THE HILL: A TRIBUTE TO OSWALD MORRIS OBE, DFC, AFC, BSC

Introduced by special guests Duncan Kenworthy OBE, Chrissie Morris and Roger Deakins CBE, ASC, BSC



RELEASE YEAR: 1965 RUNTIME: 123 mins DIRECTOR: Sidney Lumet

CINEMATOGRAPHY: Oswald Morris

With special thanks to Warner Bros and the BFI

orn in November 1915 Oswald Morris was a dedicated film fan in his teenage years, working as a cinema projectionist in his school holidays, before entering the industry in 1932 as a runner and clapper boy at Wembley Studios, a month short of his 17th birthday. The studio churned out quota quickies making a movie a week at a cost of one pound per foot of film. He left the studio in the spring of 1933 to work at British International Pictures (BIP) based at Elstree Studios, but after it was taken over by Fox, he soon returned to Wembley, as a camera assistant.

By 1938 he had graduated to camera operator at Wembley Studios but with the outbreak of World War II the following year, his career was curtailed and he enlisted into the RAF serving as bomber pilot. His services earned him a DFC, flying missions over France and Germany before being transferred to

Transport Command, where as a Flight Lt. he flew Sir Anthony Eden to Yalta, Clement Attlee to Potsdam, and the chief of the imperial general staff, Lord Alanbrooke, on a world tour.

After demobilization, Ossie joined Independent Producers at Pinewood Studios in January 1946 and was engaged as camera operator on three notable productions; *Green For Danger*, Launder and Gilliat's comedy-thriller concerning a series of murders at a wartime emergency hospital; *Captain Boycott*, a 1947 historical drama, again produced by Launder and Gilliat and *Oliver Twist*, David Lean's stunning adaptation of the classic novel by Charles Dickens photographed by Guy Green.

In 1949, Ossie gained his first screen credit as Director of Photography on *Golden Salamander*, starring Trevor Howard as an Englishman in Tunis who defeats a gang of gunrunners.

After photographing half a dozen more pictures including Jacques Tourneur's *Circle Of Danger* and Ronald Neame's *The Card* (1952) as well as two in colour, Ossie was recruited as the cinematographer for John Huston's latest project *Moulin Rouge*. Notable in many respects, this film marked the beginning of a long and fruitful collaboration between the director and his cameraman and allowed Ossie the chance to really experiment with his technical work. John Huston had asked Ossie to



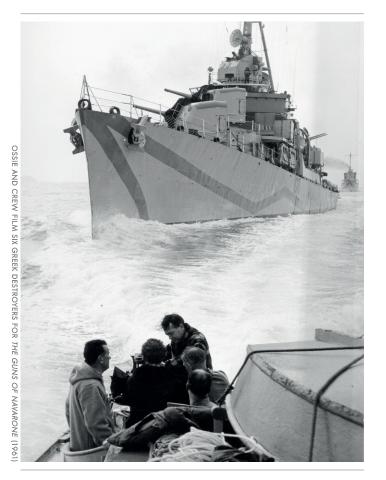
render the color scheme of the film to look "as if Toulouse–Lautrec had directed it". Shooting in three-strip Technicolor, Ossie asked the laboratory for a subdued palette rather than the mostly primary colours symptomatic of the process. Technicolor was reluctant to do this and so Ossie took to using fog filters and ambient smoke to achieve the effect he wanted.

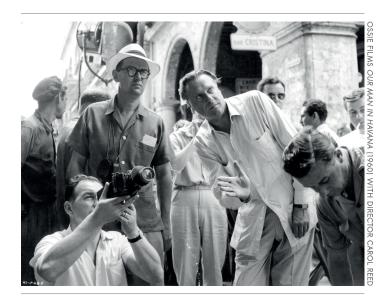
The story goes that Technicolor confronted Huston and Morris with a set of dailies saying the material was faulty and not "up to Technicolor standards". Huston and Morris watched it in the theatre at which point Huston allegedly turned to Ossie and said, "What do you think, Os?" To which Ossie replied, "Exactly as I wanted it." Huston replied, "Me too." Then turned to the Technicolor management with, "Gentlemen, thank you and f**k you!"

On its release, *Moulin Rouge* became a favourite of Technicolor's inventor, Dr. Herbert Kalmus and the British Society of Cinematographers awarded him its Best Cinematography Award.

Ossie has always considered that he had two mentors during his long career. Firstly the distinguished cinematographer, then producer, then director, Ronald Neame for whom he photographed six pictures. Secondly the tremendously talented cinematographer, then director, Guy Green for whom he was camera operator on three pictures.

Throughout the fifties, he continued to experiment. With his work on *Moby Dick*, made at Elstree in 1955, he employed an extreme process combining desaturated colour images with





a black and white image, which cleverly reduced the intensity of the colour and gave the film the texture of an old Victorian print. In addition to working with John Huston on *Moby Dick*, *Beat The Devil* and *Heaven Knows Mr. Allison*, he also served as cinematographer for Rene Clement's *Knave Of Hearts*, Carol Reed's *The Key* and *Our Man In Havana* and Tony Richardson's *Look Back In Anger* and *The Entertainer* (1960).

Having thus established a reputation as one of the world's leading cinematographers, throughout the sixties, Oswald was constantly in demand and indeed brought his talents to bear on many fine productions. They included: *The Guns Of Navarone*, a 1961 screen version of Alastair Maclean's book *Lolita*, Stanley Kubrick's 1962 interpretation of the notorious Nabokov novel *The Pumpkin Eater*, for which Ossie received the 1964 British Academy Award; *The Hill*, the 1965 film directed by Sidney Lumet for which Oswald won another British Academy Award; *The Spy Who Came In From The Cold*, 1966, which earned him his third consecutive BAFTA Award; *Oliver!*, the Carol Reed 1968 film musical for which Ossie won a first Oscar nomination for his colour photography and *Goodbye Mr. Chips* (1969).

During the seventies Oswald Morris photographed a string of major productions and indeed one of these, *Fiddler On The Roof*, filmed on location in Yugoslavia, earned him his American Academy Award (Oscar) in 1971. Between 1970 and 1978 he shot eleven pictures and in the process worked with such leading directors as Joe Mankiewicz on *Sleuth*, John Huston on *The Mackintosh Man* and *The Man Who Would Be King* and Sidney Lumet on *Equus* and *The Wiz*. After photographing two more pictures in 1980 and 1981, Ossie gained his final credit with *The Dark Crystal*, having photographed 58 features.

In addition to his Oscar win and three nominations, and three BAFTAs for Cinematography, he was awarded the fellowship of BAFTA in 1997 and was honoured with the International Award by the American Society of Cinematographers in 2000 and the British Society of Cinematographers Lifetime Achievement Award in 2003; to add to his four BSC Cinematography Awards for Fiddler On The Roof, Taming Of The Shrew, The Spy Who Came In From The Cold and Moulin Rouge.

Ossie was named an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1998, for services to Cinematography and the Film Industry. Along with his BAFTA Fellowship he was a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and the National Television School and an Honorary Fellow of The Arts Institute at Bournemouth and the British Kinematograph Sound and Television Society. In June 2009, the new building incorporating the theatre at the National Film School in Beaconsfield was named in his honour. He published his memoirs, *Huston, We Have A Problem: A Kaleidoscope Of Filmmaking Memories* in 2006 and is featured in the book *Conversations With Cinematographers* by David A Ellis.

Ossie will be sorely missed by those in the industry; a delightful man, inspired by Ronald Neame and Guy Green, who in turn has himself been an inspiration to a new generation of cinematographers.

With special thanks to Phil Meheux BSC and The British Society of Cinematographers for providing this text.



OSWALD MORRIS OBE, DFC, AFC, BSC FILMOGRAPHY

¹ Clapper Boy ² Assistant Cameraman		1936	Café Mascot²	1950	Circle Of Danger
		1936	The End Of The Road²	1950	Golden Salamander³
 Camera Operator Director of Photography 		1936	Troubled Waters ²	1950	Cairo Road ⁴
Director of Linetography		1936	Wedding Group ²	1952	The Card ⁴
1932	Born Lucky ¹	1936	Highland Fling ²	1952	So Little Time ⁴
1932	After Dark ¹	1937	Concerning Mr. Martin ²	1952	Saturday Island ⁴
1933	Money For Speed ¹	1937	Against The Tide ²	1952	South Of Algiers ⁴
1933	Follow The Lady ¹	1937	Catch As Catch Can ²	1953	Moulin Rouge ⁴
1933	Two Wives For Henry 1	1937	£,5 Man²	1953	Indiscretion Of An American Wife/
1934	His Majesty And Co. 1	1937	Strange Experiment ²		Stazione Termini ⁴
1934	Josser On The Farm ¹	1937	The Black Tulip ²	1953	Beat The Devil ⁴
1934	Rolling In Money ¹	1937	Calling All Ma's²	1954	Beau Brummell ⁴
1934	The Third Clue ¹	1937	Variety Hour ²	1954	Monsieur Ripois ⁴
1934	Blossom Time¹	1938	Murder In The Family ²	1955	The Man Who Never Was ⁴
1934	Mister Cinders ¹	1938	Second Thoughts ²	1956	Moby Dick ⁴
1935	Blue Smoke ²	1938	Who Goes Next? ³	1957	A Farewell To Arms ⁴
1935	Late Extra ²	1938	Londonderry Air ²	1957	Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison ⁴
1935	White Lilac ²	1939	I Met A Murderer ³	1958	The Key ⁴
1935	Abdul The Damned 1	1946	Green For Danger³	1958	The Roots Of Heaven ⁴
1935	Smith's Wives ²	1947	Captain Boycott ³	1959	Look Back In Anger ⁴
1935	Old Roses ²	1947	Blanche Fury ³	1960	The Entertainer ⁴
1935	All At Sea ²	1948	The Passionate Friends ³	1960	Our Man In Havana ⁴
1935	Sexton Blake And The Mademoiselle ²	1948	Oliver Twist ³	1961	The Guns Of Navarone ⁴
1936	The Big Noise ²	1949	Fools Rush In ³	1962	Satan Never Sleeps ⁴
1936	Blind Man's Buff²	1950	The Adventurers	1962	Term Of Trial⁴ CONT. ▶





The Man Who Would Be King⁴

OSWALD MORRIS OBE, DFC, AFC, BSC FILMOGRAPHY (CONT.)

1962	Come Fly With Me 4	1967	The Great Catherine ⁴
1962	Lolita ⁴	1967	Reflections In A Golden Eye ⁴
1963	Facing The Facts ⁴	1968	The Winter's Tale ⁴
1963	The Ceremony 4	1968	Oliver!4
1964	The Pumpkin Eater⁴	1969	Goodbye, Mr. Chips 4
1964	Of Human Bondage ⁴	1970	Fragment Of Fear ⁴
1965	Mister Moses ⁴	1970	Scrooge ⁴
1965	The Hill ⁴	1971	Fiddler On The Roof ⁴
1965	The Battle Of The Villa Fiorita⁴	1972	Lady Caroline Lamb ⁴
1965	The Spy Who Came In From	1972	Sleuth ⁴
	The Cold ⁴		The Mackintosh Man ⁴
1965	Life At The Top ⁴	1974	The Odessa File ⁴
1966	Stop The World I Want To Get Off ⁴	1974	The Man With The Golden Gun ⁴

1975

1976 The Seven-Per-Cent Solution⁴
1977 Equus⁴
1978 The Wiz⁴
1980 Just Tell Me What You Want⁴
1981 The Great Muppet Caper⁴
1982 The Dark Crystal⁴
1988 John Huston (onscreen participant)

BAFTA HERITAGE SCREENINGS

BAFTA Heritage Screenings are a series of quarterly film screenings and on-stage interviews which celebrate British film and TV classics and the great film and TV professionals who made them.



1966 The Taming Of The Shrew⁴