value.” (McGillivray, 1992: 15) Regardless of this critical viewpoint, distributors continued to bring sex films into the UK.

Table 4.1 shows the results of a keyword search of the BBFC database for the years 1960 to 1975 to establish the broad trends in the distribution of sex-related films during the period covered by this thesis. There were 181 films with “love” or its variations in the title, 144 films with the words “sex” or “sexy” and 100 with “Girl” or “Girls” in the title. Miracle Films, a relatively small business on Wardour Street run by Phil Kutner and Michael Myers, distributed forty-one titles on this table, with Gala a close second with thirty-five. E.J. Fancey Productions, Border Films, New Realm Entertainments and SF Film Distributors have a combined total of eighty-three, making E.J. Fancey and his family the biggest distributor of sex films in the UK for at least fifteen years. Obviously because this survey does not consider every single film in this genre there is some room for variation, but it does establish that the Fanceys were one of the major independents.

¹⁹⁹ “SUMMER FILMS: INTERNATIONAL; Why the Foreign Film Has Lost Its Cachet,” *New York Times*, 2 May, 1999

By comparison Compton, who from 1960 were one of the most successful independent British film companies, were responsible for only twenty-one, their last film on this table being *Secrets of a Windmill Girl* in 1966. In October of that year Tony Tenser left Compton, and in 1967 the group, following financial difficulties, were taken over by the father and son partnership of Curtis and Leslie Elliot. Michael Klinger also left to become an independent producer and the Elliots' took the remaining assets and staff, such as John Henderson, and formed Cinecenta,²⁰⁰ who appear on table 4.1 from 1969 onwards. Cinecenta became a major distributor of sex films, with twenty-seven titles on this table from 1969 to 1975.

If one restricts the table only up to and including 1967, Compton's strength as a distributor of sex films becomes more apparent. Twenty-one titles compares favourably with Gala on twenty-six. Miracle meanwhile only have twelve and the Fancey group a combined total of eleven, demonstrating that Compton were in fact a leading distributor in sex and sexploitation up until the company collapsed.

The 'X' rating became another exploitable commodity in the independent distributor or exhibitor's arsenal, its prominent position on the marketing material serving to lure audiences just as effectively as the imagery or title of the film itself. Independent cinemas such as the Jacey chain would thrive in this atmosphere, where any 'X' rated film seemed guaranteed to bring punters in off the streets. This contrasted with the Rank-owned cinemas, which for a period banned 'X' certificate films, perhaps owing to J. Arthur Rank's Methodist background. (Mazdon & Wheatley, 2013: 89) By 1962 however the Cohen family, who owned the Jacey chain, were tired of screening wall to wall nudist films in their cinemas. It was not the kind of film they wished to be associated with, but, as John Cohen admitted, "We couldn't believe the takings."²⁰¹ Producing these films cost barely anything and distributors were always very keen; Compton supplied Jacey with *My Bare Lady* (1962, Arthur Knight, UK: Compton Films), *Girls in the Sun* (*Corsica*, 1962, Werner Kunz, Switzerland: Werner Kunz Film Productions) and *Diary of a Nudist* (1961, Doris Wishman, USA: Dawn Productions) in 1962 alone. Nudist films were massively popular despite most nudity being often only glimpsed in the far distance. The

²⁰⁰ See Turner, 2000

²⁰¹ Interview with John Cohen, 15 July 2015. See appendix, p.315

Jacey group could not understand why the nudist films were taking so much money, so they decided to mount a large advertising campaign deliberately berating the nudist film, and by extension the audience who lapped them up. (fig. 20) It was hoped that this campaign would serve to put audiences off nudist films so that they could develop a more interesting range of programming. Adverts were produced which stated "Jacey: A nudist feature film with cartoon and news, 1/6 to 2/6, Why Pay More? Frankly patrons they're a bore. 3 different nudist feature films NOW SHOWING. Charing Cross Road, Leicester Square, Trafalgar Square. Take Your Pick! Next week a choice of 4 including Marble Arch." Another advert complained, "As long as **indifferent** sexy films are **box office** they will abound!!" (their emphasis).²⁰² With hindsight, it is difficult to imagine how the Cohens thought that dropping the ticket price and offering a choice of films and theatres was going to put punters off. This attempt at reverse psychology, rather than persuading people to watch quality continental films, caused queues around the block. As the decade rolled on, the trends in adult-oriented entertainment became more explicit. As Eric Schaefer adroitly put it, "In movies characters no longer got married. Now they got laid. Movies no longer had a big love scene; they had a sex scene... It was visible, unencumbered by metaphor, uncut by the censor [this may have been the case in the US, but not so in the UK], often with only a carefully placed leg or sheet corner to cover unions of flesh." (Schaefer, 2014: 8)

Meanwhile specialist pornographic cinemas thrived in Soho and other cosmopolitan city centres, whilst the mainstream British cinema industry struggled to compete with the triple-threat of television, a decrease in British-produced films and bingo halls. From the late 1960s onwards, as in the US, "sexual entertainment was no longer contained to seedy theaters in rundown, marginal urban neighborhoods [sic.]. It was becoming unrestricted and reaching the masses." (ibid.) When the BBFC adjusted their certification in 1970 so that 'X' meant audiences had to be over eighteen, the previously titillating nudist films and sexy European dramas shown by the Jacey gave way to far more explicit fare. This dissatisfaction with these types of films and the customers they attracted contributed to the slow demise of the Jacey cinemas, as well as many others.

²⁰² The Cohen Family Archive, Jacey advert, circa 1962.

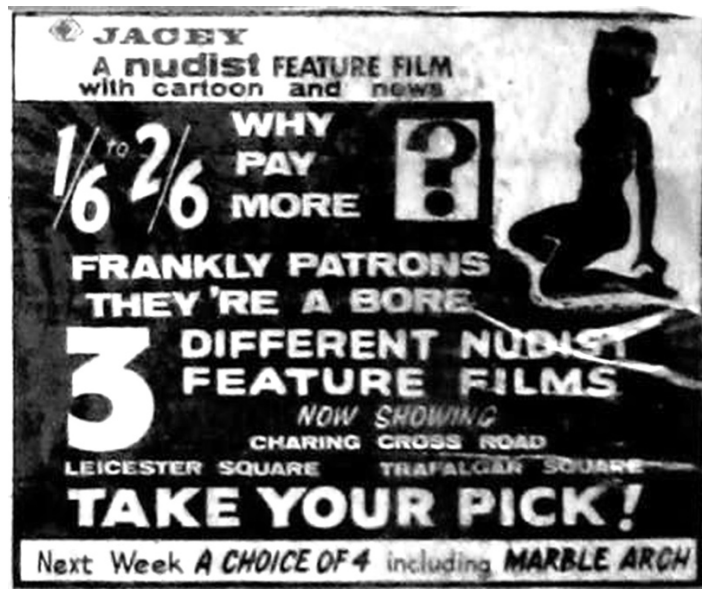


Fig.20: A Jacey advert berating the nudist film, circa 1962 (Used with the permission of John Cohen)

Compton, founded in 1960, first screened European nudist films in their own private cinema club on Old Compton Street in Soho before soon producing their own nudist and sex-themed films and acquiring their own chain of cinemas, including the 600 seat Scala in Birmingham and a smaller cinema on London's Oxford Street. They expanded throughout the 1960s whilst other mainstream exhibitors such as Rank were closing cinemas (Ahmed 2011). As a private cinema club, they could import films and screen them without the need for a BBFC certificate. Sexploitation was a major part of their programming.

The film shows at the Compton cinema and others are really only an extension of the French and Swedish films that can be seen elsewhere under an (X) certificate. The films with titles such as: *Sin Crazy*, *Passionate Nights in Paris* and the like, have not been given a certificate by the film censor, and they cannot be seen by the general public unless they are a member of a film club such as the Compton (you can become a member at the door). The torrid scenes shown in the films go so far, but not that far. Suspender belts, stocking tops, lace-trimmed knickers and exposed breasts are displayed in great profusion. The girls gavotte across the screen with their panting lovers hotly pursuing them from one bedroom to another and that is all there is to it. (Norman, 1966: 45)

This eye witness account of the private cinema clubs of Soho in the mid-1960s paints a vivid picture of what one could expect thanks to this circumvention of the need for a rating certificate. Many of the films which one might expect to see in one of these establishments are now sadly unavailable for viewing, but one gets a sense from the extant marketing materials. (fig.21) An undated Compton Cinema Club brochure, featuring an artistic rendering of a naked couple on the cover, describes the establishment as:

LONDON'S ONLY
LUXURY
CINEMA CLUB
presenting
SPECIALISED
UNABRIDGED
NEW
FEATURE FILMS
for
ADULT AUDIENCES²⁰³

²⁰³ Cinema Museum Archive. An advert in this brochure for The Windmill Cinema, "London's most famous entertainment spot," would place this as being no earlier than November 1964, when Compton reopened the legendary Windmill Theatre after converting it to a cinema.

**THE COMPTON
CINEMA** SOHO

♦ TOP FEATURE FILMS COMPLETELY
UNABRIDGED SHOWN FOR THE FIRST TIME
* LICENSED BAR & MEMBERS LOUNGE
* ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE 10/-

COMING SHORTLY

EXPOSING - THE
FIENDISH PEDLARS OF
VICE!

**THE
WHITE
SLAVERS**

ALSO

THE THRILLS, EXCITEMENT AND SWEAT OF
THE **WRESTLING Game**

YOU NEVER KNEW
(OR SAW)
ANYTHING
LIKE THIS

**SURFIDE
'77'**

**World Without
Shame**

THE AMAZING TRUTH OF SAVAGE PASSIONS!

**VIOLENT
ECSTASY**

TERRIFIC!
ECSTATIC!
EXOTIC!

**ADAM and
SIX EVES**

It's
Bewildering
in its
Shocking
Excitement!

I wish to become a member
of the Compton Cinema Club
& enclose 10/- I am over 21.
(Licd. Bar & Lounge).
(Men Only)

Name

Address (C.F.R.)

Fig. 21: Ad for the Compton Cinema Club,
Continental Film Review, April 1963, p.2

Membership was 10 shillings per year, and the films currently showing included *The Wild and the Naked* (*Wild Gals of the Naked West*, 1962, Russ Meyer, USA: Films Pacifica), *Nude in Charcoal* (1961, Philip A. Melilla, USA: Tempest Productions/ Premier Pictures Company), *Copenhagen Call Girls* (*Villa Vennely*, 1964, Poul Nyrup, Denmark: Pingvin Films) and *Lorna* (1964, Russ Meyer, USA: Eve Productions). The “nudie cuties” of Russ Meyer were just as popular with club members as the European sex films.

As mentioned above, Compton soon developed a distribution network across the UK, dubbing themselves “The name for Continentals!” (fig. 22) much to the chagrin of Gala’s Kenneth Rive.²⁰⁴ Compton’s publicity director was Graham Whitworth, a man whose sense of humour often came through in his marketing campaigns. In 1961 Compton Films acquired the comedy film *Anonima cocottes* (1960, Camillo Mastrocinque, Italy/ France: Cocinor/ Les Films Marceau/ Titanus) for distribution beyond the cinema club. The plot concerned a banker who, after losing his job due to internal corruption, befriends a prostitute who employs her colleagues to help him get his life back. *Anonima cocottes* was retitled *The Call Girl Business* by Compton and the press book is devoted to images of women undressing or lying in bed, all wearing glamorous lingerie, under a tagline “For Allure... without Demure...”, accompanied by an explosion of adjectives “Teasing! Exciting! Provoking! Enticing!” The cover of the press book features Anita Ekberg, and folds out revealing more information and imagery, promising that you will “See the belles of the bedroom at business in the boardroom!” The exhibitor is addressed directly by the press book as “Mr Showman,” under a section titled “Comptonship.” *The Call Girl Business* is described as “Sexy, saucy and satisfying!” featuring “a galaxy of curvaceous young females to add thrills with spicy entertainment in one of the Continent’s most exciting productions for some time. Here is another pulse-pounding picture for big box office business!” General publicity suggestions are made including the use of posters and front-of-house stills, but that distinctive eye for showmanship comes through in this suggestion:

SPECIAL DISPLAY STUNT

For an astonishing display use a large blown-up cut out of ANITA EKBERG or the lovely VALERIA FABRIZI in a seductive pose mounted on hardboard. Place an extension speaker behind the figure and wire to a tape recorder which at frequent

²⁰⁴ Tony Klinger recalls the professional rivalry between Kenneth Rive and his father. See appendix p.354

COMPTON FILMS LTD.
60-62 OLD COMPTON STREET.
LONDON W.1 TEL.: GER. 1522-3

The name for Continentals!
The sensational 'Ballets Rose' scandals exposed...

PAVEMENTS OF PARIS_x
(LE PAVE DE PARIS)
starring **DANIELLE GAUBERT**

JEAN SEBERG
acts the French way in
A TASTE OF LOVE
co-starring **MAURICE RONET** and **MICHELLE PRESLE**

Revealing passions pleasures in...
The Call Girl Business_x
starring **ANITA EKBERG** and **RENATO RASCEL**

The screen shudders with violence in...
ASSASSINS IN THE SUN_x

THESE SENSATIONAL COMPTON FILMS NOW ON RELEASE

Fig. 22: Compton Films ad,
Continental Film Review, October 1961

intervals should relay a loud wolf whistle followed by a female seductive voice inviting onlookers to come and enjoy the pleasures of THE CALL GIRLS BUSINESS.

This practice is similar to promotional activities from the classical era of American exploitation cinema as catalogued by Eric Schaefer, where films were often roadshowed from town to town with large lobby displays to draw audiences in. For screenings of *Narcotic* (1933, Dwain Esper, USA: no company listed), Esper and his wife created display boards featuring fake packets of drugs which would cause crowds to come and stare for hours. This was alongside huge painted marquees and lobby displays, and even occasionally the mummified remains of Elmer McCurdy,²⁰⁵ who was presented as a victim of drug use. (Schaefer, 1999: 122-123)

Monthly Film Bulletin's review suggests that Compton's repackaging of this Italian-French film could leave audiences feeling misled: "Anita Ekberg is splendidly decorative in a comedy that badly needs some kind of distraction to keep from boring to death the audiences who will clearly expect something different from the English title."²⁰⁶ This is indicative of the kind of appropriation which Compton and other distributors were often guilty of. They were obviously trying to exploit every possible element of sexual activity out of their property, and it is not unreasonable to imagine that every single shot of a woman in lingerie in the film, Ekberg in particular, has been used as a promotional image. Sadly, with the film being unavailable, it is difficult to be certain. It would be intriguing to know if any cinema owners took Graham Whitworth seriously and set up hidden speakers in their auditorium. Compton enjoyed the showmanship aspect of distribution, stemming not only from Tony Tenser's previous experience at *Miracle* but also from Michael Klinger's previous career: he ran the Nell Gwynn and Gargoyle clubs in Soho and had regularly supplied Tenser with girls to promote *Miracle*'s films. This was a gimmick they continued to use as Compton, including using dancing girls dressed

²⁰⁵ Elmer McCurdy was an outlaw who was shot and killed following a robbery in Oklahoma in 1911. His body was preserved and put on display and spent more than sixty years as a sideshow attraction before ending up hanging in a ghost train covered in dayglow paint in a park somewhere in California. For the full story see Senvold, M., 2003, *Elmer McCurdy: The Misadventures in Life and Afterlife of an American Outlaw*, London: Fourth Estate.

²⁰⁶ *Monthly Film Bulletin*, September 1961, p.127

as schoolgirls at the premiere for the pregnant schoolgirl drama *The Yellow Teddybears* (1963, Robert Hartford-Davis, UK: Tekli Film Productions) (fig. 23)

One of the last high-profile European sex films acquired by Compton was the Swedish-Danish co-production *I, A Woman* (*Jeg – en Kvinde*, 1965, Mac Ahlberg, Denmark/Sweden: Novaris Film/ Nordisk Film), produced by the American filmmaker Radley Metzger. It was the success of this film in the USA that enabled Metzger to build a career based primarily on the public thirst for European erotica. It is a beautifully shot film, Ahlberg also being a celebrated cinematographer. *I, A Woman* depicts the journey of young nurse Siv (Essy Persson), who goes against her religious upbringing to have sexual experiences with a variety of men. She rejects offers of marriage from these men, preferring her freedom. An incestuous subtext is introduced early in *I, A Woman*, when Siv returns home from a rousing church service and sensually strips off in front of a mirror before lying down naked, conforming to the “female subjectivity” of the softcore narrative identified by David Andrews, including “domestic images of a women before her mirror or relaxing in her tub.” (Andrews, 2006: 14). The film cuts between shots implying that she is engaged in self-gratification and shots of her father skilfully playing the violin, an erotic moment which is the natural extension of Siv looking in the mirror, as Andrews continues; “Both motifs hint at what is, after the breast and face, softcore’s most important image, not to mention one fraught with psychosexual resonance: the masturbating woman.” (ibid.) Violin music is a recurring motif throughout, and during a meal in a restaurant with one of her lovers a violinist approaches the table in serenade. She watches, entranced, and her male companion accuses her of flirting with him, to which she replies, “I was thinking of my father.” The film is trying to draw some connection between a desire for sexual freedom and pious paternal protection.

The suggestion is made by one of her lovers, a surgeon, that she is a nymphomaniac because she desires sex rather than love, but by the end of the film we learn that she does crave the companionship of these men, and not just their bodies. *I, A Woman* takes an unexpected turn towards the end of the film, which is not mentioned by the censors or in the reviews, suggesting that the concern over depictions of rape in film were different in 1966 to those a decade later, as will be discussed in relation to *Emmanuelle* in the next chapter. Siv spends the entire film reviewing her sexual experiences in a series of



Fig. 23: Dancers dressed as schoolgirls welcome unidentified guests to the premiere of *The Yellow Teddybears* at the Jacey Cinephone on Oxford Street, 11 July 1963. (Used with the permission of Annette Conder-Prill)

flashbacks whilst looking forward to the arrival of a new man to her apartment at 10pm. *Monthly Film Bulletin* describes the moment this man keeps his appointment: “No sooner has he arrived than the stranger makes violent love to her.”²⁰⁷ What appears to happen is that he physically assaults her, pulls off her clothes and proceeds to rape her. Siv puts up some resistance, and we see her struggle through close-ups of her face and his hands holding her down by the wrists. As she goes through this unpleasant experience we hear Siv’s thoughts: she hears criticisms from her previous lovers, including her chaste religious fiancé, who told her, “You’ll end up a whore, that’s how this always begins.” She then thinks, over a close-up of her face now appearing to be enjoying the sex, “Just because I went for a walk with you and imagined other men were raping me? I enjoyed it; it gave me a thrill.” She tells all the previous lovers in her head that she loved them, but “I love men – every male on Earth. I want them all to desire me. I want to receive pleasure and give pleasure.” She then asks, “Are all women this way, or is it only me?” The scene is over, and we see this man getting dressed, smoking a cigarette. He asks her if she is alright, and she groans in post-coital ecstasy whilst kissing his fingers. The supposed twist in the tale comes when he refuses to tell her his name when he leaves. He will not stay or even visit her again because in his experience women will soon start talking about marriage, and he wants to be free. At this remark Siv howls with laughter as the camera pushes in to her increasingly hysterical face as the film ends.

I, A Woman represents a transitional period in the development of the erotic drama. David Andrews explains that the European sex films developed an “awakening-sexuality model” which was conducive to female desire, whereas the classical exploitation model would “punish free expressions of female agency and desire.” (Andrews, 2006: 15) *I, A Woman* is guilty of presenting Siv’s “awakening-sexuality” but then punishing her for this awakening and desire for freedom.

Described in Compton publicity as “A totally new concept in artistic motion pictures for adults,” and by John Trevelyan at the BBFC as “a picture of nymphomania leading to prostitution without in any way serving as a discouragement,”²⁰⁸ the film was refused a certificate on its initial submission. Their objections were not just to specific visuals

²⁰⁷ “JEG – EN KVINDE (I, a Woman), Denmark/ Sweden, 1965,” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, May 1968, p.78

²⁰⁸ BBFC Archive, *I, A Woman* file

which could be cut, although “Some of the scenes of sex and nudity in the film go a good deal further than the Board would be prepared to accept,” but to the theme “which suggested at the end of the picture that prostitution could be enjoyable for the prostitute.”²⁰⁹ Some cuts were made and a modified version of the film received ‘X’ certificates from many local authorities around the country. It was in this condition that it was reviewed, described as “relentlessly tedious” and “rich in unintended humour.”²¹⁰

John Trevelyan later compared the film with the 1967 release of *Belle de Jour* (1967, Luis Buñuel, France/ Italy: Paris Film Production), a film which he described as containing “explicit sexual perversions, but its quality was undeniable... At the other end of the scale we had a Swedish film, *I, A Woman*, which we regarded as pornographic and therefore banned it.” (Trevelyan, 1973: 116) He credits *I, A Woman* with encouraging the release of other pornographic films in the US, following its commercial success there, starting “the sexual revolution in movies.” (ibid.) His comparison with the Buñuel film is another example of cultural capital influencing classification decisions, with artistic credibility and heritage taking precedent over a decision based purely on the content of the films concerned. This despite the praise which *I, A Woman* has subsequently received precisely because it conforms to an art film model influenced by Ingmar Bergman, as espoused by Bart Testa: “*I, a Woman* defined the erotic film by jettisoning exploitation plots and assuming an art-film model. The expedients seem simple: implant erotic experience in the subjectivity of its protagonist.” (Testa, 1999: 47-48) The use of this “art-film” style would go on to be central to the ‘porno-chic’ sex film of the mid-1970s as typified in *Emmanuelle*.

The BBFC appear to have interpreted the ending of the film as though Siv has happily become a prostitute, despite there being no suggestion in the film, at least in the English-dubbed print, that she is a prostitute, other than when the fiancé warns her that she will become a “whore.” She does not solicit for nor receive cash for any of her sexual encounters. She enjoys commitment-free relationships with three different men; an antiques dealer, a sailor and a surgeon, and then has a troubling experience with this fourth man, whom she meets through a friend. It is difficult to see how the BBFC could

²⁰⁹ ibid.

²¹⁰ “JEG – EN KVINDE (*I, a Woman*), Denmark/ Sweden, 1965” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, May 1968, p.78

interpret this as being prostitution. As for the accusation of the film being pornographic, there are several shots of Essy Persson's breasts, but by 1966 this was nothing new for British audiences. It is most likely the scene of Siv touching herself, which is subtly presented with nothing seen on screen, which was problematic, as if the BBFC were concerned about what might be going on in the imaginations of the audience. It seems particularly odd that the BBFC would choose to read the ending of the film as Siv becoming a prostitute rather than a rape victim. Given the sensitivity with which they now deal with depictions of sexual violence,²¹¹ the fact that halfway through the rape Siv goes from being an unwilling victim to a happy lover did not cause a second glance.

Compton continued to press the BBFC with *I, A Woman* for two more years, and when Compton ceased trading their replacement company Cinecenta tried again in 1969, but the film has still never received a BBFC certificate, instead being distributed under a GLC 'X' in London in 1968, and possibly under local authority approval in other areas. The original Compton press book is relatively restrained when compared with the earlier *The Call Girl Business*. The front cover is blue and white and features images of the film's star Essy Persson alongside a quote from *New Yorker Magazine* and the tagline "It is entirely possible to make excitement a way of life!"²¹² There are no "Mr. Showman"-style suggestions here, only a plot summary and credits, with the usual advertising materials of a quad-crown poster, set of eight front-of-house stills and newspaper advertising blocks. The poster features a long quotation, supposedly by the woman at the heart of the film: "I Love all men so much that it can't be measured. those I have known, those I know and those I may come to know."²¹³ [grammatical errors in original] The differences in tone between the advertising of *I, A Woman* and *The Call Girl Business* demonstrate how filmmakers and distributors were continually pushing boundaries of acceptability. As will be explored in the next chapter, the rise of more natural and explicit erotic material from the Scandinavian countries made the cantilevered, lingerie-clad Italian and French women with which audiences were familiar look increasingly anachronistic.

²¹¹ See Lamberti (2012) pp. 152-155 for details on how the BBFC deal with issues of rape and explicit imagery.

²¹² Press book for *I, A Woman*, Cinema Museum Archive.

²¹³ *ibid.*

I, A Woman also reflects the discourse of Orientalism, showing that even Swedish/ Danish co-productions were not immune from falling into the trap of racially dubious attitudes. After Siv has made love with a sailor they lie in his bed together, revealing a large tattoo of a Japanese woman on his chest. He asks her if she has ever been to the Far East, to which she replies in the negative. “One could think you were born there,” he says. “My eyes don’t slant,” she replies. “You make love like an Oriental girl,” he tells her. “How do I take that?” “Only as a compliment. They’re the best in the world at it.” He then offers Siv a silk kimono as a gift, which she refuses, seeing it as a sign that they will become too attached. This conversation is used to tie the sailor to the East, something which pays off later in the film when he confesses to signing up for another voyage. As discussed in the chapter on Orientalism in the Eurospy film, this conversation evokes the perception of the Orient as being a feminised place available for sexual conquest by a virile, masculine West.

Gala film distributors were formed by Kenneth Rive in 1951, and he controlled or owned six cinemas in London showing mainly continental films. ‘Continental’ in this context often meant exploitation, since most of the films shown were films which the British censor had given an ‘X’ certificate but had more sex content than was allowed in British or American films. In 1954 Rive announced a collaboration with Sir Albert Clavering of Cameo-Poly Distributors with the intention of creating “a broader and more powerful distribution network for the Continentals both within central London and further afield.” (Madzon & Wheatley, 2013: 92) This was known as Gala-Cameo-Poly distributors. In 1961, he announced a collaboration with the Jacey Cinema group, with similar intentions.²¹⁴ In 1960 Rive also made a deal with Films de France to handle the physical distribution of their product. According to Mazdon and Wheatley Gala were the most prolific distributor in the 1960s for French films, distributing a total of seventy-eight films, as opposed to fifty-six for the next most prolific, Connoisseur. (ibid.: 113) European cinema had a reputation in the UK for being sexier and more sophisticated than British or American film, and British film censors practically encouraged this perception, having been critical of British filmmakers whilst allowing certain prestigious European directors such as Ingmar Bergman or Mai Zetterling far more license. *Night Games* (Nattlek, 1966, Mai Zetterling, Sweden: Sandrews) for example received an ‘X’

²¹⁴ See pp. 18-19 of the Introduction.

certificate (following some brief cuts) in 1966 for distribution by Gala, despite some people, including Shirley Temple, regarding the entire film as pornographic.²¹⁵ Gala also imported prestigious films alongside exploitation, and Rive also produced British films under the Galaworldfilm Productions banner.

Referring to the “sex/art binary,” Mazdon and Wheatley point out that Rive’s marketing strategies for some of the arthouse films he would distribute, such as *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (Alan Resnais, 1959, France/ Japan: Argos Films/ Daiei Studios), were not all that different from Gala’s “existing reputation as exhibitors of risqué French film.” (ibid.) Referencing the quad poster, they describe the image of a “prostrate Emmanuelle Riva, eyes closed, her body sheltered by the broad, bare back of her lover,” and a large ‘X’ to emphasise what the press release describes as “a story of adult love.” As they succinctly summarise, “The focus, it would appear, was placed on amour, rather than Hiroshima.” (ibid.) This strategy, and “sex/art binary” is something we will see in examples from the non-arthouse output of Gala to be presented here.

The erotic reputation of European cinema was capitalised on by independent distributors like Gala in the 1960s. Shorn of any actual real explicitness by the censors, they relied on exploiting films through marketing and trading on the promise that Eurotica offered audiences.

In 1960 Gala submitted to the BBFC a German film titled *Verbrechen nach Schulschluß* (1959, Alfred Vohrer, West Germany: Ultra Films) which translates as “Crimes After School.” Gala retitled it “Sex After School,” something which the BBFC immediately took against.²¹⁶ *The Young Go Wild* was suggested, as was *After School*. Despite Gala hoping to sell this as an ‘X’ sex film, it was mostly violence that was cut, including fights with flick-knives, karate chops and smashed bottles as weapons. The emphasis on sex in the suggested title would have helped bring in an audience which the plainer *After School* would be less likely to reach, sounding more like a Children’s Film Foundation

²¹⁵ Shirley Temple resigned from the board of the San Francisco Film Festival in 1966 after they refused to withdraw *Night Games*, describing the film as “pornography for profit.” ‘Shirley Temple Obituary,’ *The Daily Telegraph*, 11 Feb 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/10630450/Shirley-Temple-obituary.html> accessed 11th October 2016.

²¹⁶ BBFC Archive, *After School* file

production than a European 'X' certificate exploitation film. It can surely have come as no surprise to Gala that the suggested "Sex After School" was rejected. It is the kind of thing that could have been used for one of the *Schulmädchen Report* series in the 1970s, but in 1960 it was going to struggle.

Striptease de Paris (*Mademoiselle Strip-tease*, 1957, Pierre Foucaud, France: Contact Organisation (Paris), TV Cinéma, Cofrabel) was an even more obviously 'sexploitative' film for Gala, and as such received an even bigger list of cuts from the BBFC when submitted in 1962. An 'A' certificate, rather than an 'X', had been requested by Gala, possibly because Rive was hoping for wider distribution. The cuts included:

- Reel 4 In artist's studio remove all shots of woman naked or with breast exposed.
- Reel 6 Remove all shots of dance in school for striptease wearing anything less than a bra and panties.
Drastically reduce the party at the hospital in which women are seen bare above the waist.
- Reel 8 In Sophie's dream dance, remove all shots where her breasts are visible.²¹⁷

John Trevelyan wrote that "Many people seem to think that a film censor has an enjoyable time watching films all day that show naked people copulating," (Trevelyan, 1973: 93) and these censor reports for the films being submitted by Gala and others do little to assuage that viewpoint. This list of cuts reveals the wider trend of what sexual material was being included by European directors in their films at that time. There is rarely any reference to male nudity or otherwise male-centered sexual activity, which reinforces the notion of erotic cinema primarily being made by men for a male audience; an argument supported by Laura Mulvey's 'Male Gaze' theory, which stated that the audience are often positioned from a male perspective as they look at the bodies of the women on screen. (Mulvey: 1975) The striptease films specifically address the notion of women being available for men to look at, in what Schaefer refers to as the "observational mode... rooted in a touristic gaze." (Schaefer, 2014: 210)

Striptease de Paris featured Brigitte Bardot as a stripper, and was a comedy set in and around a Parisian strip club, the nudity evidently on display being typical for French films

²¹⁷ BBFC Archive, *Striptease de Paris* file

from this period. One can only imagine how disappointed audiences for a film about Parisian strippers were after it had been through the BBFC, but their requests did not stop with the above requested cuts. The BBFC also wanted to see the subtitles and refused to grant a certificate until they had received “satisfactory assurances about publicity for the film.”²¹⁸ These cuts were aimed at making the film fit the expectations of the ‘A’ certificate, one of the original film certificates from when the BBFC were established in 1913, which “indicated films that were considered especially appropriate for adult audiences,” but to which no age limit was imposed (Lamberti, 2012: 18). John Trevelyan explained the difference in the three certificates they worked with during that time:

In a ‘U’ film we could allow a man and a girl to be seen going together to a bedroom door; ... in an ‘A’ film they could be seen going into the bedroom and up to the bed; ... in an ‘X’ film they could be seen in or on the bed engaged in what appeared to be sexual intercourse provided that there was reasonable discretion in what was shown. (Trevelyan, 1973: 105)

This is possibly the closest the BBFC came during that period to issuing any sort of guideline to filmmakers and distributors, and goes some way to clarifying how they approached the problem of sex in films. Of course, the concept of “reasonable discretion” allows for varied interpretation, and this desire on the part of the censors to avoid being overly explicit in their own language would give filmmakers the leeway they needed.

In 1961 MGM gave the UK distribution of prestigious Italian director Vittorio de Sica's film *Two Women* (*La ciociara*, Italy/ France: Compagnia Cinematografica Champion/ Les Films Marceau) to Gala, explaining to the BBFC that Kenneth Rive “would handle the film as they usually do their art type of picture throughout the country in the specialised theatres.”²¹⁹ The BBFC were initially prepared to be lenient with the film despite its prominent rape scene. John Trevelyan explained to Rive that:

We were prepared to be generous to this film because of its quality provided that the distribution was to specialised theatres but if there was to be extended distribution we would have to give further consideration to certain scenes. You will

²¹⁸ *ibid.*

²¹⁹ BBFC Archive, *Two Women* file. Letter from Charles Goldsmith to John Trevelyan, 28 June 1961.

appreciate that with the general distribution the film will reach a different type of audience.²²⁰

The rape scene in *Two Women*, of a mother and daughter by Moroccan soldiers in the ruins of a church, was considerably reduced for general distribution, but what is particularly striking is that the BBFC also demanded cuts which depicted the awful aftermath. Cuts were made to “the girl's painful walk after she gets up... We are particularly concerned about the front view shots when she is clasping herself and showing signs of obvious physical pain.”²²¹ One could easily argue that by reducing the evidence of harm and distress caused, these cuts made the scene potentially more damaging, in that the consequences of rape are played down for the audience rather than being shown as the horrific experience it is.

These cuts for general distribution is an example of how the British film censors judged films on issues of exclusivity and cultural capital, with the general public being ill-prepared to deal with shocking material from a supposed quality director. Tracy Hargreaves (in Lamberti (ed.), 2012) references the political and cultural fallout of the Profumo affair and the 1959 successful prosecution of the novel *Fanny Hill* as having an influence on the BBFC at this time, in particular in relation to how Trevelyan seemed to fall into the trap of relying on class as a guide to their decisions. In 1960 Trevelyan made a statement in response to public criticism from critic Derek Hill, in which he remarked:

“The British Board of Film Censors cannot assume responsibility for the guardianship of public morality... At the same time it believes that there are some films, or scenes in films, which are not suitable for public exhibition to adults.” (ibid.: 60)

Both the *Fanny Hill* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* trials (the latter failing to secure a prosecution) were described by John Sutherland (1983, cited by Hargreaves in Lamberti (ed.), 2012), as being less to do with explicit content than with social class, and who had access to explicit material. He notes that Lord Hailsham would have preferred *Lady Chatterley's Lover* to be available “in boards at 12s.6d. than in paperback at 3s.6d.” (quoted in ibid.: 61) *The Telegraph's* Peregrine Worsthorne wrote “It would surely be

²²⁰ BBFC Archive, *Two Women* file. Letter from John Trevelyan to Kenneth Rive, 21 August 1961.

²²¹ ibid.

odd for a society pledged to monogamous marriage to allow any citizen with a few shillings in his pocket to buy Fanny Hill.” (quoted in *ibid.*) Hargreaves points out that at that time, “The Board often had reservations about ‘unseemly’ rather than explicitly censorable dialogue, its cautions issued in relation to the tastes, comprehension and susceptibilities of the ‘circuit’ audience,” (*ibid.*) meaning the general, less-educated public. As Joan Hawkins explained, “Taste is never class neutral. Not only is it an important signifier of educational achievement and of class values, but it becomes the means through which class values are normalised and perpetuated within the larger society.” (Hawkins, 2000: 30) The BBFC’s censorship based, to a certain extent, on the education level of the public is effectively Pierre Bourdieu’s (1986) notion of “Cultural capital” at work: cultural capital is taste-centred but can become a major source of social inequality when certain forms of cultural capital are valued over others, and this can be seen in the decisions of the BBFC during the 1960s.

By the end of the 1960s Kenneth Rive was putting his own name on the advertising materials for films like *Girls for Pleasure* (*Dossier Prostitution*, 1970, Jean-Claude Roy, France: Les Productions René Thévenet). This was sold as an erotic romp yet there was still an attempt to present it as a serious work in which, according to the press book:

“The world-wide problems of prostitution, and its dangers, are sensitively and frankly brought to the screen... With the testimony of priests, of police, of juries, of prostitutes themselves, and their clients, the spectator cannot be indifferent to a situation which has been part of current events ever since the world began.”²²²

As already mentioned, Gala was no stranger in turning prostitution dramas into sexploitation for an undiscerning British public, with *Dolls of Vice* (1959), *Hungry For Love* (1961) and *Call Girls of Rome* (*I piaceri del sabato notte*, 1960, Daniele D’Anza, Italy: Carpentieri) having been distributed ten years earlier. The original German title of *Dolls of Vice* translates as “Girls at Risk” and is about two Viennese shop girls who get caught up in a brutal sex-industry trafficking operation,²²³ although the BBFC exceptions list suggests that the filmmakers had one eye on the exploitation market in the first place:

²²² *Girls for Pleasure* press book. Cinema Museum archive.

²²³ Plot description taken from Campbell (2006: 195), as the film is currently unavailable.

- Reel 2 Remove all shots of girls wrestling.
 Reel 3 In strip-tease act remove shots of girls stroking their breasts.²²⁴

Gala were not producing full press books for all their films at this time. For both *Dolls of Vice* and *Call Girls of Rome* they made what were effectively fliers with images on one side and a plot summary and available promotional material on the other. *Dolls of Vice* features a bold red banner in the form of film stock with the words “Gala Film Distributors Ltd.” written in black. The only other colour is the title of the film, which is also in red. Five images are arranged at different angles with some details of the film, including the name of the director, that it features “Fatty George and his Jazz Band” and that the dialogue is in French. There are images of women in lingerie, including one in a corset, alongside images of women being the victims of violence. The tagline declares: “Lured by a promise of glamour, they became Dolls of Vice. A Vivid exposé of a twilight world.”²²⁵ The other side features a full plot description revealing the ending of the film. Rather than being used to lure in potential customers, this was intended to be read by cinema owners who may consider booking the film, possibly without an opportunity to watch the film first. A set of black and white front-of-house stills was available alongside a quad poster with double or single crown versions. The poster is a cheap single colour design with the main image being two “dolls of vice” caught in the spotlight. Their look of distress suggests they may also be the victims of violence. These press books are restrained when compared with the lavish presentation and often outlandish promotional stunts in those printed by Compton. In a 1970 advertisement placed in the ‘Film Distributors’ section of *The British Film and Television Handbook* it reads:

KENNETH RIVE
 AND HIS
 GALA
 GROUP
 OF COMPANIES
 IN
 DISTRIBUTION – EXHIBITION – PRODUCTION
 GALA – THE COMPANY WITH THE SHOWMANSHIP FORMULA²²⁶

²²⁴ BBFC Archive, *Dolls of Vice* file

²²⁵ Press book for *Dolls of Vice*, Cinema Museum Archive

²²⁶ Edited by Peter Noble, published in London by BA. This handbook was published annually for use by trade professionals, and was described by the editor as “the most comprehensive reference work on personalities and companies in the film and TV field.” Gala advert on p.423.

This half-page advert is surrounded by stars and suggests that Rive saw himself as a showman, despite lacking the somewhat carnivalesque approach of some of his competitors. It is possible that he reserved his “showmanship formula” for the European art house films he was so openly passionate about.

Gala’s 1965 release of Goddard’s *Une Femme Mariee*, also available under the English title *A Married Woman* (1964 Jean-Luc Goddard, France: Anouchka Films), was accompanied by a large, comprehensive press book. Inside are suggested bylines for local advertising or to use in the lobbies: “The sex-explosion of the century... Never has the screen revealed so much... A film that is X-Certificate plus... An intimate story presented at times with startling intimacy.” Under a section headed “EXPLOITATION” it states “‘UNE FEMME MARIEE’ has broken every house record during its West End run and can do the same at your situation. SO EXPLOIT IT TO THE FULL.” (capitalized in original) Advice is given on using stills and press quotes in an “advance foyer display” as well as using ad blocks in local newspapers: “They are good ‘sellers.’”²²⁷ Press quotes from, amongst others, the *Sunday Times*, *News of the World* and the *Daily Mirror* are provided for use. The tagline on the quad poster, which features hand-drawn imagery of a woman’s naked back on the left and the main character Charlotte in an embrace with a man on the right, under the tagline “Twenty-four hours in the life of an adulteress...” So, through the “sex/ art binary,” Rive was relying on sexploitation selling techniques to exploit the commercial potential of this French New Wave film. In some cinemas, the film was on a double-bill with the British nudist camp exploitation film *Take Off Your Clothes and Live!* (1962, Arnold Louis Miller, UK: Searchlight Films), which demonstrates that “For patrons of the period, a turn-on was a turn-on whether it was bouncing breasts on the volleyball court or *nouvelle vague* close-ups of thumb joints.” (McGillivray, 1992: 51)

Another example of this type of exploitative appropriation is Gala’s release of the Grand Prix Venice award winner *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa...* (1965, Luchino Visconti Italy: Vides Cinematografica), which was distributed as the ‘X’ rated *Of a Thousand Delights*, with

²²⁷ *A Married Woman* press book. Cinema Museum archive.

the press book imagery lingering on a mostly naked Claudia Cardinale.²²⁸ The subtleties of this incestuous relationship drama seem a little lost in the advertising. In Gala's eyes, at least in commercial terms, there was very little difference between art and exploitation where sex was concerned.

Gala also distributed many notable European art-house films which did not require a reliance on sexual content, including many from Truffaut. This sets them apart from Compton, one of their nearest competitors, who imported dozens of European erotic films but rarely strayed into art house territory (with the notable exception being Roman Polanski). The nearest comparison to Kenneth Rive could possibly be Roger Corman, who as a producer and distributor in the 1970s brought filmmakers such as Fellini, Kurosawa, Bergman and Truffaut to American audiences to critical acclaim, yet still often sold them as exploitation titles. For example, when instructing his editor Joe Dante on how to cut the trailer for *Amarcord* (1973, Federico Fellini, Italy/ France: F.C. Produzioni/ PECF) he apparently said, "I know it's Fellini, but we're still selling sex and violence here. Make sure the car thing is in there, make sure the boys jerking off is in there..." Dante reflected that the finished trailer was "all boobs and buns," which Fellini was said to have preferred to the Italian trailer. (Gray, 2004: 117) Unlike Corman, who to this day is known as King of the B Movies,²²⁹ Kenneth Rive's cultural legacy has been his contribution to the appreciation of European cinema in the UK. One obituary stated, "For British followers of European cinema, Kenneth Rive is a name etched on the subconscious... the postwar popularity of French and other foreign films owed much to Rive."²³⁰ His role as a leading distributor of European erotica and exploitation has been until now virtually ignored.

As Eric Schaefer's research has demonstrated, the type of distribution practices under discussion here were not new: European art-house cinema was repurposed and repackaged as exploitation in the American independent circuit many years earlier. Producer Kroger Babb bought the rights for Ingmar Bergman's *Summer With Monika* (1953, Sweden: Svensk Filmindustri) in 1955, chopped it down to sixty-two minutes from

²²⁸ *Of a Thousand Delights* press book. Cinema Museum archive.

²²⁹ As evidenced in the title *Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen and Candy Stripe Nurses: Roger Corman: King of the B Movie*, Nashawaty, C. (2013)

²³⁰ Kenneth Rive obituary, *The Guardian*, Feb 3, 2003; p. 22

ninety-five, dubbed it into “American” English, had Les Baxter provide a new score and called it *Monika, the Story of a Bad Girl* with the tagline “No one man could ever hope to satisfy her lust for love!” (Schaefer, 1999: 337). Schaefer points out that foreign films were marketed simultaneously at the art house audience as well as the typical grindhouse audience, and *Summer With Monika* did also play in its unadulterated form to the “white wine and canapes crowd.” (David F. Friedman quoted in *ibid.*) Kenneth Rive’s practice mirrored that of the American independent distribution model, supplying European films to both arthouse and exploitation cinemas.

Gala’s “showmanship” can be seen in press coverage of one of the most controversial films of 1960, the now highly praised *Peeping Tom*, (1960, Michael Powell, UK: Anglo-Amalgamated). The Gala Royal on the Edgware Road, a cinema run jointly between Gala and Jacey, took a novel approach to promoting their screenings of *Peeping Tom*. In the foyer alongside posters featuring glamour model Pamela Green, who appears in the film, were large reproductions of press quotes: “It is the nastiest film I have ever seen.” “It’s a long time since a film disgusted me as much as *Peeping Tom*... beastly picture.” This tongue-in-cheek advertising was spotted by an outraged *Daily Mail* journalist Pearson Phillips who immediately made contact with Joseph Cohen, owner of the Jacey company, who gave an embarrassed response: “Oh dear. Did the critics say that? Well, I certainly don’t approve of exploiting that kind of thing.” He passed the buck to his son George, who was more prosaic: “Let’s face up to it. Our business is really a kind of showmanship. We have got to attract the public. This is just one way of doing it. Psychologically, this is quite a good way of exciting their curiosity... though I suppose you could say it is rather an unwholesome kind of curiosity.” Frank Hazell, head of publicity for Gala, was also confronted and defended his somewhat brave marketing approach: “I am afraid you are putting me on a spot here. I was partly responsible for this. My line in using these quotations was simply to ask people ‘Do you believe this? Come and see.’ And incidentally, they are coming. Does the fact that they are coming justify my using this kind of draw? Well, let’s face it. This is what we are in the business for, to get people to come and see the films.” Phillips described them as “Three embarrassed men profiting from something they are ashamed of.”²³¹

²³¹ *Daily Mail*, Wednesday 8 June 1960. Press quotes used in the advertising quoted above were taken from this article. Their original provenance is unknown.

Kenneth Rive angrily responded to this criticism:

May I first ask what we are in this industry for?... Is it to operate cinemas as an interim measure until conversion to bowling alleys and dance halls becomes opportune, or are we still in show business selling the public what they want, not chasing grannies and grandads who like to sit home by the television anyway. I have never made any pretense about what I stand for... I hope I'm a showman and my object is to fill cinemas, to the benefit of my co-directors and shareholders and also those of the companies with whom I deal, and I find I never have complaints at this end of the operation.²³²

In 1967 Kenneth Rive distributed the Golden Bear award-nominated *Young Aphrodites*, (*Mikres Afrodites*, 1963, Nikos Koundouros, Greece: Anzervos/ Minos Films), selling it as “a film that is wonderfully exotic and disturbingly erotic!”²³³ Press quotes used in the press book describe the film as a “beautiful, breathtaking, story” - *News of the World*, “Intensely erotic” - *The Observer*, featuring “Sex scenes erotically uninhibited” according to *Daily Cinema*.²³⁴ *Young Aphrodites* is being sold as a sex film, albeit a poetic sex film. By way of contrast, despite agreeing that the film was poetic, *Monthly Film Bulletin* also used words like “interminable” and “unbearably slow.”²³⁵ A “special note” in the publicity materials section of the press book points out that Luxor Press have published a pictorial record, with “72 large art pages of dramatically frank scenes from the film.”

Perhaps making uncomfortably clear how times have changed over the last fifty years, nobody involved with the marketing of *Young Aphrodites* seemed to have a problem with using erotic images of a near-naked twelve-year-old girl to sell this film.²³⁶ This is despite the existence of the “Indecency with Children Act, 1960,” which along with the “Sexual Offences Act, 1956,” was to provide protection for children aged fourteen or under from

²³² *The Daily Cinema*, 7 June 1960, p.7

²³³ *Young Aphrodites* press book. Cinema Museum archive.

²³⁴ *ibid.*

²³⁵ “Mikres Aphrodites (Young Aphrodites), Greece, 1962)” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, May 1967, p. 78

²³⁶ One of these poster-sized images can be seen in the background of a scene in the British crime thriller *Man of Violence*, on the wall of a homosexual man’s bedroom.

sexual exploitation, described in the Act as “Gross indecency.”²³⁷ In the House of Lords debate before the introduction of the “Protection of Children Act 1978,” which specifically declares it an offence to distribute indecent photographs of children, a discussion of how to define indecency took place. Lord Reid’s legal definition was given as including “anything which an ordinary, decent man or woman would find to be shocking, disgusting and revolting.”²³⁸ It would therefore appear that prior to the introduction of the 1978 Act it was not illegal to distribute “indecent” imagery of children, and perhaps this is why the advertising for *Young Aphrodites* was able to use imagery of its twelve-year-old star Kleopatra Rota, whose breasts are on display both throughout the film and in the press book. The marketing of this film, with its exploitation of a young nude star is comparable to *Child Bride* (1938, Harry J. Revier, USA: Kroger Babb), an American film from the classic exploitation period which was marketed using words like “Sexsational! Dramatic!” accompanying imagery from twelve-year-old Jennie’s (Shirley Mills) nude swim. (Schaefer, 1999: 112)

Call Girls of Rome was another prostitution drama acquired in 1961 and retitled by Kenneth Rive, the original Italian title *I piaceri del sabato notte* translating to “The Pleasures of Saturday Night.” *Call Girls of Rome* is a much more direct title, helping inform the audience as to what to expect. (fig. 24) The press brochure is a very cheap-looking design, again in black and white with some red writing.²³⁹ A cartoonish image of a hand reaching for a phone is below the title, the telephone cable coiling across the page to four images of Elsa Martinelli, going from fully dressed to naked, with her back turned to the reader. These images have been cut out from promotional stills supplied by the film company, but have been badly placed. There are breaks in the coiling telephone wire which were presumably intended to join up the images seamlessly, but this has not been done so the cable just breaks and hangs for no discernable reason. Perhaps Gala were hoping that eyes would be on Martinelli and not on the design imperfections. A short plot description, again revealing the end of the film, is included on the reverse side, along with

²³⁷ Indecency With Children Act, 1960,
<http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/acts/1960-indecency-act.pdf> accessed 2 November 2016

²³⁸ PROTECTION OF CHILDREN BILL, HL Deb 05 May 1978 vol 391 cc535-80,
<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1978/may/05/protection-of-children-bill>
 accessed 2 November 2016

²³⁹ Press book for *Call Girls of Rome*, Cinema Museum Archive.



Fig. 24: Promotion image of Jeanne Valerie in *Call Girls of Rome*,
Continental Film Review, October 1961, p.26

the regular set of front-of-house stills and quad posters, single and double crown advertisements. They were selling the film primarily on the star persona of Elsa Martinelli, who was already a big Italian star but was two years away from breaking through into the English-speaking markets with *Hatari!* (1962, Howard Hawks, USA: Malabar) Her name is written on the poster above the title.

The imagery used on both the press book and the poster are almost identical to the 1958 Regal Films release of *Call Girls* (*Für Zwei Groschen Zärtlichkeit*, 1957, Arthur Maria Rabenalt, Germany/ Denmark: Rialto Film), another prostitution drama with an enigmatic original title, the translation being “For Two Pennies of Tenderness,” which appears to have been given a reductive English title to make sure audiences were under no misapprehension as to what this film was. The poster for *Call Girls* features a cartoon hand reaching for a phone under the title, with a happy-looking woman in a basque on the right. Some of the smaller advertising blocks have a hand-drawn phone placed in her hand.²⁴⁰

Call Girls of Rome was initially submitted to the BBFC by Columbia Pictures, before being handed to Gala for distribution. The BBFC mainly took exception to some of the subtitled dialogue rather specific imagery and requested changes:

- Reel 1 “I want the tiny one” substituted with “I like the tiny one.”
- Reel 1 “Costa says she acts Lolita perfectly” with “Costa says she’s quite something!”
- Reel 2 “One has certain habits” with “At my age one doesn’t like change.”
- Reel 2 “Shall we try?” with “What do you say?”²⁴¹

There was one visual deletion required, a shot of “the husband tearing off some of his wife’s clothes in the salon.”²⁴² These requests, particularly those related to the subtitles, suggest a certain coyness on the behalf of the censors, similar to those changes requested for the film *Paris in the Raw*, distributed by New Realm and discussed later. They appear to find it acceptable for characters to talk around sex but not about sex. The reference to “Lolita” must have been a particularly hot topic in 1960. Although first published in Paris

²⁴⁰ Press book for *Call Girls*, Cinema Museum Archive

²⁴¹ BBFC Archive, *Call Girls of Rome* file

²⁴² *ibid.*

in 1955, Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* had only been published in London in 1959 by Olympia Press and caused a sensation, imported European copies having previously been seized by Customs officers as pornography. (Boyd, 1991)

Another of Gala's European imports which straddled the "sex/ art binary" was the Italian film *Hungry For Love*, was distributed in Italian with English subtitles, despite the name change. Given Kenneth Rive's personal preference for art house cinema, and the prominent Italian names of the cast and director in the marketing it is not surprising that he would choose to retain the original Italian language track, but with the title change it is also clear that *Hungry For Love* was being marketed as a sex film. As Joan Hawkins (2000) points out, there was often a crossover between high and low cinematic culture for art house films when they could be classified as a "body genre," which are films which, as Linda Williams notes, "privilege the sensational." (quoted in Hawkins, 2000: 4-5) These "body genres" were identified as pornography, horror and melodrama, as each causes some form of physical reaction. Whilst *Hungry For Love* and other Eurotica films released at that time could never be mistaken for pornography, they could provoke arousal in the audience. "For many Americans," explained Hawkins, "European art cinema retained a scandalous reputation that marked its difference from Hollywood cinema," (ibid. 22) which was equally true for British audiences.

Hungry for Love demonstrates a trend for realism that was developing in the European New Wave movements; something simultaneously developing in the UK in the work of writers such as Alan Sillitoe and John Osborne. *Room at the Top* (1959, Jack Clayton, UK: Romulus Films) was one of the first British films to feature characters talk openly about sex, and this would continue in other New Wave films including *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960, Karel Reisz, UK: Woodfall), which also dealt with the problems of abortion. Hill (1986) discusses one key aspect of the British New Wave films being a focus on social mobility, and this equally applies to *Hungry for Love*: "The more tightly wrought narratives and dominant central characters of the British 'new wave' work against an expression of the collective experience of working-class life. Indeed, in so far as the organising principle of so many of the movies is upward and social mobility, so the desires and ambitions of the individuals are premised upon an escape from one's class." (Hill, 1986: 138) Pietrangeli himself was directing in the neorealist tradition of Italian cinema which had been a great influence on the French and British New Wave. The

opening scenes of *Hungry For Love* take place inside a brothel on the last night that they can legally stay open before the Merlin law was instituted in 1958, which served to remove legalized brothels in Rome. The last customers disappear into the night and the women, mostly in negligée and underwear, discuss the night. Their conversations are honest - Adua (French star Simone Signoret) describes her last customer as having “the face of a schoolboy, but he’s a pig!”

Beyond this opening scene there is little in the way of titillation in *Hungry For Love*. The four women acquire a crumbling villa in the country outside Rome, investing their own money with the intention of creating a restaurant downstairs and a brothel upstairs. They are happy that this time they will be in control of their own destiny, with no pimps or men to tell them what to do, but this optimism is soon lost when they are refused a license to operate. Despite assurances that when the Merlin law was passed ex-prostitutes would have a clean start, they find that their police records block their ambitions to start afresh. Adua has to turn to local pimp Ercoli (Claudio Gora) who has political influence and can get them the license, but in return they agree to pay him one million lira per month.

Some British audience members may have been disappointed that the film was not what they expected given that there are more scenes in the kitchen than in the bedrooms, but hearing characters talk about brothels and prostitution, and the pulchritude on display in those early scenes could have been enough to see them through to the end. Whilst initially complimentary, describing “hints of depth in the characterisations,” *Monthly Film Bulletin* was critical of *Hungry For Love*, going on to complain that the script “becomes increasingly episodic and the clichés – including a sentimental child, a glib priest and a melodramatic pimp – abound.”²⁴³ This does seem overly critical, given that it is these scenes which lend the drama the opportunities for development and humanity in the four lead characters, and suggests that the film did not meet audience expectations, spending too much time to “clichés” and not enough on the sex angle the advertising hints towards. (fig. 25)

²⁴³ “Adua e le compagne (*Hungry for Love*), Italy, 1960” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, March 1962, p. 38



Fig. 25: Promotional still from *Hungry For Love*, *Continental Film Review*, October 1961, p.27. From L – R: Simone Signoret, Sandra Milo and Emmanuelle Riva

Demonstrating some interesting cross-promotion, and possibly some shrewd cost-cutting, in 1962 Kenneth Rive produced a film called *The Boys* (Sidney J. Furie, UK: Atlas Productions/ Galaworldfilm Productions). A scene for the film was shot at the Jacey cinema on Piccadilly and featured the titular boys getting into an argument with an older man in the queue outside. There is large advertising outside for two Gala films: *Hungry for Love* and *Femmes de Paris*.²⁴⁴

Gala distributed dozens of European films from the late 1950s through to the 1970s, a great deal of which could be described as erotic cinema or sexploitation. It seems that for every Truffaut or Godard film imported there were at least two dramas about Parisian strippers or prostitutes. These films could appeal to “consumers of both low and high culture,” as well as mainstream audiences, who Hawkins argues “are frequently much more resilient and eclectic in their tastes than mainstream critics give them credit for being.” (Hawkins, 2000: 205) Gala took great care to get national advertising for their films, and regularly featured on the covers of *Films and Filming* or *Continental Film Review*, the latter seemingly published with the intent of featuring as many near-naked European actresses as possible.

An intriguing endnote to this period of Kenneth Rive’s career was reported in 1972. He had called for BBFC secretary Stephen Murphy, who had only been in the job for a year, to resign. “The film industry appoints the censor so it is up to us to put our house in order by getting rid of him,”²⁴⁵ Rive apparently declared during a row over sex and violence in the cinema, and not for the reason one might first expect. Apparently Rive found Murphy to be too liberal. The irony of this was pointed out in the *Daily Mirror* who noted that Rive had just submitted the sex comedy *Danish Dentist On The Job* (*Tandlæge på sengekanten*, 1971, John Hilbard, Denmark: Paladium Film) to the BBFC, where it had been awarded an ‘X’ certificate without cuts. Referring to the film Stephen Murphy said, “There are lots of naked ladies, but it’s harmless stuff.” When asked if he saw any contradiction between submitting films like *Danish Dentist on the Job* and complaining about BBFC liberalism, Rive retorted “I was worried about brutality. This is a frolicking

²⁴⁴ When this older man tries to buy a ticket, the cashier is played by Aisha Ahmed, aka Miss Jacey, the face for that cinema chain’s publicity, in a cameo role.

²⁴⁵ “WHY THE CENSOR DIDN’T BITE,” *Daily Mirror*, Friday November 3, 1972

comedy.”²⁴⁶ This is a very different Kenneth Rive from the one who was no doubt grateful to the liberal BBFC twelve years earlier when they passed *Peeping Tom*, one of the most brutal films to come out of the mainstream British film industry at that time. Rive expanded on his feelings against Murphy years later in a television documentary: “There were more upheavals with local authorities in Murphy’s time than I think with any other censor, and that is why I was not exactly a great lover at the time of Mr. Murphy.”²⁴⁷

The final distributor to be discussed in this chapter is E.J. Fancey, whose family ran multiple distribution companies. They were not distributing sex films in the same volume as Gala or Compton in the 1960s, as evidenced in Table 4.1. The Fanceys truly flourished in this area, New Realm Entertainments and Border Films in particular, in the 1970s. This will be discussed in more depth in the following chapter. The Fancey group had since the 1940s built a successful business model on importing and supplying cheap European films, and the 1960s saw their productivity increase exponentially. Their output included not only feature films but also documentaries in the “Mondo” tradition, the definition of which will be explored below.

The Fanceys were, like Gala and Compton, familiar with appropriating prostitute drama as entertainment, such as their release of the Austrian remake of *Pandora's Box* (1929, Georg Wilhelm Pabst, Germany: Nero-Film), *No Orchids for Lulu*, (*Lulu*, 1962, Rolf Thiele, Austria: Vienna Film). The publicity used artwork that gave away the final twist in the film, where main character Lulu gets stabbed by Jack the Ripper, her cleavage at the centre of the image. French film *Victims of Vice* was another such example, where BBFC cuts were required to receive an ‘X’ certificate in 1965.

No Orchids for Lulu was released under the D.U.K. company banner in 1967. The language used in the press book when describing the plot shows little sympathy towards the titular character, and reflects the inherent misogyny of the period, as previously discussed in relation to spy films. Lulu is described as “a gutter girl,” and after giving a detailed breakdown of the various calamities which befall her, including multiple marriages and shooting a man:

²⁴⁶ *ibid.*

²⁴⁷ Kenneth Rive interviewed in *Empire of the Censors Part 2* (1995) BBC2, 29 May 1995

The final curtain falls on the tragedy of her life in an encounter in a dark street. Lulu, sure of herself to the bitter end, picks up a man – none other than Jack the Ripper. Jack does not kill her out of vengeance or hatred. As he withdraws the bloody knife, he lights a cigarette and delivers this moral – “These kind of women are useless anyway”!!²⁴⁸

This closing misogynist statement does little to endear the Fancey organisation to modern readers, and one can only speculate on how it may have been received in 1967. Lacking Compton-style showmanship, a simple set of front-of-house stills and a quad poster are all that were offered to exhibitors to promote this title. The film received an ‘X’ certificate from the BBFC once three cuts were made:

- Reel 3 Delete the shot of the “Tiger” girl where it is clear that she is naked to the waist.
- Reel 4 Remove most of the scene in the Paris night-club, including shots of Lesbians dancing together, and the scene in which a small girl is sold to a Maharajah.
- Reel 5 Remove the entire incident in which Lulu says she will not give the Countess any more favours unless she sleeps with Roderigo.
Reduce shots of the Countess in tears outside the room in which Lulu is taking men.
Shorten the shots of Lulu’s corpse.²⁴⁹

The details here paint a more explicit picture of the uncut film and the more salacious moments within it which could have been used by D.U.K. had they not been removed. D.U.K. marketed *No Orchids for Lulu* as an ‘X’-rated sex film about a “gutter girl,” a euphemism for prostitute which the audience would have understood.

Euphemisms were felt not to be necessary in the promotion for the 1965 release of French film *Victims of Vice*, also distributed by D.U.K. With the tagline “Sex without love!” accompanying images of a woman’s legs and a man with a gun to his head, this is a film which depicts the criminal underworld synonymous with the world’s oldest profession.²⁵⁰ The plot as described to as exhibitors begins: “Catherine has made a deliberate decision to turn prostitute.” Perhaps *Victims of Vice* being a contemporary story rather than a

²⁴⁸ *No Orchids for Lulu* press book. Cinema Museum archive.

²⁴⁹ BBFC Archive, *No Orchids for Lulu* file.

²⁵⁰ The head of the criminal gang in *Victims of Vice* is the appropriately-named Pornotropos (Jean Yanne).

period drama like *No Orchids for Lulu* meant they could be direct in addressing the subject matter. D.U.K. had also given the film a new title, the original French translating as the somewhat oblique “Love to the chain.” The list of BBFC exceptions suggests that this film focused more strongly on violence than sex:

- Reel 2 Remove all shots of a man being tortured by the forcible administration of gin through a funnel.
- Reel 3 Shorten the fight between the girls in the street, so as to leave only enough to establish continuity.
- Reel 7 Shorten the fighting in the mirror room, removing the savage kick and all foul blows.²⁵¹

The BBFC exceptions here allow an important insight into the film’s narrative and focus on violence, given that the film itself is no longer available for study.

The popularity of prostitution dramas as exploitation films in the UK is hard to quantify, but its ubiquity in the archives, some of which has been presented here, suggests that there was a sizeable audience. Like the classic period of American exploitation film, and like the British sex films of the late 1960s through the 1970s, the prostitution film narrative serves as a warning of the dangers of immorality, generally to women, whilst presenting the same immoral acts on the screen as entertainment, generally for men. There appear to be two types of prostitute in these European narratives; either the “happy hooker” stereotype as seen in *The Call Girl Business* and, to a certain extent, *Hungry for Love*, or “the victim of vice” who was lead down a path of destruction through a combination of poor decisions and impoverished circumstances. This type of moral justification, in that the audience can be entertained by depictions of immorality whilst feeling satisfied that the guilty will go punished, was similar to that discussed in relation to the Biblical epics discussed in chapter two.

Another form of cinema which exploited sexualised material was the “Mondo” documentary. Building on the ground laid by the nudist camp documentary, the “Mondo” film was exploitation at its most exploitative, defined by Kerekes and Slater as “a feature-length melange of exotic sights and startling incidents,” which “would find a continuity in the condescending, haughty, repulsed, or excited commentaries of a narrator.”

²⁵¹ BBFC Archive, *Victims of Vice* file

(Kerekes and Slater, 1998: 71) Gino Moliterno explained that to understand the appeal of the “Mondo” film one had to look at its roots, which “reach[ed] back to the very beginnings of cinema, to that spectacle of the real offered up in the ‘optical reports’ of the Lumière *actualités* and to that ‘cinema of attractions’ which catered to the same voyeuristic taste for sights of the freakish and bizarre previously satisfied by the P.T. Barnum circus and fairground sideshow.” (Moliterno, 2014: 172) Many histories of circuses, and those of sideshow “freaks,” focus on America,²⁵² so it is difficult to be sure just how acclimatised British audiences were to that cultural memory which Moliterno refers to.²⁵³

Kerekes and Slater also trace the Mondo to the birth of cinema, with Thomas Edison himself filming executions (Kerekes & Slater, 1995: 81), such as his *Execution of Czolgosz With Panorama of Auburn Prison* (1901, Edwin S. Porter, US: Edison Studios), and his even more Mondo-like *Electrocuting an Elephant* (1903, Edwin S. Porter/ James Blair Smith, US: Edison Manufacturing Company). Regardless of a possible lack of cultural memory, for a period in the 1960s the “Mondo” films had huge box office appeal in Britain, and as such were sought after by distributors. They can be viewed as, “A parodic catharsis, which links up with the idea of carnival as a kind of safety valve.” (Brottman, 2005: 151) They are, effectively, “*Licensed* misrule – a contained and officially sanctioned rebellion – after which everybody goes straight back to work.” (ibid. italics in original) The first international hit in this genre, and the one which gave the genre its name, was *Mondo Cane* (1962, Paolo Cavara, Gualtiero Jacopetti & Franco Prosperi, Italy: Cineriz), distributed in the UK in 1963 by Gala. The title translates as “A Dog’s World” or “A Dog’s Life,” and the word “Mondo” came to typify any documentary which depicted sleazy, grotesque or erotic material from around the globe.

²⁵² See Jay (1987) or Mannix (1990) for examples. Simon (2014) offers a European perspective but offers little information on the more “freakish and bizarre” elements Moliterno discusses.

²⁵³ London-located *The Mutations* (1974, Jack Cardiff, UK/ USA: Cyclone, Getty Pictures Corp.) includes a scene in a circus sideshow featuring real ‘freaks’ such as Willie ‘Popeye’ Ingram, who could dislocate his eyes from their sockets, and Hugh Baily, ‘The Pretzel Man,’ who was born with twisted, deformed limbs. Their presence suggests that freak shows did exist in the UK at some point, in the 1970s at least.

As proven during the nudist film craze, the documentary format allowed filmmakers the opportunity to be more explicit than they could in a feature film, and the promise of exotic forbidden fruit offered to audiences was difficult to resist. *Mondo Cane* included scenes of childbirth, gay bars and tribal women amongst its scenes of death and torture. The BBFC were unimpressed. John Trevelyan recalled “an Italian documentary film called *Mondo Cane* which contained some quite revolting scenes of cruelty: we refused a certificate but the film was widely shown by local authority licence and eventually we passed it with cuts.” (Trevelyan, 1973: 173) The ‘X’ certificate was awarded in November 1963 once nine cuts were made, mostly depicting animal cruelty, but also some violence towards people, including:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Reel 1 | Remove shots of pigs being beaten to death.
Shorten the incident of the Easter Egg chickens which are put alive into hot ovens, together with the commentary relating to this. |
| Reel 3 | Reduce the shots of the drunkards and drug-addicts in Hamburg.
Remove the shot of the man being killed by a bull in the street, and being dragged away; remove also the sound of his groans. ²⁵⁴ |

The uncut version was reviewed by *Monthly Film Bulletin* earlier in 1963 at what appears to be a private cinema club screening, where its combination of horrific footage with a jazzy soundtrack and gleeful commentary made the film “a hymn to death and mutilation embellished with a shrug and a giggle.”²⁵⁵ The film was so commercially successful, even earning an Oscar nomination,²⁵⁶ that a sequel soon followed, although there was a significant delay in the UK distribution. It was 1966 when Gala finally released *Mondo Cane no. 2* (1963, Gualtiero Jacopetti & Franco Prosperi, Italy: Federiz) with a sensational press book promising exhibitors a “fantastically exploitable box-office attraction which you cannot afford to miss.” It would be “Twice as Shocking... Twice as Daring!” featuring “Barbaric strange rituals! Uninhibited carnival antics! [and] Wild torture scenes!” Above all, *Mondo Cane no. 2* is “Life With the Lid Off.”²⁵⁷ Initially refused a BBFC certificate, an ‘X’ was awarded by the Greater London Council in January 1966 following “the deletion of sequence (b), Reel 6. namely the entire scene of

²⁵⁴ *Mondo Cane*, 1963 Exceptions Report, BBFC archive

²⁵⁵ “Mondo Cane (A Dog’s Life), Italy, 1961 [sic.]” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, January 1963, pp.3-4

²⁵⁶ Riz Ortolani’s theme song “More” was nominated for “Best Music, Original Song” at the 1964 Academy Awards.

²⁵⁷ *Mondo Cane 2* press book, Cinema Museum archive

the face-slapping concert.”²⁵⁸ The film was described as “All presented with grisly humour alternating a high moral seriousness; in other words, the mixture as before.”²⁵⁹ The BBFC finally awarded *Mondo Cane No. 2* an ‘X’ in February 1968, nine months after having passed the equally shocking *Africa Addio* (1966, Gualtiero Jacopetti & Franco Prosperi, Italy: Cineriz), “In which, among other things, we entirely removed a scene of an elephant being hacked to death by men with axes. I remember explaining to Jacopetti that by doing this we were probably helping his film since if we left such scenes in at least some people would be sickened and walk out, and would then tell their friends not to see the film. This seemed to satisfy him.” (Trevelyan, 1973: 173)

This is just one example of the censors positioning themselves as protecting filmmakers through intervention, something which, as a body formed by the film industry itself, they felt was their prime function. It would happen again many more times, including in a notorious confrontation between Joseph Strick and the BBFC over the censorship of *Ulysses* (1967, UK/ USA: Laser Film Corporation/ Ulysses Film Production) where Strick described Trevelyan at a press conference as “your friendly neighbourhood film mortician” (as cited in Matthews, 1994: 182) because the dialogue had been deemed “outrageous, offensive and possibly obscene.” (Trevelyan, 1973: 113-114) At the time outspoken critic Derek Hill described the BBFC as “a sort of protection racket run by the film industry for the film industry.” (as cited in Matthews, 1994: 181)

Being broadminded when it came to exploitation potential, the Fanceys picked up the rights to some of the dozens of similar “Mondo” documentaries from all over the world, such as an American-produced, African-shot film *Karamoja - Land of the Naked People* (*Karamoja!*, 1955, William B. Treutle, USA: Matt Freed Productions) from legendary producer Kroger Babb.²⁶⁰ With that additional *Land of the Naked People* added to the title, it was distributed by New Realm in 1965 with only an ‘A’ certificate following cuts.

²⁵⁸ Letter from the GLC to the BBFC, 28 January 1966, *Mondo Cane 2* file, BBFC archive

²⁵⁹ “Mondo Cane No. 3, Italy, 1963,” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, September 1966, p.144. A correction was issued in the October edition that the correct title of the film was *Mondo Cane No. 2*.

²⁶⁰ Responsible for many American exploitation classics including *Mom and Dad* (1947, William Beaudine, USA: Hygienic Productions). See Schaefer (1999).

In 1966 Adrienne Fancey, on behalf of E.J. Fancey Productions, bought the UK rights to the French documentary *La Femme Spectacle*, (1964, Claude Lelouch, France: Les Films de la Pléiade). It was renamed *Paris in the Raw*, possibly to trade on the name recognition from one of Compton Film's "Mondo"-style documentaries *London in the Raw* (1964, Arnold Louis Miller, UK: Compton-Cameo). Adrienne Fancey was one of the only women working in film distribution at that time. David McGillivray recalled:

Adrienne was brusque, she was a business woman, she was very hard-nosed, I remember that. It belied her looks. She was a stunner, so it always came as a surprise to people that she was so... what is the word I would use to describe Adrienne? Determined. She would not put up with any nonsense, and at that time that was very unusual for a woman.²⁶¹

The correspondence between Adrienne Fancey and the BBFC demonstrates John Trevelyan's attempt to deal with the explicit subject matter on hand whilst also retaining some element of delicacy because she was a woman. The BBFC had several objections to *Paris in the Raw*, and in this letter John Trevelyan deliberately avoids specifics:

Some further reduction is required in the visuals of the childbirth sequence. There are a few shots which we consider to be over-intimate. I am sure that you as a woman will be able to see which shots these are. I will therefore not specify exactly what should be done, but leave it to your discretion.²⁶²

Other cuts requested included naked breasts being massaged and a variety of shots featuring strippers, including at least one transvestite. Even the subtitles came under scrutiny, including this reference to an interview with a prostitute:

The first three lines, which refer to it being quicker operating in a car than going to a hotel could do with some modification on the lines of more time being involved by going to a hotel and back again, rather than suggesting that the copulation in a car is quicker. I think you will see the point.²⁶³

By the time the film was released under the D.U.K. banner, on a double-bill with Russ Meyer's *Fanny Hill*, the film was not so much *Paris in the Raw* as Paris partially-cooked. Advertising claimed it was still "FRANK! BRUTAL! VIOLENT! An exposé on women

²⁶¹ Interview with David McGillivray, 15 April 2015. See appendix, p.363

²⁶² BBFC Archive, *Paris in the Raw* file. Letter to Adrienne Fancey from John Trevelyan, 19 January 1966. Letters to the BBFC in this file often alternate between those signed by E.J. and those by Adrienne, and between using D.U.K. and S.F.-headed paper.

²⁶³ BBFC Archive, *Paris in the Raw* file. Letter to Adrienne Fancey from John Trevelyan, 11 February 1966.

that will shock you.”²⁶⁴ It was screened in Jacey’s West End cinemas on Charing Cross and Marble Arch, where one audience member was prompted to write to the BBFC to complain. *Fanny Hill* was “the worst film I have ever seen,” and *Paris in the Raw* was queried as evidently a black square had been inserted into some frames to act as a censoring device, most noticeably bobbing “up and down in a pathetic attempt to hide the mother’s pubic region from view while the baby was being delivered.”²⁶⁵ Earlier letters between Trevelyan and the Fancey’s suggest that these censor blocks were in the original print, and not been added by the distributor. This audience member requested a list of the types of scenes and dialogue usually cut by the Board for a book on censorship he was writing. Trevelyan, confirming again their position on censorship, explained “I am afraid I cannot supply you with a list of the types of scenes and dialogue that the Board usually feels obliged to cut, since we have no rules and judge each film individually on its merits.”²⁶⁶

The Fanceys did not turn down the opportunity to distribute something more artistic if it also had exploitation potential. The BBFC were known to be more lenient with respected European directors or films with artistic value, so in 1967 they picked up the French film *L'Etrangère* (1966, Sergio Gobbi, France: Paris Cannes Production) and showed indignation when the BBFC requested cuts. In a letter from Adrienne, on S.F. headed paper, she wrote:

I was under the impression that, as we are dealing with an art picture we would be treated in the same manner as such pictures as “Belle de Jour,” “Poor Cow,” “The Mulberry Bush,” etcetera... I think you must agree that this picture is artistically and delicately made, and definitely, the sex in the film is not put there for purely commercial reasons.²⁶⁷

If the sex was not in this film for commercial reasons, the Fanceys exploited it nonetheless by retitling the film *Sex From a Stranger*, which somewhat undermines the lofty position taken by Adrienne. By March of 1968, when the cuts were dealt with, it was all water

²⁶⁴ On the back page of *Continental Film Review*, March 1966

²⁶⁵ BBFC Archive, *Paris in the Raw* file. Letter to John Trevelyan from L. V. Kelly, 21 March 1966.

²⁶⁶ BBFC Archive, *Paris in the Raw* file. Letter to L. V. Kelly from John Trevelyan, 23 March 1966.

²⁶⁷ BBFC Archive, *Sex From a Stranger* file. Letter to John Trevelyan from Adrienne Fancey, 29 December 1967.

under the bridge; New Realm invited John Trevelyan to the press showing and a reception at the Jacey on Piccadilly.²⁶⁸ *Monthly Film Bulletin* described the film as “hackneyed” and “laboriously pretentious.”²⁶⁹

There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that the kind of film titles which one would typically associate with Soho’s cinemas were to be found out in the provinces and shows that the Fancey distribution empire reached well beyond London. This letter to *The Times* in 1971, clearly written tongue-in-cheek, bemoans the films available in a local Suffolk cinema:

My mother-in-law lives in a small house in a highly respectable village not far from here [the letter is written from near Halesworth, Suffolk] and during the past few months the local cinema has started to display its posters on a disused building immediately joining her front gate. Their posters have always been worthy of study, but this month’s is such a gem that one can see it being sold in facsimile in a hundred years’ time. It merits quotation in full:

December 6. “Take Me & Love Me,” the story of Nana – Goddess of the Depraved. Also Sexy Susan in “The House of Pleasure.”
 December 13. “Wild Willing and Sexy.” Also “The Anatomy of Love.”
 December 20. “Slaughter of the Vampires.” Also “The Bloodsuckers.”
 Dec 27. “Kamasutra.” Also “Zeta the Wonder Girl.”
 January 3. “Sex is a Pleasure.” Also Teenagers in Trouble in “Hot Blood.”

With the help of sedatives, my mother-in-law is surviving quite well, but one trembles at the thought of what next month may have in store.

This is the only cinema serving a small country town and a wide, exclusively agricultural area around it. One could understand a bill of fare of this sort being offered by one of perhaps half a dozen cinemas in a large town, but is this really what the population of rural Suffolk wants as a sole diet? If so, we have come a long way from the maypole and the Morris dance.²⁷⁰

This letter offers an amusing yet thrillingly accurate snapshot of a rural cinema in late 1971. The list of films gives an insight into film distribution in Britain in the early 1970s

²⁶⁸ BBFC Archive, *Sex From a Stranger* file. Letter to John Trevelyan from Brian Fitter, New Realm Press Officer, 18 March 1968.

²⁶⁹ “Étrangère, L’ (Sex From a Stranger), France, 1966” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, May 1968, p. 76

²⁷⁰ “Village Film Fare,” Mr Paul Watkins, *The Times* (London, England), Tuesday December 21, 1971; p.11

away from the first tier, chain-owned cinemas. It is difficult to identify exactly which cinema this was,²⁷¹ but as the following breakdown of titles will reveal, the fact that each title is from an independent distributor would suggest that this was an independently-owned local cinema:

Both *Take Me, Love Me* (*Nana*, 1970, Mac Ahlberg, Sweden/ France: Minerva International) and *The House of Pleasure* (*Frau Wirtin hat auch eine Nichte*, 1969, Franz Antel, West Germany/ Italy/ Austria/ Hungary: Terra Filmkunst (Munich), Neue Delta Film Produktion, Aico Films, Budapest Hungarofilm) were distributed in the UK by Miracle Films. Miracle were former employers of Tony Tenser, and in 1971 were still run by Philip Kutner. Like the other distributors under examination in this thesis Miracle were specialists in importing low budget popular and exploitation cinema from Europe, as seen in Table 4.1. The titular character of Frau Wirtin was the “Sexy Susan” of the English versions, and Miracle had previously distributed two other “Sexy Susan” films in 1968 and 1969.²⁷²

Both *Wild, Willing and Sexy* (*Liebe durch die Hintertür*, also known as *Naughty Roommates*, Franz Antel, 1969, West Germany/ Austria: Neue Delta, Terra-Filmkunst) and sex education film *Anatomy of Love* (*Anatomie des liebesakts*, 1969, Hermann Schnell, West Germany: Planet-Film) were distributed by S.F. Film Distributors. *Slaughter of the Vampires* (*La strage dei vampire*, 1964, Roberto Mauri, Italy: Mercufilm) and *The Blood Suckers* were first released on a double-bill by E.J. Fancey Productions in 1967, so must have been reissued in 1971.²⁷³ Sex education film *Kamasutra* (*Kamasutra – Vollendung der liebe*, 1968, Kobi Jaeger, West Germany: Conti-Film), and “Zeta the Wonder Girl,” actually *Zeta One* (1969, Michael Cort, UK:

²⁷¹ According to members of the “Views of Old Halesworth” Facebook group it could have been the Mayfair cinema in Beccles. The author of the letter, Paul Watkins of Pastures Farm, is remembered fondly.

²⁷² *The Sweet Sins of Sexy Susan* (*Susanne, die Wirtin von der Lahn*, 1967, Franz Antel, Austria/ Italy/ Hungary: Neue Delta Film Produktion, Aico Films, Budapest Hungarofilm) in 1968 and *Sexy Susan Sins Again* (*Frau Wirtin hat auch einen Grafen*, 1968, Franz Antel, Austria/ West Germany/ Hungary/ Italy: Neue Delta Film Produktion, Terra Filmkunst (Munich), Aico Films, Budapest Hungarofilm) in 1969.

²⁷³ The UK rights to *The Blood Suckers* were initially bought for Compton by a teenage Tony Klinger on a film-buying trip to the continent. Interview with Tony Klinger, 18 July 2013. See appendix, p.344-345

Tigon), the two films commonly appearing on a double-bill (Hamilton, 2005: 223), were both distributed by Tigon, the company founded by Tony Tenser after he left Compton. Finally, *Sex is a Pleasure* (*Die tolldreisten Geschichten nach Honoré de Balzac*, 1967, Josef Zacher, West Germany: Munich Lisa-Film) and *Hot Blood* (*Peter und Sabine*, 1968, August Rieger, West Germany: Munich Lisa-Film) were distributed by New Realm Entertainments.

Of the ten films showing in one month at this cinema in Suffolk, six were titles handled by one of E.J. Fancey's companies: S.F. Film Distributors, E.J. Fancey Productions and New Realm Entertainments. The importance of European film in keeping the cinema industry alive in the early 1970s is demonstrated in this example, as none of these films are from the USA, and only one is British: *Zeta One*, a science fiction sexploitation film so hated by its star James Robertson Justice that he refused to be involved in any publicity. (ibid.: 145). Co-star Valerie Leon later related that *Zeta One* had been her worst experience as an actress.²⁷⁴ Having failed to find an audience on its initial release in 1969 Tony Tenser shelved the film, before attempting again in 1970. The evidence in this letter suggests he was still trying to push it out into provincial cinemas as late as the winter of 1971, this time on a double-bill with *Kamasutra* which “played to respectable – if that’s the word – business in London and throughout the UK.” (ibid.: 223)

Of the remaining nine films, seven are German, or co-productions between West Germany and Spain or Austria, one film is Italian, and one is a Swedish-French co-production. It seems incredible by twenty-first century standards that popular, non-art-house German film could dominate a British cinema. *Anatomy of Love* and *Kamasutra* are also both documentaries, using the opportunities afforded by the relative respectability of sex education to present a series of sexual positions and predicaments. *Kamasutra*'s episodic structure, switching between 3rd century India and modern-day Germany was “singularly tedious” according to *Monthly Film Bulletin*.²⁷⁵ *Anatomy of Love* was described by David McGillivray as “a display of lovemaking techniques by a young couple, followed by a discussion with a doctor on the following topics: the male

²⁷⁴ “Cleavage and all the rest of it... Adrian Smith talks to Valerie Leon,” *Cinema Retro*, Vol. 6: Issue #17, 2010

²⁷⁵ “Kamasutra – Vollendung der Liebe (Kamasutra)” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, April 1970, p. 86

orgasm, the female orgasm and how to prolong it, the twelve basic coital positions and their variations (illustrated by a second couple and explained in animated diagrams), frigidity and the use of the vibrator, oral intercourse and masturbation.”²⁷⁶ He goes on to explain that “most of the film consists of a crass and appallingly staged discussion (over coffee) during which the doctor brandishes a dildo.”²⁷⁷ This was just two years before McGillivray began writing films that would often receive similarly dismissive reviews. *Anatomy of Love* is also the kind of sex education film with which the Fanceys would get into legal trouble just over three years later. German sex comedies, dramas and horrors were staples for E.J. Fancey, to the point where it seems they were buying the films in bulk, regardless of quality. *Sexy Susan Knows How...! (Frau Wirtin bläst auch gern Trompete*, Franz Antel, 1969, West Germany/ Austria/ Italy/ Hungary: Terra Filmkunst/ Neue Delta/ Italian International Film) for example, distributed in 1972, was described as having “atrocious sound quality,” with “banality of both script and direction.”²⁷⁸ Tony Klinger explained regarding acquiring foreign titles:

When you are buying one, like a locomotive, you have to buy a lot of carriages. That's part of the way it works, and if you don't you don't get the other stuff. Even the big companies with the big cinema chains, that's how it works, so if you want to get *Avengers Assemble* (2012, Joss Whedon, USA: Marvel Studios, Paramount Pictures), you're going to be taking 25 pieces of sh*t, otherwise you don't get that one.²⁷⁹

This suggests that the Fanceys were most likely picking up poor quality films in large numbers as part of an acquisition deal, where there may have been one or two titles of interest amongst a batch of “Sexy Susans.” Former Fancey employee Paul Hennessey explained that the BBFC would often be involved when it came to retitling some of these imported sex films:

We had one which was called *The Degradation of Emanuelle (Emanuelle Perche' Violenza Alle Donne?*, 1977, Joe D'Amato, Italy: Embassy Productions S.p.A.), and the censor wouldn't have that title at all. Some of the things he wanted to do were very funny. I think it was Stephen Murphy at the time, he didn't like the title

²⁷⁶ “Anatomie des Liebesakts (Anatomy of Love)” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, January 1971, p.3

²⁷⁷ *ibid.*

²⁷⁸ “Frau Wirtin bläst auch gern Trompete (Sexy Susan Knows How...!)” *Monthly Film Bulletin*, June 1972, p.112

²⁷⁹ Interview with Tony Klinger, 18 July 2013. See appendix, p.346

Enter the Seven Virgins (*Yang chi*, also known as *The Bod Squad*, 1974, Ernst Hofbauer/ Chih-Hung Kuei, Hong Kong/ West Germany: Rapid Film/ Shaw Brothers) which was a sort of German/ Chinese co-production, sex and chop-socky I suppose. He said to me “I don’t like that title,” I said “Don’t you Stephen? If you want to be like that, what about *Enter the Dragon*? (1973, Robert Clouse, Hong Kong/ U.S.A.: Warner Bros./ Concord Productions) That’s bestiality!” He looked at me and laughed and said, “Oh alright.” He was a good guy... We had the *Hausfrauen Reports*. We called one *Give ‘Em An Inch* (*Hausfrauen-Report 3*, Eberhard Schroeder, West Germany: Munich TV 13 Film und Fernsehen), which was fine, so in came *Hausfrau* number two (*Hausfrauen-Report 2*, Eberhard Schroeder, West Germany: TV13 Filmproduktion) and we said we wanted to call it ‘Give ‘Em Another Inch!’ “Oh you can’t do that!” What’s the difference?²⁸⁰

The evidence presented in this chapter demonstrates the importance of independent distributors, and shows that European films about sex, or films which could be exploited for their sexual content, were a significant force in the programming of British cinemas, as a report from the Institute for Economic Affairs pointed out in 1966:

Not every non-English-speaking film which is acclaimed by the critics manages to find screen space in the London art-houses. Of those that do and delight audiences, a minute number receive a nation-wide showing and then usually in a dubbed version and because there is an exploitable sex angle. (Kelly, 1966: 112)

These films kept money flowing back to distributors and producers which enabled Gala to promote a more prestigious arthouse cinema culture in Britain, and Compton invested the money made from these films into forming a vertically-integrated film empire. Where E.J. Fancey invested his profits is less easy to ascertain. Their own film production during the 1960s and 1970s remained modest, and they did not go into the bricks and mortar side of the industry like Compton and Gala. The answer may lie in another direction: E.J. Fancey owned racehorses, and the racing columns of national newspapers regularly featured references to E.J. or Olive Negus-Fancey and their horses.²⁸¹ As the next chapter will demonstrate, even when Fancey’s film business was at its most prosperous they were unable to capitalise on that financial success and secure a more dominant position in the industry.

²⁸⁰ Interview with Paul Hennessey, 12 December 2016. See appendix, p.320

²⁸¹ See “Hurry Imp gets going,” Richard Baerlein, *The Observer*, 17 March, 1974. Examples can be found in newspaper racing columns dating at least as far back as 1955.

CHAPTER SIX

The Language of Love: Sex Education and Soft-Focus Eurotica

1975 was a year of contrasts for E.J. Fancey: approaching retirement, he had already passed the day to day running of the businesses to his children, with Adrienne and Malcolm controlling New Realm and S.F. Film Distributors, and Charles Negus-Fancey and Judith Smith running Border with their mother. The Fanceys achieved their greatest financial and critical success in 1975 with the UK release of *Emmanuelle* (1974, Just Jaeckin, France: Orphée Productions). In contrast, Olive Negus-Fancey, E.J.'s common-law wife, was convicted for obscenity over a legal screening of Swedish sex education film *More About the Language of Love* (*Mera ur Kärlekens språk*, 1970, Torgny Wickman, Sweden: Swedish Film Production) at the Jacey cinema on the Charing Cross Road in London. As one critic pointed out at the time, "Nobody makes a sex-education movie like the Swedes. And nobody – but nobody – will make such a supercilious fuss about it more than the British Establishment."²⁸²

This chapter uses the E.J. Fancey business empire as a micro-study to draw wider conclusions on the role of the independent distributor in the 1970s. Whereas the focus has, up until now, been primarily within the 1960s, this chapter approaches from a perspective of on what might be termed the 'Long 1960s.'²⁸³ The ramifications of the collapse of the major British studios at the end of the decade following a withdrawal of financial investment from Hollywood were being felt at all levels of the industry. Coinciding with the change of age categorisation for the 'X' certificate from sixteen to eighteen in 1970, the easiest way to make money seemed to be through selling sex. Companies such as E.J. Fancey were well placed to take full advantage of this, having effectively been specialists for more than a decade already. This chapter will explore 1975's diametrically-opposed experiences of the Fancey family, drawing on the documents for the *More About the Language of Love* court case and the political and cultural backlash against the prosecution. The role of the European sex education film as

²⁸² "More About the Language of Love," T.C., *Cinema X*, Vol. 6 No. 11 1974, London: Top Sellers Ltd.

²⁸³ The Long 1960s is a reference to discussions at the conference "Tonite Let's All Make Love in Leicester: Peter Whitehead and the Long 1960s" held at De Montfort University, Leicester, 3-4 March 2017, at which some of this research was presented.

entertainment in British cinemas will be discussed in relation to their production and reception in Sweden itself, drawing on the research of Elisabet Björklund (2012). Björklund has written extensively on the history of these films within Sweden, but this case study offers an opportunity to look at their British reception and treatment in the hands of distributors, the censors, the press and the courts. These films raised public and political concerns and became the focus of orchestrated campaigns from moralists including Lord Longford and the Festival of Light. The BBFC and GLC censorship records suggest that the interpretation of the educational versus exploitative intentions, inflected by British distributors' decisions in marketing and editing content, to be the chief feature of the British reception. Furthermore, I argue, the political outcry reflects a tension between liberal and conservative sexual attitudes particular to early 1970s British culture.

One Swedish pornography producer interviewed in *More About the Language of Love* described his films as being simply "Adult fairy tales." *More About the Language of Love* became embroiled in the pornography debate, although as we shall see, definitions of pornography, and its legal status, were far from settled matters. Indeed, modes and means of interpretation abounded. Twenty years later, Linda Williams' landmark study would acknowledge similar problems in conceptualizing the "power and pleasure" of sexuality expressed in pornography, although she rejected the famous utterance of Justice Potter Stewart in 1954: "I don't know what it is, but I know it when I see it." (quoted in Williams, 1989: 5) Ultimately she describes pornography, borrowing from mythology, as being "a speculation about pleasure that begins... from a phallic perspective, journeys to the unseen world of the sexual other, and returns to tell the story." (ibid.: 279) Sexuality being presented from "a phallic perspective" is a useful definition when used to explain the narrative thrust of non-hardcore films like *Emmanuelle*, but is less clear when applied to the pornography debates of the sex education films. The *Language of Love* films are just as concerned with the sexual needs and fulfilment of women as they are men, albeit with imagery and a system of representation that Laura Mulvey dubbed the male gaze. (1975) It was this form, rather than simply the content, that particularly concerned the censors, who wanted to avoid classifying "indecent" films in order to protect distributors from

prosecution for obscenity.²⁸⁴ As will be demonstrated in this chapter, in the case of *More About the Language of Love* they were proven correct.

Whilst Olive Negus-Fancey was embroiled in legal difficulties at Border, at New Realm, up the road on Berners Street, the Fanceys were celebrating the greatest deal they had ever made; *Emmanuelle* is by far the most commercial title this thesis touches on. It was picked up for distribution by Adrienne and Malcolm Fancey who by then were jointly running New Realm, acquired the film rights based purely on reading a summary of the novel before the film had been completed. With artistic and philosophic pretensions, owing to Just Jaeckin's background as a fashion photographer and the themes of self-discovery in the novel, *Emmanuelle* became a mainstream hit, as well as launching a franchise and dozens of unofficial "Emmanuelle" films, several of which were also distributed by New Realm or other Fancey companies.²⁸⁵

This chapter will explore *Emmanuelle*'s exoticisation and exploitation of the Thai locations, which serve to 'Orientalise' *Emmanuelle*'s sexual experiences. As discussed

²⁸⁴ Taken from personal correspondence with the BBFC by email, helpline@bbfc.co.uk, 2 October 2017.

²⁸⁵ Notably the Italian "Black Emanuelle" (spelt with one 'm') series (and associated titles) mostly starring Laura Gemser: *Black Emanuelle* (1975, Albert Thomas (Bitto Albertini), Italy: Emaus Films), *Emanuelle in Bangkok (Emanuelle nera: Orient reportage)*, 1976, Joe D'Amato, Italy: Kristal Film), *The New Black Emanuelle (Emanuelle nera no. 2)*, 1976, Albert Thomas (Bitto Albertini), Italy: San Nicola Produzione Cinematografica), *Black Emmanuelle White Emmanuelle (Emmanuelle Bianca e nera)*, this time spelt "mm," 1976, Mario Pinzauti, Italy: Società Europea Films Internazionali Cinematografica), *Emanuelle in America* (1977, Joe D'Amato, Italy: New Film Production), *Sister Emanuelle* (1977, Joseph Warren (Giuseppe Vari), Italy: MEN Cinematografica), *Confessions of Emanuelle (Emanuelle – Perché violenza alle donne?)*, which translates loosely as "Emanuelle – why is violence done against women?" 1977, Joe D'Amato, Italy: Embassy Productions. Alternative titles for this film include *The Degradation of Emanuelle* and *Emanuelle Around the World*) also distributed by New Realm Entertainments, *Emanuelle and the Last Cannibals* (1977, Aristide Massaccesi, Italy: Flora Film), *Emanuelle and the White Slave Trade (La via della prostituzione)*, 1978, Joe D'Amato, Italy: Flora Film), *Emanuelle: Queen Bitch (I mavri Emmanouella)*, 1980, Ilias Mylonakos, Greece/ Italy: Andromeda International Films), *Emanuelle Reports From a Women's Prison (Violenza in un carcere femminile)*, 1982, Vincent Dawn (Bruno Mattei), Italy: Beatrice Film) and *Emanuelle in Prison (Blade Violent – I violenti)*, 1983, Gilbert Roussel (Bruno Mattei), Italy: Beatrice Film). Gemser also made an appearance in *Emmanuelle II (Emmanuelle: L'antivierge)*, 1975, Francis Giacobetti, France: Orphée Arts) as a masseuse. The name "Emmanuelle" was also used regularly in TV production, proving the flexibility of the character, such as the American cable TV series *Emmanuelle in Space* (1994, New Horizons Home Media).

previously the Eurospy genre was emblematic of the idea of Western culture having a global superiority, and exploiting Eastern culture for its own gain, with the world representing an erotic playground. Like many Eurospy protagonists, Emmanuelle, a French diplomat's wife, is a westerner on a journey of sexual self-discovery, and follows a similar imperialist agenda. David Andrews points out that *Emmanuelle* does have a "paternalist and specifically colonialist logic," where "upper-class foreigners use lower-class natives as playthings." (2006: 43) The film also appears to be about the creation, and performance of a woman. As Mathijs and Sexton point out, gender is always performed, "The result of bodily routines, acts of stylized repetition managed through regulatory discourses: femininity, masculinity, and even the so-called "natural" and "biological" sex of a body are largely the result of cultural discipline." (Mathijs & Sexton, 2012: 111) In *Emmanuelle* the characters around her constantly comment on her performance as a liberated woman. Emmanuelle is a "sex-positive quester," (Andrews, 2006: 165) a heroine of sorts whose sexual appetite and body confidence could be both aspirational and exploitable.

The eroticisation and justification of rape in *Emmanuelle* is particularly problematic. The culmination of Emmanuelle's erotic education is to be raped by a young Thai man who has just won a fight in an opium den whilst other men watch. She is his prize, and this is depicted as being pleasurable for Emmanuelle. This scene specifically refers to the notion of a woman's sexuality being stylized and created through the acts performed upon her, as per Mathijs and Sexton, who state that "Even Emmanuelle's rape is explicitly staged as a performance." (ibid.) This rape scene raises questions as to audience attitudes in the 1970s towards sexual exploitation. It may be unacceptable by modern standards but rape was a staple of exploitation cinema in the 1970s, and there are many examples of rape being used to 'spice up' a film or provide the motivation for a tale of revenge.²⁸⁶ Sarah Projansky discusses at length the use of rape as a narrative tool, explaining that "Rape functions both as the narrative motor for individual films and as a cultural reference that connects any number of films together— forming genres, shaping expectations, and naturalizing the cultural pervasiveness of sexual violence against women." (Projansky,

²⁸⁶ One particularly notorious example being an out-of-character moment when Baron Frankenstein (Peter Cushing) rapes a woman in *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* (1969, Terence Fisher, UK: Hammer), in a scene "apparently opportunistically tacked on after principal photography had been completed." (Rigby, 2015: 184)

2001: 63) This illustrates Laura Mulvey's argument that "Visual pleasure in the cinema derives, to some degree, from the victimisation of women." (Mulvey, 1975, cited in Hawkins, 2000) *Emmanuelle* provides an opportunity to explore the acceptability of Orientalism and rape by mainstream audiences in the 1970s.

Just as Edwin Fancey was approaching retirement, winding down and handing over the businesses to his children, New Realm were able to take advantage of the change in the BBFC certification in 1970, when an 'X' meant over-18s only, rather than over-16s. A Home Office circular from the period describes some of the thought behind this change:

It is widely known that, however conscientious exhibitors may be in their application of the category regulations, a number of children of 15 years of age, and perhaps even younger children, succeed in attending "X" films. But recent trends in world film production policies are tending to make an increasing number of the films given an "X" certificate less suitable for younger adolescents. The British Board of Film Censors' intention, therefore, is that the new "X" category should be confined to films which are definitely not suitable for young adolescents and the Board accordingly recommends that the minimum age for admission to such films should be raised to 18 years.²⁸⁷

The 1970s presented the Fanceys with the opportunity to both distribute and produce more explicit and controversial material, including films from the German *Schulmädchen Report* series.²⁸⁸ It has been estimated that this film series was West Germany's most successful film export, reaching over 100 million viewers worldwide. This makes them even more successful than the Edgar Wallace films, (Fay, 2004: 42). In 1975 the Fanceys finally achieved mainstream success with *Emmanuelle*. Having had the novel recommended to them by their Paris sales agent, Adrienne and Malcolm paid £10,000 for the British distribution rights. This was despite the novel only being then available in French, so they had to rely on a synopsis. "It was a gamble," said Malcom in 1975, "but making and distributing movies has always been a gamble, and both Adrienne and I had a hunch about this subject and felt it was money well spent."²⁸⁹ That hunch about the

²⁸⁷ Home Office Circular no. 57/1970, BBFC archive

²⁸⁸ *Schulmädchen Report* films distributed by New Realm included *Confessions of a Sixth Form Girl* (1970, *Schulmädchen-Report: Was Eltern nicht für möglich halten*, Ernst Hofbauer, Germany: Rapid-Film) in 1976 and *Further Confessions of a Sixth Form Girl* (1971, *Schulmädchen-Report 2. Teil - Was Eltern den Schlaf raubt*, Ernst Hofbauer, Germany: Rapid-Film) in 1978.

²⁸⁹ "A LITTLE BIT OF WHAT YOU FANCEY!" Peter Noble, *CinemaTV Today*, Saturday 3 May 1975

subject was based on decades of experience within the E.J. Fancey business; that European sex films will make money.

The success of *Emmanuelle* enabled S.F. Films and New Realm to finally break out of the lower ranks and become a major concern within the industry. Adrienne admitted “With my father, E.J. Fancey, both Malcolm and I have worked in S.F. and New Realm for 15 years. It has been an exciting, sometimes uphill struggle. It does look as if we have now turned the corner. We are being offered films from the Continent which usually go to the majors.”²⁹⁰ This could have been the breakthrough that the Fanceys needed in order to go mainstream, but, in this *CinemaTV Today* article at least, they were already preparing to get back to business as usual, with upcoming productions *Girls Come First* (1975, Joseph McGrath under the pseudonym Croisette Meubles, UK: Oppidan) and *I’m Not Feeling Myself Tonight* (1976, Joseph McGrath, UK: Antler Film Productions) being announced, “and in the coming year we plan to make at least four British quota films as well as distributing about 20 pictures from Europe and the USA.” (ibid.)

Malcolm Fancey had ambitions as a filmmaker, having already had some experience as an editor, and the financial boost to the company from *Emmanuelle* allowed him to indulge his creativity. In an inside joke intended for Malcolm Fancey, *Girls Come First* features a brief spoof of *Emmanuelle*, as a saucy young woman (with a terrible French accent) flashes herself at the lead character Alan (John Hamill) as she models for him next to the Thames, whilst boasting about having joined the “mile-up club” whilst on a flight to Bangkok.

Girls Come First was a prequel to *The Over-Amorous Artist* (1974, Marice Hamblin, UK: Oppidan), also produced by Fancey and Grant. This film also ran at just over forty minutes, and in 1975 was retitled *Just One More Time* and distributed as the supporting feature to *Emmanuelle*. This would have meant that the titular artist would have been a well-known character to millions of people, which is perhaps what encouraged Fancey and Grant to produce a trilogy of films based on his character, Alan Street.²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ ibid.

²⁹¹ The last film was *Under the Bed* (1977, David Hamilton Grant, UK: no production company credited, but most likely Oppidan), which is only fifty-three minutes long.

The second film mentioned in that *CinemaTV Today* article, *I'm Not Feeling Myself Tonight*, was written by David McGillivray. His memories of Malcolm Fancey reveal how easily the latter had slipped into this form of filmmaking:

He tried to get me to join in a sex scene in *I'm Not Feeling Myself Tonight*. I said, "I can't, I write for *Sight and Sound*!" He said, "Go on, I'll give you extra money!" Get this shirt off," and he started ripping my shirt off. I said, "I can't, honestly," he said, "It's alright, we won't see your b*****s." I put that in my diary, because I thought I'm always going to remember that line. I refused. I thought, "I've got to think of my future." Even in those days I had ambitions and I thought "No one will ever employ me again," because it's still true, once you do porn, that's it. There's no going back. You'll never cross over to the mainstream. You can count the exceptions on the fingers of one hand, the people who have. It's a stigma, it always has been and it still is. Eventually he paid someone else to do it, and the results are all up there on the screen, not that I'm ever going to watch it again. I watched it when we had the cast and crew screening and I've never been so embarrassed. I just wanted to crawl under the seat, it's so bad.²⁹²

This reference to pornography is hinting at the fact that hardcore inserts were being shot for a "hot version" to be distributed by the Fanceys outside the UK. The film was being co-produced by John Lindsay who was fired by Malcolm Fancey midway through production when Lindsay was put on trial for shooting hardcore pornography in a Birmingham school. McGillivray explained:

Despite the fact that all Fancey companies dealt in smut, they decided they were going to draw the line and weren't going to be involved in anything connected to hardcore pornography. The inference from that is that they were as moralistic as anyone else in the business at that time. Lindsay kicked up a hell of a fuss, but there was not a leg he could stand on, so the contract was torn up and he never made another mainstream feature film.²⁹³

John Lindsay's involvement would certainly explain the relative ease in which *I'm Not Feeling Myself Tonight* could have a "hot version" shot, something which Malcolm Fancey was clearly condoning. It was most likely the fact that John Lindsay's name got

²⁹² Interview with David McGillivray, 15 April 2015. See appendix, p.365

²⁹³ *ibid.*

into the press which caused them to fire him.²⁹⁴ Lindsay had previously co-directed another of McGillivray's scripts, *The Hot Girls* (1974, Laurie Barnett & John Lindsay, UK: Baskform), a film now believed lost.

Emmanuelle was not hardcore pornography, but it was almost as close to it as could be found in mainstream British cinemas, so it is not difficult to see David McGillivray's point regarding the hypocritical treatment of John Lindsay by Malcolm Fancey. The arguments around pornography were complicated by the release of European sex education films which were allowed to show explicit sexual acts, but in terms of narrative film real sex was still problematic. The BBFC did allow *W.R. – Mysteries of the Organism* (*W.R. - Misterije organizma*, 1971, Dušan Makavejev, Yugoslavia/ West Germany: Neoplanta Film, Telepool) to retain images of real sex, after having first watched critical and audience reaction in London when the Greater London Council gave the film an 'X' with no cuts required. (Lapper, C. in Lamberti, 2012: 88-90) Both outgoing Board secretary John Trevelyan and his replacement Stephen Murphy felt that the film "possessed significant merit and sexual scenes were not there to provoke titillation." (ibid.)²⁹⁵

BBFC regulations currently, as laid down in 2005 and then updated in 2009, do allow explicit sex in '18' rated films provided the film is not a "sex work."²⁹⁶ BBFC director David Cooke explains the current regulatory difference between sex in a mainstream film and pornography: "There is a key difference between showing explicit sex being enjoyed by the participants or characters and showing explicit sex merely in order to arouse the viewer... the regulatory and licensing system within which we work is based on the difference between whether images are merely explicit or whether they are pornographic." (Cooke quoted in Lamberti, 2012: 166) Public debates around

²⁹⁴ John Lindsay was found not guilty, but did go to jail a few years later for selling tapes of hardcore gay pornography in one of his Soho shops, which he claimed had been planted by the police. See Kerekes, D. (2002) for more information.

²⁹⁵ Despite an uncut release in 1971, *W.R. – Mysteries of the Organism* has yet to receive an uncut home video release in the UK, although this is owing to the distributor of the video in 1995 rather than the BBFC.

²⁹⁶ Defined by the BBFC as something "primarily for explicit works of consenting sex or strong fetish material involving adults," (*BBFC Guidelines: Age Ratings You Can Trust*, 2014, BBFC: London, p.24)

pornography became particularly strong in the mid-1970s, as will be explored later in this chapter.

The BBFC were unimpressed with *Emmanuelle*, seeing through its artistic veneer. Stephen Murphy described it in a letter to the GLC as being “at best pseudo-intellectual and in places [it] seemed to us downright silly.”²⁹⁷ *Guardian* reviewer Derek Malcolm might have agreed, when he stated that “There really is a limit to what bosoms and bottoms can express dramatically, and one begins to think that there ought to be a ban on intellectual directors trying their hand at sex movies. They make them even worse than the hacks.”²⁹⁸ Nine cuts were required for an “X” certificate in 1974, which included certain moments of subtitled dialogue as well as specific explicit imagery of masturbation, two references to “lesbian lovemaking,” a nightclub girl smoking a cigarette through her vagina, and reductions to the rape scene in the boxing club. This latter scene would become a source of potential legal trouble just five years later. These comments from the BBFC, and the opinion of reviewers like Derek Malcolm and David McGillivray towards “sex movies” seem to reflect a particularly British way of looking at something which other nations may take more seriously; pricking pomposity and mocking artistic intent if the work does not appear to have a sense of self-awareness.

Initially New Realm, upset at the number of required cuts, submitted the film to the GLC at the end of July 1974, in the hope that they might receive an easier ride. It is not entirely clear from the archival material from either the GLC or the BBFC as to why, but New Realm then changed their minds and came back to the BBFC. Malcolm Fancey simply explained “We have now decided not to submit “EMMANUELLE” to the G.L.C. but will continue discussions on the cuts with you.”²⁹⁹ Perhaps they realised that receiving a BBFC certificate would make nationwide distribution easier than having to submit *Emmanuelle* to each individual local authority.

²⁹⁷ National Archives, *Emmanuelle* file. Letter to W. Tofts at the GLC from Stephen Murphy, 2 August 1974.

²⁹⁸ “Cleanliness is next to modishness,” Derek Malcolm, *The Guardian*, Sep 10, 1975, p. 10

²⁹⁹ BBFC Archives, *Emmanuelle* file. Letter to John Trevelyan from Malcolm Fancey, 15 August 1974.

Advance publicity for *Emmanuelle* meant that it was already a known quantity by the time the film received its premiere. A newspaper article in August 1974 speculated “A sensational new sex film, which has taken Paris by storm, may soon be unveiled in London.” Describing the film as having “exquisite colour photography and a pseudo-intellectual script,” the writer suggested, “In my view the sex scenes are dynamite... but not dangerous. Mary Whitehouse and Lord Longford may have other ideas.”³⁰⁰ The Columbia Pictures campaign book for the release in the U.S. calls *Emmanuelle* an “X you can take your wife to.”³⁰¹ It goes on to explain that it is “a film that doesn’t make you fidget in the explicit scenes... And after the film is over you don’t find yourself making a hasty departure while scrupulously avoiding eye contact.”³⁰²

The film received its premiere in September 1974 at the Prince Charles cinema on Leicester Square, with an invite to the event being sent to Stephen Murphy. Although submitted for certification by New Realm, it was put out under the S.F. Distributors name under a blaze of publicity. (fig. 26) The poster was a variation on the well-known promotional image for the film, only this time Emmanuelle herself is covered up whilst sitting in that rattan chair. The original French biblical-themed image of the apple, bare bottom and snake was to be used in local advertising, but was banned by the “cinema industry publicity company” and was not allowed on “the Underground, British rail and outdoor sites.” It was eventually agreed that it would be allowed on London buses, “high up, out of reach of graffiti artists.”³⁰³

The film received a mixed critical reception, often reflecting the British sense of humour when presented with something serious and artfully pretentious, and perhaps especially when it is French. *What’s On* went to see the film at the Prince Charles, and, describing it as “top-drawer pornography,” explained that, “Some sort of seriousness is attempted

³⁰⁰ “The Next Tango in Paris: Emmanuelle,” Kenelm Jenour, *Daily Mirror*, Aug 12, 1974, p. 15

³⁰¹ Merchandising and Advertising Manual for *Emmanuelle*, published by Columbia Pictures, 1974. Cinema Museum Archive.

³⁰² *ibid.*

³⁰³ “Now fans can see David’s sexy film,” Michael Kilbrane, *Evening Standard*, 12th September 1974, p. unknown



Fig. 26: Promotional image for *Emmanuelle* from a seven-page special feature in *Cinema Blue*, Issue 1, 1975, London: Top Sellers Ltd., p.7 (Used with the permission of Neil Jackson)

by some ridiculous mumbo-jumbo about sexual maturity and the way to attain it.”³⁰⁴ *Monthly Film Bulletin* described *Emmanuelle* as “a pompous tract on voyeurism... lacking in both spirit and eroticism.”³⁰⁵ The critics opinions did not appear to trouble either the Fanceys or the public. The film was still showing at the Prince Charles in May 1975, having played there for 29 weeks, as well as in other cities around the country. “It is not so much the money that the film is taking that thrills us,” Adrienne told *CinemaTV Today*, “but the fact that our hunch paid off.”³⁰⁶ One news report in November 1975 stated, “Nearly 3,000,000 people have seen *Emmanuelle* at the Prince Charles Theatre, where it has been showing for the past year.”³⁰⁷

Kenneth Rive of Gala Film Distributors expressed regret at not having acquired the film for himself: “I would have bought *Emmanuelle* had I had the chance: that is the type of sex film that deserves the success it is having.”³⁰⁸

The film drew complaints from the public, with some calling for the BBFC to be abolished. In one letter to the Board, in which “the humiliating role women are shown to play in the film,” is highlighted – “Never has the expression ‘male chauvinist pig’ been more applicable,” – the main source of complaint is regarding the dialogue of *Emmanuelle*, which “projects a false concept of the relationship between love and sex and the role of sex in marriage and society.”³⁰⁹ The GLC received one particularly strong letter of protest, typed almost entirely in uppercase, from “300 PARENTS OF 18 yr OLD BOYS & GIRLS.”³¹⁰ The tone of this letter is hysterical, bordering on the incomprehensible, and one must treat the claim that this was written from three hundred parents with some scepticism. The anonymous writer claims “We have a group of very

³⁰⁴ *What’s On*, 11 October 1974, p. unknown

³⁰⁵ *Monthly Film Bulletin*, October 1974, .223

³⁰⁶ “A LITTLE BIT OF WHAT YOU FANCEY!” Peter Noble, *CinemaTV Today*, Saturday 3 May 1975

³⁰⁷ “Who’s Being Wooed?” Paul Callan, *Daily Mirror*, Nov 10, 1975, p. 15

³⁰⁸ “Kenneth Rive: Britain's biggest foreign-film distributor,” Obituary, *The Independent* (London, England), 1 April 2003, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/kenneth-rive-36395.html>, accessed 13 September 2017.

³⁰⁹ Letter from Mrs A Claass to the BBFC, 11 September 1975, *Emmanuelle* file, BBFC archive.

³¹⁰ Anonymous letter to the GLC, 18 December 1974, *Emmanuelle* file, London Metropolitan Archives

honest 60 boys aged between 18 and 20 who are willing to testify personally to the London Council that they definitely feel tempted to commit crimes of rape after seeing highly provocative sex films in London.”³¹¹ They go on to accuse the GLC of taking bribes from unscrupulous filmmakers to abolish the censorship of sex films, stating that “The GLC is full of the most remarkably corrupt people who seem to have made a vow to pollute Britain with as much moral poison and filth as possible.”³¹² The writer had seen a television interview with “a disgusting woman from the Greater London Council,” which was most likely Enid Wistrich, head of the Film Viewing Board, who evidently said she was doing everything she could to abolish all film censorship. Having now lost all pretence of a seriously-minded concern, the writer exclaims, “I am convinced this woman must be mentally defective or else diabolically evil,” and that the GLC is “composed of wicked dishonest liars and deceivers.”³¹³ Although clearly written by someone a little unhinged, the fact that this three-page letter was not only annotated but then preserved in the GLC archive means they took every complaint seriously.

In her survey of Hollywood films which feature rape as a central plot device, Sarah Projansky identified the following concerns:

“What is particularly troubling about rape films is not that they are sometimes sexist, capitalist, racist, nationalist, or colonialist (although, of course, many are) but that violence against women is so central to the films, so key to character transformations and narrative development and resolution, so versatile, that it not only seems to be necessary to the films themselves but concomitantly naturalizes the policing and negotiating of the gendered, classed, racialized, and national boundaries in which these films engage.” (Projansky, 2001: 63)

Emmanuelle is a very clear example of this. It is through the central character’s rape at the hands of an opium addict that she finds true fulfilment and becomes a woman, thus being central to her character transformation and character development. This moment, and indeed the myth that sexual fulfilment can only be found through experiences with multiple partners in exotic locales, is perpetuated throughout *Emmanuelle*. It symbolises an Orientalist exoticisation of the East. Shortly after the film’s release the star, Sylvia Kristel, was quoted as saying, “She would not object to making another film like

³¹¹ *ibid.*

³¹² *ibid.*

³¹³ *ibid.*

‘Emmanuelle,’ which shows scenes of rape, masturbation and lesbianism. ‘But it would have to be done with taste.’”³¹⁴

David Church observed that rape was a cinematic staple of the mid-1960s form of sexploitation known as the “roughie,” where “sexual violence (e.g., rape and coercion) or violent sexuality (e.g., bondage and sadomasochism) [became] framed as alternate forms of erotic spectacle.” (2016: 67) He suggests that as second-wave feminists redefined rape as being a crime on a par with murder sexploitation filmmakers moved towards “a greater emphasis on mutual, consensual sexual pleasure... a potential concession to not only women’s liberation but also a growing couples market.” (ibid. 68) His research is purely on American exploitation cinema, but his identification of a more consensual pleasure is demonstrated in the rape scene of *Emmanuelle*, where she allows herself to be raped by the fighter as part of her sexual education. The film effectively appropriates the “roughie” and represents it through a soft-focus lens of consensual self-discovery.

In 1979 the then secretary at the BBFC, James Ferman, wrote to Adrienne Fancey with some potentially bad news regarding *Emmanuelle*. There is no archival evidence as to whether the Fanceys were planning to redistribute the film, or whether it was still in circulation. Ferman explained that they must sometimes look again at films which are subsequently seen to offend against some aspect of criminal law:

When EMMANUELLE was certified in 1974, it was not realised by the Board that the deprave-and-corrupt test applied to films. At the time, films had been specifically excluded from the Obscene Publications Act 1959, although recent court cases had made clear that this left them subject to the common-law test of gross indecency...

In 1975, however, the Law Commission pointed out to us that the old common-law offence of obscene libel applied to films, and that this required us to apply the deprave-and-corrupt test exactly as if films had been included in the 1959 Act, except that there was no public good defence.³¹⁵

He gets to the point by explaining that the Williams Committee on Obscenity and Film Censorship has been reviewing virtually every controversial film on release in Britain, and they have identified the rape scene in *Emmanuelle* as depraving and corrupting.

³¹⁴ “My Baby, by Sex Film Girl,” Stan Sayer, *Daily Mirror*, Oct 25, 1974, p. 11

³¹⁵ Letter to Adrienne Fancey from James Ferman, 8 January 1979, *Emmanuelle* file, BBFC Archive

I have been asked whether in a court of law I could consistently argue that this scene is not depraving and corrupting, and I have had to say that, in all conscience, I could not. For that reason, I must now ask you to delete that sequence from the film for all future British distribution.³¹⁶

Adrienne was most displeased with this turn of events, and replied angrily, saying:

“I really feel your request for us to cut the rape sequence in “Emmanuelle” seems to be extremely unreasonable. Ninety-two minutes may appear to be insignificant, but the film has already suffered many cuts and certainly this scene is an integral part of the film.”³¹⁷

This reference to “ninety-two minutes” is a mistake, as she is most likely referring to the ninety-two feet of film, or a running time of one minute and one second, which was the length of the rape scene as measured by their in-house editor Paul Hennessey, stated by James Ferman in his first letter.

In a reply the next day Ferman breaks down his reasoning, and as such gets to the heart of the problem with *Emmanuelle*, and indeed with many films which use rape as a device to increase the amount of sex in a film. He explains that:

“TOKYO EMMANUELLE, FANTASM, and RED, HOT AND SEXY have all had rape scenes cut for the reasons which will now apply to EMMANUELLE. In each of these cases, the rape was originally presented as in some way a liberating and, therefore, justifiable, experience for the victim – a view of rape we will no longer permit.”³¹⁸

This is because the “deprave-and-corrupt” test now applied to every film distributed and exhibited in this country. Ferman had to issue threats to Adrienne Fancey in this letter to stress the seriousness of the issue, which were that if New Realm did not comply with this request he would contact every local authority in the country to tell them that *Emmanuelle* no longer carried a BBFC certificate. Unfortunately, any further correspondence from Adrienne Fancey on this matter is not located in the BBFC archive,

³¹⁶ *ibid.*

³¹⁷ BBFC Archive, *Emmanuelle* file, letter to James Ferman from Adrienne Fancey, 29 January 1979,

³¹⁸ BBFC Archive, *Emmanuelle* file, letter to Adrienne Fancey from James Ferman, 30 January 1979

but given that *Emmanuelle* continued to hold a BBFC certificate it is safe to assume that these wishes were eventually carried out.

Having examined the Fancey family's greatest success, I will now explore the 1975 prosecution for obscenity over the Swedish film *More About the Language of Love* (1970, Torgny Wickman, Sweden: Swedish Film Production) which involved both the Jacey cinema chain and the Fanceys. This case will be explored and analysed with reference to key archival materials along with the film itself and its predecessor *Language of Love* (1969, Torgny Wickman, Sweden: Swedish Film Production), which had also been screened in UK cinemas through one of E.J. Fancey's distribution companies.

Since the late 1950s when films shot in nudist camps around Europe became cinematic staples, taking advantage of censorship loopholes that allowed nudity in a natural context, the exploitation documentary was able to push the boundaries of taste and acceptability in British cinemas. The film *Mondo Cane* (1962, Paolo Cavara & Gualitiero Jacopetti, Italy: Cineriz) inspired a series of increasingly lurid documentaries from the continent as well as similar, low-rent fare shot in London including Arnold Louis Miller's *London in the Raw* (1964, UK: Compton) and *Primitive London* (1965, UK: Compton). Towards the end of the 1960s the exploitation by distributors of the Mondo documentary gave way to the use of sex education films; generally earnest explorations of the subject that may have been viewed in all seriousness in their original countries but took on a very different set of meanings when uprooted and planted in Britain by distributors and exhibitors keen to exploit these cheaply-made products for a large profit.

This section will detail the prosecution of one such sex education film in the Central Criminal Court for obscenity, the reaction it caused amongst the British establishment, the press and the public, and what this can tell us about British attitudes towards sex and censorship in the 1970s. Prior to this is it worth looking at how the European sex education documentary was first received by the British censors, and the process they went through in understanding the genre.

It was through the documentary format that actual depictions of sex were first seen on cinema screens not only in the UK but in America as well, where two Scandinavian-shot but US-produced films – *Sexual Freedom in Denmark* (1970, John Lamb as M. C. von

Hellen, USA: Horizon Productions) and *Censorship in Denmark: A New Approach* (1969, Alex de Renzy, USA: Graffiti Productions) – were ostensibly a sociological inquiry into newly relaxed censorship laws, taking “immediate and clever advantage of the ‘redeeming social importance’ clause of the 1966 Supreme Court rulings.” (Williams, 1989: 97) Due to the lack of a legal requirement for censorship in America, it did not take long before hard-core pornography was in production and available in cinemas, something which anti-porn campaigners in the UK were worried could happen at home. As O’Toole put it, “This short-lived mini-genre was the last disguise prior to porn finally coming out in full, cinematic hard-core relief” (O’Toole, 1998: 70).

The general public had long perceived European cinema as being more sexually open and explicit, something which Eric Schaefer explains stemmed in part from wartime exploits in Europe being bragged about when the servicemen returned home (2014: 208). Paris, with its Moulin Rouge and the can-can, became the epitome of France as a sexy nation, cemented in the English language with the terms “French letter” and “French-kissing”. Cinema exploited this, naturally, and for a while France seemed to own sex in films, and starlets like Brigitte Bardot became the figurehead of erotic Europeanism for the late 1950s generation. The striptease, often featured in French films, was symbolic of what Schaefer terms the “observational/ retrospective mode” of viewing (ibid.: 210) These films incorporated the act of watching, reflecting the tourist experience of Paris. According to a 1954 *Sight and Sound* article seventy-two films between January and March of that year received an ‘X’ certificate, and of those twenty-six were French.³¹⁹ This would have contributed to the “pervasive perception of French cinema as ‘risqué.’” (Mazdon & Wheatley, 2013: 88) Perhaps inevitably an air of seediness and decrepitude developed in this type of cinema, and audiences began to notice the fresh-faced innocence of Scandinavian girls who by the mid-1960s were also interested in expressing themselves sexually, but did not need to do it covered in makeup and wearing expensive negligees.

The sex in Swedish films such as *I Am Curious – Yellow* (1967, Vilgot Sjöman, Sweden: Sandrews) and *Inga* (1968, Joseph W. Sarno, Sweden/ USA: Inskafilm, Canon Films) was seen as more honest and natural. Sweden and Denmark had created societies that

³¹⁹ Anon. 1954c: 123-24, quoted in Mazdon & Wheatley (2013).

were far more relaxed about sex, and this had inevitably made its way into the production of popular culture. In Sweden sex education in schools had been compulsory since 1955. Sex had changed from “something sinful, which only promiscuous people engaged in, to becoming something natural which everyone needed in order to be happy, healthy, and satisfied members of society” (Marklund, 2009: 85). In turn, sex in Scandinavian films offered a “rationality, modernity and naturalness” (Schaefer, 2014: 230) perhaps missing in the earlier French cycle. In any event, these films found particular resonance among audiences in Britain and America, even if the new openness was not universally appreciated.

In order to understand the BBFC’s attitude towards *More About the Language of Love*, we need to probe its immediate antecedents; in this period and others, ‘precedents’ formed an important part of the Board’s methods of classification. Early in 1969 Adrienne Fancey, under the S.F. Film Distributors name, submitted the film *The Wonder of Love* (*Oswalt Kolle: Das Wunder der Liebe*, 1967, Franz Josef Gottlieb, Germany/ Swiss: Arca-Film) to the BBFC. Ostensibly fitting with the Fancey’s pattern of distributing exploitative documentaries, this film was moving towards the trend of instructional sex films that were appearing around this time. *The Wonder of Love* was based around a series of dramatized reports by the journalist Oswalt Kolle and appears to have been dramatized. It was described as “the first of a new German series on sex education... an attempt to provide a guide to a new sexual enlightenment.”³²⁰ The BBFC decided to host a screening of the film with genuine experts, psychiatrists and therapists to learn their views before making a decision, including popular agony aunt and television presenter Claire Rayner. On the 20th January 1969 this screening took place and was followed by a discussion with John Trevelyan and BBFC President Lord Harlech.

There was a full discussion in the course of which all four people expressed the opinion that there was still a great deal of ignorance among young people about sexual matters in relation to marriage relationships, and that, although probably some people would see films of this kind for the wrong reasons, they could certainly be helpful to people who were ignorant, and that for this reason they were of the opinion that in principle such films should be passed for public exhibition. They all said that if by passing such films the Board came in for criticism they would be prepared to support the Board’s decision. They were all of the opinion that there was nothing in this film which they would personally want removed, although they

³²⁰ *Monthly Film Bulletin*, August 1969, p.180

appreciated that there were areas which suggested at least some degree of commercial exploitation.³²¹

As a result of this support, it was agreed by John Trevelyan and Lord Harlech that *The Wonder of Love* would be passed 'X', with some cuts. Regarding the bigger picture, it was decided that the BBFC should accept the sex-education film in principle, "but [we] should not be more generous to sex-scenes than we would be to similar scenes in feature films. This should enable us to keep out the more extravagant exploitation."³²² This decision, prompted by the Fanceys submission, enabled the BBFC to consider and eventually certificate films like *Language of Love* (*Ur kärlekens språk*, 1969, Torgny Wickman, Sweden: Swedish Filmproduction Investment). There was no clear definition of what exactly "extravagant exploitation" could mean, an ambiguity that would later prove problematic.

The Swedish National Board of Film Censors had similar reservations when *Language of Love* was first submitted in 1969, seeking expert advice as to whether showing the film at cinemas "could entail any risks to mental hygiene." (Björklund, 2012: 183) The film raised concerns coming two years before the legalisation of pornography in Sweden in 1971. The censors debated the necessity of a long scene of female masturbation and an anatomical split-screen scene of heterosexual intercourse, illustrating the difficulty in pinpointing exactly where sex education tips over into pornography. Ultimately released uncut, and deemed suitable for anyone aged over fifteen, *Language of Love* became the first legally-released, theatrically screened film in Sweden to feature hardcore images. (ibid.) At that time the classification system in Sweden consisted of four categories: "Red" meaning suitable for all including small children, "Green" for audiences over eleven, "Yellow" for audiences over fifteen, and "White" for films which were banned. The age limit for the "Yellow" certificate, coupled with the assumption that "no child can be harmed mentally by seeing a naked body," provides further evidence as to why Swedish society was deemed to be sexually liberated by the more censorial British, and why a Swedish angle was consistently exploited by distributors and exhibitors keen to push their sex films on the public. (Svensson, 1965: 47)

³²¹ BBFC Archive, *Wonder of Love* file, John Trevelyan's written account of the meeting held on 20 January 1969.

³²² BBFC Archive, *Wonder of Love* file, letter from John Trevelyan to those who attended the screening, 21 January 1969.

Producer Inge Ivarson chose an English name for his production company – Swedish Filmproduction Investment – to increase their potential for international distribution. Torgny Wickman had previously directed some straight dramas in the 1950s and early 1960s, but the success of *Language of Love* saw him reinvent himself as a sex film specialist. This film was seen in Sweden by 1,128,000 people in Sweden: a staggering figure for a country with a population of only approximately 8 million. (Björklund, 2012: 154)

In tandem with the documentaries Wickman made several sex dramas and comedies, most famously *Anita: Swedish Nymphet* (1973, Sweden/ France: Swedish Film Production/ Alpha Film) with Christina Lindberg (distributed in the UK in 1974 by Michael Green Ltd (Exclusives). In total Wickman made five feature-length sex education films in Sweden: ³²³

Language of Love (Ur kärlekens språk, 1969)

More About the Language of Love (Mera ur Kärlekens språk, 1970)

XYZ of Love (Kärlekens XYZ, 1971, Sweden: Swedish Filmproduction Investment AB, not distributed in the UK)

Love-Play: That's How We Do It... (Kärlek - så gör vi. Brev till Inge och Sten, ³²⁴1972, Sweden: Inge Ivarson Filmproductions, not distributed in the UK until 2009)³²⁵

Det bästa ur Kärlekens språk-filmerna (1973, Sweden: Swedish Filmproduction Investment AB, a best-of compilation which does not appear to have been distributed outside of Sweden)³²⁶

The films were made in collaboration with Danish expert therapists Inge and Sten Hegeler, who became familiar names in the UK from 1970 following the successful

³²³ Footage from these films was also used to make short films for schools and a short film called *Sweden is Love*, created specifically for the international market. A Danish film called *Inge og Sten spØr (Inge and Sten Ask the Questions, 1971, Torgny Wickman)* was also cut together using footage from *More About the Language of Love*. (Björklund, 2012: 154-155)

³²⁴ A direct translation is “Love Games – so do we. Letters to Inge and Sten”

³²⁵ Although a film called *Swedish Love Play* was distributed in 1970 in the UK by Crispin Films, but this appears to be an exploitative title for the drama *Carmilla* (1968, Claes Fellbom, Sweden).

³²⁶ Original Swedish release dates taken from The Swedish Film Database <http://www.sfi.se/en-GB/Swedish-film-database/> accessed 15th September 2016

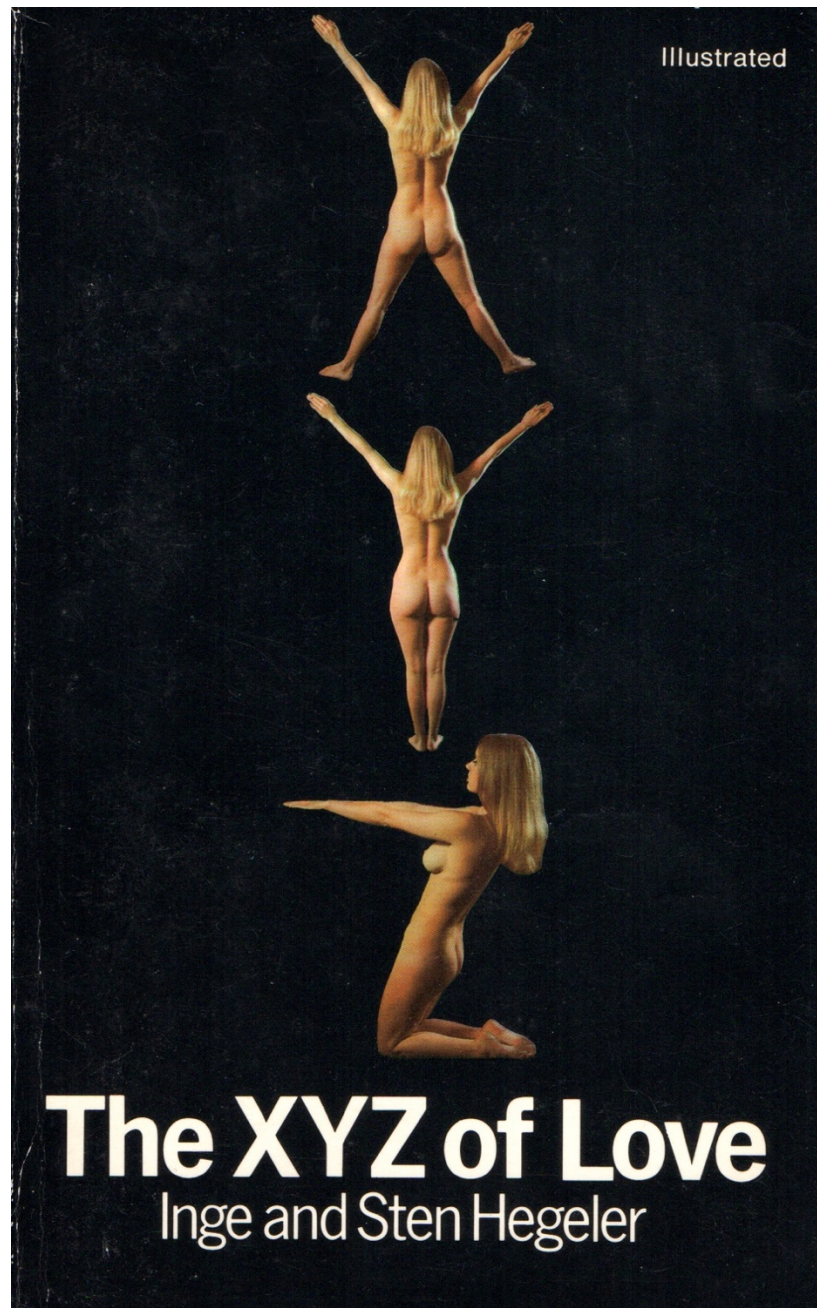


Fig. 27: 1981 English language edition of *The XYZ of Love*, first published in 1970.
St Albans: Granada Publishing

publication of their book *The XYZ of Love*, which remained in print until at least 1981 and provides answers to hundreds of questions on a range of sexual topics. (fig. 27) Initially advertised as the film that “Says it and Shows it all!”³²⁷ *Language of Love* had a successful, trouble-free first run in London cinemas, despite first being refused a BBFC certificate. Awarded an ‘X’ from the GLC, it was an opportunity for audiences to see explicit sexual imagery in the context of an educational framework. *Language of Love* was shot simultaneously in both Swedish and English,³²⁸ which seems an interesting decision given that it was ostensibly made to be used as an educational tool in Sweden, and suggests that the filmmakers had one eye on exploiting distribution opportunities abroad. In a letter to John Trevelyan in 1970 Ove Wallius of Swedish Filmproduction Investment explained that:

We are perfectly aware of the censor problem all our foreign customers have and we are trying to solve this problem by making our films in two versions. This may seem strange to you but you can be absolutely sure that even the “hot” version will not be dirty. It is, as you say, only a question of your country’s view of morality. Our directors want to be free to show life as it is and this perhaps shocks people in countries where they are not familiar with this kind of freedom. Therefore in order to save important markets we have to do some scenes in a “cooler” version but still make them as artistic as possible.³²⁹

It is not clear from the archival material what scenes they shot in a ‘cooler version’ and whether there remained differences between what was shown in Sweden and what was included in the print shown in the United Kingdom. Wallius stresses the artistry of these films, and attempts to play down any suggestion that their films are in any way “dirty,” although by bringing up the word in the first place, his protestation could have the opposite effect and actually confirm the suspicions of the reader. Bolstering Trevelyan’s reputation as a man who was willing to work with and to try to understand filmmakers’ intentions, he arranged to stay in Stockholm for a week in order to meet with Wallius and some of the directors working with them.

³²⁷ The tagline from the Darville Organisation quad poster for *Language of Love*, London Metropolitan Archives. The council did not approve this tagline and a new poster was issued.

³²⁸ According to the research of Elisabet Björkland (2012).

³²⁹ BBFC Archive, *Language of Love* file, letter to John Trevelyan from Ove Wallius, 9 February 1970.

Despite being willing to accept sex education films in principle, and one examiner feeling that *Language of Love* was “a very good film of its kind – complete sincerity – helpful to many people. Always puts emphasis on love not sex,”³³⁰ the BBFC decided to leave it to individual Local Authorities to decide on the suitability of the film for public cinemas. So regardless of the fact that John Trevelyan thought it a “sincere film which was made with the best of intentions,”³³¹ he effectively passed the buck, being unwilling to court the controversy that he knew would undoubtedly erupt should it receive an ‘X’ from them. He even admitted that the film “is obviously sincere, and the doctors talk a good deal of sense; indeed I think it would be helpful to a number of people.”³³² This must have been frustrating for the original distributor Peter Darville, who would then have to go through the rigmarole of submitting the film to each individual authority. Trevelyan attempted to justify this fudged position in a letter to one such local authority a year later:

Perhaps the time will come when we can gauge the attitudes of licensing authorities more accurately than we can at present; if so we can take firm decisions here. Since this Board is an independent organisation which in fact acts as an agent for licensing authorities it is obviously important for the Board to maintain the confidence of these authorities. If we passed films here and found that a large number of authorities objected to them we would obviously be putting ourselves in a very difficult position.”³³³

The GLC passed *Language of Love* in late 1970 with an ‘X’ certificate once some brief close-ups “from the sequence towards the end of the film which depicts night clubs, ‘strippers’, pornographic bookshops, mini-skirted girls, etc. in rapid succession,”³³⁴ were removed.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that *Language of Love* was reaching its intended audience. In his memoirs John Trevelyan acknowledged, “One elderly man told me that if he had seen this film twenty years ago his marriage and his life would have been much happier,”

³³⁰ BBFC Archive, *Language of Love* file

³³¹ London Metropolitan Archives, *Language of Love* file, letter from John Trevelyan to E.W. Newberry of the GLC Licensing department, 18 November, 1970.

³³² *ibid.*

³³³ BBFC Archive, *Language of Love* file, letter to Cambridge Council from John Trevelyan, 17 March 1971.

³³⁴ BBFC Archive, *Language of Love* file, letter to the BBFC from the GLC, 21 December 1970.

before going on to say, “Having had to see all these films, I must be the most sexually educated man in Britain!” (Trevelyan, 1973: 120)

In February 1971, however, critical response was mixed. Marjorie Bilbow described it as “not pornographic: but it could be accused of being subjectively slanted to flatter the male ego and to that limited extent learning towards sexploitation,” expecting the film to “attract big audiences both as a peepshow and as a highly informative treatise that should calm a lot of fears.”³³⁵ Another felt “it is *so* serious, *so* medically detailed, *so* honest, that the commercial cinema hardly seems the right place for it,” (emphasis in original) before highlighting that “the lovers are all very nice to look at: somehow this makes the whole thing a lot easier than it might otherwise have been.”³³⁶

Ove Wallius at Swedish Filmproduction Investment continued to correspond with John Trevelyan, complaining about the British distributor Peter Darville and begging for the BBFC to change their viewpoint and award a nationwide ‘X’ certificate. In one reply Trevelyan points out that:

As you may possibly know there has been a great deal of publicity recently in the British press on the subjects of pornography and sex-education. This was inspired first by a Debate in the House of Lords, and, at the same time, by a sex-education film for schools to which much objection was made. In these circumstances it would be extremely unwise for us to do anything more about this film at present. I am sure you will understand.³³⁷

Trevelyan seemed concerned to avoid adverse publicity. The BBFC viewed themselves as a form of buffer between the film industry and the public, or the government. In some instances, this meant making decisions in order to protect the industry from itself, which seems to be the case here. Trevelyan appeared to be willing to hold off on a certificate despite his own feelings toward this specific case, but with a purview of the larger political constellations. Approaching his 1971 retirement, he perhaps wanted to avoid becoming embroiled in one last public scandal.

³³⁵ *Today's Cinema*, 5 February, 1971, p. 9.

³³⁶ F. Maurice Speed, *What's On In London*, date unknown, p.11

³³⁷ BBFC Archive, *Language of Love* file, letter to Swedish Filmproduction Investment from John Trevelyan, 13 May 1971.

By the summer of 1971 distribution had passed to Grand National Film Distributors, owing to Peter Darville's financial problems, and the BBFC were ready to reconsider their position, given the fact that many Local Authorities had passed the film with little trouble. One BBFC examiner, a former military man, was duly dispatched to the Jacey on Charing Cross Road to watch *Language of Love*, where "the audience was typical of that area, consisting completely of males." He observed dryly that there was "a rather unnatural silence during some of the more sexually specific episodes."³³⁸ What is particularly fascinating is his account of a second visit to see the film, this time at a "good-class family type cinema" in Portsmouth. He attended an almost full house on a Saturday evening, consisting mainly of a mixed younger audience:

They obviously appeared to enjoy the film. There was no snide laughter or remarks, but some healthy laughter was raised by the thought of 'making love in boots,' the man's large moustache during the love-making and a near hysterical shout from the women during the sequence when a vibrator is set in motion.³³⁹

The reference to "making love in boots" here suggests another occasion when a scene was added to the film that did not exist in the original. There is no such scene in *Language of Love*, but there is in the fourth film in the series, *Love Play: That's How We Do It*, where a sequence of a young couple standing in the shower wearing rubber boots and raincoats is featured. It is possible that this was spliced in to the print of *Language of Love*, again to fill out the running time when something else had been removed. The examiner attended the film with friends, who found it interesting and were not shocked. Having seen *Language of Love* at a "good-class cinema" he concluded that "sex instructional films made with integrity can be passed for viewing under a Board certificate."³⁴⁰ Three years later, another visit to the Jacey on the Charing Cross Road by an authority figure would have a very different outcome.

Despite the examiner's conclusions, by March 1973 the BBFC had still not issued the certificate, despite 127 Local Authorities around the country having passed the film, out of the 169 it was submitted to.³⁴¹ After yet more negotiation between the distributor and

³³⁸ BBFC Archive, *Language of Love* file, Examiner's report, 17 June 1971

³³⁹ *ibid.*

³⁴⁰ *ibid.*

³⁴¹ *ibid.* Figures taken from a letter to Stephen Murphy from Ronald Wilson at Grand National Film Distributors, 8 March 1973.

Stephen Murphy, an 'X' certificate was finally issued on 11th July 1973. This decision is given some perspective when one considered the statistics for this year: In total the BBFC handled 646 titles in 1973. 249 titles, or 49% of all films submitted (excluding documentaries) were awarded an 'X' certificate.³⁴² This is a good indication of early 1970s British cinemas' strong focus on adult audiences. Grand National's reaction to the certificate, furthermore, demonstrates the political climate and high stakes of the certification process at that time:

I would like to thank you for all your efforts with regard to this difficult matter even though, as you are well aware, I have never agreed with your viewpoint. I am already beginning to miss our weekly arguments although I imagine it will not be too long before we are involved in a similar situation regarding MORE ABOUT THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE which will be submitting to your Board in the not too distant future.³⁴³

More About the Language of Love was the sequel to *Language of Love* (1969), also featuring sex therapists and experts Maj-Brith Bergström-Walan and husband and wife team Inge and Sten Hegeler. In the film these experts discuss various sex-related problems and issues including venereal disease, sex education, impotence, the sex lives of the handicapped and homosexuality. These discussions are interspersed with documentary footage and depictions of sex, including close-ups of diseased genitalia and blind children being encouraged to feel the sexual organs of both male and female models. The section that would push the film into potentially obscene territory was the final few minutes, where a happy young couple enjoy sex together, free from the problems and hang-ups discussed in the preceding eighty minutes. A narration justifies the scene's inclusion by stating that "We focus on two things: One is tolerance for everything human, every variation, every form, every dialect of the language of love. The other thing is that 'tenderness' is the most important word in this language."

In July 1974 two plain-clothed policemen, Chief Inspector Smith and Police Sergeant Collins entered the Jacey cinema on Charing Cross Road, where *More About the Language of Love* had already been playing to audiences five times a day for six weeks. According to C.I. Smith "The cinema has a seedy air entirely in keeping with its clientele

³⁴² BBFC Archive, *Language of Love* file, statistical report

³⁴³ Ibid. Letter from Ronald Wilson to Stephen Murphy, 13 July 1973.

and the films they come to watch.”³⁴⁴ The entire front of the cinema was covered in a poster of the word “Sweden”, and the pillars were wrapped in the words “*More About the Language of Love*.” More posters were on display in the lobby, featuring claims that the film “visually shows the intimacies of love,” and that it is “sex education in the Swedish manner; frank, forthright and explicit.” Another poster exclaimed: “New from Sweden... Fully explains sex techniques for the handicapped... If you’ve seen *The Language of Love* you’ll want to see *More About the Language of Love*.”³⁴⁵

After buying their tickets, priced 99p each, the two policemen entered the auditorium where the usherette asked “Why do you want to see this film? It’s sex, sex, sex all the time.” “Is that so?” C.I. Smith asked. “She even puts it in her mouth,” was the response.³⁴⁶ They took their seats in the balcony of the cinema, the auditorium of which could accommodate up to 500 people. They found the audience mostly consisted of men alone or in groups, although there were a few couples. There were even tourists, “including Indians and Chinese.”³⁴⁷ After a short Castrol-sponsored film about motor racing *More About the Language of Love* began, and Chief Inspector Smith and Sergeant Collins sat through the entire screening, noting that the audience of around 250 were talking amongst themselves during the medical discussions. When however, “sexual activity was shown, there was utter silence,” as the audience viewed in “rapt attention.” C.I. Smith completed his detailed report with his view that the film was “criminally obscene.”³⁴⁸

More About the Language of Love had first been submitted to the British Board of Film Censors on 24th October 1972. Stephen Murphy, secretary of the Board, explained, “The Board declined to issue a certificate. The film was re-submitted in a reduced version on the 18th of December, 1973 and the Board continued to decline certification.”³⁴⁹ Unfortunately, the original documentation relating to the film has been lost from the BBFC archives,³⁵⁰ but their objections were summarised later by Enid Wistrich, then head

³⁴⁴ National Archives, DPP/2/5458. C.I. Smith witness statement, 26 July 1974

³⁴⁵ *ibid.*

³⁴⁶ *ibid.*

³⁴⁷ *ibid.*

³⁴⁸ *ibid.* The film was shown in an English dubbed version which sadly no longer exists, the only version now commercially available being in Swedish.

³⁴⁹ *ibid.* Stephen Murphy witness statement, 10 December 1974.

³⁵⁰ Although there are references to the film and the legal case in the documentation for *Language of Love*.

of the GLC Film Viewing Board, as being “not to the explicit nature of the final sequence but ranged vaguely around a feeling [Stephen Murphy] evidently had that some sequences were exploitative rather than educational in intent, meaning that he felt that they were included for sexual stimulation rather than instruction.” (Wistrich, 1978: 34-35) A few years later, in a letter to a Conservative MP working on a bill related to film censorship, James Ferman, who later became Secretary of the BBFC, described his own position:

[*Language of Love*] is, in fact, a quite moral one, since it is concerned primarily to encourage happy marriages and its message is a plea for tenderness in sexual relationships and for greater understanding by men of the needs of women... I have far less sympathy for the “MORE ABOUT” film, since its motives seem to me decidedly more prurient.³⁵¹

This concern was in line with that of the Swedish film censors when the film was submitted in 1970, where they expressed fears that “the concept of sex education would be used increasingly as a cover for the spread of purely pornographic cinematic pictures, whose ability to brutalize and vulgarize the view of love life for young and immature cinema-goers cannot be underestimated.” (quoted in Björklund, 2012: 190) The filmmakers had appealed to requests for cuts to sequences of a pornographic film shoot and a Danish sex club. Despite the censors concerns the Swedish government upheld the appeal and the sequences were allowed, with only a sequence of drug taking removed and replaced with a scene about transvestites. (ibid.)

Despite their name containing the word “censor”, one of the purposes of the BBFC was to help film companies avoid prosecution charges; by rejecting a film they felt could be charged with obscenity they were actually protecting the film industry. Identifying an offending film was no easy task, and came down to this basic summary, that:

No film shall be exhibited at a licensed cinema which is likely to encourage or incite to crime, lead to disorder or to stir up hatred against any section of the public in Great Britain on grounds of colour, race, ethnic or national origins or the effect of which, if taken as a whole, is such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely to see it. (Wistrich, 1978: 34)

³⁵¹ BBFC Archive, *Language of Love* file, letter from James Ferman to Mark Carlisle Esq MP, 1 July 1977.

As was common practice amongst distributors in London, if a film was refused a certificate by the BBFC it was submitted for a certificate to the GLC for consideration. Owing to the peculiar nature of film censorship in Britain – both then and now - it is the local councils who have the last word on what can be seen in cinemas, and as such the local authority is at liberty to issue certifications of their own if they disagree with the decisions of the BBFC. The GLC were the largest and most significant local authority regarding film in the UK, as there were 234 licensed cinemas under their jurisdiction at this time, which was approximately one seventh of the total number of cinemas in Britain (Wistrich, 1978: 19) Therefore distributors could use them to circumvent the decisions of the BBFC, and often other local authorities would follow their lead, issuing certificates of their own. Occasionally this would cause the BBFC to reverse an original decision and supply a certificate to a previously rejected film. This course to certification was one which *Language of Love* had navigated a year earlier.

The Chairman of the GLC Film Viewing Board – the body responsibly for considering films and granting certificates, was the aforementioned Labour councillor Enid Wistrich, who had been appointed in 1973. As such she was seen as Britain's first female chief film censor. One of her first actions as Chairman had been to undertake a study as to whether film censorship was even necessary, as she felt that cinema ought to be on the same footing as literature and the theatre, where pre-censorship had been abolished in the 1960s.

A meeting of the Film Viewing Board was held on the 20th March 1974 to discuss *More About the Language of Love*, following a screening. Opinions were divided, as might have been expected. Similar to debates surrounding the film in Sweden, the educational nature of the film was also questioned. Perhaps revealing the left-wing nature of the GLC at the time, one member suggested that the film be given an 'AA' certificate, provided a full description of the film was accompanying each screening. This suggestion was seconded by a Labour member of the Board. Another member countered this by saying the film was "not pretty", and they did not want fourteen-year-olds seeing such things, and another said it would be dangerous for children of fourteen to see without adult guidance. Some felt the film needed to be seen in context, alongside the first film, which had been popular with audiences, despite being boring in parts. One member felt that the film made

treatment of V.D. seem too easy, and was therefore misleading. Positive points were raised however, including the fact that the theme of impotence was handled well.

The film's liberal values regarding homosexuality were also discussed. One member felt that the issue of female lesbianism was disproportionately exaggerated. This led to worries about how this film could actually corrupt members of the audience by developing a girl's latent homosexual instincts. The final scene featuring oral sex was deemed beyond any reasonable limit, and some felt that psychologists have pointed out that family nudity may create problems, in reference to the scenes in the film where families bathe together. The question of who the audience might be for such a film was raised, with one member pointing out that as a documentary it was well made, but the people who need to see a film like this are unlikely to want to watch it at a public cinema. It was suggested that doctors might choose to see it. Whilst not doubting its merits as an educational film for teenagers, Enid Wistrich felt awarding an 'AA' would have been seen as outrageous by many. A vote was taken initially as to whether they ought to grant *More About the Language of Love* an 'AA' certificate, but this vote was split so they voted again as to the awarding of an 'X'. Six were for an 'X', and four were against. One member asked that his dissent should be recorded in the minutes. Another was worried that the council "will get clobbered" for this decision, and it was agreed that they ought to be ready to defend this decision. At no point did they seem to realise just how controversial this decision would prove to be, and the impact it could have on film censorship and the British film industry.³⁵² A letter was sent to A.A. Reid at Grand National Distributors to confirm the certificate, stipulating that each print of *More About the Language of Love* had to begin with this notice:

GREATER LONDON COUNCIL
'MORE ABOUT THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE'
has been passed by the
Greater London Council
As suitable only for exhibition to adults
i.e. persons of 18 and over
X (London)³⁵³

³⁵² Paraphrased from the minutes held in the London Metropolitan Archives, *More About the Language of Love* file, 20 March 1974.

³⁵³ *ibid.*

Any publicity material for the film, including the trailer, front-of-house and newspaper notices also required prior approval. Exercising this prerogative, the GLC had Darville Associates change the wording on their newspaper advert from “Nothing like it on any London screen” to either “A sex education film that explains techniques frankly and fully,” or “The most explicit sex education film – explains frankly and fully the techniques of love.” They were also to substitute the word “controversial” with “essential” or “great.”³⁵⁴

The GLC had been under a lot of criticism for passing films that had been rejected, that they were opening the floodgates to “great tides of filth and porn” (Wistrich, 1978: p.38), but this was something Enid Wistrich doubted. She pointed out in her memoirs that between May 1973 and October 1974 only twenty films were given an ‘X’ certificate, and of those only twelve had been screened publicly by the end of 1975. As she explained, “Patrons are not so enthusiastic about poorly made sexploitation films and Kung Fu sagas as the moralist fear. Who has ever seen a queue outside a Soho sex film cinema?” (ibid.)

Despite the ‘X’ certificate, which ought to have acted as a protection for the Jacey cinema and all those concerned, Raymond Blackburn, a disgraced former-MP-turned-moralist-campaigner, took on the Swedish film as a personal crusade. In July 1974 he twice visited the Jacey cinema on Charing Cross Road to see *More About the Language of Love*; once on his own and again with his friend and fellow moralist Lord Longford, campaigner for the Nationwide Festival of Light, which were a movement actively fighting the ‘permissive society.’ Blackburn’s feelings towards this sort of film were clear:

“No man is in fact incorruptible... If a film were to influence only two or three persons to become dangerous sexual perverts, the consequences for innocent persons and perhaps young persons contaminated as a result might be unthinkable.”³⁵⁵

³⁵⁴ ibid. Letter to Simon de Mille at United Kingdom Advertising from the GLC Chief Officer, 24 March 1971.

³⁵⁵ National Archives, DPP/2/5458. Letter from Raymond Blackburn to the police, 23 July 1974.

Although freely partaking of the ‘media harm’ discourse, he himself felt incorruptible, admitting, “I have seen blue films in Amsterdam. Some of the sequences in this film would form part of such blue films.”³⁵⁶

Although he had not accompanied Lord Longford on his fact-finding trip to Copenhagen in August 1971 to “sample the sexual entertainments in this totally liberated city,” (Trevelyan, 1973: 144) Raymond Blackburn had clearly followed Lord Longford’s example in travelling overseas to sample European pornography.³⁵⁷ Gyles Brandreth, then a junior member of the Longford Commission, wrote an account of the Copenhagen visit for women’s magazine *Nova*, describing that “Lord L’s sole reaction is disgust, no more, no less. The rest of us aren’t sure that disgust is a very useful reaction. This is where two very different outlooks begin to emerge. He sees the problem in black and white, while I think the rest of us can detect a certain amount of shading.”³⁵⁸ Longford described to him one late-night visit to a sex club, in shocked terms: “We were placed in the front row and, almost as soon as we arrived, a naked girl approached me with a whip. She used the whip to caress the top of my head and then looped it around my neck... I had to get out and I did. Don’t think me faint-hearted, Gyles. I had seen enough for science and more than enough for enjoyment.” (Brandreth, 2009: 245)

Lord Longford’s preoccupation with pornography was an enduring part of his political life. He delivered a long speech in the House of Lords in 1971 entitled “Pornography in Britain,” where he raised his concerns: “Pornography, in my conviction, has increased, is increasing and ought to be diminished. That is my profound conviction.”³⁵⁹ He singled out *Language of Love* when raising the problems of controlling censorship:

For example, there is a film showing in London now, and I understand it is showing elsewhere, called *The Language of Love* (sic), which displays the full sex act explicitly.

³⁵⁶ *ibid.*

³⁵⁷ Gyles Brandreth confirmed to me by email that Raymond Blackburn had not been part of the commission visit to Copenhagen, gylesbrandreth@gmail.com, 24 February, 2017.

³⁵⁸ “A Secret Diary on Lord’s Longford’s Committee,” Gyles Brandreth, *Nova*, January 1972, as quoted in Trevelyan, 1973: 145.

³⁵⁹ “Pornography in Britain,” 21st April 1971, Lord Longford to the House of Lords, reported in Hansard:

http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1971/apr/21/pornography-in-britain#S5LV0317P0_19710421_HOL_33, accessed 4 October 2016

A Censorship Board would still place a ban on that kind of thing, and in fact the Board did not give a licence to *The Language of Love* (sic); it was refused a licence by the Film Censorship Board but granted one by the G.L.C. So when we are trying to find out who are the people who have allowed all this kind of thing to appear on the screen or elsewhere, we must carry out our inquiry quite fully. It may be we have to blame the Government, the state of the law, the censor, or the G.L.C. or other local authorities. But at any rate, let us try to find who are responsible for this situation in which we find ourselves.³⁶⁰

Border Films considered using extracts from the press reports of this speech in publicity materials for the cinemas it was currently screening in, and contacted the GLC, who advised against it.³⁶¹

The Longford Commission published its report in September 1972 (fig. 28) and it received a lot of press attention, becoming a best-seller in the process. John Trevelyan described the book as “a curious document which in its 500 pages ranged from prejudiced subjective judgements unsupported by evidence to an objective and scholarly appendix by an expert psychologist.” (Trevelyan, 1973: 145) This final section “effectively demolishes the whole of the preceding report showing that there is very little evidence at all as to the effects of pornography... in the final analysis, the Longford report on pornography is no more than an essay in dogmatism.” (Bernard Levin, *The Observer*, as quoted in Trevelyan, *ibid.*) The younger members of the commission felt the same way, seeing Lord Longford’s research and work for what it was: a moral crusade rather than an objective enquiry. The press had already begun reporting of a split in the commission when they returned from their fact-finding visit to Copenhagen the year before. Gyles Brandreth told *The Times*, “I believe that there is something to be said for introducing in Britain, perhaps not for some years and with far stricter application of the law than in Denmark, the present Danish pornography laws.”³⁶² Longford’s response to this was to state that not all Danish experts agreed that these laws had resulted in a fall in the number of reported sex crimes. In *More About the Language of Love* itself, expert Sten Hegeler claims that sex crimes in Denmark fell by 20-30% since pornography was legalised.

³⁶⁰ *ibid.*

³⁶¹ London Metropolitan Archives, *More About the Language of Love* file.

³⁶² “Lord Longford denies reports of ‘furious row,’” *The Times* (London, England) Friday August 27, 1971, p.1

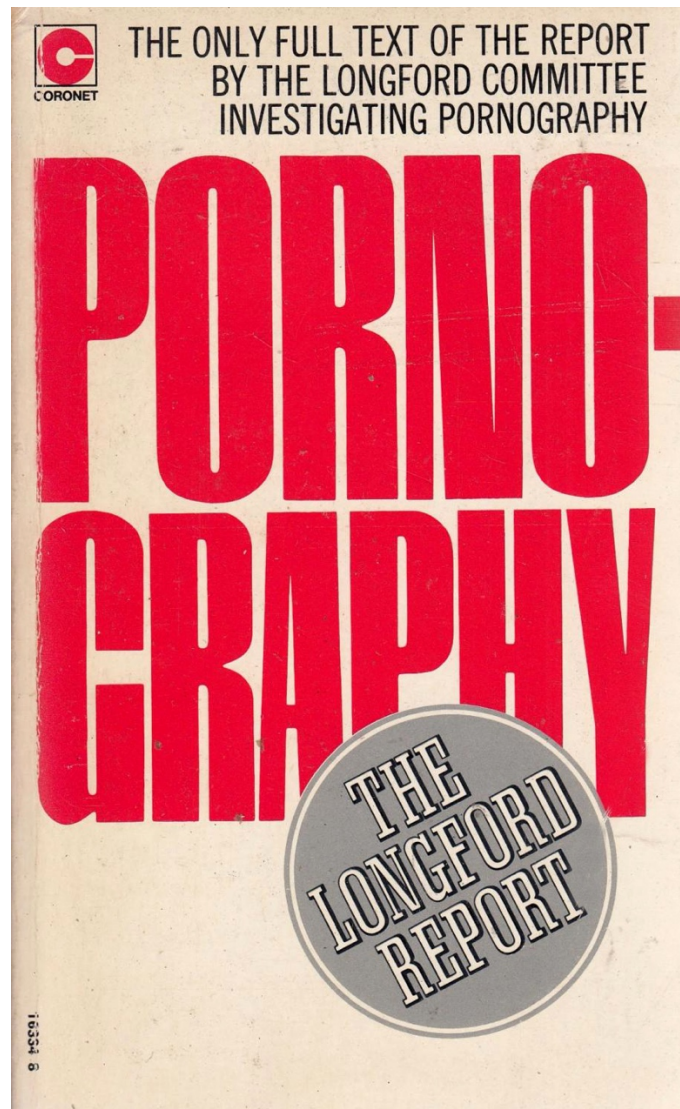


Fig. 28: *Pornography: The Longford Report*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1972

In addition, perhaps with his whip-themed experience in mind, Lord Longford stated:

“If people in Britain could actually see these live sex shows – particularly the ones involving participation of the audience – I am certain that they would think twice before allowing such extreme liberalization of the law.”³⁶³

Gyles Brandreth seemed to have some sympathy with this argument when he quipped, “I think the best cure for those with an urge for pornography is to see a live sex show. No one who has would want to see another.”³⁶⁴ Footage recorded at a live sex show in Copenhagen is included in *More About the Language of Love*, and the audience look extremely bored, potentially proving Brandreth’s point.

It was Raymond Blackburn’s complaint to the police in July 1975 which triggered the *More About the Language of Love* prosecution trial, with charges being made against three people or groups; Jacey (London) Ltd., who owned the cinema itself, Fancey Associates, who dealt with the programming and Lionel Parsons, the cinema manager. The distribution company, Grand National Ltd., who had originally submitted the film to the BBFC for certification, were not charged with any offence. On Saturday 10th August 1974, the print of *More About the Language of Love* was seized by C.I. Smith at the Jacey cinema on Charing Cross Road. After being informed by Lionel Parsons that the film was screened under instruction from Fancey Associates, who leased the cinema from Jacey, he travelled up to Birmingham to speak to George Cohen, manager of Jacey (London) Ltd. Cohen explained that he had a “gentleman’s agreement” with Fancey Associates – there was no formal contract. When asked if he had ever seen the film *More About the Language of Love*, Cohen replied he had not, but had been informed by an employee “that the ten minutes he had seen was degrading.”³⁶⁵

Three days later C.I. Smith visited Olive Negus-Fancey, manager of Fancey Associates and Border Films. Olive explained to the Inspector how this “gentleman’s agreement”, known in the business as four-walling, worked: “We pay to Jacey a guaranteed sum of

³⁶³ *ibid.*

³⁶⁴ “Divided views of Longford team,” *The Times* (London, England) Thursday Aug 26, 1971, p.4

³⁶⁵ National Archives, DPP/2/5458, Statement of Witness, 12 August 1974

money each week whether the film makes a profit or not and then they have a percentage over and above this.”³⁶⁶ This arrangement meant that Jacey had no control over what was shown, and Fancey either provided films from their own catalogue of titles or from other independent distributors. Olive admitted that she had not seen *More About the Language of Love* either, but did not feel that it was necessary given that the film had received an ‘X’ certificate from the GLC.

As the case against them was prepared, Raymond Blackburn attempted to provide further evidence in the form of medical expert testimony. Dr John Linklater of Essex, someone clearly sympathetic to the anti-pornography cause, was asked to contribute an analysis of the film in the form of a letter to the Director of Public Prosecutions. In his letter, he inadvertently reveals more about his own relationship with sex than he had most likely intended, and as such this letter provides useful and amusing insight into conservative British attitudes of that decade.

Dr Linklater takes issue with what he sees as misleading and dangerous depictions and discussions of sexuality. In the film two experts discuss lesbian relationships and say, “The homosexual act is more satisfying... a woman knows better how to excite a woman.” He writes that, “Having seen this, the vaguely discontented or frustrated man or woman might well break away and be tempted into perversion.” Continuing his obvious disagreement with the entire concept of homosexuality, he takes issue with the claim in the film that it is “Not an illness or anything like that. You can’t catch it.” He replies, “In fact it is an emotional disease and you can catch it, as is well known, especially in adolescence.” After several complaints about the lack of commentary on the value of chastity and a religious upbringing, he comes to the final section of the film. This scene was later described by the judge of this case in his closing statement as, “continuous, unbridled, uninhibited sexual congress including mutual oral sex with close-ups [and] intensely sustained anatomical detail.”

Dr Linklater explains:

The showing of long and skilfully carried out sexual intercourse is harmful. Expertise in the sexual field is deeply desired by most of us and achieved by very few...

³⁶⁶ *ibid.*

The vaguely discontented housewife on seeing the film will know exactly what she is missing and will have no chance of remedy without breaking up the home, while the husband who has become accustomed to the rather stodgy response of his plump, plum duff spouse will be sorely tempted to seek a livelier, more ardent partner.

One can only imagine what the response of Dr Linklater's own wife would be to this, or to his somewhat startling admission, post-screening:

At lunch shortly afterwards I found myself looking at a rather striking young blonde and placing her in my mind's eye in the position of the actress in the last scene where she performs fellatio with obvious zest – with me as her partner.

He closes his letter with the following statement:

If this film is not grossly obscene and primarily erotic, then nothing is and the concept of obscenity has no meaning.³⁶⁷

It appears that despite Raymond Blackburn's enthusiasm for Dr Linklater's "expert witness" testimony, this document was not referred to in court.

Regina vs Jacey (London) Ltd, Lionel Parsons and Fancey Associates Ltd was held at the Central Criminal Court between 2 – 5th June 1975, with the Hon. Gwyn Morris QC presiding. The jury consisted of nine men and three women. There were initially two charges, but the second, keeping a disorderly house was dropped. The remaining charge was that the defendants "did unlawfully and scandalously show to those members of the public who had paid for admission... a film entitled 'More About the Language of Love' which depicted a number of grossly indecent performances thereby outraging public decency."³⁶⁸ The defence lawyer felt the case was unfair from the beginning as the defendants had all acted within the law, in that the film had received a certificate from the licensing authority. If they were to be found guilty this case would have serious implications on the whole system of British film censorship. He also tried to appeal to a sense of local pride when he stated, "Film cannot outrage persons of London. We live in a plural society where minorities are tolerated and the film makes a contribution to public decency." Proving that something was indecent according to law was not going to be an

³⁶⁷ National Archives, DPP/2/5458. Written testimony from Dr. J.P.T. Linklater, 7 August 1974.

³⁶⁸ National Archives, DPP/2/5458, trial transcript, 2 – 5 June 1975

easy task. The Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, had recently admitted “the complete impossibility of giving any sensible definition of ‘indecent.’”³⁶⁹

The film was screened in full to the jury in the courtroom. Following the judge’s closing remarks, it took the jury just forty minutes to return a verdict of guilty.³⁷⁰ Judge Morris, who during his summing up of the case had clearly revealed his own distaste for the film, stated “I entirely agree with the jury’s verdict and thank them in the name of the public.”³⁷¹ Both Jacey and Fancey Associates were fined £500 each and the cinema manager Lionel Parsons was fined £50.

Despite the controversy, film censorship in Britain survived this case relatively unscathed. In his summation of the then current poor state of film legislation in Britain, Geoffrey Robertson, assistant QC on the *OZ* magazine trial in 1971, pointed out:

There is an urgent need to rationalise recent developments in film censorship. Either give the BBFC exclusive statutory responsibility for all films imported, made or screened in England, or else abolish it entirely, along with local viewing committees, Customs and common law offences and private prosecutions, and make all films subject to the Obscene Publications Act. Otherwise the smell of burning celluloid will soon be unbearably pungent.³⁷²

This was arguably a sensible suggestion which would have prevented further private prosecutions being made against the industry by campaigners like Mary Whitehouse and Raymond Blackburn, but no such legal move was made.³⁷³ This case could have triggered an overhaul of the system, particularly when a guilty verdict had confirmed to the BBFC that they were right to reject the film in the first place. The Obscene Publications Act did not apply to films until 1977, in part as a response to the recommendations of the Williams

³⁶⁹ *Hansard*, May 1974, as quoted in “Film Censorship Merry-Go-Round” Geoff Robertson, *New Statesman*, June 28, 1974, p.912

³⁷⁰ “Censor overruled on indecent film”, NICHOLAS DE JONGH, Arts Reporter, *The Guardian*, June 6, 1975, p. 1

³⁷¹ National Archives, DPP/2/5458, trial transcript, 2 – 5 June 1975

³⁷² “Film Censorship Merry-Go-Round” Geoff Robertson, *New Statesman*, June 28, 1974, p.914

³⁷³ Emboldened by the victory against *More About the Language of Love*, Raymond Blackburn went on to file for summonses against Stephen Murphy and Lord Harlech for “unlawfully and scandalously” allowing *Language of Love* to be seen by the general public. “Film censors to face private summonses,” Home Affairs Correspondent, *The Times* (London, England), 3 July 1975, p.3.

Report, otherwise known as “The Report of the Committee on Obscenity and Film Censorship (the Williams Committee).” (Lamberti, 2012: 99) In fact, during their research the Williams Committee watched *Language of Love* alongside other controversial titles which had either received a certificate, or those for which a certificate had been withheld, including *Pretty Baby* (1978, Louis Malle, US: Paramount Pictures) and *In the Realm of the Senses* (*Ai no korîda*, 1976, Nagisa Ôshima, Japan/ France: Argos Films, Oshima Productions, Shibata Organisation).³⁷⁴

The archival evidence is unclear as to why this case did not have legal implications regarding future film censorship: at the GLC following the case Enid Wistrich attempted to pass a bill abolishing film censorship for over 18s, which, following a long debate attended by Mary Whitehouse, amongst other high-profile campaigners, she lost at a count of forty-four votes for the motion and fifty against. It is worth noting that the number of women counsellors who voted for the abolition of film censorship was double that of male counsellors. As Wistrich observes, “clearly it was not women who felt the need to curb visual expressions of sexuality. ‘Would you like your wife/ daughter to see this film’ was it seemed an expression of the anxiety of men and not of their womenfolk.” (Wistrich, 1978: 73) Having lost the debate Wistrich resigned immediately from the Film Viewing Board. It was much to Mary Whitehouse’s chagrin that Britain’s first notable female film censor had been anti-censorship. Whitehouse had once written a letter to Lord Harlech, president of the BBFC, explaining that a woman ought to be considered for BBFC Secretary, “because of the sensitivity of women and the responsibility they carry for their children who are liable to see even X films.”³⁷⁵

The archival material related to this case reveals information that would otherwise be undocumented; most importantly, the eye-witness testimony from a film screening at the Jacey on Charing Cross Rd. For exploitation film historians, this level of detail is extremely rare. Also within the documentation are some clues that the film had already been altered, possibly by the distributor themselves, Grand National, prior to its

³⁷⁴ This must have been an early submission, as *Pretty Baby* was not formally submitted for certification until 1978, and finally received an ‘X’ certificate in 1979. *In the Realm of the Senses*, despite finding a champion in James Ferman, did not receive a BBFC certificate until 1991.

³⁷⁵ “Sex rated: DENNIS BARKER on Mrs Whitehouse’s latest, *The Guardian*, Mar 6, 1975

submission to the BBFC and GLC. The film appears to have had at least one scene removed as well as some added. The original Swedish release, *Mera ur kärlekens språk*, featured a scene of two homosexual men making love in a small flat. The film was written about in great detail by the many participants of this case and it seems unlikely that all of them would forget to mention this, as it would still have been controversial. Similarly, there is footage in the original featuring a Danish sex club, complete with audience participation, which also seemed to be missing in this 1974 British print.

In his expert statement Dr Linklater describes an “unhealthy” scene featuring primitive jungle dancing complete with a mock witch doctor, ostrich and people with painted skin, with an “erotic sexuality [which] tended to dredge up ancient, atavistic memories of long forgotten ferocity and lust.”³⁷⁶ No one else refers to this scene. Given that there was only one print of this film being shown in one cinema, it seems odd that he was the only person who noticed it. Either way, if this scene did exist in the *More About the Language of Love* he saw, it was most likely inserted by the distributor from another film in their possession, perhaps to fill the running time following the removal of the scene mentioned earlier. This was common practice amongst exploitation filmmakers, where films often “eschewed the ‘style’ of the classical Hollywood cinema (continuity editing, spatial and temporal coherence, etc.) and the rhetorical or categorical logic of most documentaries.” (Schaefer, 1999: 5) Spectacle was always at the expense of any other sensibility.

Another indication of distributor-editing is a scene referred to by Stephen Murphy in his letter to Mr. W. Tofts, the current Director-general at the GLC Entertainment Licensing Section, regarding the film. He mentions that *Language of Love* was initially rejected by them, but after the film was passed by many councils including the GLC they reconsidered their decision and awarded it a certificate. Regarding this sequel however;

With the best will in the world we could see little educational purpose in “MORE ABOUT THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE”. It is probably true that many people do not know the function of the bidet; nevertheless, we felt that the treatment of this,

³⁷⁶ National Archives, DPP/2/5458. Written testimony from Dr. J.P.T. Linklater, 7 August 1974.

as of several other incidents in the film, became exploitative. We have never certificated Lesbian cunnilingus. We accept that blind children may need to be instructed by touch, but nevertheless felt that this sequence, as with the sequence about crippled couples, fell into the area of specialised education and could hardly be justified in the public cinema. In the body colouring sequence there is material that looks to us like the exploitation of children. In short, we do not feel that this film can be justified in terms of sex education.³⁷⁷ (fig. 29)

This reference to a “body colouring sequence” is puzzling. No such scene exists in current versions of *More About the Language of Love*, and is not described in any witness statements, so could have been edited in from elsewhere later on. There is a possibility that the scene was taken from the fourth film in the series, *Love-Play: That's How We Do It...*, which as previously noted was produced in 1972 but did not receive UK distribution. A scene of naked men painting naked women at a party exists in this film, but there are no children to be seen anywhere. Also, no reference is made to a “body colouring sequence” by Chief Inspector John Smith in his otherwise very detailed report of the film when he viewed it on the 25th July 1974. It may come from the third film in the series, *XYZ of Love*, which again received no UK distribution, as it does feature a scene from a Danish summer camp where the revelers paint each other whilst children play in the background.

An answer may possibly be found in the further information provided in a February 1983 BBFC censorship report for the film. By then retitled *Language of Love 2*, it was resubmitted by Peter Darville Associates for another cinematic release. In total 2 minutes and 55 seconds were requested to be removed, which appears to be more than was requested on its original release:

³⁷⁷ London Metropolitan Archives, *More About the Language of Love* file, letter from Stephen Murphy 28 January 1974.



Fig. 29: Blind children touch “remarkably patient nude models.” Promotional image and quotation taken from a four-page spread on *More About the Language of Love* in the “Scandinavian sex film edition” of adult magazine *Cinema X*, Vol 6 #11, Issue #71, 1974, London: Top Sellers Ltd., p. 25 (Used with the permission of Neil Jackson)

Reel 1	Remove commentary assurance that gonorrhea is invariably easy to cure.
Reel 2	Reduce close-up washing vulva in bidet to establishing shot only. In school for blind children, remove all sight of boy handling woman's breast and pubic area and of girl handling man's penis.
Reel 3	Remove end of scene in which little girl is decorated with crayon to delete sight of it colouring between her pubic cleft (To confirm with Protection of Children Act 1978)
Reel 4	Reduce demonstration of squeeze technique to only one close shot of woman squeezing erect penis to prevent premature ejaculation.
Reel 5	In demonstration of technique to overcome female frigidity, remove close shot of man's fingers on clitoris. ³⁷⁸

This reference to the Protection of Children Act 1978 on that excision from reel 3 could be why the scene existed in the 1974 version of *More About the Language of Love*, but has since been removed from existing available copies of the film. Although a seemingly minor detail, attempting to trace the source of this missing scene demonstrates the sometimes-slippery nature of exploitation film distribution, where films could be snipped and re-edited to suit the needs of the distributor or local screening without recourse to the original filmmakers themselves.

The playing of Swedish sex education documentaries in British cinemas did not herald a flood of pornography as was feared. Despite being available in private cinema clubs and on 8mm loops available from mail order pornographers like John Lindsay, hardcore pornography remained illegal in the UK until 2000, despite the introduction of the 'R18' certificate in 1982 which allowed for more explicit material to be sold in licenced sex shops. (Lamberti, 2012: 147) The introduction of VHS in the 1980s would go on to have a more significant and far-reaching impact on the public and on the policies of the BBFC than Swedish sex education ever did.

As I have demonstrated, issues of sexual repression and representation in the public sphere are linked to the politics and socio-economic strictures of the period. Along with the desire of filmmakers, distributors and exhibitors to push boundaries, for both financial and artistic reasons, these were significant factors in creating a space for public debate.

³⁷⁸ BBFC Archive, *Language of Love* file

The popularity of the films under discussion in this chapter demonstrates that audiences willingly consume entertainment of a sexual nature, and the British film industry was only too happy to provide it within the strictures of UK law, despite the occasional lack of clarity. The marketing of European adult dramas and comedies of the late 1950s and early 1960s as exploitation films in the UK provided the origins, and the need for more explicit, yet still legal, material. Explicit sex in a dramatic production, as opposed to a documentary, was still very rare, as when stripped of its educational value it could have been considered pornography and be liable to prosecution. Exceptions were made for films deemed to have artistic worth, such as the aforementioned *W.R. - Mysteries of the Organism*. Nudity however became more and more acceptable throughout the 1970s. *Emmanuelle* was one of the first glossy erotic films to be marketed towards couples, and women in particular, enabling sexploitation to break through to mainstream audiences. It is appropriate that it would be the Fanceys, distributors with a long history of importing European sexploitation, rather than one of the majors jumping on the sex film ‘bandwagon,’ who brought *Emmanuelle* to the UK. Whilst not quite ushering in an era of ‘porno-chic’ as was the case with *Deep Throat* (1972, Gerard Damiano USA: Gerard Damiano Film Productions) in the US, it still broke new ground in allowing cinemas outside the usual exploitation circuit to run more adult material provided the films also had an air of artistic respectability.

The need for more explicit films was also met by distributors experimenting with Scandinavian sex education films. Elisabet Björklund noted that in the 1940s and 1950s Swedish sex education films were negative in tone, dealing with the risks of venereal disease and unwanted pregnancy, whereas the *Language of Love* series embodied the search for a better sex life, with a “predominant theme concerned with helping people solve problems in their sexual lives so that they can achieve pleasure and orgasm.” (Björklund, 2012: 201) This shift in tone from danger to self-fulfilment must be understood in light of progressive 1960s Swedish politics, a context that contrasts sharply with the sexual attitudes being expressed in the public sphere of the United Kingdom. British films, regardless of genre, most often couched their sexual exploits in a moral trajectory by which promiscuity led to an unhappy narrative conclusion.³⁷⁹ *Language of*

³⁷⁹ See, for example, *Loving Feeling* (1968, Norman J. Warren, UK: Piccadilly Pictures) or *Permissive* (1970, Lindsay Shonteff, UK: Lindsay Shonteff Film Productions Ltd). *Cool It Carol* (1970, Pete Walker, UK: Pete Walker Productions) was one of the first

Love and its ilk, in contrast, presented sex as a mutually pleasurable, cooperative experience based on couples working through their psychological issues and understanding physiological facts and processes. With a decided lack of moral judgment that upset anti-pornography campaigners perhaps as much as the explicit material itself, the Swedish exemplars offered British audiences a fresh sense of freedom and sexual optimism.

significant films to depict young people returning to their normal lives unscathed following various forms of sexual experimentation, including pornography and prostitution.

Conclusion: The Tin Cans of Europe

On his way to the airport in 1958, American distributor Joseph E. Levine told a reporter, “You never can tell... your next million could be lying in a tin can in Europe,”³⁸⁰ and he was right; British cinemas were awash with European popular film throughout the late 1950s, the 1960s and into the 1970s. Browsing issues of *Continental Film Review*, *Cinema X* or other film magazines from the period reveals that films from all over Europe were filling British cinema screens. There was an extraordinary breadth of world cinema on offer outside of the traditional parameters of the arthouse circuit, and as such this thesis offers an insight into the international film milieu of the time.

Having researched many of the independent distributors working out of Soho in the 1960s and 1970s, I decided to use Compton, Gala and E.J. Fancey as the key case studies around which to base this thesis. Between them they encapsulate the independent world in which they operated, with Compton growing from a private cinema club to become the biggest independent distributor in the country within just a few years, Gala straddling art and exploitation, and E.J. Fancey building a family empire like some kind of Soho Godfather, complete with infighting, controversy and occasional violence. Other distributors such as Planet Films, Miracle Films and Butchers Film Distributors no doubt have equally fascinating tales to tell, but that is a project for another time.

Primary sources were crucial as I was determined not to rely solely on the research of others. This thesis draws on rare material such as that found in the Cinema Museum and National Archives to provide primary evidence as well as that of my own archive, primarily consisting of the remainder of the abandoned Compton office archive, once destined for a skip or a bonfire. The fragility and temporality of film and film ephemera has become particularly evident during the course of this research. Where copies of films no longer exist it has been largely possible to plug gaps with a poster or campaign book, but this does highlight the issue that there are inevitably some aspects of film and audience history most likely lost forever. The archives of the BBFC have also been vital in providing company records when the company archives no longer exist. They gave

³⁸⁰ George W. Clarke, “TV to Exhaust All Films in 4 Yrs,” *Boston Daily Record*, 19 April 1958

insight into the process of negotiation through which many films went before certificates were, or were not, awarded, and they demonstrate the role censorship played in shaping public and political debate as to what was or was not acceptable at the time.

I have also been fortunate enough to meet people who have experiences and memories from the period, and of the people involved. Whereas Tony Klinger was more than happy to give his time and knowledge, the Fancey family were sadly unwilling to cooperate and the Rive family were friendly but had no archive or stories to relate. Thankfully I have been able to trace others who were able to help plug the gaps in the oral history I have recorded and drawn on here, and it has provided a more detailed picture of the industry and the people within it. For instance, director Peter Shillingford learned the hard way how unreliable Border Films could be at times:

We got to the Seychelles and we started shooting and I called the office and there was no one in the office. I've got a pocket full of cash, their cash, and I called round and found that they'd either gone broke, or somebody had died. I never found out, and so we sat in Seychelles waiting for a phone call back, because I'd send about half an hour of dailies in – rushes – and I called the office, called the office, called the office, called the office, no one came back... later they'd either gone broke, or they walked away from the whole business, or they had a death, I've never found out.³⁸¹

As I have demonstrated in this thesis, films for children and family audiences proved to be just as important to the distribution business model as those aimed at adults. Following Chapter One's overview of the extant academic terrain, in Chapter Two I detailed the rise of the peplum film in Italy and its brief dominance in British cinemas. Shorn of any resonance with national Italian politics or history, most notably the recent traumas of Fascism, in the UK these films were, for the most part, marketed towards children. In this chapter I also exposed flaws in the dominant academic reading of the peplum film as camp, ironic or homoerotic. As evidenced in Table 2.1 dozens of peplum films were distributed in the UK in the early 1960s. The examples I chose to use were among the distributed product of Compton, who were still finding their feet as an independent distributor, and Gala who already had years of continental experience. Compton fully embraced the idea and distributed at least a dozen through the height of the genre's

³⁸¹ Interview with Peter Shillingford, 14 December 2016. See appendix, pp.369-370

popularity. With the success of *Hercules*, and to an even larger extent *Hercules Unchained*, the peplum became a common experience for British audiences.

Chapters Three and Four examined the relatively fleeting popularity of the Eurospy film, again driven by the Italian studios but also fed into by France, Spain, Germany and others. More than simply James Bond clones, as commonly assumed, these films had much to offer British audiences but, like their toga-wearing counterparts, are now largely forgotten. Chapter Three focused on the political dimension of the Eurospy and its heritage of colonialism and Orientalism at a time when, for British audiences, these concepts were rapidly retreating into history. Chapter Four focused more specifically on the sex and violence – the ‘Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang’ – of the Eurospy film. As evidenced by the number of examples in Table 3.1 the spy film became just as ubiquitous in British cinemas as the peplum, and provided enough espionage action to plug the gaps between the releases of Bond films. The examples chosen, again, related mainly to the films distributed by Compton, Gala and E.J. Fancey. *Bonditis*, although ultimately not distributed in the UK, was the part of the lost Compton archive I acquired and provides an excellent case study of the extent of that company’s ambitions and marketing budget. The Eurospy film also presents an ideal opportunity to explore the concept of the European co-production, which many of these films were.

Finally, in chapters Five and Six, I have presented marketing strategies and legal battles regarding the distribution of sex-based European films in the UK, establishing the importance of these films to the British film industry at a time when cinemas were closing down and Hollywood finance was retreating. The dichotomy between the art and commerce of world cinema was recognised in the Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA) report on the state of the British film industry in the mid-1960s:

Not every non-English-speaking film which is acclaimed by the critics manages to find screen space in the London art-houses. Of those that do and delight audiences, a minute number receive a nation-wide showing and then usually in a dubbed version and because there is an exploitable sex angle. (Kelly, 1966: 112)

Raising again the concept of the “sex/art binary,” (Madzon & Wheatley, 2013: 113) the authors were referring to films such *La dolce vita* (1960, Federico Fellini, Italy/ France: Riama Film/ Pathé Consortium Cinéma) being sent to the provinces from the London

arthouse circuit, where audiences would be sold on images of a frolicking Anita Ekberg. As the examples cited in Chapter Five revealed, not only were arthouse films often packaged as sex films, but run-of-the-mill dramas and comedies were also often marketed to the ‘X’ film audience, with the narrative elements suppressed in favour of the undressing actresses in the marketing materials. As Table 4.1 demonstrates, there were hundreds of examples which could have been looked at in this chapter. The examples ultimately selected were, for the most part, based on the ephemeral materials available in the Cinema Museum archive and give a broad cross-section of the European product audiences would have found nestled amongst the British and American nudie cuties and nudist camp documentaries.

Chapter Six focused on two main case studies; the softcore erotica of *Emmanuelle* and the almost simultaneous Swedish sex education documentary scandal. These were major events in the history of the Fancey family, with both the glory and burden falling upon Olive Negus-Fancey and the children since E.J. had all but retired from day-to-day business activities. Whilst also analysing the censorship debates and marketing approaches, the study of *Emmanuelle* presented an opportunity to address the issues of sexual violence and the exoticisation of rape in 1970s cinema. The Fanceys were never able to replicate the success of *Emmanuelle*, instead reverting to their tried and tested ‘lowest common denominator’ business model developed by their father decades before. The *More About the Language of Love* court case has, until now, remained undocumented in film histories. The documentation in the case file, and that of the BBFC and GLC files, offers an unparalleled array of eye-witness testimonies on cinema attendance and the audience experience in the mid-1970s. This conviction over a film with a legally-awarded certificate could have spelled the end for the British film censorship system at that time, yet for reasons still unclear, the furore just seemed to drift away and all the legal bodies and film companies continued as usual.

Reflecting the growing desire for artistic and sexual liberalism in the mid-1960s, film critic Raymond Durgnat wrote in favour of a more relaxed attitude to censorship, employing the language of psychoanalysis:

It is certainly arguable that “arousal” reveals to the spectator some of his own hidden desires. But these are as likely to be morally neutral or positive as negative.

Again, ideological controversies are involved; the sexual titillation provided by the cinema may help a spectator throw off a puritanical upbringing. (1964: 54)

Audiences were certainly not starved of sexual titillation in 1964, as seen by the number of films distributed by the likes of Gala, Compton and E.J. Fancey. That previously mentioned IEA report stated that “Censorship is of its nature capricious and patronising,” (Kelly, 1966: 138), and recommended changes in the certification, raising the age restriction for the ‘X’ to eighteen and the reintroduction of the ‘H’ for horror films, as a way of making a distinction for audiences based on taste as well as suitability. (Kelly, 1966: 188) The age for the ‘X’ was ultimately raised in 1970 from sixteen to eighteen, allowing for the certification of those films discussed in the final chapters. This was an important development, often celebrated in conventional historiographies as being pivotal in the production of *The Devils* (1971, Ken Russell, USA/ UK: Warner Bros./ Russo Productions), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971, Stanley Kubrick, USA/ UK: Warner Bros, Polaris Productions, Warner Bros., Hawk Films), *Straw Dogs* (1971, Sam Peckinpah, USA/ UK: ABC Pictures Corp., Talent Associates, Amerbroco Films) and many more challenging British films. What has been less celebrated is the fact that it enabled distributors to handle the high-profile titles like *Emmanuelle* alongside ‘Schoolgirl Reports,’ ‘Sexy Susans,’ and their other continental counterparts.

Also uncovered through the research in this thesis is a world of film advertising and promotion which no longer exists. It is difficult to imagine a 21st century cinema holding a “Luxuriant Beard Competition,” as was seen at the Odeon, Wimbledon to publicise the release of the James Robertson Justice vehicle *Father Came Too!* (1964, Peter Graham Scott, UK: Independent Artists (Production) Ltd.) (ibid.: 146) In an attempt to reach the general public the Rank Theatre division once sent a large float and an “attractive cowgirl” into the streets of London to promote *The Rare Breed* (1966, Andrew V. McLaglen, USA: Universal Pictures). A passing film journalist was immediately:

...approached by the young lady. ‘You’d better come or I’ll shoot you,’ she said to my six-year-old. He’s been pestering me ever since to take him to the pictures... You don’t have to persuade me these stunts work!³⁸² (fig. 30)

³⁸² “Don’t tell me these stunts don’t work...”, Frank Ratcliffe, *Kinematograph Weekly*, 8 September 1966, p.16.



Fig. 30: Large float and “attractive cowgirl” promote *The Rare Breed* on the streets of North London. *Kinematograph Weekly*, 8 September 1966, p.16.

Although this publicity stunt had the financial backing of a major studio, independent distributors like Compton had similar ideas, but would generally leave it to the local exhibitors to organise.³⁸³ A particularly ambitious example was suggested for the promotion of Compton's *The Adventures of Remi*, where "Mr. Showman" was told that the film "demands an exploitation campaign to ensure the widest possible coverage." As well as ideas for press stills, a children's painting contest and eye-catching displays in the foyer, a stunt was suggested in which they should:

Dress up a group of musicians like those in the film and get them to parade around the town with blackened faces. Affix a linen banner to their backs reading:

REMI CAPTURED OUR HEARTS, HE'LL HAVE YOURS TOO
When you see "THE ADVENTURES OF REMI"³⁸⁴

If that fails, Mr. Showman is asked "Can you get a live Monkey in the foyer?"³⁸⁵ The film is about an orphaned child who is sold to a travelling circus with musicians who perform in blackface as minstrels. British audiences in 1961 would have been familiar with this tradition owing to the popularity of *The Black and White Minstrel Show*, which had been running on the BBC since 1958.³⁸⁶

I wrote this thesis with the cooperation of some of the people who were there, and were part of this historical experience. Their contributions, alongside that of the archival material uncovered, has presented new evidence which serves to fill some gaps in our understanding of the British film industry of the 1960s and 1970s. This research also demonstrates that a study of British cinema is incomplete without considering the films which were in the cinemas, and equally a study of European popular cinema needs to

³⁸³ The Compton-distributed film *Secrets of a Windmill Girl* (1966, Arnold Louis Miller, UK: Searchlight Films) features a sequence in which a group of Windmill dancers dress as cowgirls and ride around London on a stagecoach as a promotional stunt.

³⁸⁴ Press book for *The Adventures of Remi*, Cinema Museum Archive. Compton were clearly fans of the parade as a promotional tool. See appendix, pp.349-350 where Tony Klinger describes his disastrous attempt, aged fourteen, to arrange a parade for the mayor of Torquay to promote an upcoming Compton production.

³⁸⁵ Press book for *The Adventures of Remi*, Cinema Museum Archive.

³⁸⁶ Despite a growing number of complaints and accusations of racism, the BBC did not cancel the show until 1978. Dates sourced from the 'Radio Times 1923 – 2009 listings' on the BBC Genome Project:

<http://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/search/0/20?order=desc&q=the+black+and+white+minstrel+show#search> accessed 15 December 2017.

address the reception of the films in a global context, where meanings can differ according to cultural specificity. I have built on the guidance laid down in the New Film History by continuing to challenge traditional orthodoxies within the discipline and highlight the importance of primary, non-filmic sources.

In this thesis I have covered only a handful of the genres involved, and I decided to concentrate on European films in order to provide specific case studies which would indicate the broader industrial picture. I have not discussed, for example, the films imported from South America in the mid-1960s starring Isabel Sarli, whom Compton hoped to mould into a new sex symbol for British audiences. (fig. 31) As evidenced in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 films from countries all around the globe were in the UK in the early 1960s, and the sex films detailed in Table 4.1 show that the volume of imported film increased steadily throughout the decade, with a sharp increase in 'X'-rated films after the changes at the BBFC in 1970.

One notable genre exclusion in this thesis is the horror film, of which hundreds were also imported from Europe during the period covered here. I decided not to cover these as much has been written on European horror elsewhere,³⁸⁷ and many of those films were produced with the intention of exploitation marketing techniques. As mentioned earlier, there are also many other independent distributors who have received little academic attention. This represents a significant gap and is somewhere the research could go next. It would also be equally valuable to study the distribution and exhibition of British independent film in Europe to see if they were undergoing a similar process of de-ethnification, their national origins being rendered neutral through retitling and dubbing. This research also feeds well into research on the home video explosion of the next decade, where independent distributors and independently-owned shops were one stop ahead of the majors and made available frequently unlicensed films, leading to a right-wing press outcry and the introduction of the Video Recordings Act (1984). For many distributors, such as Malcolm Fancey and David Grant, it was a natural extension of their cinema distribution careers.

³⁸⁷ see Olney (2013) or Shipka (2011) for examples

VENUS FROM **COMPTON**

Introducing

ISABEL SARLI

the girl the whole world is waiting to see more of!

Such an opportunity exists in

NAKED TEMPTATION

shortly to be released by

COMPTON

Fig. 31: Publicity material from Compton heralding the arrival of Isabel Sarli, "The girl the whole world is waiting to see more of!" *Naked Temptation* was subsequently refused a BBFC certificate and Sarli returned to Argentina.

In this thesis I have proven that popular European cinema was a vital component of the British film industry in the 1960s and 1970s. The work presented here is only part of the picture, and suggests many potential directions the research could take. Independent distributors, following Joseph E. Levine's lead, scoured the film factories of Europe for product which would entertain British audiences and make a "million."³⁸⁸ Without those 'Dolls of Vice,' or the hundreds of "musclemen, monsters and maniacs" (Kelly, 1966: 70) which distributors like Compton, Gala or the Fanceys supplied, many British cinemas, especially those not on the major circuits, would not have survived.

³⁸⁸ George W. Clarke, "TV to Exhaust All Films in 4 Yrs," *Boston Daily Record*, 19 April 1958

Filmography

A list of every key film text analysed or discussed at length in this thesis. It does not contain every film mentioned. Where possible the UK title is first, followed by the original title.

After School (*Verbrechen nach Schulschluß*, 1959, Alfred Vohrer, West Germany: Ultra Films)

Bonditis (1967, Karl Sutter, Swiss/ West Germany: Turnus)

The Call Girl Business (*Anonima cocottes*, 1960, Camillo Mastrocinque, Italy: Titanus)

Dolls of Vice (*Gefährdete Mädchen*, 1958, Wolfgang Glück, West Germany: Rex-Film GmbH)

Emmanuelle (1974, Just Jaeckin, France: Orphée Productions)

From the Orient With Fury (*Agente 077 dall'oriente con furore*, 1965, Sergio Grieco, Italy/ France/ Spain: Fida Cinematografica, Les Productions Jacques Roitfeld, Época Films S.A.)

Goliath and the Vampires (*Maciste contro il vampiro*, 1961, Giacomo Gentilomo, Italy: Società Ambrosiana Cinematografica)

Hercules (*Le fatiche di ercole*, 1958, Pietro Francisci, Italy: O.S.C.A.R. Film/ Galatea Film)

Hercules Unchained (*Ercole e la regina di lidia*, 1959, Pietro Francisci, Italy/ France: Lux Film/ Galatea Film)

Hungry for Love (*Adua e la compagne*, 1960, Antonio Pietrangeli, Italy: Zebra Films)

I, A Woman (1965, *Jeg – en Kvinde*, Mac Ahlberg, Denmark/ Sweden: Novaris Film)

Jason and the Golden Fleece (*I giganti della tessaglia*, 1960, Riccardo Freda, Italy/ France: Alexandra Cinematografica/ Société Cinématographique Lyre)

Language of Love (*Ur kärlekens språk*, 1969, Torgny Wickman, Sweden: Swedish Filmproduction Investment)

Mission Bloody Mary (*Agente 077 missione Bloody Mary*, 1965, Sergio Grieco, Italy/ France/ Spain: Fida Cinematografica, Época Films S.A., Les Productions Jacques Roitfeld)

Mondo Cane (1962, Paolo Cavara, Gualtiero Jacopetti & Franco Prosperi, Italy: Cineriz)

More About the Language of Love (*Mera ur kärlekens språk*, 1970, Torgny Wickman, Sweden: Swedish Film Production)

No Orchids for Lulu, (*Lulu*, 1962, Rolf Thiele, Austria: Vienna Film)

Operation "Y" (*Ypotron*, 1966, Giorgio Stegani, Italy/ Spain: Dorica Film/ Euro International Films)

OSS 117 (*OSS 117 se déchaîne*, 1963, André Hunebelle, France: Globe-Films)

Paris in the Raw (*La Femme Spectacle*, 1964, Claude Lelouch, France: Les Films de la Pléiade)

Samson (*Sansone*, 1961, Gianfranco Parolini, Italy: Cineproduzioni Associate (Rome))

Sex From a Stranger (*L'Etrangère*, 1966, Sergio Gobbi, France: Paris Cannes Production)

Shadow of Evil (*Banco à Bangkok pour OSS 117*, 1964, André Hunebelle, France/ Italy: Compagnie Industrielle et Commerciale Cinématograp, Da Ma Produzione (Rome), P.A.C.)

Victims of Vice (*L'amour à la chaîne*, 1965, Claude de Givray, France: Comptoir Français du Film Production)

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Table 2.1

Selected Peplum films submitted to the BBFC between 1959 and 1968 per BBFC database by keyword search

Keyword	Number of uses
Hercules	16
Gladiator	11
Goliath	7
Samson	5
Maciste	4
Rome	6
Giant	5
Spartacus*	4
Ursus	3
Colossus	3
Spartans**	2
Ulysses	2
Titans	1
Perseus	1
Jason ***	1

Year	UK Title	Certificate	Cuts	Distributor
1959	<i>Hercules</i>	U		Archway Film Dists
1960	<i>Hercules Unchained</i>	U		Warner Pathé
	<i>David and Goliath</i>	U	Y	British Lion Film Corp
	<i>Sign of the Gladiator</i>	U	Y	Anglo Amalgamated
	<i>The Giant of Marathon</i>	U	Y	Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
	<i>The Fighting Gladiator and Fabiola</i>	A		New Realm Entertainments
1961	<i>Goliath and the Barbarians</i>	U	Y	Anglo Amalgamated
	<i>Spartacus the Gladiator</i>	U		New Realm Entertainments
1962	<i>The Three Stooges Meet Hercules</i>	U		Columbia Picture Corp.
	<i>Hercules Conquers Atlantis</i>	U	Y	Golden Era Films
	<i>Hercules in the Center of the Earth</i>	U		Golden Era Dists
	<i>The Colossus of Rhodes</i>	A	Y	Metro-Goldwyn Mayer
	<i>The Giant of Metropolis</i>	A	Y	Warner Pathé
1963	<i>Fury of Hercules</i>	U	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>The Rebel Gladiator</i>	U	Y	Miracle Films

	<i>Goliath Against the Giants</i>	U	Y	Compton Films
	<i>Hercules in the Centre of the Earth</i>	A	?	Golden Era
	<i>Samson</i>	U	Y	Compton Films
	<i>Duel of the Titans</i>	U		British Lion Film Corp
	<i>Maciste the Mighty</i>	A		Panton Film Dists
	<i>Samson and the 7 Miracles of the World</i>	U	Y	Anglo Amalgamated
	<i>Maciste in the Valley of the Kings</i>	A	Y	Panton Film Dists
	<i>Son of Samson</i>	A		Panton Film Dists
	<i>Mighty Ursus</i>	U	Y	United Artists Corp.
	<i>Ursus in the Valley of the Lions</i>	U	Y	Golden Era Dists
	<i>Rome in Flames</i>	U		Compton Films
	<i>The Fall of Rome</i>	U		Compton Films
	<i>Jason and the Golden Fleece</i> (also submitted as <i>The Giants of Thessaly</i>)	U	Y	Compton Films
	<i>Vengeance of the Gladiators</i>	A	Y	Compton Films
	<i>Gladiators Seven</i>	U		MGM Pictures
	<i>Son of Spartacus</i>	U	Y	MGM Pictures
1964	<i>Samson and the Slave Queen</i>	U	Y	Anglo Amalgamated
	<i>Goliath Against the Vampire</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Maciste in King Solomon's Mines</i>	U	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Goliath and the Sins of Babylon</i>	U		Golden Era Films
	<i>Hercules, the Invincible</i>	U	Y	Golden Era Dists
	<i>Ursus in the Land of Fire</i>	U	Y	Golden Era Dists
	<i>Hercules, Samson and Ulysses</i>	U	Y	MGM Pictures
	<i>Battles of the Gladiators</i>	U		Eagle Films
	<i>Rome Against Rome</i>	A		Panton Film Dists
	<i>Brennus, Enemy of Rome</i>	U	Y	Regal Films International
	<i>Giant of the Lost Tomb</i>	U		Regal Films International
	<i>Battle of the Spartans</i>	U	Y	Regal Films International

	<i>Maciste in the Land of the Cyclops</i>	U	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>Perseus Against the Monster</i>	A	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Ulysses Against Hercules</i>	U	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>Colossus of the Stone Age</i>	U	Y	Compton Cinemas
1965	<i>Hercules Against the Moon Men</i>	U	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>The Triumph of Hercules</i>	U	Y	Golden Era Films
	<i>The Revenge of Spartacus</i>	U	Y	Golden Era Films
	<i>Hercules and the Masked Rider</i>	U	Y	Planet Films
	<i>Goliath, King of the Slaves</i>	U	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>Hercules Attacks</i>	A	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>Goliath the Rebel Slave</i>	U		Compton Cameo
	<i>The Invincible Gladiator</i>	U	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Spartacus and the Ten Gladiators</i>	U	Y	Butchers Film Service
	<i>The Triumph of the Ten Gladiators</i>	U	Y	Butchers Film Service
	<i>The Spartan Gladiators</i>	U	Y	MGM Pictures
1966	<i>Hercules Against the Sons of the Sun</i>	U		Golden Era Dists
	<i>Seven Slaves Against Rome</i>	U	Y	Golden Era Dists
1967	NOTHING SUBMITTED IN 1967			
1968	<i>Hercules Against the Barbarians</i>	U		A. Balch Films
	<i>Amazons of Rome</i>	U		United Artists Corp
	<i>Colossus and the Headhunters</i>	U	Y	Grand National Pictures

All information taken directly from the database available at www.bbfc.co.uk, accessed 25th April 2017

* *Spartacus* (1960, Stanley Kubrick, USA: Universal) was not a peplum film (in that it was not Italian) and is not included in this table, but it boosted the genre, placing swords, sandals and togas into cinemas worldwide, and reminded filmmakers of another recognisable historical name to use in future films.

** *The 300 Spartans* (1962, Rudolph Maté, USA: 20th Century Fox) is also not included here as it was a Hollywood production, although clearly inspired by the current peplum popularity.

**1963 saw the release of one of the most popular mythological adventure films of the 1960s, *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963, Don Chaffey, USA: Morningside Worldwide/ Columbia Pictures), but this is not included in the title given that it was also solely a US production. It did however inspire the retitling of *I giganti della tessaglia* to *Jason and the Golden Fleece*.

Table 3.1

Selected Spy and Espionage films distributed in the UK from 1960 – 1975 per BBFC database by keyword search

Keyword	Number of uses
Spy	22
Spies	6
Spying	1
Agent	9
Mission	4
Operation	4

There were also several war films which also featured the keywords “mission” and “operation” which have been omitted here.

This list does not include any James Bond films, given their lack of any of the keywords in their titles.

Year	Title	Cert.	Cuts	Distributor
1960	<i>Canaris – Master Spy</i>	U		British Lion Film Corp
	<i>Confessions of a Counterspy</i>	U		Columbia Picture Corp
1961	NOTHING SUBMITTED IN 1961			
1962	<i>The Devil’s Agent</i>	A		Emmet Dalton Ltd
1963	<i>Master Spy</i>	U		Grand National Pictures
	<i>Ring of Spies</i>	A	Y	British Lion Film Corp
1964	<i>The Spy</i>	A	Y	SF Films Dist Ltd
	<i>To Trap a Spy</i>	A		MGM Pictures
	<i>Carry On Spying</i>	A	Y	Anglo Amalgamated
1965	<i>The Spy With My Face</i>	A	Y	MGM Pictures
	<i>The Spy Who Came in from the Cold</i>	A		Paramount Film Service Ltd
	<i>Coplan, Agent 005</i>	A	Y	E.J. Fancey Prods
	<i>FX 18 Secret Agent</i>	A	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Where the Spies Are</i>	A		Val Guest Prods Ltd
	<i>Operation C.I.A.</i>	A	Y	Warner Pathe Ltd
1966	<i>Spy in Your Eye</i>	U	Y	Anglo Amalgamated
	<i>The Spy Who Went Into Hell</i>	A	Y	E.J. Fancey Prods
	<i>The Spy Killers</i>	A	Y	British Lion Film Corp
	<i>The Spy With a Cold Nose</i>	U		Paramount Film Service Ltd
	<i>One Spy Too Many</i>	A		MGM Pictures

	<i>Operation Poker</i>	A	Y	Golden Era Dists Ltd
	<i>How to Be a Spy Without Even Trying</i>	U	Y	E.J. Fancey Prods
	<i>The Ravishing Idiot (Agent 38-24-36)</i>	U		Gala Film Dists Ltd
	<i>One of Our Spies is Missing</i>	U	Y	MGM Pictures
	<i>Agent for H.A.R.M</i>	A		Rank Film Dists Ltd
	<i>Mission for a Killer</i>	A	Y	Miracle Films Ltd
	<i>Mission Bloody Mary</i>	X	Y	Compton Films Ltd
	<i>Sugar and Spies</i>	U		Warner Pathe Ltd
1967	<i>The Helicopter Spies</i>	U	Y	MGM Pictures
	<i>Operation Kid Brother</i>	A	Y	United Artists Corp
1968	<i>Serenade For Two Spies</i>	A		Gala Film Dists Ltd
	<i>Agent 505</i>	A	Y	Gala Film Dists Ltd
	<i>Operation "Y"</i>	A	Y	Gala Film Dists Ltd
1969	<i>Last of the Secret Agents</i>	U		Paramount Pictures
	<i>Mission Impossible vs The Mob</i>	A	Y	Paramount Pictures
1970	<i>Spy Pit</i>	A		Golden Era Films
	<i>The Spy in the Green Hat</i>	AA	Y	MGM Pictures
	<i>To Skin a Spy</i>	A		Golden Era Films
	<i>Mrs Pollifax – Spy</i>	U		United Artists Corp.
1971	<i>Blinker's – Spy Spotter</i>	U		Eyeline Films
	<i>Catch me a Spy</i>	A	Y	Rank Film Dists
1972	<i>Superspy</i>	U	Y	SF Films Dist
	<i>Mission For a Killer *</i>	A		Miracle Films
1973	NOTHING SUBMITTED IN 1973			
1974	<i>Spys</i>	A		EMI Dists
	<i>Agent 1</i>	A	Y	Columbia-Warner Dists
	<i>Double Agent 73</i>	X		Production Associates
	<i>How To Destroy The Reputation Of The Greatest Secret Agent</i>	A	Y	Columbia-Warner Dists
1975	<i>Somebody's Stolen Our Russian Spy</i>	U		No distributor listed

**Mission For a Killer* appears twice on the list, 1966 again in 1972.

Table 4.1

Sex films distributed in the UK from 1960 – 1975 by keyword search on BBFC database

This is not a definitive list of every sex film distributed in the UK, as such a task is virtually impossible, and is certainly beyond the scope of this research project. This list does also not consider films which screened without BBFC certificates in private cinemas and cinema clubs, or with certificates only from local authorities. This is instead an attempt to document enough sex films to establish trends and recurrences of keywords within this genre. Some film titles were clearly not sex-related, despite appearing in the keyword search. As such, for example, films which contain the word “naked” in the title but are clearly not sex films, such as *The Naked Prey* (1965, Cornel Wilde, Sven Persson Films, Theodora Productions: South Africa/ USA) or *The Naked Edge* (1961, Michael Anderson, Baroda, Bentley Productions, Jason Films: UK/ USA) have not been included. Likewise, films like *Love Thy Neighbour* (1973, John Robins, UK: Anglo-EMI, Hammer Films) and *The Love Bug* (1968, Robert Stevenson, USA: Walt Disney Productions) have been omitted.

Keyword	Number of uses
Love/ Lovely/ Loved/ Lover	181
Sex/ Sexy	144
Girl/ Girls	100
Virgin	35
Bed	27
Naked	25
Erotic	17
Lust	16
Nude/ Nudist	15
Seduce/ seduction	11
Strip	7

Distributor (10 titles or more)	Number of films
Miracle Films	41
Gala Film Dists	35
Border Films	33
New Realm Entertainments	28
Cinecenta Film Dist	27
English Film Co. Ltd	24
Compton/ Compton Cameo	21
SF Film Dists	18
Columbia/ Columbia-Warner	13
Antony Balch/ A. Balch Films	11
Chilton Films	11
Contemporary Films	10
Warner Pathe	10

Year	Title	Cert.	Cuts	Distributor
1960	<i>Sex Kittens Go to College</i>	U		Warner Pathe
	<i>Nudes in the Snow</i>	A		Miracle Films
	<i>Naked Venus</i>	A	Y	Anglo Amalgamated
	<i>The Nudist Story</i>	A	Y	Danziger Bros.
	<i>Go Naked in the World</i>	X		Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
	<i>Come to Bed Madame</i>	X		Unifilms Ltd
	<i>Love Me As Long As you Like</i>	X		Cross Channel Film Dist
	<i>I Love You</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Let's Make Love</i>	U		20 th Century Fox
	<i>Macumba Love</i>	X	Y	United Artists Corp
	<i>Love Now – Pay Later</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Love and the French Woman</i>	X		Miracle Films Ltd
	<i>No Love for Johnnie</i>	X		Rank Film Dists
	<i>Aphrodite Goddess of Love</i>	A		British Lion Film Corp
	<i>Afrodite (Goddess of Love)</i>	U		Archway Film Dist
	<i>Doctor in Love</i>	A		Rank Film Dists
	<i>The Game of Love (L'eau a la bouche)</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Sons and Lovers</i>	A		20 th Century Fox
	<i>Teenage Lovers</i>	X		Rank Film Dists

	<i>When a Woman Loves</i>	A		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Young Lovers</i>	U		Archway Film Dist
	<i>Lust of the Vampire</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Girl of the Night</i>	X	Y	Warner Pathe
	<i>Girls from the Latin Quarter</i>	A	Y	E.J. Fancey Prods
	<i>Girls of the Night</i>	U		New Realm Entertainments
	<i>The Virgin Sprung</i>	X	Y	Premier Releasing
	<i>The Seducer (Man of Straw)</i>	A	Y	Mayfair Film
1961	<i>Nudes of the World</i>	A		Miracle Films
	<i>Nudist Memories</i>	A	Y	Searchlight Films
	<i>Diary of a Nudist</i>	A		Compton Films
	<i>The Love Trap</i>	X		Unifilms
	<i>Love Is When You Make It</i>	X		British Lion Corp
	<i>Naked As Nature Intended</i>	A	Y	Compton Cinemas
	<i>Lovers of Montparnasse</i>	A		Mondial Films
	<i>By Love Possessed</i>	A	Y	United Artists Corp.
	<i>The Colour of Love</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>For the Love of Sheila</i>	A	Y	
	<i>A Taste of Love</i>	X	Y	Compton Cinemas
	<i>Young Love</i>	X	Y	Bargate Films
	<i>Hungry For Love (Adua & le compagne)</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Sun Lovers Paradise</i>	A	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Lust for Evil</i>	A		Hillcrest Prods
	<i>Girls Behind Bars</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Dancing Girl</i>	A		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Paris Playgirls</i>	X	Y	Compton Cinemas
	<i>Call Girls of Rome</i>	X	Y	Columbia Picture Corp
	<i>Bad Girl</i>	A		Regal Films International
	<i>The Call Girl Business/ Call Girls Ltd</i>	X		Compton Cinemas
	<i>Strip Tease Murder</i>	X	Y	Danziger Bros.
	<i>Mam 'Selle Striptease</i>	A	Y	Compton Films
1962	<i>The Nude Ones</i>	A	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>Some Like it Nude</i>	A		New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Naked Freedom</i>	A	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Love For Sale</i>	X	Y	SF Film Dist
	<i>One Week With Love</i>	A	Y	Planet Films

	<i>Ordered to Love</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>The Ritual of Love</i>	A		Gala Film Dists
	<i>I Love, You Love</i>	X	Y	Columbia Picture Corp
	<i>Love on a Pillow</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>The Girl in Lover's Lane</i>	X	Y	Grand National Pictures
	<i>The War Lover</i>	X	Y	Columbia Picture Corp
	<i>Latin Lovers</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Girl on the Road</i>	A		Compton Films
	<i>A Girl in the Shadows</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>The Girl with the Golden Eyes</i>	X		Compton Films
	<i>Girls Led Astray</i>	X		Compton Films
	<i>Girls in the Sun</i>	A	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>The Big Girl</i>	X		Compton Films
	<i>The Wayward Girl</i>	X	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>The Twilight Girls</i>	A	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>The Playgirls and the Vampire</i>	X	Y	Supreme Film Dists
	<i>Striptease de Paris</i>	A	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>The Virgin Spring</i>	X	Y	Curzon Film Dists
1963	<i>Sex Can Be Difficult</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Love in the Suburbs</i>	A		Contemporary Films
	<i>Love at Twenty</i>	X		20 th Century Fox Film
	<i>Lovers Must Learn</i>	A		Warner Pathe
	<i>A New Kind of Love</i>	A	Y	Paramount Film Service
	<i>No Bigger Love</i>	A		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Three Fables of Love</i>	A		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Wives and Lovers</i>	X		Paramount Film Service
	<i>Girl With a Suitcase</i>	A		Compton Films
	<i>Girl in the Headlines</i>	A	Y	View Finder Films
	<i>Girls for the Mambo Bar</i>	X	Y	E.J. Fancey Prods
	<i>That Kind of Girl</i>	X	Y	Compton Films
	<i>Seven Daring Girls</i>	A	Y	E.J. Fancey Prods
1964	<i>Sex and the Single Girl</i>	A	Y	Warner Pathe
	<i>Nude in a White Car</i>	X	Y	Hillcrest Prods
	<i>Naked Among the Wolves</i>	A		Contemporary Films
	<i>And So To Bed</i>	X		SF Films Dist
	<i>The Love Makers</i>	X		20 th Century Fox
	<i>The Lovemakers</i>	X	Y	20 th Century Fox Film
	<i>The Love Cage</i>	X	Y	MGM Pictures
	<i>Of Love and Desire</i>	X		20 th Century Fox

	<i>Image of Love</i>	X		Contemporary Film
	<i>Too Young For Love</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Where Love Has Gone</i>	X		Paramount Film Service
	<i>Phantom Lovers</i>	A		Gala Film Dists
	<i>She Loved to be Bad</i>	X	Y	SF Film Dist
	<i>The Young Lovers</i>	X		MGM Pictures
	<i>A Girl for Two</i>	U		H. Joannides
	<i>Sex and the Single Girl</i>	A	Y	Warner Pathe
	<i>Seduced and Abandoned</i>	X		British Lion Corp
	<i>The Girl With Green Eyes</i>	X	Y	Woodfall Prods
	<i>Strip-Tease</i>	X	Y	Hillcrest Prods
1965	<i>Sexy Party</i>	X		Miracle
	<i>Nude in Charcoal</i>	X	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>Nudes on Tiger Reef</i>	A	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>The Naked Hours</i>	X	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>Naked Venus</i>	A	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>The Naked Hours</i>	X	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>To Bed Or Not To Bed</i>	X		British Lion Film Corp
	<i>The Love Goddesses</i>	X		Paramount Film Service
	<i>The Loved One</i>	X		MGM Pictures
	<i>Love Is Where You Find It</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Blonde in Love</i>	X		Contemporary Films
	<i>Climates of Love</i>	A		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Passage of Love</i>	A		Partisan Films
	<i>Four Kinds of Love</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>The Great Love</i>	A		H. Joannides
	<i>Wild Roots of Love</i>	A		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Girls on the Beach</i>	U		Paramount Film Service
	<i>Girls for Kissing</i>	U		H. Joannides
	<i>The Pleasure Girls</i>	X	Y	Compton Cameo
	<i>The Seduction of Julia</i>	A		DUR Films
1966	<i>Sex in the Grass</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>The Reluctant Nudist</i>	A	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Naked Evil</i>	A	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Dearest Love</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>The Season For Love</i>	A		Libricon Prods
	<i>To Love</i>	X		Amanda Films
	<i>My Sister, My Love</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films

	<i>Georgy Girl</i>	X		Columbia Picture Corp
	<i>Secrets of a Windmill Girl</i>	X	Y	Compton Films
	<i>Slave Girls</i>	A		Hammer Film Prods
	<i>Kiss the Girls and Make Them Die</i>	A		Columbia Picture Corp
1967	<i>Sex in the Afternoon</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>Sex Quartet</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>The Other Sex</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Lost Sex</i>	X	Y	Tony Tenser Films
	<i>From Bed to Worse</i>	X		D.U.K. Films Ltd
	<i>Naked Hearts</i>	X		Contemporary Films
	<i>Primitive Love</i>	X	Y	Orb Films
	<i>Martyrs of Love</i>	A		Contemporary Films
	<i>My Love and I</i>	X	Y	Sebricon Films
	<i>Tonite Let's Make Love in London</i>	A		Academy Cinema
	<i>How to Be Loved</i>	A		Contemporary Films
	<i>Yesterday Girl</i>	X		Contemporary Films
	<i>The Cat Girl</i>	X		Anglo Amalgamated
	<i>Seduced in Sodom</i>	X		Libricon Prods
	<i>The Virgins</i>	X		Sebricon Films
1968	<i>Sex From a Stranger</i>	X	Y	SF Films Dist
	<i>The Sex Tile</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Sexy Gang</i>	X	Y	SF Films Dist
	<i>Aquasex</i>	A	Y	World Cinema
	<i>The Sweet Sins of Sexy Susan</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Waltz of Sex</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Love in Our Time</i>	X	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Nudes in the Sun</i>	A	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Naked World of Harrison Marks</i>	X	Y	Harrison Marks Prods.
	<i>Love in Amsterdam</i>	A		Trio Films
	<i>Baby Love</i>	X	Y	Avton Films
	<i>Fire of Love</i>	X	Y	Richard Shulman Ltd
	<i>Licence For Love</i>	A	Y	Butchers Film Service
	<i>Sleep is Lovely</i>	X		Telstar
	<i>Lust in the Swamps</i>	X	Y	Amanda Films
	<i>Girl on a Motorcycle</i>	X	Y	British Lion Film Corp
	<i>Some Girls Do</i>	A		Rank Film Dists
	<i>How to Seduce a Playboy</i>	X		New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Strip Poker/ The Big Switch</i>	X	Y	Heritage Films
	<i>A Virgin for the Prince</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>The Amorous Virgin</i>	X		Border Films

1969	<i>Sexy Susan Sins Again</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>Sexual Partnership</i>	X	Y	Crispin Films
	<i>Sexyrella</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>The Sex Artist</i>	X	Y	Butchers Film Service
	<i>School For Sex</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films Ltd
	<i>Sin Sun and Sex</i>	X	Y	SF Films Dist
	<i>The Subject is Sex</i>	X		Richard Schulman Ltd
	<i>The Nine Ages of Nakedness</i>	X		Harrison Marks
	<i>The Erotic</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>Erotic Urge</i>	X		SF Films Dist Ltd
	<i>The Queen and the Erotic</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>A Promise of Bed</i>	X	Y	Dorak Films
	<i>Love Problems</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>The Love God?</i>	A		Rank Film Dists
	<i>A Curious Way to Love</i>	X	Y	Butchers Film Service
	<i>One Thousand And One Ways To Love</i>	X	Y	Richard Shulman Ltd
	<i>Forty-Eight Hours Of Love</i>	X	Y	SF Films Dist
	<i>The Wonder of Love</i>	X	Y	SF Films Dist
	<i>Women in Love</i>	X	Y	United Artists Corp
	<i>A Place for Lovers</i>	X		MGM Pictures
	<i>Hot Blood</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Life, Love, Death</i>	X	Y	United Artists Corp.
	<i>Island of Love (Goto – l'isle d'amour)</i>	X		Contemporary Films
	<i>The Girls</i>	X		Contemporary Films
	<i>A Complicated Girl/ A Rather Complicated Girl</i>	X		Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>The Dream Girl</i>	X		Antony Balch
	<i>Take a Girl Like You</i>	X		Columbia Picture Corp
	<i>Just the Girl</i>	X		R.C.A.
	<i>Playgirl</i>	X		Amanda Films
	<i>The Smashing Bird I Used to Know (School For Unclaimed Girls)</i>	X	Y	Titan Film Dists
	<i>Mumsy, Nanny, Sonny and Girly</i>	X		Fitzroy Films
	<i>Art of Seduction</i>	X	Y	Richard Shulman Ltd
	<i>The Night They Invented Striptease</i>	A		United Artists Corp.
	<i>Virgin Youth</i>	A		New Realm Entertainments

	<i>The Virgin Soldiers</i>	X		Columbia Picture Corp
	<i>I, A Virgin</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
1970	<i>Sex of Angels</i>	X		United Artists Corp.
	<i>Sex Italian Style</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>Sex is a Pleasure</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>As the Naked Wind From the Sea/ Sex on the Beach</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>The Sex Seekers</i>	X	Y	S.F. Films Dist
	<i>The Sexy Dozen</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>The Sex Adventures of the Singleman</i>	X	Y	Golden Era Films
	<i>Secrets of Sex</i>	X	Y	A. Balch Films Ltd
	<i>The Sex Racketeers</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Sex, Love and Marriage</i>	X	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Labyrinth of Sex</i>	X	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Mondo Sex</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Excuse Me, Do You Like Sex?</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>Female Sexuality</i>	X		Crispin Films
	<i>Heterosexual</i>	X	Y	A. Balch Films Ltd
	<i>Naked England</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>What Do You Say to a Naked Lady?</i>	X		United Artists Corp.
	<i>Sex on the Beach</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>The Erotic Three</i>	X		Grand National Pictures
	<i>My Bed Is Not For Sleeping</i>	X		E.J. Fancey Prods
	<i>Love Circle</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>Love Is a Splendid Illusion</i>	X		No distributor listed
	<i>Love 65</i>	X		Antony Balch
	<i>Love and Anger</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>Love Variations</i>	X		Tigon Pictures
	<i>Love and Marriage</i>	X		No distributor listed
	<i>Lovers and Other Strangers</i>	AA		Cinerama Ltd
	<i>First Love</i>	AA		U.M.C. Ltd
	<i>Pussycat Pussycat I Love You</i>	X		United Artists Corp
	<i>Sex, Love and Marriage</i>	X	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Inga – I Love Lust</i>	X	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Swedish Love Play</i>	X	Y	Crispin Films
	<i>A Touch of Love</i>	AA		British Lion Film Corp
	<i>The Vampire Lovers</i>	X	Y	Hammer Film Prods
	<i>My Lover, My Son</i>	X		MGM Pictures
	<i>The Music Lovers</i>	X		Russ Films

	<i>Lust for a Vampire</i>	X		Warner Home Video
	<i>Girls for Pleasure</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Groupie Girl</i>	X		Salon Prods
	<i>There's a Girl in My Soup</i>	X		Columbia Pictures Corp
	<i>A Very Curious Girl</i>	X	Y	Rank Film Dists
	<i>Twisted Girls</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>European Striptease</i>	X	Y	Butchers Film Service
	<i>Virgin and the Gypsy</i>	AA	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Do You Want to Remain a Virgin Forever?</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Run Virgin Run</i>	X	Y	SF Films
1971	<i>Sex Is Not For Virgins</i>	X	Y	SF Films Dist
	<i>Sex Isn't Sin</i>	X	Y	Richard Shulman Ltd
	<i>Sex Explosion</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>Sex in the Classroom</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Sex Service</i>	X		Butchers Film Service
	<i>Sex Clinic</i>	X		Target International Films
	<i>The Sextroverts</i>	X	Y	SF Films Dist
	<i>The Sex Nest</i>	X	Y	Richard Schulman
	<i>Sex and the Vampire</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>How to Succeed With Sex</i>	X		Cinecenta
	<i>Lust For Sex</i>	X		Aphrodite Films
	<i>S For Sex/ Forbidden Seduction</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>Forbidden Seduction</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>Dead Sexy</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>Sweet and Sexy</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>Wild Willing and Sexy</i>	X	Y	SF Films Dist
	<i>Midsummer Sex</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Nude as a Trap</i>	X	Y	Supreme Film Dists
	<i>Naked and Violent</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>The Naked Countess</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>So Much Naked Tenderness</i>	X	Y	Grand National Film Dist
	<i>Bedroom Mazurka</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists ltd
	<i>Play the Game or Leave the Bed</i>	X		SF Films Dist
	<i>Love Me, Baby, Love Me</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>Love Is a Four Letter Word</i>	X	Y	Richard Shulman Ltd
	<i>Love Me Love My Wife</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films Ltd
	<i>Love Story</i>	AA		Paramount Pictures

	<i>The Love Pill</i>	X	Y	Target International Films
	<i>The Love Machine</i>	X	Y	Columbia-Warner Dists
	<i>Anatomy of Love</i>	X		SF Films Dist
	<i>Nobody Ordered Love</i>	X	Y	World Arts media
	<i>B.S. I Love You</i>	X		20 th Century Fox
	<i>A Strange Love Affair</i>	X		New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Take Me, Love Me</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>I Love My Wife</i>	X		Rank Film Dists
	<i>Lions Love</i>	X		Contemporary Films
	<i>Games That Lovers Play</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Lust for Sex</i>	X		Aphrodite Films
	<i>Dearest Love (Le soufflé au coeur)</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Girl Who Couldn't Say No</i>	AA		London Screenplays
	<i>Girl Stroke Boy</i>	X		Virgin Films
	<i>A Nice Girl Like Me</i>	AA		Avco Embassy
	<i>A Date With a Lonely Girl</i>	AA		Paramount Pictures
	<i>Take Some Girls</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>Good Little Girls</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>The Yes Girls</i>	X		Miracle Films
	<i>Virgin on the Verge</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>Part-Time Virgin</i>	X		Richard Shulman Ltd
	<i>School For Virgins</i>	X	Y	Monarch Film Corp
	<i>Diary of a Half Virgin</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
1972	<i>Sex Under the Bed</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Sex Is My Game</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>Sexy Confessions</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>Blue Sextet</i>	X	Y	Grand National Pictures
	<i>I Am Sexy</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>The Importance of Being Sexy/ The Hippie Girls/ Loving and Laughing</i>	X	Y	A. Balch Films Ltd
	<i>Sex in the Office</i>	X	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Sex Obsessed</i>	X	Y	Constantine Films
	<i>Sex in the Snow</i>	X	Y	Chilton Films
	<i>Sex and the Other Woman</i>	X	Y	Salon Prods
	<i>Sexy Susan Knows How</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Sex</i>	X	Y	United Artists Corp.

	<i>You Can't Run Away From Sex</i>	X		No distributor listed
	<i>Hot Bed of Sex</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>Nude Vampire</i>	X	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Where Are you Going All Naked?</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>Erotic Fantasies</i>	X		Target International Films
	<i>Erotic Love Games</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>The Erotic Adventures of Siegfried</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Sex Under the Bed</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Danish Bed and Board</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
	<i>Two Girls in my Bed</i>	X		New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Love Under 17</i>	X	Y	Butchers Film Services
	<i>Love Film</i>	AA		Curzon Film Dists
	<i>Love in the Afternoon</i>	AA		Gala Film Dists
	<i>The Love Box</i>	X		No distributor listed
	<i>The Loves of a French Pussycat</i>	X		Chilton Films
	<i>The Love Ban</i>	AA	Y	British Lion Film Corp
	<i>Nathalie After Love</i>	X		No distributor listed
	<i>Freedom For Love</i>	X	Y	Gemini Films
	<i>Human Love</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>Moral Love</i>	X	Y	A. Balch Films Ltd
	<i>Virgin Lovers</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>The Last of the Red Hot Lovers</i>	X		Paramount Film Service
	<i>The Lustful Vicar</i>	X	Y	Mondial Films
	<i>Girls Most Likely To...</i>	X	Y	Doverton Films
	<i>The Wild Damned Girl</i>	X	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Au Pair Girls</i>	X	Y	No distributor listed
	<i>Swedish Fly Girls</i>	X		New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Two Girls in my Bed</i>	X		New Realm Entertainments
	<i>The Seduction of Inga</i>	X		No distributor listed
	<i>Virgin Witch</i>	X		No distributor listed
	<i>Virgin Lovers</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>The Virgin and the Soldier</i>	X		SF Film Dist
	<i>Unsatisfied Virgins</i>	X		New Realm Entertainments
1973	<i>Sex Life in a Convent</i>	X	Y	Grand National Film Dist

<i>Sex Shop</i>	X	Y	Gala Film Dists
<i>Sex is Beautiful</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
<i>Sex is the Name of the Game</i>	X	Y	Columbia-Warner Dists
<i>Sex Games</i>	X	Y	Chilton Films
<i>Sex of Their Bodies</i>	X	Y	Mark Associates
<i>Sex After Six</i>	X	Y	Mark Associates
<i>Sex Memorandum</i>	X		Cinecenta Film Dist
<i>Sex Love and Murder</i>	X		No distributor listed
<i>Love Hungry Girls</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
<i>The Sex Victims</i>	X		Border Films
<i>The Sex Thief</i>	X	Y	Ocean Films
<i>Sexy Sinners</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
<i>Sexual Desires of Women</i>	X		Gemini Films
<i>Sexy Darlings</i>	X	Y	A. Balch Films Ltd
<i>The Sex Connection</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
<i>The Sex Life of a Female Private Eye</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
<i>Body Sex</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
<i>No Sex Please, We're British</i>	A		Columbia-Warner Dists
<i>Psycho Sex Fiend</i>	X	Y	Variety Film Dists
<i>Hungry For Sex</i>	X	Y	SF Films Dist
<i>Doctor in the Nude</i>	X		A. Balch Films Ltd
<i>Erotic Witchcraft</i>	X	Y	Gemini Films
<i>The Erotic Adventures of Zorro</i>	X	Y	Counsellor Films
<i>Erotic Blue</i>	X	Y	Border Films
<i>Bed Partners</i>	X	Y	Mark Associates
<i>Invitation to Bed</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta
<i>Soft Beds, Hard Battles</i>	X		Fox-Rank
<i>Sex Mad/ I Am Frigid... Why?/ She Should have Stayed in Bed</i>	X	Y	Border Films
<i>Love Me My Way</i>	X		Richard Shulman Ltd
<i>Love Is Only a Word</i>	AA	Y	New Realm Entertainments
<i>Love Play</i>	X	Y	Chilton Films
<i>Love Passion and Pleasure</i>	X		Mark Associates
<i>Love Hungry Girls</i>	X		No distributor listed
<i>The Lovers!</i>	A		British Lion Film Corp
<i>The Love Hate</i>	X		A. Balch Films Ltd
<i>Love-Making – Hot Style</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
<i>Love Hungry Girls</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
<i>Blume in Love</i>	X		Columbia-Warner
<i>Hotel of Free Love</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films

	<i>Master of Love</i>	X		Sirius Film Prods
	<i>Language of Love</i>	X		Grand National Film Dist
	<i>Versatile Lovers</i>	X		Mark Associates
	<i>Lusty Wives of Canterbury</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta
	<i>Black Girl</i>	AA		Cinerama Releasing (UK)
	<i>A Gorgeous Bird Like Me</i>	X		Gala Film Dists
	<i>Carry On Girls</i>	A	Y	Peter Rogers Prods
	<i>Love Hungry Girls</i>	X		No distributor listed
	<i>Most Girls Will</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Sex Hungry Girls</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>Virgin Doll</i>	X		Intercontinental Films
	<i>The Reluctant Virgin</i>	X	Y	Butchers Film Service
1974	<i>Sex and the Lonely Woman</i>	X	Y	Ember Films
	<i>Sex or Bust</i>	X	Y	Titan Film Dists
	<i>Sex and the Animals</i>	AA		Harold Baim Ltd
	<i>Sex For Free</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Sex Scene</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>Sex is For Pleasure</i>	X	Y	Gemini Films
	<i>Sex School For Lonely Husbands</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>Sex Without Love</i>	X	Y	Target International Films
	<i>Sex Quartet</i>	X	Y	Carnaby Pictures
	<i>Sex School For Men Only</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>The Sex Symbol</i>	AA		Columbia-Warner Dists
	<i>Sexier Than Sex</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>Confessions of a Sex Maniac</i>	X		Oppidan (UK) Ltd
	<i>Sexplay</i>	X	Y	Atlantic Film Dists
	<i>Sexy Relation</i>	X		Eagle Films
	<i>The Sexy Virgin</i>	X	Y	Gemini Films
	<i>Sextime in Paris</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Sexual Desires</i>	X		London International Film Dists
	<i>ABC of Sex</i>	X		Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>Naked Sex</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>Le Sexe Nu</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>Before and After Sex</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Cat Dance of Sex</i>	X		Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>Till Sex Us Do Part</i>	X	Y	Eagle Films Ltd
	<i>The Golden Saloon of Sex</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist

<i>I Could Never Have Sex With Any Man Who Has So Little Regard For My Husband</i>	AA		British Lion Film Corp
<i>In Love With Sex</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
<i>Is There Sex After Marriage</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
<i>More Sex Please</i>	AA		Border Films
<i>Oversexed</i>	X		Cinecenta Film Dist
<i>Some Like It Sexy</i>	X		Target International Films
<i>Hot and Sexy</i>	X	Y	Chilton Films
<i>Naked Are the Cheaters</i>	X		No distributor listed
<i>Hot and Naked</i>	X		No distributor listed
<i>Erotic Bed</i>	X	Y	Border Films
<i>Erotic Diary</i>	X		Cinecenta Film Dist
<i>Erotic Dreams</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
<i>Erotic Quartet/ The Lickerish Quartet</i>	X	Y	Carnaby Pictures
<i>Count Dracula's Erotic Love</i>	X	Y	Mark Associates
<i>Tales of Erotica</i>	X	Y	Border Films
<i>Bed Bunnies</i>	X		Cinecenta Film Dist
<i>Bed Career</i>	X	Y	Carnaby Pictures
<i>Bed Champions</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
<i>Bedtime With Rosie</i>	AA		London International Film Dists
<i>Red Hot in Bed</i>	X	Y	Butchers Film Service
<i>The Sinful Bed</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
<i>Love Me Gently</i>	X	Y	Butchers Film Service
<i>Love Vampire Style</i>	AA		Border Films
<i>Love Makers</i>	X		Titan Film Dists
<i>Love Slave of the Islands</i>	X	Y	Chilton Films
<i>The Love Keys</i>	X		No distributor listed
<i>Lovelier Than Love</i>	X		No distributor listed
<i>Love in a Woman's Prison</i>	X	Y	Eagle Films
<i>Black Love</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
<i>Dance of Love</i>	X		Cinecenta Film Dist
<i>Swedish Love Games</i>	X		Atlantic Film Dists
<i>Free Love</i>	X	Y	Border Films
<i>When Love is Lust</i>	X		Chilton Films
<i>A Wrong Way to Love</i>	X		Paladin Films
<i>Girls in Love</i>	X		Carnaby Films

	<i>Making Love</i>	AA		Slater Films
	<i>Design For Love</i>	X	Y	Doverton Films
	<i>Dracula's Virgin Lovers</i>	X	Y	Mark Associates
	<i>All Lovers are Strangers/ Escort Girls</i>	X	Y	Donwin Prods
	<i>The Lustful Amazon</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta
	<i>When Love is Lust</i>	X		Chilton Films
	<i>Girl From Hong Kong</i>	AA	Y	LMG Tigon
	<i>Secrets of a Call Girl</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Voodoo Girl</i>	X		International Film Theatre
	<i>Beach Girls Report</i>	X	Y	Chilton Films
	<i>Resort Girls</i>	X		Chilton Films
	<i>Danger Girls</i>	A		Pan-European Films
	<i>When Girls Undress</i>	X	Y	A. Balch Films Ltd
	<i>Hot Girls</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>I Like Girls Who Do</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Mama's Dirty Girls</i>	X	Y	A. Balch Films Ltd
	<i>Seduction</i>	X	Y	Gemini Films
	<i>Virgin Wives</i>	X		Atlantic Film Dists
	<i>The Blood Virgin</i>	X		New Realm Entertainments
	<i>The Sexy Virgin</i>	X	Y	Gemini Films
	<i>Twenty Four Hour Virgin</i>	X		Target International Films
	<i>We Are No Virgins</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
1975	<i>Sex Crazy</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Sex Adventures of the Three Musketeers</i>	X		Amanda Films
	<i>Sex Orgy</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Sex Express</i>	X	Y	Variety Film Dists
	<i>Sex at the Olympics</i>	X	Y	Chilton Films
	<i>Sexy Lovers</i>	X	Y	Gemini Films
	<i>The Sexplorer/ Diary of a Space Virgin</i>	X	Y	Butchers Film Service
	<i>Sexbury Tales</i>	X		Border Films
	<i>Sexually Yours</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Sexy Penelope</i>	X	Y	Target International Films
	<i>They Love Sex</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>There's No Sex Like Snow Sex</i>	X		Miracle Films

	<i>Hot Sex in Bangkok</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>Jungle Sex</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>Naked Over the Fence</i>	AA	Y	Variety Film Dists
	<i>More Sexy Canterbury Tales</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>The Naked Man</i>	X	Y	Focus Films
	<i>Naked Revenge/ Cry For Me Billy</i>	X		Scotia Barber
	<i>Erotic Inferno</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>Bed of a Thousand Pleasures</i>	X	Y	Focus Films
	<i>The Adulteress in Love</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>And Now My Love</i>	X		Avco Embassy
	<i>French Love</i>	X	Y	Gemini Films
	<i>Hot Acts of Love</i>	X		English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>A Girl Called Jules</i>	X		Butchers Film Service
	<i>Lusty Lovers</i>	X	Y	English Film Co. Ltd
	<i>Lust and Desire</i>	X	Y	Miracle Films
	<i>The Lust Seekers</i>	X	Y	Mark Associates
	<i>Design for Lust</i>	X	Y	Doverton Films
	<i>A Girl Called Jules</i>	X		Butchers Film Service
	<i>Girls Come First</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Girls for Rent</i>	X	Y	Nationwide Dist
	<i>That Girl is a Tramp</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta
	<i>Highway Girl</i>	AA		Focus F. Dists
	<i>Naughty Girls</i>	X	Y	Border Films
	<i>Play Girls</i>	X	Y	Cinecenta Film Dist
	<i>The Centrefold Girls</i>	X	Y	Nationwide Dist
	<i>Swedish Playgirls</i>	X		Atlantic Film Dists
	<i>Fugitive Girls</i>	X	Y	Grand National Film Dist
	<i>Cannibal Girls</i>	X		Target International Films
	<i>How to Seduce a Woman</i>	AA		Fox-Rank
	<i>Confessions of a Teenage Virgin</i>	X	Y	Mark Associates
	<i>Enter the Seven Virgins</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments
	<i>Kung Fu Virgins</i>	X	Y	New Realm Entertainments

Table 5.1

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NON-BRITISH OR U.S. ENTERTAINMENT FILMS REVIEWED BETWEEN NOVEMBER 11, 1959 AND NOVEMBER 9, 1960

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	ORIGINAL TITLE	ALTERNATIVE TITLE	DIRECTOR	PRODUCTION COMPANIES	UK DISTRIBUTOR	CERT.
Argentina Total: 1 title	<i>La Caida</i>	<i>The Fall</i>	Leopold Torre Nilsson	Argentine Sono	Curzon	X
Brazil Total: 1 title	<i>Passion in the Wilderness</i>		Zygmunt Sulistrowski	Filmes Internacionais do Brasil	E.J. Fancey	A
Czechoslovakia Total: 1 title	<i>Vlci Jama</i>	<i>The Wolf Trap</i>	Jiri Weiss	Ceskoslovensky Film	Contemporary	A
Denmark Total: 1 title	<i>Ung Koerlighed</i>	<i>Pleasures Are Paid For</i>	Andre Rodriguez	Barfodfilm	Cross Channel	X
E. Germany Total: 1 title	<i>Zwischenfall in Benderath</i>	<i>Racial Incident</i>	János Veiczi	DEFA	Contemporary	U
France Total: 23 titles	<i>A Pied, A Cheval et un Spoutnik</i>	<i>Hold Tight for the Satellite</i>	Jean Dreville	Films Jean-Jacques Vital/ Régina, Filmsonor (Paris)	Rank/ Intercontinental	U
	<i>Ascenseur Pour L'Echafaud</i>	<i>Lift to the Scaffold</i>	Louise Malle	Nouvelles Éditions de Films/ Lux Compagnie Cinématographique de France	Mondial	A

	<i>Charmants Garçons</i>		Henri Decoin	Sirius	Connoisseur	A
	<i>Le Dejeuner Sur L'Herbe</i>	<i>Lunch on the Grass</i>	Jean Renoir	Compagnie Jean Renoir	Mondial	X
	<i>L'Eau Vive</i>	<i>The Girl and the River</i>	François Villiers	Les Films Caravelle	British Lion	U
	<i>L'Ecole des Cocottes</i>	<i>In Six Easy Lessons</i>	Jacqueline Audry	Productions Metropolitaines de Films	Mondial	X
	<i>Faibles Femmes</i>	<i>Women are Weak</i>	Michel Boisrond	Transcontinental Films	Paramount	A
	<i>Les Fanatiques</i>	<i>The Fanatics</i>	Alex Joffé	Cinégraph, Coopérative Générale du Cinéma Français/ Films Régent	British Lion	A
	<i>Pardonnez nos Offenses</i>	<i>Forgive Us Our Trespases</i>	Robert Hossein	Hoche Productions/ Eden Cinematografica/ Iéna	Films de France	X
	<i>Les Quatre Cents Coups</i>	<i>The 400 Blows</i>	François Truffaut	SEDIF/ Les Films du Carrosse	Curzon	A
	<i>L'eau à la Bouche</i>	<i>The Game of Love</i>	Jacques Doniol-Valcroze	Les Films de la Pléiade	Gala	X
	<i>Les Grandes Familles</i>		Denys de La Patellière	Filmsonor (Paris)/ Intermondia-Films	Cross-Channel	A
	<i>Les Heures Chaudes</i>	<i>Hot Hours</i>	Louis Félix	K.L.F. Productions	Miracle	X
	<i>Huis Clos</i>	<i>Vicious Circle</i>	Jacqueline Audry	Les Films Marceau	Mondial	X
	<i>Julie la Rousse</i>	<i>Julie the Redhead</i>	Claude Boissol	Films Matignon/ Metzger et Woog	Miracle	A

	<i>Le Mariage de Figaro</i>	<i>The Marriage of Figaro</i>	Jean Mayer	Les Productions Cinématographiques (LPC)	Connoisseur	A
	<i>Voici le Temps des Assassins</i>	<i>Murder a la Carte</i>	Julien Duvivier	Compagnie Industrielle et Commerciale Cinématographe/ Films Agiman/ La Société Nouvelle Pathé-Cinéma (Paris)	British Lion	X
	<i>O.S.S. 117 N'Est Pas Mort</i>	<i>O.S.S. 117 Is Not Dead</i>	Jean Sacha	Paris Globe Omnium Film	Eros	A
	<i>Tendre et Violente Elisabeth</i>	<i>Passionate Affair</i>	Henri Decoin	Cérès Films, Société Nouvelle des Etablissements Gaumont/ Marly	Unifilms (London)	X
	<i>Péché de Jeunesse</i>	<i>Sins of Youth</i>	Louis Duchesne	Contact Organisation (Paris)	Gala	X
	<i>Pickpocket</i>		Robert Bresson	Agnès Delahaie Productions	Mondial	A
	<i>Le Triporteur</i>	<i>The Screwball</i>	Jack Pinoteau	Films du Cyclope	Films de France	U
	<i>Si Versailles M'Était Conté</i>	<i>Versailles</i>	Sacha Guitry	C.L.M./ Cocinex	Mondial	A
Greece Total: 1 title	<i>Agioupa</i>	<i>Bed of Grass</i>	Gregg Tallas	Parnassus	Gala	X
Italy Total: 10 titles	<i>Afrodite dea Dell'Amore</i>	<i>Slave Women of Corinth</i>	Mario Bonnard	Schermi Associati	Archway	U

	<i>La Grande Speranza</i>	<i>Torpedo Zone</i>	Duilio Coletti	Excelsa Film	Archway	U
	<i>Londra Chiama Polo Nord</i>	<i>The House of Intrigue</i>	Duilio Coletti	Excelsa Film	Archway	A
	<i>Luci del Varieta</i>	<i>Lights of Variety</i>	Alberto Lattuada, Federico Fellini	Capitolium	Gala	A
	<i>Vite Perdute</i>	<i>Lost Lives</i>	Adelchi Bianchi, Roberto Mauri	O.S.C.A.R. Film	Archway	A
	<i>I Soliti Ignoti</i>	<i>Persons Unknown</i>	Mario Monicelli	Lux Film (Rome)/ Vides Cinematografica/ Cinecittà Italiana Stabilimenti Cinematografici	Archway	A
	<i>La Risaia</i>	<i>Rice Girls</i>	Raffaello Matarazzo	Ponti-De Laurentiis, Excelsa Film	Mondial	A
	<i>Il Tetto</i>	<i>The Roof</i>	Vittorio De Sica	A Vittorio De Sica Production	Gala	A
	<i>L'Uomo di Paglia</i>	<i>Seducer - Man of Straw</i>	Pietro Germi	Vides Cinematografica/ Lux Film (Rome)	Mayfair	A
	<i>I, Vampiri</i>	<i>Lust of the Vampire</i>	Ricardo Freda	Athena Cinematografica/ Titanus	Gala	X
Japan Total: 6 titles	<i>Arashi O Yobu Otoko</i>	<i>The Stormy Man</i>	Umeji Inoue	Nikkatsu	Gala	A
	<i>Ukiyo Buro</i>	<i>The Bath Harem</i>	Keigo Kimura	Shochiku	Gala	X
	<i>Bijo To Ekitai-Ningen</i>	<i>The H-Man</i>	Inoshiro Honda	Toho	Columbia	X

	<i>Biruma No Tategoto</i>	<i>The Burmese Harp</i>	Kim Ichikawa	Nikkatsu	Contemporary	A
	<i>Kindan no Suna</i>	<i>Black Nets</i>	Manao Horiuchi	Shochiku	Gala	A
	<i>Waga Ai</i>	<i>When a Woman Loves</i>	Heinosuke Gosho	Shochiku	Gala	A
Mexico Total: 4 titles	<i>Ensayo de un Crimen</i>	<i>The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz</i>	Luis Bunuel	Alianza Cinematografica	Connoisseur	X
	<i>La Flecha Envenenada</i>	<i>The Poisoned Arrow</i>	Rafael Baledon	Alameda	Rank	U
	<i>Flor de Mayo</i>	<i>A Mexican Affair</i>	Roberto Gavaldon	La Compania Cnematomografica Latino Americana/Estudios Clasa	British Lion/ Britannia	A
	<i>Un Mundo Nuevo</i>	<i>A New World</i>	Renée Cardona	Cnematomografica Latino Americana	Rank	U
Poland Total: 1 title	<i>Pokelenie</i>	<i>A Generation</i>	Andrzej Wajda	Film Polski	Contemporary	A
USSR Total: 3 titles	<i>Sudba Cheloveka</i>	<i>Destiny of a Man</i>	Sergei Bondarchuk	Mosfilm	Rank/ Sovexportfilm	A
	<i>Nastasia Filipovna</i>	<i>The Idiot: Part One</i>	Ivan Pyriev	Mosfilm	Sovexport	A
	<i>Ivan Groznii (II)</i>	<i>Ivan the terrible - Part Two: The Boyars' Plot</i>	Sergei M. Eisenstein	Mosfilm/ Alma-Ata Studios	Contemporary	U

Spain Total: 2 titles	<i>Un Hecho Violento</i>	<i>Camp of Violence</i>	Jose Maria Forque	Nervion, July	Gala	X
	<i>Saeta del Ruisenör</i>	<i>Flamenco</i>	Antonio del Amo	Argos-Suevia, June	Gala	U
Sweden Total: 2 titles	<i>Kvinnors Våntan</i>	<i>Waiting Women</i>	Ingmar Bergman	Svensk Filmindustri, March	Cross Channel	X
	<i>Lek Pa Regnbagen</i>	<i>The Rainbow Game</i>	Lars-Erik Kjellgren	Svensk Filmindustri, August	Cross-Channel	X
W. Germany Total: 11 titles	<i>Verbrechen Nach Schulschluss</i>	<i>After School</i>	Alfred Vohrer	Ultra Films	Gala Film Distributors Ltd	X
	<i>Solange das Herz Schlägt</i>	<i>As Long as the Heart Beats</i>	Alfred Weidernmann	Ufa	New Realm	U
	<i>Hunde Wollt ihr Ewig Leben</i>	<i>Battle Inferno</i>	Frank Wisbar	Deutsche Film Hansa	British Lion Film Corp	A
	<i>Das Nachtlokal zum Silbermond</i>	<i>Caverns of Vice</i>	Wolfgang Glück	Rex-Film/ Schönbrunn-Film	Gala Film Distributors Ltd	X
	<i>Gefährdete Mädchen</i>	<i>Dolls of Vice</i>	Wolfgang Glück	Rex-Film	Gala Film Distributors Ltd	X
	<i>Liebe Kann Wie Gift Sein</i>	<i>Girl of Shame</i>	Veit Harlan	Arca-Film	Miracle Films	X
	<i>Das Mädchen Rosemarie</i>	<i>The Girl Rosemarie</i>	Rolf Thiele	Roxy-Film (Munich)	Small Films	X
	<i>Herrscher Ohne Krone</i>	<i>King in Shadow</i>	Harald Braun	Bavaria-Film	British Lion Film Corp	A

TABLE 5.2
INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTIONS
 MFB VOL. XXVII NOS. 313-323
 ENTERTAINMENT FILMS REVIEWED BETWEEN NOVEMBER 11, 1959 AND NOVEMBER 9, 1960

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN	ORIGINAL TITLE	ALTERNATIVE TITLE	DIRECTOR	PRODUCTION COMPANIES	UK DISTRIBUTOR	CERT.
Italy/ France/ USA	<i>Anna di Brooklyn</i>	<i>Anna of Brooklyn</i>	Reginald Denham, Carlo Lastricati	Circeo Cinemtagorafica/ France Cinema Productions	Columbia	U
Italy/ USA	<i>Annibale</i>	<i>Hannibal</i>	Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia, Edgar G. Ulmer	Liber Film	Warner-Pathé	U
Italy/France	<i>La Battaglia di Maratona</i>	<i>The Giant of Marathon</i>	Jacques Tourneur	Titanus-Galatea-Lux- Lyre	MGM	U
Italy/ France	<i>I Battellieri del Volga</i>	<i>The Boatmen</i>	W. Tourjansky	Transmode-Rialto/ Fides (Paris)	Rank/ Welbeck	U
Italy/ France	<i>Belle Ma Povere</i>	<i>Irrestible</i>	Dino Risi	Titanus/ Franco-London	Gala	U
France/ Italy/ Brazil	<i>Orfeu Negro</i>	<i>Black Orpheus</i>	Marcel Camus	Dispatfilm (Paris)- Gemma Cinematografica (Rome)-Tupan Filmes (Sao Paolo)	R. D. Purie/ Curzon	A

W. Germany/ Italy	<i>Kanonenserenade</i>	<i>Il Capitano</i>	Wolfgang Staudte	Bamberger/Atlantisfilm/ UFA	Gala	U
Italy/ France	<i>Cartagine in Fiamme</i>	<i>Carthage in Flames</i>	Carmine Gallone	Lux-Gallone (Rome)- Lux Cie Cnematographique de France (Paris)	Rank	U
France/ Italy	<i>Voulez-Vous Danser Avec Moi?</i>	<i>Come Dance With Me</i>	Michel Boisrond	Francos Film Vides (Rome)	United Artists	X
Italy/ France	<i>I Cosacchi</i>	<i>The Cossacks</i>	Giorgio Rivalta	Vanguard-Faro- Explorer-C.F.P.C.	Rank/Universal- International	U
France/ Italy	<i>Jeux Dangereux</i>	<i>Dangerous Games</i>	Pierre Chenal	Metzger et Woog/Films du Zodiaque/Eden (Paris)-Cino del Duca (Rome)	Unifilms (London)	A
France/ Italy	<i>Du Rififi Chez les Femmes</i>	<i>Rififi and the Women</i>	Alex Joffe	Productions de l'Etoile/Dismage (Paris)- Transalpina/Techno Stampa (Rome)	Regal International	X
Italy/ France	<i>Ercole e la Regina di Lidia</i>	<i>Hercules Unchained</i>	Pietro Francisci	Lux-Galatea/Lux Compagnie Cinematographique de France	Warner-Pathé	U

France/ Italy	<i>La Main Chaude</i>	<i>Eternal Ecstasy</i>	Gerard Oury	Franco-London/Les Films Gibe (Paris)-Mira Film (Rome)	Gala	X
France/ Italy	<i>Les Yeux sans Visage</i>	<i>Eyes Without a Face</i>	Georges Franju	Champs-Élysées-Lux	Miracle	X
France/ Italy	<i>La Femme et le Pantin</i>	<i>A Woman Like Satan</i>	Julien Duviver	Societe Nouvelle Pathe-Gray Films (Paris)-Dear Films (Rome)	United Artists	X
France/ Mexico	<i>La Fievre Monte a el Pao</i>	<i>Republic of Sin</i>	Luis Bunuel	Groups des Quatre (Paris)-Filmex (Mexico)	Gala	X
Italy/ USA	<i>Jovanka e L'Altri</i>	<i>Five Branded Women</i>	Martin Ritt	DeLaurentis	Paramount	A
Japan/ USA	<i>Gigantis The Fire Monster</i>		Motoyoshi Odo	Toho/Warner Bros.	Eros	A
Italy/ USA	<i>Il Terrore dei Barbari</i>	<i>Goliath and the Barbarians</i>	Carlo Campogalliani	Standard/American International	Anglo Amalgamated	U
France/ Italy	<i>La Jument Verte</i>	<i>The Green Mare's Nest</i>	Claude Autant-Lara	S.N.E.G./Sopac Films (Paris)-Zebra Film (Rome)	Cross Channel	X
France/ Japan	<i>Hiroshima Mon Amour</i>		Alain Resnais	Argos-Como-Pathe Overseas/Daiei	Gala	X
W. Germany/ USA	<i>I Aim at the Stars</i>		J. Lee Thompson	Morningside Worldwide/Fama	Columbia	U

Italy/ France	<i>Belle ma Povere</i>	<i>Irresistible</i>	Dino Risi	Titanus/Franco-London	Gala	U
W. Germany/ Italy	<i>Labyrinth</i>		Rolf Thiele	UFA/Cei-Incom	Gala	X
Italy/ Spain/ Monaco	<i>Gli Ultimi Giorni di Pompeii</i>	<i>The Last Days of Pompeii</i>	Mario Bonnard	Cineproduzioni (Rome)-Procusa (Madrid)-Transocean (Monaco)	United Artists	A
W. Germany/ Italy	<i>Liane - Die Weisse Sklavin</i>	<i>Liane - White Slave</i>	Hermann Leitner	Arca (Berlin)-Arca Cinematografica (Rome)	Anglo Amalgamated/ Gala	U
Italy/ France	<i>La Ragazza del Palio</i>	<i>The Love Specialist</i>	Luigi Zampa	G.E.S.I. (Rome)-Cite Film (Paris)	Grand National	U
GB/ Sweden	<i>The Man in the Middle</i>		Peter Bourne	Frejafilm	Archway	U
France/ Italy	<i>Marie des Isles</i>	<i>The Wild and the Wanton</i>	Georges Combret	Radius/Tibre (Rome)	Cross Channel	A
Sweden/ GB	<i>Vildmarkssommar</i>	<i>Matti</i>	Bertil Haglund	Nordisk Tonefilm/ Countryman	Eros	U
France/ Belgium	<i>La Nuit des Traqués</i>	<i>Men Without Morals</i>	Bernard Roland	Paris-Élysées/Sofradis/Galiera Films (Paris)-Belga Films (Brussels)	Miracle	X
Italy/ France/ W. Germany	<i>Nel Segno di Roma</i>	<i>Sign of the Gladiator</i>	Guido Brigone	Glomer Film-Lux Film/ Societe Cinematographique Lire/ Telefilm	Anglo Amalgamated	U

Italy/ France	<i>La Notte Brava</i>	<i>Night Heat</i>	Mauro Bolognini	AJACE/ Franco-London	Gala	X
Italy/ France	<i>La Notti di Lucrezia Borgia</i>	<i>Nights of Temptation</i>	Sergio Grieco	Musa Cinematografica (Rome)-Fides (Paris)	Eros	A
France/ USSR	<i>Normandie-Niemen</i>		Jean Dreville	Franco-London/ Alkam (Paris)-Mosfilm (Moscow)	Films de France	U
Italy/ France/ GB	<i>Ombre Bianche</i>	<i>The Savage Innocents</i>	Nicholas Ray, Baccio Bandini	Magic Film/Playart/Gray Films/S.N. Pathe Cinema/Joseph Janni	Rank	A
France/ Italy	<i>Paris-Palace Hotel</i>		Henri Verneuil	Speva/Francinex (Paris)-Rizzoli (Rome)	Rank	A
Italy/ Spain	<i>La Rivolta dei Gladiatori</i>	<i>Warrior and the Slave Girl</i>	Vittorio Cottafavi	Alexandra/Atenea	Columbia	U
USA/ Philippines	<i>The Scavengers</i>		John Cromwell	Lynn-Romero	New Realm	A
E. Germany/ Bulgaria	<i>Sterne</i>	<i>Stars</i>	Konrad Wolf	VEB/DEFA-Bulgarian Feature Film Studio, Sofia	Plato	A
France/ Italy	<i>Tamango</i>		John Berry	Films du Cyclope/DA.MA. Cinematografica	Columbia/ Vitalite	A

USA/ Sweden	<i>Terror in the Midnight Sun</i>		Virgil Vogel	Gustaf Unger Films (California)-AB Fortuna (Sweden)	Gala	X
USA/ GB/ Spain	<i>The Three Worlds of Gulliver</i>		Jack Sher	Morningside	Columbia	U
Italy/ France	<i>Venezia, La Luna e Tu</i>	<i>Venice, The Moon and You</i>	Dino Risi	Titanus-S.G.C.	Gala	A
Total: 45 titles						
Totals by European Country						
Italy: 33	France: 29	W. Germany: 5	Spain: 3	Sweden: 3	Bulgaria: 1	
E. Germany: 1	Belgium: 1	USSR: 1	Monaco: 1			

Interview Transcripts

The following interviews have been transcribed from the original recordings. They have been edited for clarity and relevance to the main topic of conversation. Some information of a personal nature has been removed on request of the interviewee. Where films are discussed which are not otherwise mentioned in this thesis the details are given in brackets.

Michael Armstrong

15 April 2015

Michael Armstrong is a screenwriter and film director. Having had his first short film *The Image* (1969, UK: Border Film Productions, Negus-Fancey) produced by the Fanceys, he went to Austria at their request to direct *Mark of the Devil* (*Hexen bis aufs Blut gequält*, 1970, UK/ West Germany: HIFI-Stereo 70-KG), which was ultimately not distributed in the UK but proved hugely popular in the USA. Armstrong wrote and starred in the satirical feature *Eskimo Nell* (1975, Martin Campbell, UK: Salon Productions) based on his experiences with film producers and distributors.

AS – How well did you know the Fancey family?

MA – They had a big farm out in Sussex. Might have been Worthing. When I shot *The Hunt*, we went down there and were shooting on the woods around the farm. Possibly had stables. I was more bemused by Olive sitting on a tractor ploughing up a field, they were a nice, happy, lovely couple.

AS – None of the remaining family will talk to me!

MA – If you spoke to any of them you would be no wiser at the end of it. I worked with Border and knew them very well. I met E.J. occasionally when I went to New Realm and popped in, I knew Jack Grey in distribution. This is how I met them. My manager in those days was a woman who worked with Jack Grey and put me in touch with him. Jack Grey got me to go in to see Olive at Border with my script, that's how I got to know them. My initial encounters with Olive and Judith were very brusque, shall we say. I was a tender young innocent, but I persevered. When I finished *The Image* Judith put it together, and they called me and asked me to come in and fix it. Because I did fix it I was their golden boy, they adored me, I was a lost little lamb in those days, ready for the slaughter by certain people in the industry. When I went down to the farm to do *The Hunt*, I got to know them much better. They treated me like a son and they were delightful. They were devoted to each other and Judith was down there as well. It was like a real family when I was down there.

The Hunt was finished and went to fine cut, I was left alone. It ran at 20 minutes and it had to run at either 15 or 40 so they asked me to shoot another twenty minutes in an afternoon at Hampstead Heath. I said let me have a look and see. It will just be one person running around, I don't think it will hold for forty minutes. It was put on a shelf for me to come back to, some of it was in colour, it just sat there and I went off and did other films, other work, but I never went back. What happened to it I have no idea.

They made a lot of money, which might be one of the reasons they are not wanting to talk. You don't question people when you are in the business. You go in and love them

accordingly. The industry when I went in, and still is, is connected to questionable areas of financial... people in the industry are very non-judgemental, otherwise you would never get finance. They are personable, nice people, but what the hidden, secret depths of the Fanceys are I don't know and couldn't say. I do have to be careful. I heard that story (stabbing the accountant) A lot of these tales are bit like bigfoot stories. There's so much hiding and invention with all those people. The number of companies I know, especially in the accounts department, they cheerily went to prison for their beloved employers. I heard all sorts of various rumours. I wouldn't be surprised in those days if more accountants hadn't got stabbed. Things were shady on both sides.

Malcolm started to get into the video nasties. He was taken to court for distributing an uncut version of *Nightmares in a Damaged Brain*. Him and David Hamilton Grant.

AS – How well did you get on with John Trevelyan?

MA – Dear John Trevelyan, who was a very good friend of mine, I knew him very well, he was instrumental in my getting a first introduction to Tony Tenser. I used to go round, and he'd sit and smoke his Benson and Hedges and drink his whisky and regale me with all the stuff he'd cut out of films. He loved it all. He was a delicious rogue because he didn't believe in censorship, which is the perfect censor, really.

AS – He closes his book by saying he sees a time when censorship could be done away with.

MA – Yes, but it still isn't. The BBFC was set up by the business to protect them. After John it became a campaign of... James Ferman used to go round with the Festival of Light. I went to a thing at BAFTA. He showed this ten or twelve-minute show reel of all the bits he'd cut out. If you play twelve minutes and every shot is heads being blown off or what have you, and then you turn round and say, "And this is the kind of thing we're trying to protect your children from." Well even *Mark of the Devil* didn't have that much! Alex Walker stood up and had a screaming match and had to be evicted. Ferman was going around the country showing this stuff to show what a good job he was doing. Criminal!

AS – It's propaganda, isn't it?

MA – Beyond that! But John was lovely. He told me a wonderful story about Andy Warhol. I think it was *Flesh* (1968, Paul Morrissey, U.S.A.: Factory Films), it's the first one that went out on general release, and he set up a campaign, not in his own name, to get the Warhol film shown over here, for a variety of reasons. There was this screening in Tottenham Court Road, I think it was The Place or something like that. I think it was Bachoo Sen who got it. And John phoned the police, anonymously, saying a hardcore pornographic movie was being shown to the public. Dear old dum-dum coppers turn up dutifully and break down the thing, what have you, making sure no one sees, then

Trevelyan leaked that to the press. There was a huge outcry the result was that they passed it!

AS – Wasn't that when Trevelyan contacted Andy Warhol and persuaded him to pay the fine for the cinema owner?

MA – I think so. It was a set up to get the picture shown. He did an awful lot of good. Ken Russell, he had to take little bits out, but he passed anything, but *Mark of the Devil* was too much, even for John, and I never questioned him about it. He was on his way out.

AS – It was Stephen Murphy in the end, wasn't it?

MA – Yes, that's right. But John in his book somewhere, I haven't read it, but I think there's a passage where he says that *Mark of the Devil* was one of the worst examples he'd ever seen. But he was delightful, and was very in with all the people like the Fanceys, and the Tensors, all these areas. So, the Fanceys were able to get away with an awful lot when John was around.

AS – I've read a lot of the correspondence between them in the BBFC archive and it's really fascinating. He is always very friendly, even if they're cross about something being cut. He's very good with them.

MA – He was an incredibly personable man.

AS – Did you ever get to know Kenneth Rive?

MA – I never met Kenneth Rive. I knew of him. In that whole area there were people I may have been introduced to, but even with the sex films later on, I was never part of the gang. I only did one picture with Tudor Gates and Martin Campbell, *The Sex Thief* (1973, Martin Campbell, UK: Ocarina Films/ Drumbeat/ Rainbow (II)), but that, we'd never done sex films before. With Stanley Long I did *Eskimo Nell* (1975, Martin Campbell, UK: Salon Productions) and two of those *Adventures of*,³⁸⁹ I did other things, but that was about it really. Everyone assumes I was with David Grant and the usual suspects, but I wasn't. I wasn't that interested.

AS – It's probably just as well, particularly with David Grant, there's all kinds of rumours about him.

³⁸⁹ Michael Armstrong is credited for the screenplay of *Adventures of a Private Eye* (1977, Stanley Long, UK: Salon Productions), and as Associate Producer on *Adventures of a Taxi Driver* (1976, Stanley Long, UK: Salon Productions), in which he also appears as a customer.

MA – But we all knew each other. I wasn't part of that scene. I came out of legitimate film. The Fanceys were more or less on their way, fading around that time. E.J. was not around by the end, Adrienne was taking over more. The latter few times I popped into the office E.J. wasn't there. When Olive retired and all that went, the office just closed down. There's a story that somebody told me about him. Apparently E.J. was a distributor for 9.5mm pathoscope and they used to run matinee shows in Brighton and E.J. owned the rights. They used to have to go to his office in Leicester Square every time to get a copyright certificate and he always wanted cash. Everything was cash, everyone wanted cash. He later on sold the rights to this film to this guy for cash.

There were an awful lot of cash deals going on, left right and centre. A lot of the actors got cheques which were official, and the rest was cash. They were all doing cash, it was basically standard practice in that area, and probably carried on right the way through. This was how people made their money really. In a sense, nobody was being paid that much money on any of these, certainly the artists made very little money, so it was made up in kind usually, in other ways. Not for everybody, the people who came out of it the worst were the writers.

AS – As always.

MA – Oh really! I mean once I learned the trick, I'd heard of being ripped off but this was ridiculous. You had to turn round and say, "Now wait a minute" I had to advise people. One of the great tricks was they would pay you a little bit up front to write it and if they raised the money to make it they would pay you the rest. Very often they didn't and you never saw the money! But you'd put in six months' work!

AS – Was distribution where the money was? Was it the distributors who had the money?

MA – Yes. When Stanley set up Alpha with his brother he said, "I knew they'd ripped us off. I never knew how much." He said distribution was where the money is.

(Looking at a photo of men smiling to camera, from Adrienne Fancey's collection)

MA – These men have the look of "Don't trust me with money!" I'm trying to think what film this might be to do with. It could be *Harlequin* (1980, Simon Pincer, Australia: Farflight Investments/ Australian Film Commission/ West Australian Film Council). If I remember correctly David Hemmings directed that, and it starred Robert Powell. One or two of those people could have been connected. Gayle Hunnicot is in it. It's not a bad film. Everyone smoked then, it was standard. You'd go into a screening room and think "where's the screen? There's a light flickering over there, it must be the screen."

I used to have quite a lot of pictures and Alan Frank nicked it all off me. He was writing a book or something, in my innocent days, when nobody collected all this stuff, he said can I look at this and that, I had loads of material from all the films, pictures, and he said

I'll bring them back. I never saw them again. Years later he used to avoid me, guilt written on his face. It was years later David del Valle told me you should never trust anyone who writes books, they get your stuff and you never see them again. So I learned that lesson. All this material, we never kept anything, we threw it all away, nobody kept it. I was invited to a film festival and I couldn't understand who would know me. British exploitation cinema, we were the lowest of the low. We were the scum on the British film industry's foot! I thought it would be a twenty minute do and that was it, when I turned up there were queues out of the hotel and round the block! Gerry Anderson and Ray Harryhausen were there, these were all people we thought the general public had never heard of! There must have been more than a thousand people there. The audience knew more about me than I did: the line up for autographs! I was signing stuff, posters I'd never seen before, which were then being sold for three times the price. I had crates of that stuff that I'd just thrown out. We all had. It was just junk! That has built up. Now I'm used to it, it's grown and grown and grown. Now I'm a movie legend. It doesn't take much to become a legend in the movie business. You've just got to survive and become old enough. If you're rediscovered a few times you're automatically a legend.

Studios were throwing out films. In those days nobody ever thought, well I say nobody, the idea of everything lasting, or being considered art or worthwhile, even films like Bergman and so on, it was just BFI geeks. Films by people like Terry Fisher, you look at their work now and they were so skilled at what they did. I'm delighted, it's about time. Screenwriters were the most trodden on people ever. This is why I'm now publishing my own screenplays. Screenplay writing should be treated exactly the same as stage play writing, with equal rights because for all this time movie studios pay tuppence for a screenplay, and as far as they are concerned they owned it, and they rewrite it, they change it, they just hang on to it. Now in theatre you can't do that. The written word is the written word, and the play can be licensed but the copyright remains with the writer. Do what you want once we've been dead for fifty years! The point is that you pay a royalty for it.

AS – Writers seem to be lower down the rung than clapper-loaders.

MA – They really are. They say it's wonderful, and then the first thing they do is change the damn thing. It's ridiculous. There's no respect on it.

AS – Although of course you did that as well, with *Mark of the Devil*!

MA – Oh, well no, I wrote a new screenplay. That was completely new. That's why he (Adrian Hoven) hated me.

AS – Did you ever see *Mark of the Devil II*?

MA – No.

AS – I'm intrigued to see whether he put any of his original stuff back in.

MA – I think he might have. Impalings up the anus and other areas, apparently.

AS – That's what *Mark of the Devil* was missing.

MA – It was, it really was! I've been credited with having written *Mark of the Devil II* (*Hexen geschändet und zu Tode gequält*, 1973, Adrian Hoven, West Germany/ UK: Atlas, HIFI Stereo 70 Kg, TV13 Filmproduktion), but I had nothing to do with it.

AS – You're credited with having written some of the characters, as some of them are based on characters you wrote for the first film.

MA – (Laughs) Oh really? I hadn't even looked. I never read about myself, I try to avoid it. I think everybody does. I've been called everything under the sun, everything you can think of. Nice things as well. There's so much fiction and stories out there. I've yet to read something where it's entirely what I said. Or even bore any relation!

AS – I'll make sure I send you a copy of this!

MA – At my age you get immune to it. Who cares?

AS – You've done various jobs in the industry, on the production side.

MA – I was involved in distribution. I was involved with Stanley Long, with Alpha, and also, I can't remember what my title was, I was vice-president, executive in charge of InterVision. I was doing all the buying and recommending of what they should purchase, none of which they actually bothered with. They went off and bought the most ridiculous stuff, and then said why can't we ever have *Rocky* (1976, John G. Avildsen, U.S.A.: Chartoff-Winkler Productions) or things like that? First of all, you're not going to get anything from the American majors, but I can get you the entire Elstree output, all the films they made, for about ten grand. Oh no, they're black and white, we don't want those.

AS – This was for video release?

MA – Yes. I could have had anything I wanted from Russia, all the Eisenstein's, Tarkovsky, the lot, amazing stuff that nobody wanted. They just said, "Why can't we get *Rocky*?" They were vegetables. I hated them so much that one night I was sat with them, I was out with them for dinner and there was a lot of other distributors round there, and I actually just called them a whole pile of leeches and parasites and walked out!

AS – Was that the end of your career in distribution?

MA – No! I think they probably had to go and look up the words. It was just vile. Stanley hated them all as well, which shows how vile they were. When they talked about films

all they would talk were units. It was that and I found when I mixed with anyone from distribution that side of things, it really makes you want to give up the business and think “Why on earth do I bother, why does anyone bother?” They have absolutely no interest in the films, they have no interest, almost contempt, for anybody who makes them. They really are vile. Charming, delightful people!

AS – Would you include the Fanceys, people like Michael Klinger, in that?

MA – I would, actually. I don’t think they cared about film, as such, whereas people like Tony Tenser, the producer rogues, they sort of in a way did. They didn’t know anything about them, and they didn’t quite know how they happened, it was a mystery, but they actually like the feel of it all. I don’t think, I never heard, really, I can’t recall Olive or anyone, basically a good film was one that made money. I think you find in this industry you get two sets of people who come into it: ones who come in to make money, and ones who come in because they’ve somehow got an ego problem of one form or another, and they go on the creative side, and they’re generally very f*cked up, and screwed up, and get screwed up.

The other lot, the only consideration is money. They’ve got no real... genuinely, I found there’s almost a contempt, deep down contempt for artists. It’s never admitted, it’s unspoken. It’s like racism! It lurks beneath the surface. I noticed in the way they talked, and exchanged certain things. Go to Cannes, lie on the beach and listen to them talking. I used to go, and I couldn’t wait: movie, movie, movie, movie, left, right and centre. They’d all ask me, “Is there anything you’ve seen worth buying?” None of them could be bothered. Their idea of watching movies – “Could you put some more oil on my back?” and they’d all go round and talk bullsh*t. I’d sometimes sit in the Carlton and watch this wonderful game being played between producers and the game was ‘who will end up picking up the bill?’ By the end, “Do you want another coffee?” “I think I’m fine.” “Oh, I might,” and it went on, for whatever it was, a coffee, a meal, and it went on and on and on until someone said, “I just have to make a phone call” and never came back! It was ridiculous. It was all like that, and so for someone like myself to be in that area was soul-destroying. Unfortunately, what I realised was that unless you are aware of that you don’t stand a chance in hell.

So I had to learn, I got most of the sh*t out of the way in my twenties. I was a punching bag. When I came back in, started to get into that side of things, I had no problem, I’d just really joined the game, I thought I will keep secret the fact that I’m an artist. I’m not going to say anything about that whatsoever, and I learned their language. I was able to play that power game very comfortably. I had, on many occasions, when we were distributing, this is when we were distributing, with the Longs and a couple of other people, they would say “Tell me what you think of this movie.” I would go in and whoever it was, not particularly Long’s company, but they would say “What reel are the tits on?” “The projectionist would say “I think there’s some on reel 2.” “Well put that on then!” And that’s it! “Any more?” A few times they’d watch a film, I was asked and it was quite

an interesting film. They'd watched the first reel and they'd say, "I've seen enough, that's fine," and then that afternoon whoever directed it, I think it was a writer-director actually, youngish, thirties, came in to see if they were going to buy it. It might have been the producer. And he was told "No, no, we sat and watched the whole thing, and you've got no idea what's commercial." He was given a lecture on how to make commercial films by the people who'd never even seen the damn film. The poor guy was crushed and went out. Then I started to realise this happened all the way through the business. You send a screenplay in thinking someone will read it – nobody reads it! Nobody! Even on set I used to say, you could go on set, If I went on and somebody decided to shoot a scene that was *Snow White* meets *Baby Doll*, in the middle of *Frankenstein*, nobody would know the difference, including the actors, because none of them had read the script! It was just incredible. Even in Hollywood it was the same. I talked to a vice-president, a guy in his fifties, and he said, "We never read them, we don't have time." I said, "How do you make decisions?" He said, "Well somebody reads them for me, and I get just a couple of lines." What is all this bullsh*t you're given at this end about, it's all your fault, you should have listened. None of them know anything. It doesn't matter whether you're at the top of your business, it's the same right the way down. I discovered all this only by being around distribution, at that end with that side of people. The people who make decisions. That's an interesting angle for you!

AS – Some of that comes through in *Eskimo Nell*, especially the character of Big Dick, based on Deke Hayward.

MA – In *Nell*, the screenplay was modified, to be shot, and then what happened was that some wasn't shot, and it was altered. Having said that, it doesn't affect the film that bad. The heart of the film, originally, was about the lot of the writer, not the director. It ends up being a director's story, and I end up playing the director! I was one of the ridiculous characters in it. If you look at the poor writer, the screenplay was about him. Chris (Christopher Timothy) just makes him an adorable geek, but originally he wasn't. He was a lonely little soul battered by the director. If you look at the film it's not about the director's problems, it's all about what happens to the screenplay. In that there's a whole segment about what the distributors wanted altered and why. One of them is the fact that one of the backers was Jewish, and was sort of in awe of distribution and that had to be changed. It was seen not to be credible. He was also closet gay. When I rewrote it, it didn't make a difference any more. It was a much harder picture in the original script, called 'The Moviemakers.' A lot of things in there, quite a large amount, were removed because the distributors were terrified that there would be lawsuits left, right and centre from all over the world. It was too close to real life. There were things that people were saying that people had actually said. Most of the dialogue was verbatim. They were terrified, ludicrously so, I might add. There was a whole thing about Barbara Streisand and her nose job. That all had to come out for starters! It's incredible how much stayed in. I had learned how to deal with people, and I learned how to write for them, knowing they wouldn't read it. Eventually I wouldn't even allow people, producers or anybody, to read anything. When I'd finished I wouldn't let them have it. I would read it to them. By

the end I would do a tape recording, acted out with music and effects, and play it to them! I was there on set, right through the cutting, all the meetings, the publicity. It was a lot of effort but it was worth it.

Even with *House of the Long Shadows* (1983, Pete Walker, UK: London-Canon Films), that was written on set and went straight into production. I never even had a chance to rewrite or tidy it ourselves. It was only when I found my original screenplay that I found bits are altered, some of which by Canon who tried to make it into a horror film. I don't think it was Pete Walker.

Everything I have written is going to be published, even unmade projects like the Sex Pistols movie 'A Star is Dead', and the aborted fetus horror film 'Deliver Us From Evil.' It was a little bit more than just about a fetus, that was the twist at the end, but all Canon wanted were stars. People had wanted to put those four together but they had always said no, so Peter thought about *The Old Dark House* (1932, James Whale, U.S.A.: Universal Pictures). All these stories will be in the books.

Sébastien Blondeau

10 May 2016

Sébastien Blondeau's mother was Mitsouko, an actress who appeared in several films shot in France in the 1960s. She is best known for appearing alongside Sean Connery in the pre-credits sequence of *Thunderball* (1965, Terence Young, UK/ USA: Eon Productions). She died in 1995.

AS – I was interested in your mother. She was only in a few movies back in the sixties and most of them were spy films. This is something I'm writing about for my PhD.

SB – Okay. That's an interesting PhD!

AS – It is! One film that your mother was in was called *Mission Bloody Mary*. You mentioned that you're not familiar with that one.

SB – I knew about it but I never watched it.

AS – Would you like to me to send you a copy?

SB – Of course, that would be very nice!

AS – In the film she plays quite an interesting role, and she's required to do an exotic dance. I was reading a little about her online and it says that she started out as a dancer in Paris. Is that right?

SB – No, that's not really true. She's never been a dancer. She was just a model and an actress, but she danced in a few movies.

AS – I see. That's where that has come from. The thing I was mainly interested to find out was your mother's actual heritage. Online she is described as Eurasian. I wondered if you knew more specifically where her parents were actually from?

SB – It's very vague. I don't know myself. She was born in China from a French, half-Chinese mother that had a French passport, but she never really met her father. It's quite a sad story. She looked more Asian than her mother did, so I guess her father was either Chinese or maybe Vietnamese, possibly. I think in 1948, during the revolution they fled to France. She went to France with her mother. It's a bit of a tragic story, because it was a long trip on the boat. Her mother became amnesiac and she forgot everything, even her own daughter. So when she arrived in France she went to an orphan school.

AS – How awful.

SB – That’s probably why she killed herself, it was too much to deal with.

AS – Do you know what happened to her mother in the end?

SB – She just died from her age in a specialised mental hospital in France.

AS – I’m very sorry to hear about that.

SB – That’s the sad part of it, but the good part is she had some secondary, minor roles and at some point in France she was quite a celebrity, the kind of celebrity that touches on different kinds of arts. It lasted for a while.

AS – She was in several films in a very short space of time. It must have been an exciting time for her.

SB – The she worked in the U.S. and then she started a family, when she was around 35.

AS – Were you born in America?

SB – I was born in France. She came back to France.

AS – Because I’ve only seen her in this one film and *Thunderball* I don’t have any other questions specifically related to the different films she did.

SB – There’s another movie called *Operation Blue Lotus*, something like that?³⁹⁰ That’s all I can say for now. If you have anything else you want to know please contact me. I’m not sure if I have particular photos of that movie, more the James Bond one.

AS – The main thing I was interested in was trying to clarify where she was from because online it’s all very muddled, so what you’ve told me is interesting.

SB – She was born in Tianjin, China. There was a big explosion at a factory six months ago, close to Beijing. There was a British/French colony at the time.

AS – That’s fascinating. Thank you so much. I will email you a copy of *Mission Bloody Mary* in the next couple of days! Thank you for your time.

SB – Thank you, bye.

³⁹⁰ Possibly *OSS 77 – Operazione fior di loto*, *Operation Lotus Flower*, 1965, Bruno Paolinelli, France/ Italy: Italspettacolo, Radius Productions, not listed on Mitsouko’s IMDB credits.

John Cohen

July 18, 2015

John Cohen was a third-generation member of the Cohen family who worked for the Jacey Group, with his grandfather having originally started the company in Birmingham. Jacey were a successful chain of independent cinemas in the 1950s and 1960s, and John Cohen worked primarily in front-of-house publicity.

AS – I've been focusing on Kenneth Rive, E.J. Fancey and the Compton group, and Jacey brings them all together.

JC – That's right. We worked with all of them.

AS – Your website seems to be the main source online for the Jacey group.

JC – That's right. That's why I was doing it, as there has not been anything as far as I could see, and I had intended doing this a long time ago. We had a huge scrapbook that was kept from way before I started. This was unfortunately lost as it was lent to somebody who also was doing an article about my grandfather, and they asked to borrow this book. I said "Yes, but I do want it back," and it never came back. I chased them over quite a number of years and they failed to find it. At first, they said they had given it back, which I knew was untrue, as I hadn't had it. They admitted in the end they had no idea where it was. It was only at the end of last year that my son, who still lives in Birmingham, was invited by the old Electric Cinema, which was formerly the Tattler. He joined them onstage and they were discussing the early beginnings of the cinema. I had to brief him for this and he did very well apparently, and the cinema was surprisingly packed for this occasion. It was due to that that some gentleman contacted my son and said "I've got a book that I believe should belong to the Jacey family. Is it alright if I bring it to you?" And that's what happened. We got it back. Jason didn't know much about this but told me about it and I thought "Good heavens!" We've no idea who this man is, the name was given but it didn't mean a thing to me. We'd never heard of him. How he came to have it I do not know but eventually Jason managed to bring it out here to me and having got it I decided I'm going to have to put this together. It was in a dreadful state unfortunately. Lots of newspaper cuttings were torn and folded badly. Cellotape had been stuck over lots of pictures and things and gone all yellow, so it's been quite a task to get something presentable to put on the web.

AS – What an amazing coincidence that it would come back after so many years.

JC – Many, many years. We're talking about thirty-odd years.

AS – I'm very glad it did turn up again, as it's full of fascinating stuff that I would otherwise never have been able to find.

JC – That's good! I sent you in one of the more recent emails the article that was published for *Birmingham Jewry*. It was that organisation that borrowed the book originally, for that article. It was a publication, probably restricted to just the Jewish community in Birmingham.

AS – It's very interesting that your grandfather was getting involved in film production way back then.

JC – You ask me if I know much, and we're talking about 100 years ago. I am retired and getting on a bit but I'm not quite that old! I'm 75 at the moment but don't know much about that period.

AS – Any clues you get about silent film history are quite intriguing as it is all just gone now! These questions are not in any particular order. Could you tell me what happened to Miss Jacey, Aisha Ahmed?

JC – She stayed with the company until the company went into voluntary liquidation. She stayed right until the end with us. I'm still in touch with her actually, she's moved down to the New Forest area. She got married and she's kept in touch with us. She came out to Marbella to see my parents who also emigrated to live here many years ago. She visited them and I gather this year she's going to see my sister in San Francisco.

AS – You mentioned that the company went into voluntary liquidation. Was that in the 1980s?

JC – Yes, what actually happened is, basically my father and his brother wanted to retire, and the cinemas generally were not doing all that well at that time. A lot of them were on leases due to be renewed, and the rentals were impossible to see how one could continue, so before getting into a situation where we had nothing to sell we decided that we would sell out the cinemas and all the property companies that my grandfather had originally started, and this would enable my father and his brother to retire with good funds and I would have to find something else to do!

AS – Which you seemed to do. I've been looking at your photography and antique dealing. It seems very interesting.

JC – It is, and it's kept me very busy. Thank goodness, we've been pretty lucky with the way things turned out.

AS – How did you feel when, in the 1960s, a couple of the cinemas were converted? The Marble Arch was converted into an art gallery and another was converted to a stamp centre.

JC – We did that before we sold out.

AS – You were involved in the running of both of those, weren't you? The gallery and the stamp centre?

JC – Yes, that's right. Actually, we had a very good idea with the Marble Arch Antiques centre. It was the first of its kind, or was supposed to be, but we had quite a few problems getting planning permission, and getting the actual construction work completed, and the word had got out. The Bond Street Antique Arcade managed to open before us and I'm sure they got the idea for us, so instead of being the first we ended up being the second, which was a pity! But still, it was quite successful. It wasn't the big success we hoped for because we discovered the public are not easy to persuade to go downstairs, and that was one of the drawbacks, because the bulk of the area was below street level.

AS – Because the cinema was originally in the basement?

JC – Yes.

AS – You mention on your website that you had your own department controlling front-of-house publicity and marketing and advertising, and you also did publicity for some film distributors as well. How did that come about?

JC – What happened was, because we were doing the front-of-house display work, quite a few times. I've done a lot of things since then, and I can't really recall a lot of titles that I got involved with. I do remember Mike Chivers, who was Connoisseur Films and Amanda Films and a fellow called Brian Sands, I can't remember what his company was called. Because I did quite a bit of work with Phil Kutner at Miracle Films, I found that they came and we booked some of their films. They said "John, can you come up with how best to advertise, and put a display on the front of the cinema to advertise these films." When we looked at the material we got from France, or various countries in Europe, we felt "Quite frankly that leaves me cold, it doesn't appeal, I don't think it's going to bring any customers in." So I would view the film and then select different stills. We kept the title but we would sometimes introduce a catchline to try and make it a little more appealing to the British. Because I'd done that a fair amount for people like Phil Kutner these other guys who had smaller companies basically gave me a free hand and said, "Do what you can with it!"

AS – So they would then use those marketing materials for distribution around the country, not just in Jacey cinemas?

JC – Yes, they had the right to do that. I only did what we played, but of course once I had created that they used it.

AS – They paid you for that I'm assuming?

JC – No! I didn't charge them. I was paid, before I became a director, to run the advertising side and to create the front-of-house image, and I didn't feel right in charging them to do this. All I was feeling that I was doing was simply not using what they've got and trying to improve on it!

AS – Were you involved in the *Peeping Tom* scandal? When outraged quotes from the press were used in cinemas as advertising?

JC – No, I was quite amused by that and I thought Gala's fellow... It was done by Gala, they had their own fellow, he was very good actually at promoting things, and he had done that. I think he got put on the spot there.

AS – Some of your cinemas were co-owned with Gala for a while, weren't they?

JC – There were two that we owned 50/50 with Gala. One was the International Film Theatre in Westbourne Grove, and the other was the Gala Royal in Edgware Road.

AS – His name was Frank Hazel at Gala.

JC – That's right, of course. I spent quite a bit of time with Frank in those days, but I wasn't involved in that. On some of the earlier things we did, he was quite useful to chat to. He did have some good ideas.

AS – Could you tell me of some of the impressions you had of people you worked with, starting with Kenneth Rive?

JC – Ken Rive I knew pretty well. He did become quite a good friend of the family for many years and he was certainly what one would call a live wire. He stayed married for, I think, very long, I don't think he ever got divorced, but every time at the Cannes Film Festival he had another bright starlet with him! Rather than his wife! He was a character, no question about it, and very amusing, and very charming. The friendship that grew with him and my father, because he was more my father's age really, the idea became a good one to change from what had become cartoon cinemas rather than news theatres to showing continental films.

AS – I recently got in touch with Kenneth Rive's son, who runs a theatre in London, but there appears to be no archive anywhere. I've also spoken to some of his former employees and they've got nothing.

JC – That's extraordinary. They didn't keep anything?

AS – No.

JC – I know Ken would have been a little secretive about the various affairs that were involved! That is surprising. I think I did send you, I've got, I think it was in the Kine Weekly, an article about Kenneth Rive. It gives quite a bit of extra information. I've put it on the website. There's two or three pages.

AS – You mentioned that you knew the Fancey family.

JC – Ah, now, what shall we say? Colourful people!

AS – Everybody tells me this, but nobody will go into detail.

JC – That's right. I can appreciate why! Well look, I liked E.J. very much. He was a real rough diamond-type of person. I believe he'd even been locked up at one stage. But he was the only one that gave me an opportunity that I was very, very grateful for. To explain, very basically, I was creating award-winning photography by photographing projected images. These images were projected onto anything but a screen – all sorts of things – and then re-photographed. He had seen one or two of my exhibitions, and he said "John, do you think you could do this with movies?" I said, "I think it's possible but I'm not sure, in reality whether it will work," partly because the projector runs at 24 fps and so does the camera but there's no way I can see that one could synchronise them, and in order to create the movement with the effects I achieve, it would be essential that the image from the projector, when it's projected at that same instant the camera lens is open. If it was out of sync you'd get nothing. He said "I'll tell you what, let's set it up. I'll organise the studio, you can have all the 35mm equipment, have a go!" And I did. Actually, it was very exciting because I think, more by luck than anything else, it did work. So what was projected was captured on the camera, and I was able to create all sorts of intriguing effects which later, this was years before the James Bond credits were created using exactly this technique.

AS – I see. And why was E.J. interested in that? What was in it for him?

JC – I don't know. Whether he was considering to use it in some way if it did work, I just don't know. He never told me, but he gave me this opportunity which was wonderful for me, because the cost of all this equipment, you couldn't get your hands on it very easily, and to have a free hand for a day or two to experiment was really exciting and it worked. His son Malcolm I didn't like a lot to be honest. He went into, I believe, making pornography films. Adrienne I liked a lot, she was a live wire rather like her dad and she had an amazing success with us with the film *Emmanuelle*.

AS – Did you know Olive as well?

JC – I had met her. I didn't know her well.

AS – There are rumours, and I don't know if you've ever read Matthew Sweet's book *Shepperton Babylon*? He mentions in there the rumours that E.J. Fancey had been involved in murder. He doesn't expand on that. We know he went to prison. Did he have the reputation, or were there rumours about him being involved in criminality?

JC – I have to say I have no knowledge, I don't know of anything like that. I did know he's been in prison, I don't know who told me.

AS – There was a rumour that he had once stabbed an accountant. In the groin, funnily enough!

JC – He seems to have an obsession with that area!

AS – He was a man who seemed to like to generate his own publicity, and may have helped spread the rumours himself.

JC – It wouldn't be beyond the realms of him! He liked to make sure you never forgot him.

AS – How about Tony Tenser and Michael Klinger. How were they to work with? You knew them fairly well?

JC – Yes, actually Tony Tenser was very likeable and very go-ahead, and we were showing a few of his films. Miracle, he was with. Michael Klinger, I didn't know as well as Tony Tenser. I don't have many anecdotes. We saw them many times in Cannes, we used to get together with most of the British film distributors of continental films. Phil Kutner was another one who was quite a character.

AS – Tony and Michael got together and formed Compton and you held the premiere of *The Yellow Teddybears*.

JC – That's right. We'd shown films of Tony Tenser's before that one as well. *The Yellow Teddybears* was quite a success and a clever angle he'd found to exploit.

AS – I see from the photos that they managed to get Robert Mitchum at the premiere!

JC – Yes, yes.

AS – It was quite a big event. There's a really good photo of the front of the cinema. Did you create the materials for that, in your role as publicist?

JC – I did quite a lot of that, I think Tony did put a lot into it too with me. It wasn't a sole effort, but yes, I was responsible to get it all created. I remember having quite a few discussions, choosing what was used, yes, we did do that.

AS – Tony Tenser’s strengths lay in advertising and marketing. He was a very good showman.

JC – He was, definitely. I’d go along with that, and a very likeable fellow actually. Very amusing.

AS – What are your memories of the night itself? It seems like it must have been quite an exciting evening?

JC – Well, for me a more exciting evening than that was The Strand opening, when we opened the Jacey in the Strand with all the French film starlets, and Adam Faith and a whole lot of pop singers.

AS – That was for the film *Torment*? (*Les scélérats*, Robert Hossein, France: Les Films Marceau-Cocinor, Les Productions Francis Lopez)

JC – That’s right, we opened with *Torment*, but it was more the fact that we got all these people to come that were celebrities at the time, and pulled quite a lot of press for us. It was a great evening. It was fantastic to have the opportunity to be with these gorgeous-looking women, and also to chat to people like Adam Faith when he was a very big name at that time. *The Yellow Teddybears*, yes, we had a number of pretty good, exciting openings in one way or another, because that was a good way of gaining publicity.

AS – You had one in Birmingham with Martine Carroll?

JC – That’s right. That was the Cinephone in Birmingham. We had Martine come over and again it was a very glamorous evening.

AS – When the business was winding down, did you miss those days of the premieres and the glamour, that sort of thing?

JC – I think the answer to that is certainly yes! It had been a lot of fun and a very exciting time to go through, especially for someone my age at the time. It was quite something.

AS – I can imagine. Did you know Anthony Balch?

JC – Yes, Anthony also became a pretty close friend of my parents. We always met up with Anthony in Cannes. He was quite an extraordinary person. He’d got quite a lot of different aspects. He was a charming person. Very eloquent, very good-looking and he had some very strange ideas. To give you one example, when he stayed in a hotel in Cannes he would take with him a rope ladder, because he was always terrified if there was a fire in the hotel he might not be able to get out, so he would have this to climb out of the window down to a lower floor! Most extraordinary. He was an interesting

individual. I liked him a lot, he was very nice. We were very impressed with his ideas and he actually ran two of our cinemas in London. He wanted to do it and do things his well.

AS – Was he a distributor before he took on the cinemas? Is that how you got to know him?

JC – That's right, we did.

AS – And it was the Jacey Piccadilly?

JC – Piccadilly and Baker Street.

AS – Did you ever watch any of his own movies, the films he was making?

JC – I can't say I did, no. I knew of them.

AS – He made a couple of very interesting films with William Burroughs.

JC – I heard about them, yes.

AS – I assume these films were screened at his Jacey. He made one called *Secrets of Sex* (1970, UK: Balch/ Noteworthy Films), which is completely bizarre. Really fascinating.

JC – Oh dear. It's a shame he died so young. Such an interesting fellow, I can tell you.

AS – I've got two questions left. You mentioned something that sounded really interesting. You said that you introduced a screen surround that did away with the black masking and instead had reflected colours. I've never heard of that before. Did it have a name, that technique? Who developed it and how did it come about?

JC – There was a company called Modernisation, it was (John) Friese Greene, related to (William) Friese Greene who invented the projector, he ran this company and we used them quite a lot for the design of the cinema, the screen, the seating arrangements, etc. I believe it was something he came up with, because of the films in those days, some of them being widescreen, some Cinemascope, some standard, all the cinemas used the black masking surround. He came up with an extraordinary type of lens to fix on the front of the projector lens. He called it something like an anamorphic type of lens. What it did, it captured the coloured lighting of the image and reflected it and projected it onto the sides of the projected screen image so if you had a surround that was white instead of the black masking, that surround would take on the colours, very muted and out of focus, surrounding the actual projected image. It created a very pleasing effect. You could watch the film just as usual, but instead of having a black surround you've got a surround that was constantly changing with the colours of the film.

AS – Did you introduce that into all of your cinemas?

JC – We started with the Cinephone Birmingham, which was the first one I believe to do it. I think then we did introduce it gradually into Manchester, I don't know if it ever went into Oxford Street. We had a Cinephone bang opposite Selfridges, and I'm not sure whether we put it in there or not.

AS – Did it catch on? Were you aware of that being used by other chains as well?

JC – I don't recall anyone else. I didn't see it being used. I used to go to the odd cinema apart from our own and I don't recall seeing it anywhere else.

AS – I'd love to be able to see that in action now.

JC – Yes. I think there was a mention of it in one of the things I put on my site.

AS – I'm so grateful you've put all that on your site. Like I mentioned, no one really kept any archives. I've managed to get in touch with the Fancey grandchildren and they don't want to talk to me, and they also say there's nothing anyway. I don't know if there are family secrets, but they don't seem to want to talk to me at all. Which is a real shame. I think Adrienne would have been up for talking to me but she died two years ago sadly.

JC – I saw that.

AS – She died just before I got started on this project, so I missed her, but luckily she had been interviewed by Matthew Sweet and a couple of other people.

JC – She was very straight forward, I'm sure she would have been very helpful.

AS – One last question: I was really fascinated by your "Why Pay More" campaign, where you were ridiculing the nudist and sex films. I find the idea of negative advertising hilarious!

JC – Yes! Well, it backfired on us because the damn things got even more packed! It was a genuine move on our part because we were sick to death of it. It wasn't the type of cinema we wanted to be connected with any more. We were very upset. We did it for a while because we couldn't believe the takings, and the distributors were mad keen. To produce these films cost hardly anything. There's no story, or if there's any story, which usually there isn't, it's so feeble.

AS – I've seen a couple, and they are pretty terrible. It's all about beauty contests!

JC – Absolute rubbish, and as far as nudity is concerned, it's usually in the distance. We just thought "Why the hell are these things taking so much money?" We thought you'd

cash in one or two of them and that would be that, but they kept going and more were being made. We ended up showing nothing else and basically hating it! So we decided “Right, let’s try and kill it,” so we did a big campaign where we put lots of adverts and dropped the prices so much, I forget what they were down to. It was way below what other cinemas were charging. Instead of killing it they queued and packed in and we thought “This is really pathetic.” It is not the sort of film industry we wanted to be in, and it also coincided very closely to the time when the decisions were being taken anyway to allow my parents, my father and my brother, to retire. My grandfather had already passed away, and the situation wasn’t good. The renewal leases were horrendous. The Leicester Square one was impossible for a small cinema to survive. We thought we’d better do something now.

AS – Can I ask a slightly prurient question, based on something I’ve read. Where sex films were being shown in the 1960s in cinemas, or in the Windmill, the ushers would have to be on the lookout in raincoats with bowler hats on their laps. Was that ever a problem in the Jacey cinemas? Did you have to have ushers keeping an eye out for men misbehaving?

JC – I don’t recall that happening, but they always talked about the audience being the raincoat brigade, but I don’t recall every having to employ extra staff. We had our usual usherettes. Actually we were, unlike these days, at that time all out staff stayed with us all their working lives, once they came to work with us. They stayed with us. We didn’t have a changeover of staff. The usherettes stayed with us, as did the managers of the cinemas, and so on. I don’t recall us ever employing extra people for that, so I think the answer is no.

AS – That’s good to know. What was it about the Jacey group that kept people so well?

JC – I think there were two main reasons I feel: we were fair in payment, not mean. They were not unfair to them, but the other thing was we got them to feel like they belonged to a family. It was a family business and there were odd occasions when we would make sure everyone was invited to come and have a drink and discuss how things were going, ideas they had, or any complaints about things. It was run on a very friendly basis. We didn’t treat them just as employees.

AS – I was looking at the photos of your Christmas parties where all the staff would get up and sing!

JC – Yes, it was amazing what was done, and it was all in a good cause, for the old aged pensioners or the odd charity. This was something the staff decided to do themselves and we encouraged it. We had a very good team of people, and we always promoted people were possible from our own employees rather than bring in people from outside.

AS – Who funded those Christmas parties? Was it paid for by the Jacey?

JC – Yes it was.

AS – When I saw the photo of Ron Catton's Cinephone Christmas show and I read the caption where it says that each pensioner was given a chicken to take home with them after the show I laughed for about five minutes.

JC – Yes! I think that happened, there must have been ten or twelve Christmas shows, and that happened on the last one. I've no idea where that idea came from! It's quite true, each one was presented with a chicken.

AS – There were about 600 pensioners there. That's a lot of chickens!

JC – I've no idea whose bright idea it was, or how it came about!

AS – They don't do Christmas parties like that anymore.

JC – No, no, it's a different time these days.

Paul Hennessey
12 December 2016

Paul Hennessey worked for the Fancey family, mainly in New Realm, from the mid-1960s up until the time he retired. Whilst primarily working as an editor, being a small company he took on many different roles during his career.

AS – You are credited with various things on the IMDB.

PH – I must look it up!

AS – You are down for visual effects for *I'm Not Feeling Myself Tonight*.

PH – Visual co-ordinator or something like that.

AS – How did you first get involved with the Fanceys? Was it specifically New Realm you worked for?

PH – At the time it was New Realm Pictures which I joined in November 1963 when the old man E.J. was in charge. Adrienne at that time had only done acting and New Realm went through various stages of becoming New Realm Film Distributors I think. And then New Realm Entertainments, but before it became New Realm Entertainments E.J. had his company E.J. Fancey Productions, which he actually took down the road to Border Films, which was Negus-Fancey's company.

AS – I have a list of their companies. There were so many!

PH – Border Films, D.U.K. was one of New Realm's companies, it actually stood for, would you believe, Do U Know!

AS – Yes!

PH – Which is pretty awful! There was SF Film Distributors, which a lot of people thought it meant they were Sci-fi.

AS – Did it stand for Scott-Fancey?

PH – I understood it actually stood for Small Films, but then there was the people who made television cartoons who were also called Small Films.

AS – I thought for a long time it stood for Science Fiction.

PH – A lot of people did. At one time I had a guy who ran some sort of fanzine, and he always came to us because he liked science fiction. I had to explain we did more than that.

AS – I thought it might be Scott-Fancey because Adrienne called herself Adrienne Scott when she acted. It was a family name.

PH – I don't know if it was her mother's name.

AS – New Realm also changed their name to Spanville for a couple of years. Did you know anything about that?

PH – No, I don't.

AS – On Companies House New Realm were listed as Spanville LTD between 1981 and 1983.

PH – I don't know.

AS – Maybe for tax purposes?

PH – It might well have been, although I don't think they ever paid any tax!

AS – I'm beginning to wonder whether that's why no one will talk to me. Because of intriguing financial arrangements...

PH – I don't know. I think they're just not all that, especially the family now, are not all that interested in being associated with some of the stuff we did. Because we did quite a lot of French, German and some Italian, I suppose you'd call it "softcore." I mean they were better than that, but they weren't good, until *Emmanuelle* came along.

AS – And changed everything!

PH – It changed everything, it changed the business. Suddenly the French, well the French had always made quite reasonable stuff, but the Germans improved their softcore films. They were still making rubbish but they also, some of their stuff did improve quite a bit.

AS – I see, so because of *Emmanuelle* other filmmakers started...

PH – Upping their game. Then of course the Italians made all the *Black Emanuelle* films!

AS – Some of which New Realm distributed.

PH – Yes, we did. We did. Had a bit of a problem with titles. We had one which was called *The Degradation of Emanuelle*, (*Emanuelle Perche' Violenza Alle Donne?*, 1977, Joe D'Amato, Italy: Embassy Productions S.p.A.) and the censor wouldn't have that title at all.

AS – That doesn't surprise me.

PH – No, well quite! (laughs) Some of the things he wanted to do were very funny. I think it was Stephen Murphy at the time, he didn't like the title *Enter the Seven Virgins* (*Yang chi*, also known as *The Bod Squad*, 1974, Ernst Hofbauer/ Chih-Hung Kuei, Hong Kong/ West Germany: Rapid Film/ Shaw Brothers) which was a sort of German/ Chinese co-production, sex and chop-socky I suppose. He said to me "I don't like that title," I said "Don't you Stephen? If you want to be like that, what about *Enter the Dragon?* (1973, Robert Clouse, Hong Kong/ U.S.A.: Warner Bros./ Concord Productions) That's bestiality!" He looked at me and laughed and said, "Oh alright." He was a good guy.

AS – I came across your name in a letter written by James Ferman about *Emmanuelle*. I have read the BBFC archive on *Emmanuelle*. In 1979, they had to make cuts to things which they had allowed previously because of some changes to the obscenity laws, and they wanted to remove the entire rape scene from the film.

PH – Did they?

AS – They wrote to Adrienne to tell her this was what they were going to have to do, and he mentioned your name specifically because you were their in-house editor.

PH – I was, yes.

AS – You had apparently told him the length of the footage which would have to be removed in order to get this scene taken out. Adrienne was very cross that they wanted to remove the scene when it had been passed previously.

PH – I agree.

AS – He explained that they would have to take away the 'X' certificate.

PH – I don't know what it's like now. They pass everything. Probably everything but the cigarette-smoking scene is back in.

AS – I think it's all back in there. It's been interesting reading the BBFC reports on the film.

PH – We had a lot of work getting it through. I did a lot of censor cutting on it and we got it through in a reasonable, what I thought was a very reasonable state.

AS – Did you do all their censor cuts?

PH – I had an assistance, but you could say yes, I did at that time. I started out with them just as a dispatch clerk, in a way, and then I said to Malcom, “I don’t want to do this. I want to go into the cutting room,” so he said “okay, fine,” So I did and I started to learn how to cut. So I went in and started to learn how to cut, because in those days it was all cutting married prints, whereas now it’s done on video and it’s so easy, if you want to do it, but it was all married print cutting. So I started doing that; I made trailers and then I started doing radio spots, advertising, and then there were a couple of films, a couple of shorts, then *I’m Not Feeling Myself Tonight*, which is the one you mentioned, *Girls Come First*, which was a sort of prequel to *The Over-Amorous Artist* or *Just One More Time* and also I almost completely re-edited *Can I Come Too?*³⁹¹ which was a Ray Selfe film (1979, U.K: Oval Region) It wasn’t really very... it was alright but it didn’t really work so I completely re-edited that and then I did various other things. Somebody came to us with a short about bull-fighting and I did a, not a total remake, but I did a real cutting job on it and credited myself with “Editor U.K release version!”

AS – Why not?

PH – Absolutely. I also learned to subtitle.

AS – Oh really? A lot of their films were dubbed, weren’t they?

PH – In the earliest days you’d buy a lot of foreign films – German or French films with English dubs – but what we normally did, and I didn’t do the early ones, was to get the original version, subtitle them and then the dubbed version would come in later. That happened with *Emmanuelle* for example, that came subtitled and played almost everywhere subtitled, and then the French made an English dub, which I think was directed by the director of the film *Just Jaekin*, if I’m not mistaken.

AS – Did the Fanceys ever get a dub done themselves? Or did they only take what was supplied?

PH – They didn’t normally, they just took what was supplied. To dub it yourself would have been expensive, and they weren’t really into that sort of film, mainly. I mean it’s not many that work anyway. There are various companies that, say, in France I think it was [Les] Film Jacques Willimetz who did most of the dubbing. There was someone in Italy that did most of their dubbing. Of course, there was a great history of dubbing in Italy anyway as you probably know. In the old days Italy would play anything as long as it was dubbed. They didn’t have any restrictions. The funniest one my wife saw was they did a

³⁹¹ Paul Hennessey is credited as post-production supervisor. David McGillivray has a cameo as a “critic.”

dub of *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (1959, Bert Stern/ Aram Avakian, U.S.A.: Galaxy Productions/ Raven Films) which was not really a lot to dub there, but they had someone imitating Louis Armstrong speaking and all that sort of thing. It was interesting. Anyway, I learned to subtitle. Basically, I did it mainly with the originals and an English translation and I did the subtitling that way from there, and of course there was a way, you couldn't always put as much into a subtitle as you could, as the original sound was, as you just can't read that fast, so there is a formula of how much you can use. What I always refused to do, which they do now, is put two peoples dialogue on the same frame, which really annoys me!

AS – Were they translated for you?

PH – They were by someone else.

AS – Was that somebody paid by the Fanceys?

PH – No, they probably came with, generally it would come with an English translation from the producers. Sometimes it didn't, but you know, in my early days there was a lady who had several languages and she used to do her own translations.

AS – In some documentation I've seen for films, French films, which were distributed by the Fancy's, the BBFC sometimes asked them to change the subtitles, they didn't like the wording in the subtitles.

PH – That's very likely. That's always been the way, they didn't like certain things.

AS – Would that require a whole new print to be made?

PH – Well, not necessarily, we didn't usually do it with an overlay of subtitles. There was a company called Film Text that actually etched the titles into the film. Probably not as good quality as doing an overlay, but cheaper. We would cut the film to what they wanted visually, then it would be subtitled afterwards. If you did it first, then they said, "cut that scene anyway" then you're wasting time, and money!

AS – You stayed with Adrienne for up until the business closed. Is that right?

PH – Almost closed. I retired when I was 65 and it was still going a bit from then. They had actually gone out of distribution as such as the business had changed entirely. In my day, you could sometimes do a whole distribution deal with six prints and you would punt them round and eventually you would get all your bookings. If we had twenty or even forty prints, twenty was a lot for a company like us. I think we were like most small companies. And then the whole business changed, I say with the birth of the multiplex, when everyone is showing everything at the same time. It used to be, I don't know if you know about barring? You probably don't. That meant you played what we called the

principal runs, or principal towns, first, and then you could then move onto subsequent runs and some of it was quite complex depending on what towns could play in what order. You'd have things like, "Well that could play concurrently but not before that town," you get all sorts of things like that and it was an entirely different way of doing things. It worked, but with the birth of the multiplex everybody is playing the same film everywhere. I think it almost started with TV advertising, because if you weren't playing a lot of cinemas there was no point in advertising on television. But now the whole thing is just so different. I would say the cinema bookers were much more important in those days, and now it's the distributors who say we're going out with so many prints, we're going to play this here, we're going to play this there, the cinemas have to go along with it. Some of them have always been very powerful. No one could argue with Disney! That's really how we operated.

As far as the Fanceys themselves are concerned, I don't want to say too much about... because I have reasons for that!

AS – What was E.J. like?

PH – E.J. was a very, when you first met him he was fine, he was great, he was okay, I did go through a period where he didn't speak to me for two years and I don't know why but he didn't! Once he'd taken his films down the road to Negus-Fancey's company he was much better with me. I used to do some of their cutting as well, as I did with some other companies.

AS – He had an office on Leicester Square. When you knew him did he still have that?

PH – Oh yes, the office was Queen's House, the old hotel, and then the vestibule became the Jacey cinema. That's where I first met him. And then we moved a few times.

AS – One address I have is on Berner's Street.

PH – That's right, 1-2 Berner's Street, I would say that's when New Realm and some of its associated companies went there, that was when he took his stuff down to Negus-Fancey.

AS – On Wardour Street, next to the Marquee Club?

PH – That's right, I can't remember if it's 84 or 86 Wardour Street.

AS – I've heard interesting things about E.J. Obviously he was quite a formidable character.

PH – Oh, he was, yes.

AS – Have you heard the story that he went to jail in the 1940s for stabbing his accountant? I’ve heard that from several sources.

PH – I’m not sure if he went to jail, although he allegedly stabbed his accountant, or whether, he had a brother called Sid, and who I never knew, he died before... I’m not sure whether Sid hadn’t gone to jail in his place, but I can’t really say.

AS – I’ve not found any evidence of it anywhere. The closest I’ve found is that back in the 1940s E.J. was involved in a court case about cheque fraud.

PH – Oh was he?

AS – He was found not guilty but a couple of the other days went to jail.

PH – Oh really? (laughs)

AS – Beyond that I don’t know whether that story is true, but it’s a good story.

PH – I certainly had heard it before I joined the company.

AS – (Showing him a photo of the Border office) This was Olive’s office at Border.

PH – Is that *She Lost Her You Know What?* (*Der Turm der verbotenen Liebe*, 1968, Franz Antel, West Germany/ France/ Italy: Rapid-Film (Munich), Films E.G.E., Filmes Cinematografica)

AS – Yes, and *Bury ‘Em Deep* (*All'ultimo sangue*, Paolo Moffa, Italy: Società Ambrosiana Cinematografica (SAC)).

PH – (Laughs) They were very funny, some of those titles. We had a so-called version of *Madame Bovary* which became *Play the Game or Leave the Bed!* (*Die nackte Bovary*, 1969, Hans Schott-Schöbinger, West Germany/ Italy: Tritone Filmindustria Roma/ Roger Fritz-FilmprodU.Ktion/ Devon Film (Rome))

AS – I like the retitling of the *Schoolgirl Report* films as *Confessions of a Sixth Form Girl*.

PH – Yes, that was one of ours. We wanted to call one ‘Confessions of a School Cert’ but the censor wouldn’t have that. We had the *Hausfrauen Reports*. We called one *Give ‘Em An Inch* (*Hausfrauen-report III*, Eberhard Schroeder, West Germany: Munich TV 13 Film und Fernsehen), which was fine, so in came *Hausfrau* number two, and we said we wanted to call it ‘Give ‘Em Another Inch!’ “Oh, you can’t do that!” What’s the difference?

(Looking at Adrienne and Gordon’s wedding photo. The wedding took place years before Paul knew them.)

PH – She did some modelling.

AS – I've got some pictures.

PH – I think with Jackie Collins.

AS – She was in a film with Jackie Collins. There's a photo somewhere.

PH – Was that *Rock You Sinners?* (1957, Denis Kavanagh, U.K: Small Film Distributors)

AS – I'm not sure. She was very glamorous.

PH – Oh yes. One of E.J.'s companies was called Celluloid Dispatch. They did a lot of dispatching for smaller companies, us included, to cinemas, and then on the other hand there was a company called FTS, Film Transport, which I think took it all over in the end. Like a lot of the small companies, he produced a lot of what I would term second features, that was the days when there was the British film quota, where all cinemas were supposed to play a certain amount of British product. All these small companies were making quite a lot of cheap films.

AS – He made a few films in the 40s and 50s didn't he? I've seen some of them on Talking Pictures TV.

PH – Yes. At one time a lot of films, a big block of films, say from New Realm and Border, was sold to, who used to be at the BBC? Alan someone. Anyway, they were sold to the BBC because everybody was desperate for money! And then Renown Pictures came along and bought a lot of that stuff, and Talking Pictures is their channel.

AS – They have put some of those out on DVD as well. Have you bought any of those?

PH – The only one I've bought was *The Traitor* (aka *The Accursed*, 1957, Michael McCarthy, U.K: E.J. Fancey Productions).

AS – There's one with three films on, including one which E.J. himself directed, called *London Entertains* (1951, U.K: E.J. Fancey Productions). Adrienne is in it. It's about a girls' school that opens an escort agency, but all these girls are doing is literally taking men around London and showing them the sights. They're not that kind of escorts! That came later.

PH – With Donovan Winter's *Escort Girls!* (1974, U.K: Donwin Films)

AS – The brilliant thing with that film is that they shot some scenes with Eamon Andrews in E.J.’s office in Queens House, so you can see the view from his office window. It’s brilliant to have that now. Not very good films, but still very enjoyable.

PH – I think *The Traitor* was one of his better ones, and I believe *Soho Conspiracy* (1950, Cecil H. Williamson, U.K: E.J. Fancey Productions) isn’t bad!

AS – Adrienne and Gordon had two children?

P - Deborah and Charles, not to be confused with Charles Negus.

AS – Did they work for her as well?

PH – No. I think Deborah worked for various companies, including Avatar at one time, and a couple of others. Charles never came into the industry.

AS – Do you think it’s worth me trying to talk to them, or do you think they might give me the cold shoulder as well?

PH – I think they might give you the cold shoulder! You could try, but I wouldn’t hold your breath that they would want to talk about it.

AS – When I first tried contacted the family it was to see if there was any kind of archive left. If anyone had kept any paperwork, old posters, or anything. I was wondering if Adrienne might have kept anything, or if it had all been thrown away.

PH – My feeling is they didn’t keep anything.

AS – It doesn’t surprise me! It’s a shame. I’ve had a similar experience with Kenneth Rive.

PH – Oh Gala, yes!

AS – Nobody kept anything there either. I’ve spoken to his son.

PH – One of the people you might try and get hold of, who may have some stuff, is Alan Wheatley. He’s a publicity man. I forget what his company is called. It might have been Arrow or something. Anyway, Alan Wheatley, if you can find him. I know, because I see him quite often. We have a monthly lunch of people who have been in the business. It’s called the West End Managers Lunch. I don’t think there’s a cinema manager left in there, but anyway! We meet once a month, and I know he’s got an archive of everything he’s worked on. All the publicity. He might be worth trying to get hold of.

(Looking at a copy of a lobby card)

AS – This is one of the films S.F. distributed.

PH – Ah, that's one they made. *It's a Bare, Bare World*. Originally they made with Michael Winner a film called *Some Like It Cool* (1960, UK: SF), which ran for a year at the Cinephone Oxford Street. Seriously, and made its negative cost from that one screening. Everything else after that was profit. *It's a Bare, Bare World* was something, there was new stuff shot, but they used quite a lot of the footage from *Some Like It Cool*. *Some Like It Cool* was feature length, that was about, I can't remember, how long it was. That would have been a supporting feature. At one time they had loads of nudie films as supports. It was the way you could get tits on the screen without an 'X' certificate!

AS – Did you know Michael Winner?

PH – Personally, no. I know someone who worked for him, and I wouldn't want to know him!

AS – He started his career with the Fanceys.

PH – He did.

AS – He talks about E.J. in his autobiography.

PH – He probably talked about how E.J. would give you an envelope with something scribbled on the back and say, "There's your script!"

AS – He wanted him to make a travelogue in Holland, and they ended up shooting it in London and just sticking fake number plates on everything.

PH – Oh absolutely. They did that all the time. Nobody ever took them off!

AS – In his book Michael Winner refers to a time when Charlie Chaplin apparently said to the press that he had come to England (in the 1960s) to sue E.J. Fancey for distributing his films without permission. Apparently E.J. had been selling 9.5mm versions.

PH – I know, and I can't remember when it happened, there was a company called Equity British and they had a lot of Chaplin stuff. When they went out of business we took it over but we already had some of his stuff anyway, things like *A Burlesque on Carmen* (1915, Charles Chaplin, U.S.: Essanay Film Manufacturing Company) and various others. We showed quite a lot of them before it was a cinema to contend with, at the Prince Charles Leicester Square.

AS – Which is where *Emmanuelle* had its premiere?

PH – That's exactly right. Following *Last Tango in Paris*! (Bernardo Bertolucci, France/ Italy: Les Productions Artistes Associés, Produzioni Europee Associati (PEA)) Again, *Emmanuelle*, I can't remember whether it was two years or three, it played there for at least two years and, in those days, it took over a million. Taking over a million in those days was a lot of money. I don't think it's so much now, with what they charge now.

AS – They didn't seem to spend all that money making films, because the films they made after that were things like *Girls Come First*.

PH – They didn't, no. They didn't spend the money making films. I don't know that they spent all the money buying films. Unfortunately, I have to say, I think, with the success of *Emmanuelle* they thought they had the golden touch. You only get struck by lightning once. One of the worst things they had was the Pia Zadora film *Butterfly* (1982, Matt Cimber, U.S.: Par-Par Productions), I don't know if you're aware of that. Oh dear.

AS – What was Jack Grey like to work with?

PH – Jack was a nice man. How he put up with them for as long as he did I do not know.

AS – He was sales director? What would that have involved?

PH – Well, basically that was, we also had circuit salesmen, but that would have been in charge of the sales of films to the cinemas. Apart from your circuit people, who dealt with ABC and Rank and all that, we had salesmen all over the country selling to the independent cinemas.

AS – Was that where most of the Fancey's films would have played, in independent cinemas? Apart from *Emmanuelle* obviously, which played everywhere.

PH – They would have played a lot in independent cinemas. They would also, as I say, in those days you could punt a few copies round, and how it worked was, the person in charge of booking at the circuit, Rank or whoever, they would have a date sheet and they would tick up which cinemas they thought these films would play in, and then there were people called Circuit Principles who were given these sheets of paper for their area that they dealt with. And then it was up to you, or to get dates from them for the cinemas that the boss had agreed to.

AS – So he was with New Realm for a long time from what I understand.

PH – Yes, he was. He was certainly there when I joined, he was there before that.

AS – The story they tell is that they bought the rights to *Emmanuelle* before they had seen the film.

PH – That’s absolutely true. I think we dealt with various people, like in France there was a guy called Paul De Charnisay. He said to them “Buy this film,” and I heard it had actually been offered to Columbia who actually turned it down. And they were quite eager to get the third one! The third Sylvia Kristel film, *Goodbye Emmanuelle* (*Emmanuelle 3*, 1977, François Leterrier, France: Trinarca Films/ Parafrance Films) although unfortunately it wasn’t goodbye! And I have to say when it came over, and we all looked at it we thought “Yeah, that’ll take money. That’ll take money, if we get it through the censor.” I don’t think anybody had any idea exactly what we had, or what they had. Just didn’t know how big it was going to be. Unfortunately, I think, in my opinion, they thought after that they had the golden touch but it just didn’t work.

AS – Malcolm mentions in an interview *Just One More Time* and *Girls Come First* and then they say the next film they’re going to make is *I’m Not Feeling Myself Tonight*. They also talk about a film called *Charlotte* (*La jeune fille assassinée*, Roger Vadim, France/ Italy/ West Germany: Copra Films, Gerico Sound, Paradox Production) and *Magdalena* (*Magdalena, vom Teufel besessen*, 1974, Walter Boos, West Germany: Constantin Film, TV13 Filmproduktion).

PH – *Charlotte* was quite a startling film, I believe Columbia distributed it in the States. It had Sirpa Lane in it, and maybe Vadim himself. I think Serge Gainsbourg was in it. The other one, *Magdalena*, was a sort of, it was German, sort of sexy horror!

AS – Jack Grey described it by saying “It would make *The Exorcist* look like a Walt Disney picture!”

PH – That was typical of Jack. He used to come up with some brilliant lines.

AS – Malcolm said, “In the coming year (1976) we plan to make at least four British quota films as well as distributing about twenty pictures from Europe and the USA.” These were their great plans after making all this money – to carry on making quota movies.

PH – I think apart from *Just One More Time* and *Girls Come First* I suppose they were involved with, no they weren’t, they didn’t go into production in a big way.

AS – *Girls Come First* is the only one of those three films that you can still find, the other two have vanished, which might be partly to do with David Hamilton Grant having disappeared as well.

PH – It might partly to do with that.

AS – What do you remember about him? Did you know him? There are lots of stories about him.

PH – Oh yes, I knew David. I have to say I did have a few disagreements with him, because he had made *Just One More Time* and *Girls Come First* was shot as a prequel, and then you could join the two films together if you know how to do it, which I think I'm the only one who does! The lab f*cked it up in the end and they managed to put... There was a link reel between the two films, you took the end credits of one and the main titles off the second one, and they had this link reel which went in-between. I think the idea was for overseas sales. I know when I did that one, I did it with a triple track: dialogue, music and effects, and I think when they did the first one they didn't separate the dialogue, music and effects. It would have been difficult to sell it for foreign versions. Anyway, I went to the dubbing theatre and we started to dub the film and he suddenly sat there and said to his dubbing mixer "Have they shown you the first one?" I just said "David, this guy mixed the first one," so he started going potty and the dubbing mixer said "Get out, I'm trying to work here. Get out of my theatre!" I have to say he was a gentleman who I took an instant dislike to, and I wasn't proved wrong.

AS – Was he really called "The Poison Dwarf?"

PH – Oh yes, definitely. We did have a certain association, because he had a company called Oppidan Films and we had certain association with that, and I think he was involved when we took over what became the Soho cinema in Brewer Street. It had originally been a Focus cinema, and it is now Madam JoJo's. The building belonged to Paul Raymond.

AS – Most of Soho did!

PH – Well absolutely. Yes.

AS – Do you think David Hamilton Grant is still alive somewhere?

PH – No. No.

AS – David McGillivray believes he is, because people have contacted him to say he is still alive.

PH – I understood he might be part of a Turkish motorway! All I can say is, about that, there was a guy who knew David in Cyprus, he went to Cyprus, and this other guy did, and apparently, I believe he'd had an affair with this guy's wife or bird or something, and he's supposed to have wacked this guy with a spade. The guy contacted me, and every so often he would send me clippings from newspapers, Turkish newspapers, which unfortunately I don't still have, and for quite a long time he was doing that, and suddenly is just stopped. If anyone does know where David is, I'm sure there's quite a lot of people who would like to find out!

AS – There are some very unpleasant stories about him online, things he was involved in.

(At this point in the interview we watched extracts of *Girls Come First*.)

AS – You were the editor on this one. I hope you don't mind me saying that it's not a great film!

PH – I know it's not!

AS – Bill Kerr is extraordinary.

PH – Oh, I mean, Bill didn't deserve that! Burt Kwouk as well!

AS – How did they get such a good cast?

PH – That I don't know. It must have been something to do with Grant.

AS – it makes you wonder whether he had something on them!

PH – It does seem strange! But people took... I think Bill ended up back in Australia didn't he?

AS – Yes. The seventies was a pretty difficult time to find work for a lot of people I suppose.

PH – It probably was. John Hamill, hysterical as you can see.

AS – He was in *Crossroads* or one of those.

PH – I don't know. I think he was the lead in *The Beast in the Cellar* (1970, James Kelley, UK: Tigon British Film Productions, Leander Films) or something like that. Very likely. He just, I said to him "If flashing was legal you'd be a very happy man, wouldn't you John!" Joe McGrath was one of the writers on this, and the director. I think, was it this one where he used a pseudonym?

AS – Croisette Meubles.

PH – Yes.

AS – Joe McGrath had done *The Great McGonagall* (1975, UK: Darlton, Oppidan Film Productions) with Spike Milligan.

PH – He'd done a lot of stuff. He did the original stuff on the first *Casino Royale* (1967, Ken Hughes/ John Huston/ Joseph McGrath/ Robert Parrish/ Richard Talmadge, U.K./ U.S.A.: Famous Artists Productions), and then the producers decided they wanted about

six different directors or something. What you've got there wasn't the original, well it wasn't the original credit sequence, but we had to change it for over here for something a lot...

AS – Well I did wonder. It's a pretty strong opening title sequence!

PH – Yes.

AS – There's more sex in the titles than there is in the film.

PH – We put it back for the video, when it wasn't subject to censorship. David had a company with Malcolm Fancey called World of Video 2000 and they put out several of the films we handled. David ended up in jail for the *Nightmares in a Damaged Brain*. Somehow or other Malcolm got away with it.

AS – He was given a suspended sentence.

PH – I think he was. I don't know how he managed that. That always disappointed me! I had a joke with him about that: "I just imagined you, Malcolm, bending down to pick the soap in the shower, and one of those big lifers would be there straight away mate."

AS – There's a picture of Malcolm holding the brain in the jar. Do you know how Malcolm ended up getting involved with David to begin with? Was it because of Malcolm's role as a film producer? They ended up becoming partners.

PH – I think he just thought this was a way of making money. Olive Negus' company put *Nightmares in a Damaged Brain* out theatrically. And then one day she phoned me and said "Paul, we can't make sense of it," well I won't mention the guy's name, but whoever did the cutting for her cut every print differently. She asked, "Can you sort it out?" They'd all been cut differently, I didn't have any of the cuts that were taken out, so all I could do was try and take out anything left that I thought was iffy and tried to cut them more or less the same way, which was of course impossible.

AS – So the film was released theatrically?

PH – By Watchgrove,³⁹² or Border or someone.

³⁹² Records are unclear as to who ran Watchgrove. They submitted eighteen titles (mostly European sex films) to the BBFC between 1977 and 1982. The earliest BBFC record for *Nightmares in a Damaged Brain* is a submission from Oppidan in 1982, which was David Hamilton Grant's production company. It was awarded an 'X' with cuts.

AS – Speaking of Olive, the Fanceys were charged for distributing the film *More About the Language of Love*, through Fancy Associates. They had picked up the film from Grand National.

PH – Shouldn't they have gone after the GLC as well? I would have said so. They're the licensing authority. It should have been found not guilty. It's very peculiar.

AS – You would think so! But in the end the GLC were able to carry on as normal.

PH – One of the films I got through was Walerian Borowczyk's *La Bête* (The Beast, 1975, France: Argos Films). What an extraordinary film. I did the censor cuts. I did it before the censor saw it. I looked at it and I thought, there's this whole sequence with the beast and Sirpa Lane. I think it had originally been intended as part of *Immoral Tales* (*Contes immoraux*, 1973, Walerian Borowczyk, France: Argos Films/ Syn-Frank Enterprises). Borowczyk took it out and built on it. There is a sequence and I thought "The only thing you can do Paul is say to yourself, 'If this was a man and a woman, that would be obscene, and therefore you have to take it out. Take the cum shots and everything else out that would not get through.'" I did this and *Immoral Tales*. Someone said to me "It's arty porn!" And I suppose it is, especially the sequence with the cucumber! I was even amazed that when it went to the GLC viewing committee, I thought "they're not going to have this," so I was quite amazed when they passed it. Several films, another one was a very hardish, softcore film called *Prison Girls* (1972, Tom DeSimone, U.S.A.: Pacific Films/ United Producers). It was American. I think it was put out by a subsidiary of American International called United Producers and it was actually in 3D. It was amazing. It had Uschi Digard in it. She's one of the alumni of Russ Meyer, and in 3D she's quite extraordinary! I don't think we ever showed it in 3D. It had a great number of ladies from hardcore and softcore movies. Quite extraordinary, and we got that through the GLC.

AS – So the GLC would often certificate films that the BBFC would not?

PH – Absolutely right. I don't know if you remember the Russ Meyer *Fanny Hill*, made in Germany. It was put out by S.F. It was an extraordinary thing. You had to go to watch committees all over the country to get it through. It got everything from 'U' certificate to 'X'! It depended on the individual committees. There may have been one or two that banned it, I'm not sure if there were. For a Russ Meyer film it was very mild.

PH – We had *Anatomy of Love*, which is German. The great thing about it is it's set to Ravel's Bolero! It was, again, I don't think it got a BBFC [certificate], it went through the GLC. I may be wrong. That's what I recall. It wasn't hardcore by any means, but it was very good simulated sex.

AS – Do you remember *Paris in the Raw*? It was distributed on a double-bill with *Fanny Hill*.

PH – *Paris in the Raw* would have gone out first before *Fanny Hill*, I'm sure.

AS – There was a childbirth sequence they wanted cut out.

PH – That's right, in fact if I'm not mistaken, certain cinemas would play that and certain cinemas wouldn't. I'm trying to think, I remember it. I'm not sure, I'm trying to think who the director is. It might be Lelouche, but I'm not sure.

AS – In the BBFC documentation they quite often would switch between film companies whilst talking about the same film.

PH – *Paris in the Raw*, I seem to remember, going out as a D.U.K. film. I think it went out before *Fanny Hill*. I think it was already in distribution, and they were put together in some places.

AS – In a cinema in Scotland they were showing a double-bill of *Emmanuelle* and *Just One More Time*. I don't know if that was played like that everywhere.

PH – I'm trying to think.

AS – Quite an interesting double-bill.

PH – Oh yes, talk about the sublime and the ridiculous! I don't think it went out originally with *Emmanuelle*, but I can't honestly remember. My memory is not what it used to be!

AS – The Fanceys are such an important family in regard to film history.

PH – I think actually the important one was E.J. He's the important guy, being honest. I think, I believe he said to Adrienne one time "Darling, why don't you go to France and buy a film." Or it may have even been Germany, I'm not sure, I think the first film she bought herself was *The Girl Rosemarie* (*Das Mädchen Rosemarie*, 1958, Rolf Thiele, West Germany: Roxy Film). I think that's the first film she bought, and it took her quite a long time to buy it! So, he sent her off and she was then set up with S.F. Film Distributors as her company. I think D.U.K. was her and Malcolm, and I think maybe mother paid for that company.

AS – Something else that is a bit difficult to unpack is the family dynamic, as E.J. had both Beatrice and Olive.

PH – Well, here we go. All I can say is he was married to Beatrice. Olive was not his wife. It was all extraordinary. She had an ad sales company called Sugens, which is Negus backwards, and if you looked at some of our old films, you suddenly see Sugans, which had been doing the ad sales for New Realm, but I gather, I'm not sure if I should divulge

here, but I will tell you but don't quote me, that Judith and Charles Negus are all around the same age as Adrienne and Malcolm, so the two things were going on at the same time.

AS – And at one point they all seem to have been living together in the same property in Worthing.

PH – I don't know about that, it had all come to an end before I got there.

AS – From what I can see in terms of credits, Beatrice had seemed to stop being involved in the films by the early sixties, and Olive becomes involved in the company after that. Was that partly because of this family dynamic?

PH – As far as I gathered it was just two separate entities. She started calling herself Olive Negus-Fancey.

AS – And the children are legally called Negus-Fancey.

PH – That doesn't surprise me. She did start to call herself Olive Negus Fancey. There was a dispute in the office one day. Some poor sod went into E.J.'s office and said "Mrs Fancey's been on the phone," you know, and he was chased out of E.J.'s office by Beatrice. She was screaming at him "She's not Mrs. Fancey. I'm Mrs. Fancey!"

AS – They weren't all completely comfortable with it then.

PH – No.

AS – I wonder whether that's one of the reasons why none of the family want to talk to me.

PH – They probably don't want to talk to you about that! Or do they just think "Are we trying to be more respectable than we ever were?"

AS – Have you ever read Matthew Sweet's *Shepperton Babylon*? In there he repeats a rumour that E.J. murdered somebody once. Apparently he got this story from Michael Winner. The rumour is that there were bodies buried somewhere!

PH – I hadn't heard that one. I heard about him stabbing his accountant, but I've never heard of him having murdered someone. But it's the sort of thing you would like to be true!

AS – I was amazed that he could repeat that claim in his book and no lawyers got in touch. It's potentially quite libellous!

PH – That actually is quite strange. Although you can't libel a dead person can you?

AS – True, although you would think the family might have complained!

PH – Winner was a very... someone you didn't want to get too involved with. I have a friend who worked for Winner in publicity, unit publicist, and he hates Winner with a passion!

AS – I've heard similar things!

PH – There used to be a guy who owned Mercury Preview theatres in Wardour Street, he had several theatres, I think he was a big mate of Winner's because when Winner started making films, deciding he was a film director, he didn't actually have any technical knowledge. He didn't understand that if you join two bits of film together you have join them on the frame line, not halfway across. He put this stuff together and the guy who ran the theatre said "We'd better stop Michael. Now we're going to go out and remake all the joints so they are in rack."

AS – I've found some pictures from *Wonder of Love*. This was a German education film?

PH – A so-called sex education film. In fact, the guy who made it made a whole series of them.

AS – F.J. Gottlieb and Oswalt Kolle.

PH – Gottlieb had a lot to do with those films. It was shot in black and white but a lot of it was tinted different colours. It used to be common didn't it? In the silent days! You could almost pretend it was a colour film, but it never was! He did make a whole series of these films, but that was the only one put out theatrically.

AS – One other question I wanted to ask you, when I met with Michael Armstrong he made a short film called *The Hunt* and it was never finished. It was only half an hour long and Adrienne Fancey asked him if he could go and shoot twenty minutes of film of someone running around on Clapham Common! He said I'd have to think about that. But then he went off to make *Mark of the Devil*.

PH – Oh yes, I remember it well.

AS – so *The Hunt* got put on a shelf somewhere and was never finished and is now lost. He would love to find it now. What happened to film elements for films they owned?

PH – It could well be that a lot of it just got junked.

AS – It wouldn't still be in a lab somewhere, in a vault?

PH – It's possible. It's possible, but it could be, it's worth asking, is Rank labs still around? Or Metrocolor which was part of Technicolor, and I'm not sure about Studio Film labs, they might have had it.

AS – If someone was making a film for Adrienne, where would the elements be stored?

PH – They would have been kept, the camera elements would have been kept in a lab, the rest of it, if Michael doesn't know I don't know!

AS – He shot some of it on the Fanceys farm, so it would be really interesting to find it, but it's gone! New Realm did try to distribute *Mark of the Devil*.

PH – We did actually try. Put it this way, by the time we got it to a censorable state everybody was either being dragged to or dragged away from torture. Michael claimed and I don't know how true it was, that while he was shooting some stuff Adrian Hoven was on another set shooting some other stuff that he didn't know about. Now I don't know about how true that is. Michael did say that to me once. We did get it to where it could be shown but it wasn't worth showing. That's why we didn't go ahead with it.

AS – From what I understood no exhibitors wanted it because it didn't make any sense.

PH – It didn't make any sense. There was a company called Redemption who were basically a video distributor, and I think they got it and they did a cut of it which was probably stronger than we got through but wasn't the full version. Nigel Wingrove had made a dreadful piece of crap.³⁹³

AS – About nuns?

PH – That's the one, and I thought, he'd shot it on video, and it was shown at the Piccadilly Jacey, or Classic, from I think, some sort of video format, U-matic or something, they tried to advertise it as being the latest digital projection! You looked at this thing, I forget what it was called now, Nigel was a great admirer of Eurociné, who did a lot of stuff including a lot of the Jess Franco films. Unfortunately, I think Jess Franco was one of those people, once they were allowed to make hardcore porn, just went for the hardcore porn, but his range of films was quite extraordinary.

AS – I love his sixties movies, before, like you say, it just turned into lots of hardcore stuff. I really enjoy his earlier stuff.

PH – Some of them are interesting. We had quite a number including *Diary of a Nymphomaniac* (*Le journal intime d'une nymphomane*, 1973, Jesús Franco, France: Comptoir Français du Film Production). What I was going to say about Nigel is that he

³⁹³ Most likely referring to *Visions of Ecstasy* (1989, UK: Axel Films)

was a great admirer of Eurociné, but it was like he'd not absorbed anything from what they had made, he just made this terrible piece of trash, sort of, all these nuns had well-painted nails and makeup. You think "No, no."

AS – Nigel seems obsessed with nuns. He's put out a lot of those on his label.

PH – Yes, I think he did. We had one of Borowczyk's films, what was it called, *Behind Convent Walls* (*Interno di un convento*, 1978, Walerian Borowczyk, Italy: Lisa-Film/ Trust International Films). That at least had something going for it.

AS – *Mark of the Devil* is now available, uncut of course.

PH – Uncut? Bloody hell. I have John Trevelyan's book *What the Censor Saw*, and he said in that that *Mark of the Devil* was one film which would never get through! Never! The whole scene has changed now.

AS – The cut that you had to do had twenty-four minutes cut out of it. It would have made no sense at all! Now you can get the whole thing completely legally.

PH – No thank you! I didn't like it anyway. I thought it was a horrible film!

AS – Did they just decide, once they had got it back, did New Realm decide not to sell it?

PH – I think they did. They decided it was just not worth the effort. There's nothing to show! By the time you'd took everything out, especially Gabby Fuchs having her tongue torn out!

AS – It's all there now. Perhaps we should finish off now. So, you only stopped working for New Realm ten years ago?

PH – That's right.

AS – What were they still doing, day to day?

PH – What they were doing day to day, once they had decided that theatrical was never going to... it became impossible to do... having done various things they became sales agents for selling films to airlines, hotels, stuff like that. They worked for various people, Pathé, Universal, when they were not tied up with the CIC mob, and various other people, some of the smaller companies as well. We were selling films to airlines and hotels, maritime, non-theatrical, things like that.

AS – And Adrienne won an award around that time for her services to the film industry?

PH – As a friend of mine said, that was a BOGOF. Buy one get one free. I'm serious. This was Women in Film? I forget who it was that published it. I can tell you that she got an award, if you sponsored someone else to get an award you got one. I think that's how it worked. As Stuart Hall of Classic Cinemas and MGM and is now an independent programmer said, "It was BOGOF Paul," and I said, "I know." It was offered several times to Adrienne. Not that she turned it down, I think it was just thought of as outrageous!

AS – It's nice to think that she had some recognition and respectability at the end.

PH – Oh, there were people who did. She was quite personable I suppose. She was quite popular with certain elements. As someone once said to me "She's great at lunches!" "I know!"

AS – Did she have her father's business acumen?

PH – I don't think she did. I think certain things were accidents that were fabulous. I think Emmanuelle was an accident. As I said nobody, none of us, knew what it was. Unfortunately, they thought everything after that was going to perform the same way, and it didn't. The *Butterfly* with Pia Zadora! It's not that the film got so much publicity, but she and her husband got acres and acres of press. We thought with this amount of press, you couldn't buy this amount of press. It's got to be... and I think we opened it at the Prince Charles again and we went there on the opening night, and nobody's coming in! Nobody is coming through that door. Hardly anybody. It was quite incredible. We thought it must start off well, but it didn't.

AS – Some publicity can be bad publicity?

PH – Well, it wasn't really anything about the film, it was about her relationship with this multi-millionaire, I can't remember his name now.

AS – So after *Emmanuelle* had died down it back to business as usual?

PH – It was, despite what Malcolm and Jack said about *Magdalena*, he was a lovely guy. Very funny. He stuck with them a long time.

AS – I've seen his name several times. I really appreciate you doing this. I'm glad I found you!

PH – Well I hope I was some help you. On Companies House? I was conned into being company secretary. By then there were very few of us left. I think there was Adrienne, there was me, there was my assistant, Malcolm, not Malcom (Fancey), Nick, and the woman who did the accounts.

AS – Did Malcolm stop working with Adrienne after the incident with David Grant? Did he go independent at that point?

PH – He stopped working with her basically when he went in with David Grant at World of Video 2000. I don't remember anything after that.

AS – I really hope I can finally get to speak to him, but I'm running out of time!

PH – What exactly is it you're doing?

AS – I'm looking at how independent British distributors imported European film.

PH – Well there were so many of us. One of the best companies was Miracle.

AS – Yes, I've come across their name several times.

PH – They distributed, as they called it at the time, *And Woman Was Created*, because they weren't allowed to call it ...*And God Created Woman*. (*Et Dieu... créa la femme*, 1956, Roger Vadim, France/ Italy: Cocinor, Iéna Productions, Union Cinématographique Lyonnaise)

AS – That was Tony Tenser at that point. He worked for Miracle.

PH – Before he went to Compton. Then he went out on his own.

AS – Tigon.

PH – And then he had a company called Tensertainment! Miracle were one of the best companies I think.

AS – One day I may write about other distributors like them, or Planet Films. There were a lot of companies around.

PH – Oh Planet, yes. They didn't make a lot of films, Planet.

AS – They were importing European film as well. It was a good way of making money!

PH – I think it probably was. I think you could say, get a German film, one of the Hausfrau's or something, *Hausfrauen Reports*, and you could agree a figure. Then you could make your initial payment after you had played it somewhere like the Moulin. You got enough money to pay the deposit. Of course, at that time, I remember we had a complaint about, we were playing a *Hausfrauen Report*, or a *Schoolgirl Report* or something, no, it must have been a *Hausfrauen Report*, and we had a complaint that the same film was showing across the road. I think we were in the Windmill and across the

road across the road at the Moulin were playing the same film under a different title. We thought, that's odd. Well it wasn't the same film, but it could have been! We had *Housewife Report* and they had a *Husband's Report*!

AS – They were all very interchangeable weren't they?

PH – Oh absolutely right.

Tony Klinger

Tony Klinger's father was Michael Klinger, who alongside Tony Tenser formed the Compton Group of Companies. Tony Klinger began working for the company during his school holidays. He went on to become a successful producer, with documentary *The Kids Are Alright* (1979, Jeff Stein, UK: The Who Films) amongst his credits.

Interview One: 18th July 2013

AS – When did you first get involved in the business itself? Where you about sixteen?

TK –I was younger. The reason I know a bit more than Andrew (Spicer) might have thought I knew was because I was doing summer jobs at Compton, because Dad wouldn't let me loose on the world, so I did assistant producer jobs, in the ad sales department, in the booking department, all the head of departments, from when I was about fourteen. On productions, I wasn't even a runner, but the kid who carried the teas, from when I was about eleven. I visited all the sets and everything, that would have been 1960-61, something like that.

AS – That is when they started?

TK – It was about that. I guess it was. They'd really started making films. I wasn't allowed on the set for *Naked as Nature Intended!* But I saw the result. I vividly remember, there's pictures of me visiting the set of *That Kind of Girl* (1963, Gerry O'Hara, UK: Tekli British Productions), *The Yellow Teddybears*, those kind of things, meeting some of the actors and actresses. Really, when you're that young... The reason I knew it was different was when other people told me it was different. They were envious of me and I couldn't understand why. I didn't think there was anything exceptional. The only thing I thought was exceptional was that every time I visited my Dad's place of work, it was getting bigger! There was more people, it was busier, it was clearly growing. At that age, you don't really quite understand why. There was lots more people and it was expanding. He said, "Let's go to Birmingham," because I'm building a cinema, so we'd go to Birmingham or Derby or wherever it was.

AS – They were becoming a significant force in independent production and distribution. What I'm particularly interested in is the distribution side, looking at their international arm, buying in films from all over the world to distribute in this country, and also, I've had some conversations with John Henderson (film buyer for Compton in the 1960s), who explained that he would buy films from other countries for distribution in other countries, but not necessarily the UK. They became quite an international operation.

TK – The reasoning behind some of that: some was because it was pragmatically essential, and part of it was that my father happened to love Italian, and French, and

German cinema, and he knew it. Before anyone knew who Pasolini was he was trying to buy Pasolini films, etc. They all thought he was mad except for one other guy who ended up living in the garden of our house. Kenneth Rive at Gala I think it was called. Kenneth Rive also had a feeling for foreign films I think.

[Tony Klinger sent an email on 28 Nov 2013 to clarify the above statement:

No, he had the smaller house to the side of my parent's house in Radlett, maybe fifty metres away. He didn't live in their garden although we did have a small office complex in that garden between dad's main house which was in the centre of his grounds and Ken Rive's house. Hope this clears it up!

Their proximity meant very little. This was Radlett, where the houses were really not on top of each other and I don't ever remember seeing or even knowing that Ken was there except by way of familial information. My dad was pretty neutral about Ken and didn't really see him as very important. As the saying goes, he wasn't on his radar.]

People always assume that all the films they bought were exploitation films, but they certainly weren't, unless you think *The Gospel According to St Matthew* (1964, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Italy/ France: Arco Film/ Lux Compagnie Cinématographique de France) is an exploitation picture, or films like that. It was clearly because he thought they had legs and he long thought, and I don't know where the thought came from, whether it was self-generated or externally, that those kinds of films would raise the profile. And that's where he had an edge, because he had that knowledge. Hence the Polanski pictures, and things like that, which his partners tried to stop him making and at one stage there were law suits threatened and started, to stop him making some of those films, because they thought they were rubbish. I suppose if you measured them pound for pound they were not initially as successful as, I don't know, some sexy film. I can see their point, but long-term and profile-raising they were clearly the right way to go.

AS – I know they seemed to be quite disappointed with the reception of *Cul-de-Sac* (1966, Roman Polanski, UK: Compton Films/ Tekli British Productions).

TK – Yes. It was a much more difficult sell for obvious reasons, and also it cost a bit more, and it was the right thing to do. Polanski, I was on that set a bit, and he was an impossible man! But a huge talent. it was, you balance these things up don't you? It's quid-pro-quo. I don't suppose there are many truly spectacular directors who are a day at the beach!

AS – There are a lot of comparisons between your father and Roger Corman in that way.

TK – I would have said there was more of a parallel and a paradox, in him being both halves of Harvey and Bob Weinstein. Because he taught me lessons like that. I was a snob intellectually at that stage. He offered for me to be involved with the *Confessions* series,

as you probably know, and I turned it down flat. I wouldn't touch that kind of film. I was a twerp! He was spot on. He said, "Look, that earns me the right to make a *Get Carter* (1971, Mike Hodges, UK: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer British Studios) and a *Cul-de-Sac*, that kind of thing," and more power to him. He was absolutely right and I could have learned a lot of lessons myself. I don't think in England there has been anyone like that. I can't think of anyone in Europe really. More of an American mind-set, like Miramax/Dimension films kind of thing.

AS – That's why I mentioned Corman. He was distributing Ingmar Bergman whilst making exploitation films.

TK – And he certainly had an eye for talent, but I don't think he ever reached a high level in his productions, and he was working with some great talents. He never deviated from cheap exploitation. I don't think that was Michael's aim. If you track back and look at that career you can see it was going towards a certain path. It got truncated in my opinion. His natural home would have been head of production at a major studio, which he turned down. He turned it down for my mother. That would have been an interesting test for a Brit in America because he could have done both, but David Puttnam couldn't do it!

Going back to your original question about the sales, it was really serious. It was kind of funny. Put yourself in that position: I was fifteen when I was sent on some of those trips by myself, buying films. I remember going to some of those places. He gave me no warning. He never said, "They're going to do this to you, or that to you." I just thought I'd go and sit in a cinema, they'd show me the film, and I'd say yes or no, and the money had been arranged by somebody else, and I'd just go back home. I remember the first time in Germany, in Munich, they had 140 films to show me in two days. They lock you in! The man locked the door and it was like these terrible, terrible police pictures. Scotland Yard, but dubbed and wearing the wrong uniforms.³⁹⁴ I was too polite to say anything, and he was trying to toughen me up. I was sat there for the first three of these and by now the morning has gone, and I'm banging on the door of the projection box to let me out! They just opened the door, stuck in a cup of coffee and kept going. You learnt your lessons. By the time you had watched, I don't know, I was in Munich, Paris and Rome, and by the time about four days had gone, I must have seen, I don't know, after five minutes you were saying, "Take that off. Next!" And I bought one film after a week. It was a terrible film, I can't remember the title of it, it was an Italian rip-off of *The Day of the Triffids* (1963, Steve Sekley, UK: Allied Artists Pictures/ Security Pictures Ltd.), except instead of a plant it was a tree that ate people.³⁹⁵ When we brought it back they

³⁹⁴ Probably the series of Edgar Wallace adaptations produced in Germany, known collectively as Krimi films.

³⁹⁵ The film in question is most likely *La isla de la muerte* (1966, Ernst von Theumer aka Mel Welles, Spain/ West Germany: Orbita Film S.A./ Theumer Filmproduktion/ Órbita Films), known alternatively as *Island of the Doomed* or *Maneater of Hydra*. It was later distributed in the UK by S.F. Distributors as *The Blood Suckers* in 1967 and again in 1972.

made me show it to all the people who were working for Compton and they obviously looked at it, the bosses, and they sat there and said, "Could you tell us why you bought this film?" I paid about \$4000 or something. "Could you tell us why you bought this film, and what are we going to do with it?" (laughs) Of course when you saw it, it was unwatchable, and they said, "Now you've got to take it to Mr Trevelyan at the BBFC and show him this film," and so I had to take it and book it in. I think they'd clued him in and he was just being friendly! He came back, it was a ninety-minute film, and he came back with twenty-three minutes of cuts! And I had to do the cuts. They made me do the cuts. It was pos-cutting because that's all I had, was a print. What happened in the real film people go past the tree, looking nervously for someone, and then the tree eats them up! All of that was taken out, so all you see is, the tree looks, they look, then you hear a noise and they're gone. All the drama was gone. I think we got away with thirteen minutes of cuts instead of twenty-three, something like that. Now you'd got to go to Bob Standen, who was the booking guy who would get it in cinemas. We had to go to have meetings with the bookers, the chains, and try to book that in cinemas. It shows how powerful we had become because we got some bookings! And quite honestly it should never have been booked. Bob Standen was a very nice man, probably long since passed, he was the chief booking guy.

Head of publicity, very definitely, was Tony Tenser, that was what he was, a publicist. He wasn't an executive in a business sense, he didn't get involved with that really. He was a consummate showman, and very good at that. Very bombastic and lively. He didn't get on well with some of the chief people at the big circuits because he was a bit rough and ready for them. But he was good at his job, with the public. And underneath him was a man who kind of took orders, did what he was told, called Eric Dalmond, who was head of sales. Eric was a polite man, and a plodder. Sparks would fly from Tony, about the actual methodical delivery of materials, that would go from Eric. And there were a bunch of people involved with them. There was a guy called Brian Hoolahan, I can't remember his title, who was also involved. Elliptically to that was the statistical knowledge of Terry Greenwood and the financial guys like David Niven (not that one) so it was a burgeoning middle-management level.

AS – After your experience with that one film did you learn from that and go back for more, or did you do something else?

TK – It was a baptism of fire. I was then sent on a few more of those little trips, and I went back to Rome, back to Paris, I went once more to Germany. They were instrumental a little bit later, particularly the British, in the way we presented ourselves at festivals and markets, and film fairs. And before that, Michael always believed in this and I still do it, I still think it's right, in making personal direct contact with the distribution companies and sales companies in their country. So we would go. We did a lot of travelling. He always believed that was fundamental to asking, "What do they want, how is it going, why are they doing it?" That kind of thing. I don't think most British or American companies did or do. So, there's always been an aversion to drama from overseas in its

original language. They all go “No, no, no,” but now they're beginning to watch it. It's taken a long time.

I don't know if it's a prejudice on my part, a reverse snobbery, I genuinely thought we found some fantastic films that you otherwise wouldn't have been able to get because they were foreign. The best talents, Pasolini, Bertolucci, all those. A million guys, fantastic talents that wouldn't have become known if it wasn't for people like Michael.

AS – And Compton were also distributing things like the Hercules and Goliath movies, those kinds of thing as well?

TK – Well that came in the mix. Part of that, I don't know if you know how this works, both sales and distribution both ways, people don't often talk about it in the industry but it's a fact, that when you are buying one, like a locomotive, you have to buy a lot of carriages. That's part of the way it works, and if you don't you don't get the other stuff. Even the big companies with the big cinema chains, that's how it works, so if you want to get *Avengers Assemble* (2012, Joss Whedon, U.S.A.: Marvel Studios, Paramount Pictures), you're going to be taking 25 pieces of sh*t, otherwise you don't get that one.

AS – So it's a block booking situation?

TK – You learn those lessons, so what you do is try and dig out the gems. It's the same as any other industry, you have to know how to negotiate, and relationships matter enormously, but not quite as much as money.

AS – When you were involved in buying in the films, was it a two-way thing or was that kept separate?

TK – That was separate people, separate departments. The only overlapping people would be my Dad, I don't remember Tenser being involved in sales like that, later I got involved in that a bit, post-Compton, it was always separate. That was usually because the sales and distribution companies in those countries were usually different companies, but we were all ends, what you would now call a 360-degree company, both vertically and horizontally, so it didn't overlap like that. Certain places and things did overlap, but it was also the market, it was very different. I remember one day we woke up to the fact that, and this was quick, very fast, within two or three years of being in distribution we were the biggest independent distributor in Europe. It was a big operation, and it was extraordinary how fast that happened. It's not that I'm claiming genius for anyone there, although I think my dad may have been one, it was about lack of competition. Like no one had built a cinema in England for forty years. When he started building cinemas, and converting theatres into cinemas, there hadn't been, that hadn't happened. You've got to remember we'd gone from 4000 cinemas to just over 1000 in that period, and we've never recovered. The numbers have gone back up to half of what they were, and he was one of those people. It was obvious that you should be doing that, but then when we did it and

everyone was buying tickets everyone was shocked!

AS – That was a model that was picked up by Leslie Elliot when he took over and went purely into exhibition.

TK – Leslie was a machine lawyer, a legal guy. I remember sitting down in a restaurant and there two tables of people, and we started talking to each other and realised that between the two tables of people there were about eleven law suits with him. He was a monster, and strangely enough his father came to me when I was making a small film at the Cannes Film Festival which would have been about 1969 or 1970, called *The Festival Game* (1970, Tony Klinger/ Mike Lytton, UK), and came up to me – Curtis Elliot – and he said, “It’s nothing personal, and I would really like to be friends with you again, maybe I could be in your film: and I said “F*ck off!” He didn’t understand it. He couldn’t believe that we would take that personally. He took something that was actually working, in a model he didn’t like, because he saw things as bricks and mortar. I remember, he lost the law suit, the major law suit, and he had to pay all the money and everything, and he couldn’t get his head around the way the justice system worked, and the QC said to the judge, “There’s no doubt that Mr Elliot can pay this money,” and the judge said, “I don’t think Mr Klinger doubts he can pay the money, he is doubting his willingness to pay the money.” He just was a different planet, like a dalek. Look what they did. I think it’s tragic. I think my Dad ended up doing well out of it, as in the final analysis he was doing what he should have been doing all along, which was producing films.

AS – Did you have much to do with the regional offices?

TK – As far as I remember, and I only visited one or two of them, they were literally a man in an office on the end of a phone. They got bigger if he discovered opportunities. In a couple of places, like Birmingham, they did, and that’s why the cinema got built there so that became a bigger hub, purely because it was generating revenue.

AS – Were they mainly responsible for regional distribution? Is that what they were doing?

TK – Yes. Lots of physical things had to move around the country, and if it didn’t get there on time you were in big trouble. That was the pattern. Bits of paper and film had to go, and that was how it was organised by the industry, so as a consequence you had to follow that pattern or you weren’t taken seriously.

AS – What about international offices? Do you know much about them?

TK – I know what happened when I was involved. What they were, in effect they were film agencies. Like for a period when we were doing quite a lot of work, Paul Kaiser, who was Dutch but was living in Madrid, became our mainland European office wherever he was, because that suited us. He could write contracts in nine languages. That was handy

for us to have, rather than where we were. We would go through all the papers once every month or two months. When you look at international distribution in particular, and at the stuff we made, it's still the same pretty much, we would be involved with maybe 150-200 contracts on each film. Different territorial sales, the music contracts, the artist contract, it was huge. What we should have had was a much bigger legal department. Actually, we handled almost all of it ourselves, and what we would give to the lawyers were variations on the deals, and for the filing and the checking and all that kind of thing. It was a big amount of legal work. We were major clients of people like Mishcon de Reya, and spent a lot of money. That was here and in America, where we had Phillips Nizer, big lawyers, and you couldn't run a firm like that. That's what people don't realise. It costs a lot of money because you were playing with a lot of money. The bits that started off being very important became very much smaller by comparison in terms of money as time went on because the productions became bigger and bigger and bigger. And the consequences of the sales got bigger and bigger, and the distribution got bigger. This is post-Compton, but that was the genesis of that. It's clearly trackable, and would probably make an interesting study all of its own.

AS – That's partly what I would like to try and find out a bit more about. I'm intrigued by the office in Tokyo. Would they have also been involved in helping to acquire potential films for Compton to distribute, or were they purely focusing on distributing Compton films in Tokyo?

TK – Both. I remember, I don't know how much success we had as I wasn't in the office all the time at that time. I remember films that my dad wanted to buy, *In the Realm of the Senses* (*Ai no korîda*, 1976, Nagisa Ôshima, Japan/ France: Argos Films/ Oshima Productions/ Shibata Organisation), *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959, Alain Resnais, France/ Japan: Argos Films, Como Films, Daiei Studios), films that he was very interested in, we all watched them, and they actually were not easy to negotiate with in those days. The way we got into them, I don't know how successful it was the other way round, but the way we got into them was the Polanski films. They started taking our output seriously. Now they loved *Repulsion* and *Cul-de-Sac*, they thought we'd cheated them. Not because they didn't get it. They just thought "What's that?" Whereas *Repulsion* they totally got. That soured the relationship somewhat, then we did some more deals and it got better again. I think we were using a man there, or working through a man there called Arthur Davis who was an American who lived there for many years, since the Second World War, and with those kind of countries, most of Asia, it's about respect and all that kind of thing. You can be treading on someone's toes without knowing it. I don't think we truly understood and dealt with them in an appropriate manner, by accident, not by design. Whereas we did very, very well in the Italys, the Germanys, both ways, and America. Michael's eyes particularly, post-Compton, near the end of the Compton era, were going towards America. As he said, "For the same amount of effort, for getting some pistachio nuts from a Turkish guy I can get a million dollars from America." And "Why am I wasting my time with the pistachio nuts guy? I'll leave that with a junior person," and that's where people are. I spent a little bit of time doing that. "You go and talk to that

nutcase, I'll be talking to the American. It's worth me schmoozing half a day with the American. This guy's going to take up half a day and I'll get nothing." And so that was the logical shape of it, and it all started at that point. He spent much more time during Compton than later going through agents and sub-agents, things like that. By the time he was finished and he'd gone almost totally into production and sales and distribution of his own stuff, he didn't want to go through everybody else because he could do it as well or better than anybody he knew. He was a very, very good film salesman if that was what he wanted to do. And so it was kind of. The only thing that thwarted him, actually, was lack of scope when he was beginning, and too much scope when he didn't have enough energy, when he was older. He did pretty good, he was very successful. I wonder what would have happened had you harnessed him to a big organisation. But you're never going to know that, but in terms of how the system worked in Japan, it also, if I remember my figures right, I think Japan at that stage, for a foreign film, unless it was American, a major studio, was worth between 0.5% and 1.5% of the royalties, so it wasn't of huge importance but we figured it would be. It just wasn't yet. It was still the time when people made stuff in Japan that everybody laughed at, not just in films but in general, like their cars. It was a very different world.

AS – One thing that I've been doing is looking at the publicity materials for a lot of the films that Compton distributed, and I wanted to run a couple of things by you. I've got a press book here from the Cinema Museum for a film called *The Adventures of Remi* which is a French film. I'm interested in the relationship between distribution and exhibition, as a lot of these press books have got tips, things that cinema owners can do to try and promote the film locally. This one suggests holding a painting contest for local children. The film is about a circus, and it suggests here getting some cut-outs for front-of-house, and then it says, "Can you get a live monkey in the foyer?" It also suggests dressing up a group of musicians, like those in the film, and get them to parade around the town with blackened faces.

TK – At one stage around the time of that film they were going to make a film called 'The Adventures of Beau Geste',³⁹⁶ which was a rip-off of a French Foreign legion film, and Tony Tenser, this is direct Tony Tenser dialogue, he said, "You're going to be in this business one day. I'm going to give you a test." This was at the CEA, Cinematograph & something Exhibition fair, in Torquay, in the early or mid-sixties. He said "Prove yourself to your father and me. I want you to arrange, and this is your test," he said, "You've got to do this. A parade of people in legionnaires uniform, go around Torquay in front of the hotel," the Imperial I think it was called, or Palace, a big hotel, "at such and such a day, at such and such a time, and they should have camels, and maybe an Elephant. And people with guns," things like that. I was fourteen! So I'm on to every zoo, and they're all telling me "Go away," in worse language than that, and eventually, after much fighting I get

³⁹⁶ In 1966 Compton announced they had in production a film called "Beau Brigand," mentioned in an ad alongside another production, "Loch Ness Monster." This could be the film to which Tony refers. Neither were produced. *Variety*, 9 February 1966, p.19

some funny uniforms, I find a few guys, four or five guys, and a goat and a dog! My father and Tenser are outside waiting to salute, with various dignitaries of Torquay, and my bedraggled group came past. It was a great lesson in making someone humble. That was my experience in trying to follow Tony Tenser's guidelines. He did do that kind of thing. He was a great showman.

AS – Do you think any of the cinemas did follow that kind of advice?

TK – Some of them tried it. Let's put it like this: the disproportionately high amount of bookings we got must have been based on more than just the films, because some of them were truly bad. But they did get a lot of bookings, and there were lots of films out there, so it wasn't that, it was because they tried to back it up with showmanship. It was a skill sorely lacking. Anybody can buy an advert, it's the person who does that little bit extra, more than everybody else does. Some of those were terrible ideas, some of them were cute ideas. But they were ideas, they were something you could try. And everything was, it's a bit like the publishing world now in books, everybody's stuff looks exactly the same. I remember when Michael and Tony, I remember them doing it for the Cannes Film Festival, made their press books bigger than everybody else's and in multi-colours and glossy, and everybody was threatening, saying "What is this? We're all going to have to do this!" And they said "You don't have to do that. You do what you want. We're doing this." And they got noticed and were selling films on the back of the press books. Later Michael started a thing called the Klinger News, it was like a newspaper.

AS – I do have something a bit like that, 'News From Compton.'

TK – This was after that. It was exactly like a newspaper, but people would quote it to each other like it was a newspaper and it was us telling them stuff we wanted them to say. It was clearly very successful, that kind of thinking. The first time at Cannes, when it was still Compton, at the Carlton Hotel, they were the first people to put a booth anywhere. No one had done that, there were no booths. No one had ever thought of that, and leafleting people. No one had done that. Pre-sales of that nature, with minimum guarantees, no one had done it. English companies never thought to do that, I don't know why. It seems now, in retrospect, completely obvious, but it wasn't really done. It had a disproportionate effect, they were punching above their weight and the weight was getting bigger as well. By the second year of operation I think they had turned over about £1.5 million. That's a lot of money in those days.

AS – Yes! Do you think they influenced other independent distributors to do similar things with their press books and their campaigns?

TK – Oh undoubtedly, but I think possibly more American companies were influenced than British companies because I think by dint of his personality, and I think Tenser as well, basically they were Americans whose parents did not have the extra \$5 to get to America. They were first generation immigrants from Poland and Russia and they

basically were the same people as Joseph E. Levine and people like that, but they never got that far so they were here, but they had a mentality that was different. Some of the people like Korda, it was a similar mentality. They were Hungarian-Jewish immigrants, with a global view. They thought in a different way because they thought in different languages. That was part of it. Michael read *Crime and Punishment*, and I think he read it in a different language, I don't think he read it in English. It was in that house, his parents would speak other languages, I remember it myself, my grandfather, they'd speak in English but if they wanted to say something private they would switch to Yiddish, and if they thought we understood it they would switch to Polish, then they'd go to Russian, then they'd go to German! You heard conversations like this in six or seven languages. What's going on! It makes you think in a different way. I think the perception of sales and showmanship and connections and networking and all that were very, very important and you helped somebody else because you knew it was going to benefit you. Like Canon-Globus, all those guys. He took them to their bank, introduced them, for his sins. It was him who introduced them to Jack Fishman who sorted them out with the music when they got in trouble with *Lemon Popsicle* (1978, *Eskimo Limon*, Boaz Davidson, Israel: Golan-Globus Productions/ Noah Films). Jack Fishman lent them the money to buy the Classic cinema chain because they didn't have the money. They had raised \$300 million in America but the money had not come to their hands. They needed £1.7 million by Friday or they would have lost the cinemas so he wrote them out a cheque. It's about that kind of connectivity.

AS – Going back to the publicity, the press books detail the posters and things the cinemas can order. Did Compton ever do nationwide advertising campaigns, or was it always down to the local cinema owners to advertise in their area?

TK – They certainly did some national stuff. They certainly did. I don't know which is what. I worked for a while in the ad sales department under Eric Doleman and we certainly did national campaigns. I remember sending stuff out nationally. I wouldn't be able to tell you specific films, but I remember them doing it. I remember one film we did nationally, one summer. I think it was called *Fury of the Vikings* (*Gli invasori*, 1961, Mario Bava, Italy/ France: Galatea Film, Lyre Films, Critérion Film) or something like that. That was certainly national, and I think one of those Hercules films was national. It depended on the weight of the film. If it was a big investment it had to be national to get the money back. It depended on how much you invested. If you bought something and it was very marginal... like *Last Year in Marienbad* (Alain Resnais, France/ Italy: Cocinor/ Terra Film, Cormoran Films) was definitely national.

AS – What would a national ad campaign consist of? Do you remember?

TK – I can tell you what it should consist of but I can't remember what they did. Posters, PR, they'd tour the country, Michael or Tony, or both of them, would take the makers of the film around the country. Television and radio were all live interviews. I remember *Last Year in Marienbad*, I remember the interview we were doing in Newcastle. I would

love there to be an existing tape, because the producer and the director-writer argued with each other live on air! Tenser was angry because they had promised not to ask those kind of contentious questions, they were going to follow a certain path and they didn't. So, Tenser somehow convinced them to do a live interview with him the following week and he tore them to shreds live on air! I have to say he was very good. He absolutely tore them into little bits, because he ambushed them. In those days it was live and they couldn't turn him off.

AS – I found a packet of material about Isabel Sarli. There's a whole pack of stuff about Isabel Sarli including newspaper articles from Argentina.

TK – She was very, very sexy. Unbelievable looking woman. She came over with a bloke called Armando Bo, her husband and director. They came over at least twice, because I had lunch with them twice, two different trips. I'd never met her, and my dad said, "Wait till you see this woman," and she came into the room and it was like Sofia Loren; incredible to look at. A fantastic body and a low-cut dress and a wiggle like you wouldn't believe. Just a woman to the nth degree. She came in and literally, it was like the waves parting, all the guys stood up in the restaurant. I can't remember which restaurant it was but it was a very famous, nice, very smart restaurant and everybody stood up and more or less started to applause. She was a stunning woman. She was just like, she couldn't kind of help it, it was beyond beautiful, sexy, and something exceptional. You don't see too many women like that, very charming and they were capable of making some good stuff, but it was like he was, everything had to be via her and sex, he was kind of obsessed, and I got it. She was charming.

AS – Do you remember whether the films themselves were successful over here?

TK – Yes, they were. I think we had two or three of them. Not huge, not breakout, but there was a market, no question.

AS – I have a whole pack of things here. There's another one called *Women and Temptation*.

TK – That's right. Look at that dress!

AS – There's press cuttings in here and everything. One other film that I've got a particular interest in is *Bonditis*.

TK – I've never heard of that film! I don't know what that film is, I don't know the title. Was it a Compton film? Was it a distribution job or a production job?

AS – It was a Swiss-German co-production by a company called Turnus Films. It was distributed by Compton. John Henderson says it was never distributed in the UK.

TK – It was one of the ones be bought and sold on.

AS – I’ve probably got the world’s biggest *Bonditis* collection now! Was that a relatively normal practice, that they would buy films to sell on?

TK – It was not encouraged. It probably meant what had happened was either we hadn’t been able to acquire clean entitlement to the rights in the UK or alternatively it just wasn’t selling in the UK so we’ll just have to sell it where we can. But that’s an expensive looking campaign. It’s a beautiful book.

AS – It amazes me that they seem to have gone to a lot of trouble for it to not have been distributed here, in 1968. It’s a James Bond spoof, and it fits with the time when those kinds of films were being made.

TK – Maybe they were threatened with a law suit! I don’t know. It could be, that’s the period Michael was getting out of the company. I wonder if that was the reason. If he was leaving Leslie Elliot wouldn’t have been interested in that. He didn’t have a love of film, and so all of that... The lawsuit hinged, and he lost on, he was one of the people, and I think Tenser joined the action, and obviously lost, where they said the film *The Penthouse* (1967, Peter Collinson, UK: Compton Films/ Tahiti Films), which had just been made, was not worth it’s production cost, and they didn’t know Michael had just sold the US rights, I think for twenty times what it cost. So, when they said it’s not that, and the judge said, “What have you got to say to that Mr Klinger?” he said, “Well here’s a contract from Paramount for a down-payment of half a million, and it cost £30,000,” And the said “Well I think that’s the end of that case!” What can you say. Thee was obviously nothing they could say. It was more arbitrary than that. They just didn’t want to be in films.

AS – The strange thing is, on that note, with Leslie Elliot, he brought in the American filmmaker Andy Milligan. He was an even lower budget version of Andy Warhol, making underground films. Leslie Elliot paid for him to come over to London in 1969 and he shot four films with money from Leslie Elliot with the idea that they would be distributed in Cinecenta cinemas, but Leslie had to go away on business, and Andy had shot two of the films, and then Elliot’s dad got into a massive argument with Andy Milligan.

TK – That would happen!

AS – He pulled the plug on the money so he only got two of the films finished, and the other two which he had already shot he took back to New York and someone else helped him finish them. I find, from what you said about Leslie Elliot, it seems odd that he would be attracted to this guy who was making very weird, low budget films in New York to come over.

TK – I think it actually makes a lot of sense. Having lost the case on *The Penthouse*, which was a very low budget, strange film of its day. It’s a good film actually. It was his

first film as a director, and he hated the idea of it but it then turned out to be very successful commercially and what then happened, was Leslie thinking “If he can do it, I can do it. If you can turn £30,000 into half a million, I can do that times four and we’ll have two million,” but it’s not that easy.

AS – One of those films has just been released on blu ray by the BFI, called *Nightbirds*. The BFI Flipside range also have several Compton films. It’s been really interesting to talk to you. I’m very grateful!

TK – It’s been my pleasure. Do you have, or could you send me, John Henderson’s email address? I’d love to talk to him and I haven’t talked to him in years.

AS – I’m currently trying to go and visit him in France in the Summer. He’s been working with Odeon Entertainment to release films from his catalogue.

TK – I was thinking of making a bid to put together the Michael Klinger library. And John would be my first starting point. It seems to me like a logical thing to do.

AS – What would that consist of?

TK – The whole collection, I just think it’s such an interesting, trackable thing, and what with the book coming out, and I’m just finishing the film I’m not sure about how academic or counter-culture I want to be but it’s an interesting thing to study.

Interview Two: 30 May 2017

AS – Did you know the E.J. Fancey family? They had companies like New Realm, S.F. and Border. I’ve contacted some members of the family but they don’t want to talk to me!

TK – Yes. I don’t remember any scandals or anything like that!

AS – Did you ever meet E.J.?

TK – I think I met him once or twice. My dad didn’t like him. I don’t know why. I don’t really know the history of that. There were a few people around at that time, who should have been more friendly but weren’t, like Kenneth Rive. He actually lived at the end of my parent’s drive. He wasn’t really friendly as he saw what my dad did as competition. Dad didn’t see it at all. At one stage, we imported and distributed a lot of foreign films which he thought were his by right. Because we went into that market at that point it kind of upped the prices he had to pay, because they suddenly had more than one buyer for England. I was part of that because I used to go and buy films from Italy, France and Germany. Ken got really upset. Some people didn’t, like Michael Myers at Miracle Films,

he was fine. The guys that you got to talk to were fine, but he [E.J.] didn't have a nice reputation, but I don't know quite what it was he did that everybody... there were people that were upset by him, but I don't know what he did.

AS – This confirms what I've heard! Maybe that's why the family don't want to talk about it.

TK – He had a dubious thing they don't want to answer for.

AS – They certainly were a complicated family, particularly regarding the family relationship itself.

TK – The Eckhart brothers were similar, who owned the Star Group of companies.³⁹⁷ They ended up in jail because of tax evasion. They were very legit and hugely growing. They were opening a cinema and bingo hall every eighteen days at one point. They were incredibly prolific, and they had inherited the business from their father. It was like the third or fourth biggest group in the country, and the biggest in the north of England. They were based near Leeds. The father had been decorating his house and putting it against the business for years. Every year he'd have a new paint job, they had this big mansion near Leeds. When the sons took over they didn't want to shame their father so they didn't say anything about it. They carried on doing it, because that kept it quiet. And then they tried to take over, and the reason I know about this is because it was British Lion, and they wanted to make my dad chairman, or head of production, so they were doing a reverse takeover to become a public entity, so they knew everything about everybody. Harold Wilson, Prime Minister at the time, had a hatchet-man called Lord Goodman, so anything that was public money, he would be sent like an attack dog to investigate it, and see if it was okay. He found out about this dodge with the painting of the house, and the furniture, and the carpet, so he said he would put them on trial for tax evasion, so they offered a £1 million fine, I'm talking 1960-something, and they got the ex-attorney general Peter Rawlinson, but my dad told them not to. He said, "Get a local man, don't get that guy from London. He's going to be in a court in Leeds, they'll hate him." They didn't listen and he got put in jail. Rodney got put in jail, and I'm not sure if Derek did. They lost their license and had to sell their bingo halls because they weren't allowed to own gambling after their convictions. They had to sell them for 5p in the pound, it was a huge empire at the time. Millions of pounds. The guy that took over was a guy called Barnard Rains, he was like Uriah Heep. He was the third or fourth person in the company, but they had to hand it to somebody, but it turned out he was the illegitimate half-brother and no one knew. He turned on them and never let them back in the business, He wiped them out and they ended up with nothing. There were two lots of brothers and one lot was determined to ruin the other lot. It was Dickensian. Wonderful story, but not great if you were them.

³⁹⁷ Walter Eckhart of Harrogate owned the Star Cinemas, and had sons Rodney and Derek.

British Lion were a big deal at the time because they'd had a lot of public money. They were considered very important as a brand name, and they had potential to become a big company, no question. They owned lots of rights and things. It was a big library. I don't know where it ended up. It was totally unfair what happened to the Eckharts. They were stupid but not criminal, and the money was not it was about. It was family pride and all that. I'm trying to think who did get it, but by then it was too late. Potential for it to have been big was at that point when the Eckharts and my father were, and if they had got it, there was lots of money available for production because it was the Eckharts who funded two of my father's films, *Baby Love* (1968, Alastair Reid, UK: Avton Films) and *Something to Hide*, (1972, Alastair Reid, UK: Avton Films). Another man who also got in trouble: there was another company called Shipman and King who owned *Screen International*, or what became *Screen International*. His name was Kenneth Shipman. He got discovered, I don't know if someone was out to get them, but he got caught doing something pornographic with some ladies in his apartment in Grosvenor Square, and it was on the front page of the *News of the World*, pictures and everything. He was persona non-grata, and had to retire. The West Indies or something, and it was a nest of vipers, those guys. I know who could help you. Do you know Colin Baines? He was a journalist for *Screen International* and became a producer. He did *Gangs of New York* (2002, Martin Scorsese, U.S.A./ Italy: Miramax/ Initial Entertainment Group (IEG)/ Alberto Grimaldi Productions). He's my executive producer on the film about my dad. He goes right back, and he knows where lots of the bodies are buried! I don't know if he will talk, but he might know about E.J. Fancey.

AS – Recently I've been writing about the distribution of Italian sword-and-sandal films. Compton appear to have been the biggest importer of these films. The Compton film club was started to show films without a certificate?

TK – That's right. The first films they had were things like *Triumph of the Will* (1935, Leni Riefenstahl, Germany: Leni Riefenstahl-Produktion/ Reichspropagandaleitung der NSDAP) and *The Wild One* (1953, Laslo Benedek, USA: Stanley Kramer Productions). It wasn't just sex films, as there weren't enough!

AS – It was films which were 'X' rated or couldn't get a certificate.

TK – That was because Rank, and other people, had the system of Logging and Barring, which no one had told my dad about when he got into the film industry. When he went to book the same films as Rank, and play it differently – he wanted to do continuous performances, that kind of thing, he wanted to do different stuff. In those days if a major distributor had distributed a film or was distributing a film in a cinema in Leicester Square for example, you could not get that film in your cinema if it was within seven miles. They logged it and barred it. That meant literally you couldn't get any films, in the middle of the West End. It was a way of stopping any competition. It was a monopoly, or duopoly. We couldn't get any films, so the consequence was "Okay, so we'll get films that are

otherwise banned.” The reason for making it a club was that they weren’t selling tickets, they were selling membership.

AS – So they could play films without a certificate?

TK – Yes, and not a lot of people know but my dad was a cineaste and a literature buff. He knew about Italian cinema, French cinema, German cinema, which was very unusual. I remember when he started talking about Pasolini, everyone started thinking “What the f*ck are you talking about? You’re mad!” Nobody wanted those films, except Ken Rive. He was the other guy! And what then happened, it came to, “Let’s try this film,” and it was a naturist film, like what you’d get in *The Sun* newspaper. And it took a fortune. I remember the first one taking as much money, we took about double the money in a two hundred seat place than the Odeon Leicester Square which was a 2000 seat place at the time. It was that packed, and as a consequence what happened was you go, “Let’s put another one of those on! Where do you get one of those!” That was the genesis of that. You could not believe how many people were coming to these places. I remember going there and literally queues outside, and people were thinking you were giving it away. It was full, every performance, because there were no outlets for a guy to watch a film with a woman in it. It just didn’t exist.

And then the [sword-and-sandal] films, we called them Italian films I guess. They would be almost identical to the American films, with a similar title, and then with the voices. Films like *Fury of the Vikings* (also known as *Erik the Conqueror*, *Gli invasori*, 1961, Mario Bava, Italy/ France: Galatea Film, Lyre Films, Critérion Film). Actually, the films weren’t that bad. I remember doing the pos-cutting of some of those, because we had to pos-cut it because the sequences didn’t make sense. We had to help them a bit, and we’d get them re-voiced as we got better at it.

AS – The first *Hercules* film in 1959 was distributed by Archway, and obviously Joseph E. Levine picked it up and made a big thing of it in America. Here it was a small release. The big release was the next year with *Hercules Unchained*, where it all exploded.

TK – It’s from that relationship, from that knowledge, that my old man and Joseph E. Levine actually started to get to know each other and make a relationship that later on ended up with them doing lots of business together. And it was the *Hercules* film that convinced my dad that there was legs in it if you did the right marketing and publicity, hence his relationship with Tony Tenser. That’s what Tony did, he was very good at that kind of stuff, PR stunts, stuff like that. He wasn’t so good at production or other stuff, but he was very good at spotting a marketing opportunity. The deal that Levine did, I can’t remember what it was about, but I remember that they had a \$1 million thing for *Hercules* and did a brilliant job. He made this little film into a huge film, and Steve Reeves into a star. He showed the way those things could be done. He was a great showman, Joseph E. Levine. I remember when he was selling his company, he was going bust, he was \$18 million in debt, personally. He’d had a heart attack and had to have a heart operation, and

they said he had a 5-10% chance of surviving. This was his story to me. He was being wheeled in, and they said, "There's a phone call," and they said no, he was about to have surgery, it was life and death! He said, "Let me take the phone call," they said there's one call from CBS and another from Avco Financial Services. He said, "Give me the phone!" He took the call from Avco and they bid \$38 million for the company, Embassy Pictures. He said, "I'll take the deal!" He ended up with \$20 million in his pocket, from being \$18 million down, and that's how he went on and survived, and became very rich again before he died.

AS – And that's why *Baby Love* is an Avco-embassy production?

TK – *Baby Love* did incredibly well in England, I don't know if you knew that, I think it was one of the top grossing films of the year. The publicity guy here was a guy called George Skinner, who was brilliant, but unfortunately they didn't listen to him in America. They did the worst poster, I don't know if you've ever seen it.

AS – I have. It's terrible.

TK – They got into a huge fight, I got involved in that, we all got involved. Insults were being hurled across the Atlantic. "Hey guys, we've got a little girl for you!" I think that was the words on a poster on Broadway. It was disgusting, and it was nothing to do with that, so the perverts weren't happy and the regular filmgoers weren't happy, so you had this huge success in England of the same material, but failure there.

I don't know how many films we did, we did quite a few deals with Joseph and he was unintentionally funny. He was very nice to me, funnily enough, he took me around America like I was his ingénue, he was giving me ideas and got me some terrific gigs purely because I think he like me. He was very funny, intentional or otherwise. He once did a thing with *A Man for All Seasons* (1966, Fred Zinnerman, UK: Highland Films) and he hired The Dorchester. There was a banquet in the dining room, with this red carpet. A knight came in on a horse holding a lance, the horse bowed and on the end of the lance was a favour that went to Mrs Levine that Joseph had arranged. As the horse stood up it emitted the biggest fart in the world and then did a dump in the middle of the carpet. Joseph got up, quick as a flash, and said "That's what they call showmanship!" It was pretty good.

He was a really good showman and he understood exhibition. That was his background, and he knew that kind of thing. I thought he made some good films, like *The Graduate* (1967, Mike Nichols, U.S.A.: Lawrence Turman), *A Bridge Too Far* (1977, Richard Attenborough, U.S.A./ UK: Joseph E. Levine Productions), *Magic* (1978, Richard Attenborough, U.S.A.: Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation/ Joseph E. Levine Productions), but his plus was his minus. He was always too busy to focus. If he could have focused all the time he could have been a really great film producer. In effect, he

kind of turned himself into an executive producer because of his other things. He certainly spotted and created a trend. What he did was brilliant.

AS – You have previously mentioned an argument your father had with Joseph E. Levine.

TK – That was about *Baby Love*. Lack of focus. He had become very wealthy because of that deal with Avco and kind of lost his way a bit, and was doing other stuff. He had a woman that was running a department who was very friendly with John Carpenter who was doing some great stuff at that time, and very talented, but John's way of making films was kind of long-winded because he had to do the music and the editing, he did everything – brilliantly in my opinion – but there's only so much time in the world. He [Levine] would then let that woman run it, and he then started to collect honorary doctorates and such because of donations he had made, so he would go off and vanish for a couple of weeks, maybe on a yacht. The rows started after the contract argument, and the argument about the *Baby Love* release in America. My dad's opening line in his letter was, "If you could tear yourself away from your academic pursuits for the moment..." and he went insane! His answer was, and don't forget there was a time delay, he wrote back an equally insulting letter, something like "You Limey, cock-sucking b*stard!" And that was the nice bit! My father wrote back words to the effect, "There's no difference between us, we even look pretty similar. The difference is that our fathers both got to England on the way from Russia/ Poland, but your dad had an extra two dollars so he got to America whereas my dad didn't have the money for the fare and stopped in London!" And that's the truth, they were very similar in that regard. The relationship got ruined. It was typical of a lot of those kind of guys. The contract was just the first step in the negotiation! My dad would say "But we have a contract! It's signed, what are you doing?" And he just did what they want. A lot of those companies do. So that was the argument.

AS – Back to the sword-and-sandal films, *Jason and the Golden Fleece* was retitled by Compton from the original *The Giants of Thessaly*. This was to capitalise on the name recognition from *Jason and the Argonauts*?

TK – That's exactly right, yes.

AS – You mentioned that Tony Tenser was good at publicity. Do you remember him doing any publicity stunts for any of these gladiator movies?

TK – No. I remember the one we did for 'Beau Brigand,' which never got made and was a kind of *Beau Geste* (1939, William A. Wellman, U.S.A.: Paramount Pictures), movie.³⁹⁸ They used to pull stunts, like with *London in the Raw* and *Primitive London*, I remember

³⁹⁸ See pp.349-350 of this interview where Tony relates his attempt to arrange a parade to promote 'Beau Brigand.'

those kind of stunts. They were pretty famous. Janie Jones³⁹⁹ was the name of the girl who got caught in a fur coat, so they must have done something similar with those kind of films. She would know. She was the go-to girl person to do the reveal. She still lives somewhere in, she's bad news, but she still lives in Notting Hill Gate. She did stuff, and they said, "You do the reveal, they'll arrest you, we get a picture for the *Daily Mail*, and then we'll pay the fine, you'll get out, and that'll be that. Keep your £50," or whatever it was. And then she pleaded innocent! It became a huge court case because she wouldn't admit she was wrong. We said, "No, but you were naked, and you got paid for it. That's the deal!" And it ended up costing a couple of grand, because, of course, we lost. I can't remember what stunts they did, but they for sure did stunts, because that's what they did.

AS – I'm guessing they went from having films more for adult audiences to very quickly family films and children's films and so on, purely because the business was growing and the films were available?

TK – Don't forget, first the cinema chain grew and then they became distributors, and that just exploded, I remember it went from nothing to a large number of employees, a building full of employees in, I think, less than a year. It was incredibly quick. Particularly my dad, because he had a real grasp of Europe, I think they became the biggest independent British film distributor in Europe in one year. Ken Rive and those guys hated that. Also, because they had a big cash flow coming from the cinemas, they were able to pay up front, whereas everybody was paying on a promise or a minimum guarantee. They could actually pay, so when I went on a buying trip for the company, they sent me off somewhere, I had a budget and we could just pay it. Sometimes that was good, and sometimes we got, because we were rushing and growing so quickly, sometimes you'd make mistakes. It didn't really matter because the reach of the company was becoming so big, and then they started making stuff and could sell them. They were literally making films out of cash flow. They didn't have to borrow anything, and that's a huge advantage.

AS – You mentioned Logging and Barring. I'm guessing that Compton were going for these movies because other chains weren't picking them up, so they were just available?

TK – Yes. There was very little competition amongst the foreign film market, basically Ken Rive and maybe Miracle Films, Michael Myers, but most of the rest didn't like those films and didn't go. I remember going to places in Germany and in Paris and in Rome as a teenager and a lot of them hadn't had an English buyer, even Ken Rive. A lot of the films were just garbage. I didn't know to say after two minutes if it was complete garbage to just say "Stop it and put on the next film," I was a polite teenager. They literally locked

³⁹⁹ Real name Marion Mitchell. She had appeared topless at the premiere of *London in the Raw* alongside her sister Valerie and was convicted of indecency. Janie was no stranger to prison, having first been convicted in 1957, and would later become the cellmate of Myra Hindley in 1973, having lost a case involving soliciting to murder her former husband and controlling prostitutes.

you in. You'd be there from 8 in the morning to 9, 10 at night, just watching film after film, and after a while you suddenly realise they were appalling, especially the German ones pretending to be British. There was a lack of competition and then we started to find some really good films. Some of them would really stand out because you'd been looking at such crap. There would be some films, you'd say "This is a decent sword and sorcery," or whatever. That was one area, and then there was the sexy films, and we started then to find films in America for that, but the people we were dealing with became really suspect. We began to realise... "Who's financing this?" That was very questionable, some of those people.

AS – In America?

TK – Yes, not in Europe. And then there was an underbelly of those kind of films in Europe, where there were things with animals and things, and we didn't want to know about that! Really bad. So we walked away from that. It became, like, trying to find the legit adult films in America. I don't just mean legit in what they are but legit in who they come from. There were gangsters involved in some of those films for sure. And then it was the sudden realisation that you could find some good stuff. A couple of good foreign films. I remember the Pasolini thing, because that's what I was involve with. Pasolini doing the English edit. It was ridiculous, I was sixteen and didn't know what the f*ck I was doing! But he didn't know that initially. These were really interesting people. I got to meet, through my dad, people that we worked with. That sensibility is how we knew about people like Polanski before anyone else did. Because we had seen the graduation films of Polanski from the Polish film school. We'd actually seen his early work, and *Knife in the Water* (1962, Roman Polanski, Poland: Zespól Filmowy "Kamera"), which nobody else had apparently seen. It gave us a tremendous advantage to go forward into better productions, a forward footing, than would otherwise have been available. That's probably the reason. It was an interesting period. I think sometimes the market drives you in a certain direction, and sometimes you drive the market. And that was a happy coincidence that the two things were coming together, and the fact that you had a very successful cinema business and a very successful distribution business made for the beginnings of a very interesting production business. Initially they were making films heavily influenced by Tony, not in terms of what the subjects were but in terms of, "A film like this will do well," because he knew it would. And then my old man's sensibilities were, "Why can't we do a Polanski film?" And then as the company got bigger, and people bought into it, shareholders and things, what they wanted was more of the former, and that's when the fight started internally in the company because my dad said, "No, I want to do that," and was getting sued to stop him making the Polanski films, and all that kind of genre. They said "No, make more of those sexy films. Films with the girls with the big boobies!" Which my dad had no objection to as a funding purpose for the other films, but they didn't see that bit. Literally it went to court. There were legal battles.

AS – Your father was keen to develop a reputation in the more serious vein?

TK – His attitude was, in retrospect I get it better than I got it at the time. His attitude was, “Let’s make the Polanski, *The Penthouse*, that kind of film, and get out of the other market as that’s not sustainable over a longer period,” and internationally you get a much bigger possibility because you’re now doing something more interesting. And if you took a little loss to get there that’s okay because you attract more talent to make bigger and better things. Which he did, sometimes. The argument didn’t preclude making something like the *Confessions*, which he invited me to do and I turned it down on the basis, “This is crap,” and he said, “Yes, but there’s nothing terrible about girls with big boobies and it’s funny.” And years later he said to me “When I’m gone are you ever going to say no, or are your bank ever going to say no to taking that cheque?” I said, “What do you mean?” He said, “That’s what enables you to make a Polanski film, you have to have both, and the Weinstein’s did it with Miramax: the one brother had Dimension Films knocking out the films that actually make the money, and the other one winning awards which are actually the films which lose money, but make a company worth more. They had a strategy and he had a strategy. Eventually he was just making films he wanted to make. The misconception is that people like that are all the same, but he had actually been reading Chekov all his life. He was a serious guy, and there was that element to him that was completely contrary to the perception of a person like that, which is why he probably did very well. That combination is what makes for success.

David McGillivray

15 April 2015

David McGillivray began writing film reviews for *Monthly Film Bulletin* in the 1960s before becoming a successful screenwriter and film historian. He recently produced the documentary *Peter De Rome: Grandfather of Gay Porn* (2014, Ethan Reid, UK: Marvy Movies) and reissued *Doing Rude Things: The History of the British Sex Film* (2017, Wolfbait Press).

AS – How well did you know the Fancey family?

DM – Adrienne was brusque, she was a business woman, she was very hard-nosed, I remember that. It belied her looks. She was a stunner, so it always came as a surprise to people that she was so, what is the word I would use to describe Adrienne? Determined. She would not put up with any nonsense, and at that time that was very unusual for a woman. I only worked for New Realm. There were other companies, or did I? I might have worked for Border. I never went to their office on Leicester Square. They had cutting rooms elsewhere; I remember going to those. Adrienne did not look unlike that when I knew her. I never met his wife. The story going around was he was still married, I don't know if it's true though, and he was living with Olive.

There were other relatives as well who worked for him. There's some still around but you can't speak to them. Why do you think no one wants to talk? Everything was destroyed. Have you met Paul Hennessey? He would know more. He's a veteran. CTTBF? A member. He was their editor and I worked mostly with him. He was a good mate at the time. I met Edwin, but all my business dealings were with Olive, and she was in charge of Border. My memory is that Border did film production, my contracts were with Border, but New Realm were the distributor, of mainly British stuff and SF was continental, but the lines blurred.

There must be so many legends. I knew Jack Grey. SF were just a distributor.

AS – Did you know about E.J.'s jail sentence for stabbing his accountant?

DM – Put the willy up rivals: This is a man not to be messed with!

AS – How closely did you work with Malcolm Fancey?

DM – Because I wrote *I'm Not Feeling Myself Tonight* I worked with Malcolm. Laurie Barnet set that up. Because I knew him he came to me to write the script. It was a pulp novel and I had to alter it to such an extent that the origins were not obvious. I think it was called *Sex Ray*. I'd met Laurie before, he was a friend of Ray Self. That's probably the first time I met Malcolm. We never bonded. I didn't really like him, no. He was a

business man, a typical Soho business man, I don't think anyone liked that type of hard-bitten producer. I don't think any of the people on the film got on with Adrienne – they were very difficult people to get on with. At that time they were powerful, they called the shots, and what they said went. Later on, John Lindsay, who was the co-producer, who was convicted of shooting hardcore porn films in a school in Birmingham and he was out like that. His name was removed from the credits, he was originally the co-producer. He was the number one in his field! Despite the fact that all Fancy companies dealt in smut, they decided they were going to draw the line and weren't going to be involved in anything connected to hardcore pornography. The inference from that is that they were as moralistic as anyone else in the business at that time. Lindsay kicked up a hell of a fuss, but there was not a leg he could stand on, so the contract was torn up and he never made another mainstream feature film.

You get into a minefield dealing with the British film industry at this time, because it was so hypocritical. People had to appear to be disapproving of sex even if they were in the business. "We're only doing this to make money." Where the Fanceys were concerned they were blatantly making two versions of their films, and I was aware of this because I was in the cutting rooms when Paul Hennessey was doing the hardcore versions. That's common knowledge. Gav Crimson is the new David McGillivray. He knows far more about this industry than I do now, and I think he talks about the system of two versions and he lists all the films where there were two versions, one of which I was involved with called *The Hot Girls* (1974, Laurie Barnett/ John Lindsay, UK: Baskform). There was a hardcore version, somewhere, I can't remember where, being on the set when that was shot. Nobody was supposed to know about this, and indeed you wouldn't have unless you were in another country where the rules were more lax and you saw the version in question. They're not all lost. I think he's seen hardcore versions of Fancy's films, I can't remember which. There was another one called *Sexplorer* (1975, Derek Ford, UK: Meadway Film productions) which my friend Monica Ringwald was in. There's hardcore footage of that, which she was quite happy to do. She's disappeared, I don't know how to track her down. Derek Ford was that one. They're all awful, he had no talent whatsoever but made a good living for so many years. There were a lot of talentless hacks at that time, which is why I find the interest in this period of time baffling because the films were so bad.

AS – Did you have any contact with Compton?

DM – I met Tony Tenser and I once tried to flog a script to Klinger, but that's where it ends. I didn't meet Tenser until very late into his life, I know I met him at Manchester in 1992 and I've got references in my diary. He just talked at me and I eventually I stopped even nodding. He wasn't the slightest bit interested in anything except himself. I was aware, obviously, of Klinger and Tenser right from when they started. It's in the book. They weren't in the "sh*t-kicker rut". They had ambition, well Tenser had ambition, Klinger was just a businessman, that's fascinating to see what he was doing, it's because of him that Polanski was able to make his British debut.

AS – Did the Fancey children they get their hard-nosed business approach from their father?

DM – Without a doubt I would have said.

AS – What did you think of Malcolm Fancey?

DM – They tried to get me to join in a sex scene in *I'm Not Feeling Myself Tonight*. I said, "I can't, I write for *Sight and Sound*!" He said "Go on, I'll give you extra money! Get this shirt off," and he started ripping my shirt off. I said, "I can't, honestly," he said, "It's alright, we won't see your bollocks." I put that in my diary, because I thought I'm always going to remember that line. I refused. I thought, I've got to think of my future. Even in those days I had ambitions and I thought "No one will ever employ me again," because it's still true, once you do porn, that's it. There's no going back. You'll never cross over to the mainstream. You can count the exceptions on the fingers of one hand, the people who have. It's a stigma, it always has been and it still is. "No, I can't do this," so eventually he paid someone else to do it, and the results are all up there on the screen, not that I'm ever going to watch it again. I watched it when we had the cast and crew screening and I've never been so embarrassed. I just wanted to crawl under the seat it's so bad. Somebody brought it round and put it on and as soon as I saw that opening scene I had to confiscate the remote. I can't bear it. It's so bad.

AS – I've had trouble getting anyone from the Fancey family to talk to me about their history.

DM – What have the Fanceys got to hide? They don't want to talk, and I want to know why. They were all up to no good! You heard it from me. They think you're going to ask embarrassing questions about stuff they don't want to talk about because the crossover between the entertainment business and the criminal world was rife.

AS – How did they pay you?

DM – Unlike Dick Randall, I did a bit of work for him and he would open up a drawer in his desk and he would get out a box and just count out fivers and then stuff them into my hand. New Realm was all legit. It was a cheque. I didn't get it all at once, I think it was in instalments. Actors got a that a lot, in cash, before the Ken Dodd era, which was when it all stopped, actors were paid in cash, most of them, the stars of those films, would do one or two days, and would only do it because it was cash in hand. All of these distributors you are talking about would have paid the stars in cash. But they were substantial amounts. I got nothing! £200 or something? But they were getting a nice little... like £1000 for two days work or something like that? Easy to hide. That doesn't happen now. Diana Dors was very keen to have cash in hand, wouldn't work otherwise. I went to a few parties, but not hers. There were some great party throwers in those days.

Christiane Rücker

21 Jun 2016

Christiane Rücker is a model and actress who appeared in a number of European films in the 1960s. She played 'The Blonde' in *Bonditis*.

AS – What do you remember of *Bonditis*?

CR – I really didn't remember any scene of it. It was not a special part, just laying around, saying a few lines, it was just too long ago. The idea is not bad, it's quite nice, but it became pretty curious, confusing, I'm not very convinced at all. It was the beginning of my so-called career, all these kinds of movies that I did, and later on I switched and went on stage, I don't have much remembrance of this stuff.

This agent, Hata Sari (Marion Jacob), was the girlfriend of the director Mr Suter, and sometimes we met and had dinner together. I was very much friends with the Chinese party. We were very good friends.

I was privately friends with a Mandarin, a tall Chinese, he later went to Boston and we lost contact, and this poor elderly Chinese, was a professional magician. We had very nice evenings together with him performing and entertaining us, so I learned table tennis, so I was with them. I met Herbert quite sometimes because he was a famous actor here in Germany also living in Munich, and this little guy from our team, Peter Capra, famous stage performer, but he died at a very young age. There's nobody, they're all dead now. Gerd Balthus was a really famous actor on German television, but he just disappeared. He must be old, a late gentleman now.

AS – Was this part like other movies you were doing at the time?

CR – It was this kind of movies, of course, the blonde, in bikini or a dirndl, in the so-called Heimat films, playing in the mountains, this was that kind of movie that I did at this time. "Ja, Ja," but the parts were bigger than in this picture. This was quite nothing. It was a very early film in my career.

AS – Did you recognise anyone from the photos I sent you?

CR – I recognised Herbert Weicker and Paula Li Shiu, and Karl Suter. I don't remember the cameraman.

AS – The film will hopefully soon be released on DVD and blu ray.

CR – (laughs) Why not? These old pictures are cult. I'm a complete different person now, it's nothing to do with me anymore, it's fifty years ago, so it's this complete other person. It's just not me anymore, it's another lifetime. This was a very nice time, I was a very light blonde at this time, since my natural hair colour is darker, so I needed bleaching cream, I thought here up in the mountains... and you really got everything, they had everything. This is what I remember, it was really amazing. We had nice facilities, there was a restaurant up there in the mountains. I did not climb the mountain for the final scene in the movie.

Things have so changed; the picture was quite well done. It was all natural and no technical tricks or computer tricks, it was very brave and nice, but I would never watch it. It is made for the public, people who like it, okay, but don't ask me. For me it was my profession, I had to earn my daily bread so I did it. I was glad to be in this picture, and today we don't make movies like this, it's completely different.

Peter Shillingford

14 December 2016

Peter Shillingford is an experienced cinematographer and producer. *Naughty Girls* (1975, UK: Border Film Productions), his only feature film, was produced by Olive Negus-Fancey and Judith Smith.

AS – Border Films were run by Olive Negus-Fancey. Did you have much to do with her?

PS – Not really, no. Do you want to hear the story of the background of the film?

AS – Yes please.

PS – I made one film for the Rank Organisation in 1970 about the world cup soccer in Mexico. And within the film I had the take-off and landing of the Australian airline Qantas. I did a deal with them, I said “We’ll put this in my little film.” They said “Great,” so I said, “Can you give me a couple of around the world tickets?” They said “Yes”, so I had those stored in my back pocket. Then I wrote a one page treatment and got it into Border and we said, “We want to do this.” What it basically was, have you seen the film?

AS – I haven’t! I would love to find a copy but it doesn’t seem very easy to find.

PS – I’ve got one copy here, but I don’t let anything out of the house! You would have to come here to see it. So I had this one page treatment and I walked into Border Films with it, I called it ‘The English Girl Abroad’, with a pun on the word broad, and they turned it into *Naughty Girls*. They decided to call it *Naughty Girls*, I didn’t mind. I just did it because I wanted to go to those various different places. And so, I said, “What I’ll be doing – I’ll be writing the script when I get there, and I’ll be shooting it. You won’t be getting a full script, but you’ve seen a treatment and you can see where I’m going with it.” And they said “Fine, go.” And they financed me, not very much but enough. We shot off to Malaysia first and we had an extraordinary situation happen there which I can tell you about later when you see the film, and then we went on to Bali, and then we went to Australia, I think that’s the three places. Anyway, so I sent the first dailies back, which was a sequence of a girl in a hammock with a guy at a sort of jungle poolside area in Malaysia. The editor, was it Olivia (possibly Judith Smith?) called me back on the phone and said “Look, we don’t understand this.” I said, “You’ve got twelve minutes there” and they said “Okay,” and I said, “I’ll send you how I think the script should go.” So I sent them the shot list as it should be in the right order. They said “Fine, great, we’ll put it together,” and it comes in at eleven and a half minutes. So then they trusted me and I went off and shot in those other three locations. We travelled around. I just had one guy with me, that was all, just the two of us rolling around. What I wished to do was role into, say

Bali, have a week getting acclimatised, which was basically wandering around having a good time, another week basically writing the script, which took me about an hour and a half, and then we would shoot for over a week to get the twelve minutes, and then push on to the next location, so we had about three weeks in each location. It was basically a bit of a holiday. We did Malaysia, we did Bali, and Australia. When we got to Australia I went to the gym, because all the other actors I found on the street, so to speak. I came across Kate [Ferguson] inside an agency. She was prepared to go half-naked and I said, "I want to do something in a different area," and she said there's a place just outside Sydney and she said, "I've got a horse," so we said "Great!" So we did this sequence where she took a shower, so there were boobs flying around, and then she hopped into bed and started dreaming, and then we're off with her on the back of a horse with a long diaphanous nightgown on being chased by three guys in three of these huge beach buggies. Big, huge beasts they were, and they were great. One of the reasons I'm about to get the film transferred from a disc as I want to send the film to Kate. She did a good job for me. Anyway, Kate's now on the back of this horse, banging around, being chased around the desert by these guys, and that's the end of the film. I then go back to London and they have decided to change the name of the film to *Naughty Girls*, I said "Okay, fine, great" and they said "Great, you've done that, what else do you want to do?" So we won't go into the next story, but on that particular Border film I had no support but no intrusion whilst trying to shoot the film at all. Nobody came along and checked on what I was doing. There was total trust, and we got away with it. We shot a nice little film. They had about three or four theatres scattered around, one on Piccadilly Circus, I forget the name of the theatre.

AS – Was it a Jacey cinema?

PS – I think it was. There were a couple of others around somewhere else. They ran it and ran it and ran it. I don't know how much money they made. I wasn't on a percentage deal so I couldn't worry about that. But they were a pleasure to deal with. No problem at all. And then they said, "Do you want to make another film?" I said "yes," and I came up with this weird idea for, well, that's something else. You're only interested in the company itself right?

AS – It's Border that I'm writing about. So was the next film that you did not with Border?

PS – It was with Border, as far as I can tell. I had a chunk of money in my pocket this time and two guys, I had an assistant director and an assistant, and we went to the Seychelles. I always pick a location where I've always wanted to go.

AS – That's a very good idea!

PS – We got to the Seychelles and we started shooting and I called the office and there was no one in the office. I've got a pocket full of cash, their cash, and I called round and found that they'd either gone broke, or somebody had died. I never found out, and so we

sat in Seychelles waiting for a phone call back, because I'd send about half an hour of dailies in – rushes – and I called the office, called the office, called the office, called the office, no one came back, and I found later they'd either gone broke, or they walked away from the whole business, or they had a death, I've never found out. Weird.

AS – Would that have been 1976?

PS – Yes.

AS – So what was your film going to be called?

PS – The second one? 'She's a Big Girl Now.'

AS – That does sound like a Border film.

PS – Absolutely. I'm surprised I can remember that, because we shot very little.

AS – What happened to the footage? Did it just disappear?

PS – Yep, yes. I think someone got their hands on it and tried to make a film out of it, but I never followed it up. I didn't want to know.

AS – From what I understand Border consisted of Olive and her two children Charles and Judith. They seem to be the ones based at the Border office.

PS – I might have met Charles, but I never had any discussions with him. Olive I started with, and then I was basically using Judith as my producer, back in Wardour Street.

AS – I have recently tracked down Charles and Judith. They're both still alive and well but neither of them want to talk to me, which is a shame.

PS – Are they still in the business?

AS – No, well Charles is a music publisher and agent. Judith married someone in property. Nobody in the Fancey family will talk to me. I don't know whether they're ashamed of the films they were involved in or what. I don't know.

PS – I guess it's a history they want to leave behind.

AS – So you think your footage ended up being used in something else? You don't know what it was?

PS – No.

AS – That would be interesting to find out. Your experience with them was pretty positive.

PS – Absolutely. They were fine.

AS – That's good. How did you come to be with Border in the first place? Were you just looking for an office along Wardour St that would take your treatment?

PS – You're talking thirty years ago aren't you?! It was only one page. I can't remember how I met up with them.

AS – I know their office was next to the Marquee Club on Wardour Street.

PS – 84 Wardour Street I think it was.

AS – I'm glad you had a good experience. I've talked to a few people now with various, mixed feelings.

PS – They were very brusque in their dealings: "You've got to do this, you've got to do that." "Yeah, yeah, sure." I'm pretty laid back. I just took it on the chin and went off and did whatever I wanted to do.

AS – It's great that you got a free holiday out of it all!

PS – Yes, and my assistant had been working with me for five years anyway, my assistant director Nigel Watts. The material we shot in Australia I wanted to shoot high speed, so I hired a camera there. We had our own camera, but I wanted to shoot her at high speed on horseback with the flowing dress and the hair, and horses hooves, we shot a fabulous sequence but a little bit of sand got in and it caused a scratch straight down the middle on one particular sequence, the end sequence.

AS – What a shame!

PS – Not at all! What I did was to say, to Judith I suppose, "I need a couple of hundred quid to go down to Camber Sands, to take Nigel down there dressed as a hunter." He was then put into the film as an observer of this whole race. Whenever we had a scratch I cut to Nigel looking through the lens of his telescope. I then put the frame lines of the sight on. I got away with it because it was dead centre. It could have been all over the place but it was straight dead centre.

AS – That's genius.

PS – Absolutely. Anyway, it was a fun experience, we had a lot of fun but we shot some nice film.

AS – So the film was released theatrically then, but has it ever been released on home video?

PS – I believe it has. The only reason I got a copy is because a guy up in Yorkshire somewhere, I don't know who he is, saw it on TV, filmed it with his 16mm camera, loved it so much he got it on a disc somehow and sent it to me.

AS – So you've got a copy of a copy?

PS – I want to take it into the edit suite and play with the last sequence of Kate on horseback, as that's the best bit of the whole film. And the other stuff, there's one piece of film which is too much. If you want to see the film I'm in Richmond.

AS – Great, I would like to do that. I'll get in touch with you!

PS – Give me a shout and come and have a look at it!