

CINECITY

NOT SHOWING AT THIS CINEMA

LOOKING BEYOND THE BRITISH FILM INDUSTRY'S CYCLE OF BOOM AND BUST, IT IS POSSIBLE TO IMAGINE AN ALTERNATIVE HISTORY, AN UNREALISED CATALOGUE OF BRITISH CINEMA THAT IS ONLY VIEWABLE IN THE MIND'S EYE.

We invite you to peruse this speculative programme for *Not Showing At This Cinema*, a festival of "never-mades", films that were left incomplete, rejected, not-yet-made or never-will-be. They have fallen prey to the vagaries of time, money, ego, and fate or were left to rot in development hell. They might have been a director's dream project, a lost masterpiece, or a folly, but all share the enigmatic quality of being frozen in a state of suspended imagination.

British cinema has produced an intriguing collection of these phantom films, with many high-profile examples, including Harold Pinter's Proust screenplay for Joseph Losey, David Lean's *Nostramo* and Joe Orton's Beatles project *Up Against It*. Michael Powell's lost films range from *The Tempest* to a musical about the life of Richard Strauss, Derek Jarman's from *Akhenaten to The Space Gospel*, Alfred Hitchcock's from *Kaleidoscope* to *The Short Night*.

This programme has been prompted by the release, finally, of two highly anticipated films based on renowned novels that both endured protracted and complicated routes to the big screen. Terence Davies struggled for over a decade to bring his version of *Sunset Song* to fruition and *High-Rise*, first proposed as a film nearly 40 years ago, has now been directed by Ben Wheatley. A film adaptation of *Tulip Fever*, Deborah Moggach's bestselling novel set in 17th Century Amsterdam, which was suddenly abandoned more than ten years ago after the UK government removed tax incentives for film production, is also now in the can and set for cinema screens in 2016.

Many never-mades are indeed based on cult or best-selling novels, constantly optioned but failing to make it to the big screen - less than 5% of all books optioned within the UK ever get to be filmed; D.M. Thomas' controversial *The White Hotel* has had more near misses than most since its 1982 paperback version

prematurely announced "soon to be a major film" and Sebastian Faulks' *Birdsong* still awaits a cinema adaptation.

Not Showing At This Cinema focuses on post-1945, so there is no room for one of the most famous of all unfinished British films, *I, Claudius*, Josef von Sternberg's 1936 production starring Charles Laughton, which was abandoned after two reels of film were shot. Inevitably, the definition of "British" is always subject to debate, but we follow the current cultural test applied for tax relief in which points are awarded for a range of factors including British cast and crew, locations, and subject matter.

Of course no claims can be made for their quality; this is not a top 50 best never-made British films but rather a tantalising glimpse of an alternative history. *Not Showing At This Cinema...* films only you can see.

TIM BROWN
www.cine-city.co.uk

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FINALLY, AT A SCREEN NEAR YOU

SUNSET SONG
DIR: TERENCE DAVIES.
WITH: AGYNESS DEYN.
UK/LUXEMBOURG 2015.
135 MINS.

Terence Davies finally brings his much cherished adaptation of Lewis Grassic Gibbon's 1932 novel to the big screen. After *The House of Mirth*, released in 2000, Terence Davies didn't make another film until his documentary *Of Time and The City* eight years later - and it was a further three years until his next drama, *The Deep Blue Sea*. After protracted battles with the former UK Film Council to get *Sunset Song* greenlit, Davies, along with his producers Hurricane Films, has found himself on safer ground with the more auteur friendly BFI Film Fund. The visionary director's adaptation of the renowned novel about rural Scottish life is masterful from first shot to last.

Another moving meditation on the past and the seemingly ceaseless brutality of men (initially encapsulated by Peter Mullan playing effectively to type), *Sunset Song* utilises Davies' "memory realism" to poignantly, but unsentimentally contrast moments of bliss with more protracted periods of tragedy and suffering. Exquisitely rendered with each scene evocative of an Old Masters painting (imagine *Days of Heaven* meets *This Filthy Earth* via Dovzhenko's *Earth*), the film's use of score is also, but unsurprisingly, a triumph. Understated in its exploration of the novel's themes of incest, suicide and infanticide, Davies also resists over-playing the horrors of World War I with a brief tracking shot of a water-logged field post-battle conveying with fidelity and restraint scenes of unutterable horror.

Sunset Song is the work of a film-maker whose self-confessed inability to understand the modern world readily transfers itself to an intrinsic ability to translate with great poetry our past.

SUNSET SONG IS RELEASED 4TH DECEMBER

HIGH-RISE
DIR: BEN WHEATLEY.
WITH: TOM HIDDLESTON,
JEREMY IRONS, SIENNA MILLER.
UK 2015. 118 MINS.

Opening with the line, "Later, as he sat on his balcony eating the dog...", J.G. Ballard's celebrated 1975 novel was never going to be the easiest work to adapt for the screen. The tale of a modern tower block with amenities enough to allow it to exist in relative isolation, the block is structured according to the bank balances of its inhabitants. The cocktail party loving wealthy frolic in the penthouse suites above; the less privileged look enviously up at the endless hedonism from the floors below.

Arguably the ultimate Dystopian tale from an author who regularly peered behind the façade of respectable social behavior, *High-Rise* was once a project developed by producer Jeremy Thomas with Nicolas Roeg scheduled to direct. It never came to fruition, but Thomas kept the flame alive through numerous other incarnations and now 40 years on, British director Ben Wheatley, whose previous work has explored themes of primal urges, secret sects and the sense of civilization teetering precariously on collapse, delivers a startling and audacious take on fragmentation, tribalism and class injustice.

Adapted by Amy Jump and with a cast including Tom Hiddleston, Jeremy Irons as the god-like architect Anthony Royal and Luke Evans, Wheatley's film captures the source material's alarming psychological insights whilst also emphasizing the profoundly disturbing connections between technology and the human condition.

JASON WOOD

HIGH RISE IS RELEASED 18TH MARCH 2016

A PIN TO SEE THE PEEPSHOW

DIR: ROBERT HAMER 1949

Adaptation of a 1934 novel by F. Tennyson Jesse about a young woman wrongly convicted as an accomplice when her lover murders her husband, a thinly fictionalised account of Edith Thompson and the Ilford Murder case of 1922. With Margaret Lockwood in the lead, this was something of a dream project that Robert Hamer tried to get off the ground at Ealing. Despite a dazzling CV that includes the masterpiece *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949), Hamer was unable to persuade studio boss Michael Balcon to back the project. Hamer once said that his goal was to "make films about people in dark rooms doing beastly things to one another", which was clearly at odds with the prevailing trends of the British film industry of the 1940s and 1950s; it also placed him at odds with Balcon whose goal was to make films "projecting Britain and the British character". Ealing's rejection of the project seems to have contributed to Hamer's decline into alcoholism and eventual death in 1963. Critic David Thomson has called this "the most serious miscarriage of talent" of the postwar years.

THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE

DIR: THOROLD DICKINSON 1951

This Hardy adaptation was planned to coincide with the 1951 Festival of Britain, but various impediments stood in its way. For one thing, the dark tragedy of the story didn't suit the celebratory mood of the festival. More broadly, the Associated British Corporation worried about the film's viability in America, deeming it too highbrow and too expensive. For *Gaslight's* Thorold Dickinson, this was symptomatic of wider problems in the industry. It is the incomprehension of these men, who hold us all enmeshed in their bank balances, which inhibits and imprisons the artists and strangles ideas at birth.



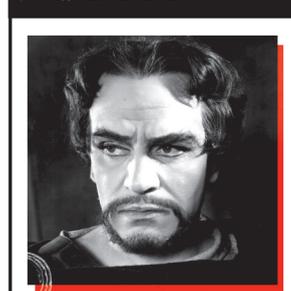
THE ADVENTURES OF HARRY DICKSON

DIR: ALAIN RESNAIS 1952-1966

As a twelve-year-old, Resnais became fascinated by a series of books by Flemish surrealist Jean Ray featuring "Harry Dickson, the American Sherlock Holmes". In a kind of parallel universe, Dickson also lived in Baker Street, but his adventures included a hypnotising octopus, zombies, a flame-throwing automaton and a vampiric Buddha. Resnais was determined to shoot in a fog-bound, dark and rainy London, as he felt it had the vital surreal screen presence, planning to shoot in 70mm colour that would gradually evolve into monochrome. Surrealist André Delvaux was to design the sets and Stockhausen to write the score. For Harry Dickson, Resnais considered Basil Rathbone (who first played Sherlock Holmes on film in 1939) but his first choice was Laurence Olivier. However, the formation of the National Theatre in 1963 coincided with a planned start date, and Olivier couldn't commit to 17 weeks filming. To cut the escalating production costs, the 3 and a half hour script was cut to just over 2 hours, but Resnais wasn't happy with the end result: "A series of fascinating fragments but only fragments, and I couldn't find an ending".

MACBETH

DIR: LAURENCE OLIVIER 1955-58



After Olivier and Vivien Leigh had starred in an acclaimed 1955 stage production (Terence Rattigan described his performance as "definitive" and Peggy Ashcroft thought Leigh was the best Lady Macbeth she had ever seen), Olivier was keen to adapt it for the big screen. It would have been his fourth cinematic adaptation of Shakespeare following successful versions of *Hamlet*, *Henry V* and *Richard III*. However, Olivier was left bitterly disappointed when the proposed film was scrapped by financial problems. The death of Sir Alexander Korda in January 1956 curtailed an agreement between the producer and Olivier and though Oscar-winning producer Mike Todd was also interested in financing the film, he too died, in early 1958. Olivier later claimed there were no surviving copies of his screenplay and nobody would ever have any idea how his version would have compared with those of Orson Welles or Roman Polanski. However, in early 2013, numerous versions of the "lost" screenplay were found at the British Library, from early drafts through to detailed shooting scripts.

THE TEMPEST (AKA TRIMIKIA)

DIR: MICHAEL POWELL 1970-75

Powell first announced his intention for a "surrealist Tempest" in 1970. "I had a way of doing the story that wasn't just Shakespeare but a bit of Powell as well". Going through various drafts and with most of the finance in place, filming was due to begin in Greece in March 1975, with James Mason as Prospero, Mia Farrow as Ariel, Michael York as Ferdinand and Topol as Caliban. Frankie Howerd and Malcolm McDowell were also on board. The sets were to be designed by cartoonist Gerald Scarfe and André Previn (married to Mia Farrow at the time) was to compose the score. However the legacy of *Peeping Tom* (1960) and its critical mauling still haunted Powell; attempting to get some pre-production costs from Rank, they announced they were "not interested in any project involving Michael Powell".

THE NIGHT CREATURES

DIR: VAL GUEST 1957

Robert Neville is the last man on earth after a mysterious plague has turned the rest of the population into vampires who swarm around his house every night, hungering for his blood. By day, he hunts out the vampires' lairs and kills them with stakes through the heart, while obsessively searching for an antidote and trying to work out the cause of his immunity. Richard Matheson wrote the screenplay for *The Night Creatures* for Hammer Films in 1957 based on his own hugely influential novel *I am Legend*. The film was to be directed by the versatile and prolific British director Val Guest, who was well-versed in British Sci-Fi having just made *The Quatermass Xperiment* (1955) for Hammer. However after submitting Matheson's script to the BBFC, the censors made it clear that a film of the screenplay would be rejected. The MPA in America also expressed concerns about some of the gruesome material, which included an uncomfortable scene in which Neville conducts tortuous experiments on a female vampire. Overall, the apocalyptic nature of the work was considered too violent for the time. Hammer, keen to keep the BBFC onside for future films, abandoned the project, using the title for another film.

NO BAIL FOR THE JUDGE

DIR: ALFRED HITCHCOCK 1958-1961

This adaptation of the thriller novel by former judge Henry Cecil would have marked Hitchcock's return to London, but it was not to be. Hitch was keen to cast Audrey Hepburn as the barrister who is assisted by a gentleman thief in defending her father when he is accused of murdering a prostitute. The screenplay included a scene, not in the original novel, where the heroine disguises herself as a prostitute and has to fend off a rapist in Hyde Park. A newly-pregnant Hepburn apparently left the film partly because of this scene. Without his "cool brunette", Hitchcock lost interest in the project and told Paramount Pictures it was better to write off the \$200,000 already spent, than to waste another \$3 million on a film he had no intention of finishing.



KALEIDOSCOPE

DIR: ALFRED HITCHCOCK 1964-67

Set to be Hitchcock's darkest film, the story concerns a young bodybuilder in New York who is a serial killer and rapist, luring young women to their deaths. In a bold move, the film was to be shown entirely from the perspective of the killer. Hitchcock planned to experiment with hand-held filming and the use of natural light. A glimpse of this proposed new vérité style exists on an hour-long tape of experimental colour rushes. Hitchcock's final unfinished film, *The Short Night* (1976-79) was to be a "realistic Bond" loosely based on George Blake. Clint Eastwood, Walter Matthau and Sean Connery were all proposed as possible leads. But Hitchcock, then aged 79, was in no state to start a film, especially one with so much location shooting. Universal cancelled the project and Hitchcock died a year later.

THE LOWLIFE

In Alexander Baron's 1963 Hackney-set novel, Harryboy Boas describes his gambler's life as "a good life, if you're not one of the gooms who thinks there is some virtue in hard work". *The Lowlife*, "a riotous off-beat novel about gamblers, prostitutes and layabouts of London's East End" was optioned as a vehicle for Harry H Corbett, best known for his role in *Steppe and Son*, but never made.

ONLY LOVERS LEFT ALIVE

DIR: NICHOLAS RAY 1966

The Rolling Stones seemed like the perfect choice to star in this adaptation of Dave Wallis' dystopian counter-culture novel in which all the adults in the UK have committed suicide and teenagers run wild. The Stones were set to play the Seely Street gang, racing through the streets on their motorcycles in search of diminishing stocks of food and petrol. The band's manager, Andrew Loog Oldham, and Jagger met with Nicholas Ray (*Rebel Without a Cause*) but the meeting came to nothing.

UP AGAINST IT

1967

Considering that the script included scenes where the band "become involved in dubious political activity, dressed as women, committed murder...", it's no surprise that Joe Orton's script for a third Beatles movie never got made. Paul McCartney later admitted it was the script's homoerotic undertones that scuppered that project: "The reason why we didn't do *Up Against It* wasn't because it was too far out or anything. We didn't do it because it was gay". The script was later adapted, with Mick Jagger and Ian McKellen set to star but Joe Orton's murder caused the project to be shelved once and for all.

O'HOOLIGAN'S MOB

DIR: MICHAEL REEVES 1969

Michael Reeves is one of the great lost talents of British Cinema, completing just three features including the masterly *Witchfinder General* (1968) before his death of a barbiturate overdose aged 25. One of his planned films was the Irish Easter Rising drama *O'Hooligan's Mob*, told through the eyes of a young IRA man. Reeves had already decided on a final scene where the hero escapes a firing squad by grabbing a machine gun and turning on his would-be executioners and the watching crowd. Reeves' pet project, which was

greenlit just before he died, was an adaptation of Walter Hamilton's 1968 novel *All the Little Animals*, exploring the friendship between a boy and an old man who patrols roads at night collecting the roadkill. Reeves prepared a treatment, locations were scouted and Arthur Lowe was to play the lead. Thirty years later the book was adapted for the screen and directed by Jeremy Thomas starring John Hurt and Christian Bale.

ISHTAR

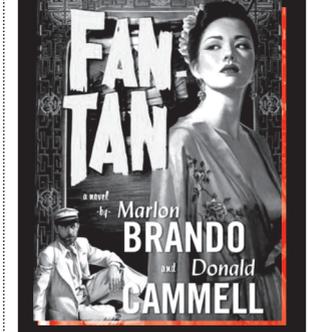
DIR: DONALD CAMMELL 1971-73

The co-director of *Performance* (1970), Cammell only completed three further features before committing suicide in 1996. His planned follow-up to *Performance* was also due to feature Mick Jagger and was described variously as a parody, a suspense thriller and a movie within a movie. In the complicated premise, the central character Nonus Smith (Malcolm McDowell) is shooting a reconstruction of the kidnapping of a Supreme Court judge by a revolutionary (Jagger). Norman Mailer was rumoured to be involved and the action was to take place largely in Morocco's Atlas Mountains. Cammell wanted "lots of soldiers and helicopters speeding down the valley of Hades at night with huge lights". Possible financiers were concerned about the escalating budget, with the script's heavy mythological elements also proving a turn-off.

FAN TAN

DIR: DONALD CAMMELL 1978

Another Cammell-helmed project, this was a 1920s pirate adventure set on the South China seas. The plot concerned an overweight adventurer who is seduced by a beautiful female pirate into stealing silver from a British ship. Marlon Brando paid Cammell to write the screenplay for him, which the studio loved. However, Brando changed his mind and insisted the story be first published as an epic novel which could become a bestseller and allow them to produce the film independently. The pair spent eight months rewriting the material as a novel only for Brando, bored and depressed, to pull out completely. The novel was eventually published posthumously in 2005. *Fan Tan* was one of many planned collaborations between Brando and Cammell. The director spent the best part of two decades trying to capture "that performance from Brando to see him bare his soul for once".



REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

DIR: JOSEPH LOSEY 1972

Harold Pinter devoted a year to reading the entirety of Proust's seven-volume *À la recherche du temps perdu* and condensing it into a single film. His script opens with a wordless sequence of thirty-six shots, beginning with a patch of yellow taken from Vermeer's *View of Delft*. Nearly four hours later, the patch of yellow appears again, closing the film. The project invigorated Pinter - "the best working year of my life... I was swallowed up by it" - but proved too expensive and complicated to film. Potential leads included Alain Delon and Dirk Bogarde. Pinter's un-filmed screenplay is now available as a standalone text and has since been produced for the stage.

OCTOBER CIRCLE

DIR: HUGH HUDSON 1975

David Puttnam took out an option on Robert Littell's novel about the effect of the 1968 Czech uprising on a father and son in Bulgaria, and tried unsuccessfully for years to get it to the screen. Hugh Hudson was lined up to direct and Ian Holm, Dirk Bogarde, Simone Signoret, Richard Attenborough, Sean Connery and Richard Burton were all approached to form the cast. It looked like filming was finally set for the autumn of 1981 but Robert Bolt's illness meant the script was delayed. As Bolt's health worsened and Puttnam and Hudson's commitments piled up, the project went into turnaround. Puttnam: "Some producers can't wait to get going once they have a perfectly satisfactory script: but I plough through as many drafts as I feel is necessary until the germ of the idea is developed to perfection. Or else I don't make the picture".

VOSS

DIR: PATRICK LOSEY 1970s

The hero of Patrick White's historical novel is a doomed German explorer who disappeared into Australia's vast desert. Voss' fatal flaw, and his immense appeal as a character, is his pig-headed megalomania. Asked whether he has studied the map, he replied, "The map? I will first make it". David Mercer's screenplay came very close to being filmed, with several drafts completed, funding seemingly in place, and locations chosen. Although Losey had originally planned Donald Sutherland to star, Maximilian Schell was eventually chosen to lead. The project collapsed in 1977 when Australian funders raised questions of creative ownership. "Despite the outbreak setting, Voss had the potential to be one of Losey's simmering interrogations of English class tension, as well as Mercer-esque fantasies on the life of the mind". (Quentin Tournour, Australian National Film and Sound Archive).



AKHENATEN

DIR: DEREK JARMAN 1975

This vision of excess and homoerotic fantasy was to be, according to Jarman, "no Cleopatra" but "as simple as butter muslin with fine white limestone walls, sand, and perhaps a gold bracelet or a scarlet ribbon". Born out of Jarman's obsession with Ancient Egypt and the occult, the 1975 script is preoccupied with sexual politics and psychoanalytic theory. The Sphinx was to narrate the Oedipal melodrama, in which the sons of a hypersexualised Akhenaten (David Bowie), born of his mother Tiye (Lindsay Kemp), also become her lovers. After years of research, begun soon after the British Museum's Tutankhamen exhibition in London in 1972, Jarman failed to secure funding and eventually lost interest.

NEUTRON

DIR: DEREK JARMAN 1979-1983

One of the most intriguing of Jarman's never-mades, this post-apocalyptic love story was set to star David Bowie, Steven Berkoff and Jack Birkett. Scripted by Jon Savage, the film was scheduled to be shot around the decaying Berlin Wall, but according to Bowie, "nobody was willing to put up the bread for it". According to Michael O'Pray in *Up in the Air* (Jarman's collected film scripts), "its tight structure, powerful visuals and post-apocalyptic theme would have made it perfectly apt for the early 1980s when *Blade Runner* (1982) and *Brazil* (1985) successfully occupied the same terrain".

THE SPACE GOSPEL

DIR: DEREK JARMAN AND KEN RUSSELL 1976

The Bible as science fiction? Jarman and Russell co-wrote a script on this very premise, featuring astronauts as angels, visitors from outer space artificially inseminating Mary, and the Angel Gabriel as a projected hologram. Unmade as a film, Russell turned the script into a SF novel, *Mike and Gaby's Space Gospel*, published in 1999.

IN THE BEGINNING

DIR: SALLY POTTER 1992

Sally Potter doesn't consider this an unmade film, despite the intense research she undertook into astronomy and genetics to fuel this ambitious work of poetic feminist science fiction. In her own words, "I realise I have eventually made every film I have been truly convinced about. *In The Beginning* has not been made (yet) because it isn't right, or finished in my view. Slow though my output is, I don't have any unmade films, just not-yet-made films; in effect they (or the scripts) have to reach a stage I experience as a kind of personal necessity, at which point the battle to make them commences and I simply don't give up".

MID-ATLANTIC

DIR: MIKE HODGES 1976-1985

A black comedy about a PR man (Malcolm McDowell) in an out-of-season seaside resort who gets involved in a course on leadership dynamics propagating a form of extreme "turbo capitalism" run by a New Age guru (Jack Nicholson). Hodges wrote the script while in LA while making *The Terminal Man* (1974) but despite the great cast, which also included Kate Nelligan, he couldn't get the money for it. Hodges tried again at various stages over his career to make it. A decade later in the UK he directed *Morons From Outer Space* (1985) on the condition that the production company, Thorn EMI, would finance *Mid-Atlantic* as part of a 2-picture deal, but again the cameras never rolled. With Thatcherism now in full swing, Hodges' script had proved eerily prescient. Hodges eventually turned the screenplay into his first novel, *Watching The Wheels Come Off*, which was published in the UK in 2010.

BURIED ALIVE

DIR: MIKE HODGES 1980

Mike Hodges readily admits his CV has "holes in it like a Swiss cheese". The director of *Get Carter*, *Flash Gordon* and *Croupier* has made just 9 features in over 40 years, partly due to his unwillingness to compromise. *Buried Alive* was based on Arnold Bennett's 1908 satirical novel about an extremely shy painter, Priam Fair, who assumes the identity of his dead valet as a means of avoiding press attention. He marries a widow and lives a happy life until the loss of his wife's money means he has to take up painting again. An art connoisseur recognises his style but thinks the paintings are by an impostor. Meanwhile Priam Fair refuses through his obstinate shyness to prove his own identity. Dirk Bogarde and Glenda Jackson were cast, but before shooting started, Hodges was taken ill and had to have major surgery. The project resurfaced in 1984 with a new version of the script with Peter O'Toole and Geraldine Chaplin now set to star and though the sets started to be built, the production finance had melted away.

A STAR IS DEAD

DIR: PETER WALKER 1977

Brighton-born horror and exploitation director Peter Walker (*The Flesh and Blood Show*, *House of Martial Sin*) was hired by Malcolm McLaren to direct this film within a film about The Sex Pistols. Diana Dors was set to star as Johnny Rotten's mother, with filming due to start at Bray Studios once the band returned from their US tour. However, the Pistols played their last ever gig in San Francisco in January 1978 and the cameras never rolled. The following year McLaren hired Julian Temple to make *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle*.

BYE BYE BABY

DIR: COURTNEY LOVE 2000-2002

Love bought the rights to Caroline Sullivan's book *Bye Bye Baby: My Tragic Love Affair With The Bay City Rollers* with the backing of REM's Michael Stipe, hoping to make it her directorial debut. The English press seized on the project, reporting that Ewan McGregor and Leonardo DiCaprio were going to star, but Love eventually pulled out.

GORMENGHAST

DIR: TERRY GILLIAM 1978

Based on Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast* trilogy, this was a project that had been preoccupying Gilliam since *Life of Brian*. At one stage Sting, a huge fan of the novels, held the rights, and every couple of years Gilliam would get a call: "I've got the rights, what about...?". However, the adaptation never materialised. "I've lost interest because I've worked the film out in my head too often. *Jabberwocky* had a lot of *Gormenghast* in it, so I've probably done it already".

GOSSIP

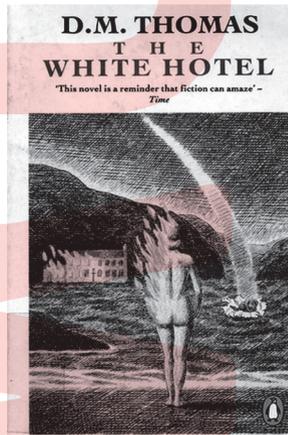
DIR: DON BOYD 1982

Scottish director and producer Don Boyd was described by critic Alexander Walker as a one-man film industry. He developed this screenplay with Village Voice writers Michael and Stephen Tolkin. Initially set in New York and described as a "moral odyssey through soul-destroying wine receptions", *Gossip* recounts the story of society journalist Clara (Anne Louise Lambert) rejection of the columnist lifestyle once she reconsiders the ethics of her profession. The script was reworked by columnist Lucretia Stewart and "anglicised" by Stephen Fry when the plot shifted to London after being rejected by Universal for being "too arty and European". After more than two years in development, production finally got underway but was shut down after just two weeks of shooting when it emerged that the film had been deceived by a fraudulent funding source – the certificates of deposit invested by "The Martini Foundation" didn't actually exist.

IF...2

DIR: LINDSAY ANDERSON 1984-1994

Lindsay Anderson and writer David Sherwin's planned sequel to the 1968 classic was to feature the same characters, locations and actors, with Malcolm McDowell reprising his role as Mick Travers. Centred around the idea of a 25 year reunion, according to McDowell, all the characters "return to the school much later in life when we've become bank managers and things...". David Sherwin says he wrote a scene for the film where the cast and crew gather for a Gala screening of *If...* with the Queen Mother in attendance. After the screening, she knights Travers and The Crusaders on stage, and then slices off Sherwin's head. A first draft of the screenplay was commissioned, but the producers pulled out, viewing it as a "European project which will not be of interest in the US".



THE WHITE HOTEL

DIR: VARIOUS 1982-PRESENT

The list of names that has been attached to this adaptation of D.M. Thomas' acclaimed and controversial novel is staggering. The story follows Lisa, a young opera singer who seeks out the services of Sigmund Freud in post-WWI Vienna because she is haunted by hallucinatory dreams of a white hotel. Together they unlock the key to her memories and her premonitions of the future. Barbra Streisand originally optioned the book, looking for "an intelligent, demanding role" but after discussing the frequent and graphic sex scenes with her proposed director, Bernardo Bertolucci, she dropped the option. Meanwhile, David Lynch, Emir Kusturica, Terrence Malick, Woody Allen, David Cronenberg, and Pedro Almodóvar have all been rumoured to be interested, and Meryl Streep, Juliette Binoche, Anne Hathaway, Kate Winslet, Anthony Hopkins, Dustin Hoffman, Geoffrey Rush and Ralph Fiennes all set to star. The film at various times has been blocked by war, death and litigation, with Thomas himself being dragged into a legal fight when one of the producers was sued and tried to share liability with him to the tune of \$4.2 million.

MOLL FLANDERS

DIR: KEN RUSSELL 1985

Ken Russell was to direct this soft porn romp, based on the 1722 Daniel Defoe novel, with its budget variously reported as between £4m-£11m. With an "extremely erotic" script backed by Penthouse magazine and with Bob Guccione as a producer, "the title role calls for extensive nudity and very strong, though stimulated sexual activity of every description". Model Janice Martin was selected to play Moll, the only actress acceptable to Russell who would also comply with Penthouse's "publicity requirement". However, casting a non-union member in the title role proved problematic as the production ran into trouble and was boycotted by Equity. The producers then tried to take the film to Ireland, but Irish Equity also refused to cooperate. Production was set to resume in Rome with Glenda Jackson, Oliver Reed, David Hemmings, Rod Steiger and Trevor Howard all being considered for roles. After falling out over script changes, Penthouse held Russell responsible for the film's costs and sued for over £1m. Almost two years later, Russell and Guccione finally came face to face during seven days of courtroom drama. After a great clash of egos, Russell "won"; Guccione was not awarded any of his claim, though Russell still had to pay his own steep legal fees.

AN ICE-CREAM WAR IN AFRICA

DIR: GAVIN MILLER 1985

William Boyd had high hopes for the big screen adaptation of his own novel about two brothers and their experience of the First World War in German East Africa. Boyd wrote the script himself and Gavin Miller was to direct, with casting and location reces underway in Kenya. Thames TV were going to put in "a million quid... a lot of money in those days. Suddenly Thames TV lost its franchise as the then Conservative government had decided in its wisdom to open up UK commercial TV franchises to competitive bidding. Thames went and with them went their million for *An Ice Cream War*. I blame Margaret Thatcher".



NOSTROMO

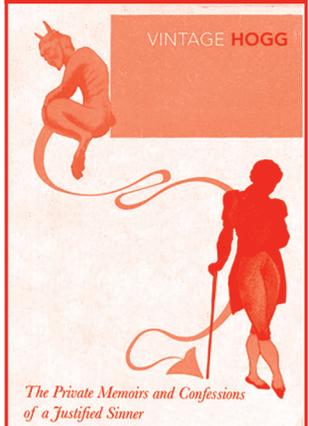
DIR: DAVID LEAN 1986-1991

Planned as an epic to rival *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Doctor Zhivago*, this is arguably the greatest English language novel never to reach the screen. David Lean and screenwriter Robert Bolt collaborated on a film version of Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo* for years but neither lived to fulfil the ambition. Bolt, and later Christopher Hampton, worked on script drafts for an international cast including Isabella Rossellini, Paul Scofield and Dennis Quaid. Various start dates were announced, but Lean's increasing frailty and ill health led to constant delays, with Kevin Costner earmarked as a standby director just in case. Lean died aged 83 in April 1991, just 6 weeks before the proposed start date. There have been further unsuccessful attempts to film Hampton's screenplay, but the project has ultimately come to nothing. "People complain it's a dark, difficult script. What can you say to that? It's a dark, difficult novel".

CONFESSIONS OF A JUSTIFIED SINNER

DIR: BILL DOUGLAS 1988-90

Despite all the plaudits for his award-winning autobiographical trilogy made in the 1970s, Bill Douglas struggled to raise finance for his next projects. He was finally able to complete his film about the Tolpuddle Martyrs, *Comrades*, in 1987 but it was to be his last film as he died in 1991 aged 57. With his death, the British film industry lost a unique imagination and the tantalising prospect of future projects. One of his unmade screenplays, *Confessions*, was based on James Hogg's celebrated novel about a religious fanatic, who believes entry to Heaven is predetermined. Under the influence of the shadowy stranger Gil-Martin, he stalks and murders his own brother. At one stage Ingmar Bergman and Alexander Mackendrick were considering adapting for the screen. Douglas' own script has been described by many as his most brilliant work but he died without raising the money to make it. Lindsay Anderson was then linked with the project but he too died in 1994.



"I WANTED TO DO A STORY ABOUT ALL THE FILMS I NEARLY DIRECTED WHICH DIDN'T GET MADE, OR AT LEAST NOT BY ME. THE LIST IS ENDLESS AND MINDLESS".

NICOLAS ROEG

CHICAGO LOOP

DIR: NICOLAS ROEG 1989-1991

The list of films attached to Roeg is certainly longer than his actual filmography, with many abortive projects passing to other directors including *Flash Gordon* (1980), *Hammett* (1982) and *Out of Africa* (1985) eventually directed by Mike Hodges. Wim Wenders, and Sydney Pollack respectively. Roeg once "wanted to do a story about all the films I nearly directed which didn't get made, or at least not by me. The list is endless and mindless". One example is *Chicago Loop*, written by Paul Theroux, in which a psychotic killer (James Spader) on the loose in Chicago is hunted by a female undercover cop (Theresa Russell). MGM agreed to finance the \$8 million film with shooting due to start in January 1989, but following management changes the project floundered. Paul Theroux later wrote the novel based on the screenplay.

ARYAN PAPERS

DIR: STANLEY KUBRICK 1990-1993

The story of a boy and his mother hiding during the Holocaust, Kubrick wrote the first draft of the screenplay based on Louis Begley's novel *Wartime Lies*. The film almost went into production before Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* was released in 1993. According to Kubrick's wife, Christiane, the subject itself had become too difficult and depressing for the director, with Kubrick concluding that an accurate film about the Holocaust was beyond the capacity of cinema.



THE MAN WHO KILLED DON QUIXOTE

DIR: TERRY GILLIAM 1990

As Gilliam freely admits in *Lost in La Mancha*, which documents this film's myriad disasters, "If it's easy, I don't do it". Gilliam's visions are often too eccentric for Hollywood's tastes and too expensive for low-budget financing. After several false starts and an £8 million budget reduction, filming of this Cervantes adaptation started in Spain in 2000 with Johnny Depp, Vanessa Paradis and Jean Rochefort. The problems began on day one, which saw interference by military jets flying overhead. Flash floods and hail stones destroyed equipment and transformed the landscape on day two, destroying any sense of continuity. Despite Rochefort's commitment – he had spent the previous seven months learning English – illness caused his late arrival to Spain and a premature departure. Already on a tight schedule, without Rochefort the film would have needed entirely new financing. Shooting was called off and the script handed over to the insurers. Gilliam is currently rumoured to be taking another crack at the material with John Hurt.

BIRDSONG

DIR: VARIOUS 1994-PRESENT

Sebastian Faulks' bestselling novel following young Englishman Stephen Wraysford and his harrowing experiences in the trenches of Northern France in WWI was first optioned in 1994 for a few hundred pounds. In 1999, Britain's most powerful production company, Working Title, came on board but despite the A-list talent attached to the project, attempts to adapt it into a big screen epic have so far come to nothing. Sam Mendes, Peter Weir, Michael Mann and Iain Softley were all tipped to direct. Eventually, Paul Greengrass said yes after directing *Bloody Sunday*. He wrote his own script and considered both Ewan McGregor and Jake Gyllenhaal as possible leads. However, the financial failure of *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* (2001) and *Charlotte Gray* (2002), also based on a Faulks' novel, meant big budget wartime literary adaptations were viewed as box office poison, and *Birdsong* went into turnaround. Paul Greengrass left to make the *Bourne* movies, and a host of other directors have come and gone. As Faulks himself has commented: "I have been hired and twice fired from the script. Harold Pinter accepted to do it but they couldn't afford him. I could go on! All film people are bonkers or dim, or both". The BBC made a television version in 2012 with Eddie Redmayne in the lead, and a new feature film has been rumoured to star Nicholas Hoult.



ANGEL MAKER / STRAY / ORIGINAL BLISS

DIR: CARINE ADLER

Adler's widely acclaimed 1997 debut feature *Under The Skin* won the Michael Powell Award for Best British feature film, and starred Samantha Morton in her first big screen role. Yet Adler has not made another film since. She did write *Angel Maker*, a portrait of a young mother who arrives in Paris from South America with her very young daughter, and her efforts to land a rich husband. Budgeted at £8m, the project was abandoned when Miramax folded its UK subsidiary HAL films. The story has since been adapted as a radio play for the BBC.

"A contemporary, sophisticated horror film in the vein of Polanski's *Repulsion* and *Rosemary's Baby*, *Stray* was set to star Emily Mortimer as Milla, a worker at an animal shelter in London. She meets a boy, falls in love and he moves in with her. However, their idyll is irrevocably shattered when Purr, an unusual stray cat, comes into their lives. Somehow more than a pet, Purr bewitches Milla, and the consequences are deadly. Based on Vicky Allan's debut novel, with a screenplay from Richard Stanley (*Hardware*), Adler was in development for a couple of years with this psychological thriller.

In 2007 the Evening Standard reported that Adler's next film was to be *Original Bliss*, based on the novella of love and desire by AL Kennedy and starring Kristin Scott Thomas, who had bought the rights to the story after yearning for a different kind of role. Like *Angel Maker* and *Stray*, the film has never materialised.

THE (WO)MAN WHO WASN'T THERE - NEVER-MADE BIOPICS

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

DIR: ALEXANDER MACKENDRICK 1940s-1969

Ealing Studio's Alexander Mackendrick had big plans for this proposed biopic of Mary Queen of Scots, including a list of possible lead actresses that included Leslie Caron, Jeanne Moreau, Vanessa Redgrave and Catherine Deneuve. The director envisaged the project as a gritty, avowedly anti-Romantic study in *realpolitik*, describing the set-up as "a sophisticated French lady in Boot Hill". Shooting was finally about to start at Pinewood but Universal pulled out in 1969, cancelling all European productions and consigning the biopic to the chopping block.

THE GOLDEN YEARS

DIR: MICHAEL POWELL 1952

Powell and Pressburger's biopic of composer Richard Strauss was conceived as an innovative "auto"-biography, being shot entirely in the first-person. According to plans, the figure of Strauss was never to be actually seen on screen until the very end, when he is glimpsed on a screen within a screen watching a home-movie with his family on his 85th birthday. This ambitious concept, as well as Strauss' association with the Third Reich, eventually sank the picture.

WILL!

(AKA THE BAWDY BARD)
DIR: JOSEPH L. MANKIEWICZ 1968-1969

Strange as it may seem today, the idea of a musical adaptation of the life of William Shakespeare seemed like a bankable Hollywood proposition after the success of British musicals such as *My Fair Lady* and *Camelot*. The "sensual and violent" script was written by Anthony Burgess, who elected *All About Eve's* Mankiewicz to direct. The proposed cast included Robert Stephens as Shakespeare, Maggie Smith as Anne Hathaway and Peter Ustinov as Ben Jonson, with Burgess himself suggesting Diana Ross in the role of Shakespeare's mysterious Dark Lady. The project was abandoned by Warner Brothers in 1969.

NAPOLEON

DIR: STANLEY KUBRICK 1969

After the success of 2001: A Space Odyssey in 1968, Kubrick embarked on his epic biopic of Napoleon Bonaparte, with either Ian Holm or Jack Nicholson set to star as the Emperor. Audrey Hepburn as Josephine, and 75,000 extras to be enlisted from the Romanian army. Napoleon was something of a lifelong obsession for Kubrick and the research for this film was exhaustive even by his own standards. An enormous

filling system contained everything from what the weather was like during a particular battle to a catalogue of 15,000 images of the Napoleonic period. In the time it took Kubrick to compile all this information, however, Rod Steiger's *Waterloo* (1970) had proved a flop at the box office and MGM, wary of repeating this failure, abandoned the project. Kubrick left the studio for Warner Brothers, where he made *A Clockwork Orange* instead, and some of his historical research was eventually channelled into *Barry Lyndon*.

FLYING HORSE

DIR: BILL DOUGLAS 1990

Early cinema held a particular fascination for Douglas and this completed screenplay was based on the life and works of English-born photographic pioneer Eadweard Muybridge. The script juxtaposed two stories, a contemporary tale about a film-maker who was trying to find a lost son of Muybridge alongside a biography of Muybridge himself, whose life was certainly dramatic. He introduced his wife to a theatre-critic friend of his and encouraged them to go to the theatre together. When Muybridge discovered they had been having an affair, he subsequently shot and killed his former friend. The case went to court and he was acquitted of murder, with a ruling of "justifiable homicide". The court case temporarily interrupted his famous experiment, *The Horse in Motion*, when he photographed a galloping horse using a series of 24 cameras.

MONSTER BUTLER

DIR: LINDSAY ANDERSON 1993

David Sherwin wrote a screenplay of "the extraordinary true story" of debonair thief, serial murderer and con-man Archibald Hall (aka Roy Fontaine), a butler who lunched with the Queen Mother before murdering his ex-boyfriend, a prostitute, his brother, a member of parliament, and his wife. Eventually arrested, he was locked up in Broadmoor and died in 2002. Malcolm McDowell was due to play Hall and Gary Oldman his lover, Michael Kitto. The project had a new lease of life in 2005 when McDowell, now acting as producer, commissioned another screenplay from Peter Bellwood, but as yet has been unable to raise the money.

MARLOWE

DIR: JOHN MAYBURY 2000

John Maybury, a frequent collaborator with Derek Jarman, made his feature debut with 1998's Francis Bacon portrait *Love is the Devil*. In 2000, Natural Nylon announced a \$20m project with Maybury directing a portrait of controversial 16th Century poet and playwright Christopher Marlowe. With Johnny Depp and Jude Law set to star, the film was to focus on Marlowe's relationship with Shakespeare, and the theory that he wrote some of the latter's plays. Maybury spent the best part of five years trying to launch the film, but Law's rising profile and commitment to other productions took over and it all

MONEY

1998

Martin Amis considers the failure to make an adaptation of his 1984 novel "one of the great lost opportunities of cinema". He wanted Gary Oldman in the role of John Self, a man with an insatiable appetite for money, alcohol, drugs and porn. In a case of life imitating art, John Self is trying to raise money for a film that eventually falls through, which is just what happened with this adaptation. Amis: "You never know, though, with films. You're pretty sure the film will be made when it's in the rental stores, and not before". A television movie was broadcast in 2010, with Nick Frost in the title role.

THE NEW CONFESSIONS

William Boyd's 1987 novel, whose hero is obsessed with making a movie based on the life of Rousseau, has proved too epic to be adapted for the screen. Boyd has admitted, "People have circled around *The New Confessions* for years, but its scale daunts them in the end". When asked if he prefers writing novels to screenplays, Boyd replied: "If you write novels you live in a world of perfect autonomy and freedom. If you write films you live in a world of constraints, compromise and endlessly ramifying parameters. Therefore there is no comparison".

"IF YOU WRITE FILMS YOU LIVE IN A WORLD OF CONSTRAINTS, COMPROMISE AND ENDLESSLY RAMIFYING PARAMETERS".

WILLIAM BOYD

THE LOVELY BONES

DIR: LYNNE RAMSAY 2002

Alice Sebold's novel was bought by Film4 as a half-written manuscript before publication. The dark subject matter seemed an ideal fit for Lynne Ramsay (*Ratcatcher*, *Morvern Callar*), who spent two years developing the project. In 2002, Channel 4 sold Film4, but they managed to retain the film rights until *The Lovely Bones* shot to the top of The New York Times Best Seller list and Hollywood started circulating. Dreamworks expressed an interest. Ramsay was taken off the project, and in 2005 Peter Jackson independently purchased the rights. Jackson's film was released in 2009, a very different adaptation than the one originally envisaged by Ramsay.

KEITH MOON WAS HERE

DIR: ALEX COX 2001

Alex Cox (*Repo Man*, *Sid and Nancy*) was commissioned to write a screenplay based on the life of Keith Moon, legendary drummer with The Who, by Roger Daltrey. Described by Cox as probably the best script he and collaborator Tod Davies ever wrote, they decided Keith Moon's antagonist should be Peter Sellers. "Sellers first appears as a giant spider, then as himself, then as Harry Nilsson, in whose London apartment rock stars inevitably die. Supporting cast includes the other members of The Who, The Beatles, and Steve McQueen". Cox describes why the film wasn't made: "I think Roger Daltrey was the executive producer and so maybe it didn't fit his recollection of events or vision of the story. I think that the people who wanted to make the film were expecting more of a mainstream biopic – which is really hard, to make a guy like that sympathetic".

THESE ARE THE TIMES: A LIFE OF THOMAS PAINE

DIR: RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH 2001

Lord Attenborough's long cherished film is an account of the life of radical 18th Century reformer Thomas Paine. "I think Tom Paine is one of the greatest men who ever lived... he was an Englishman who was involved in the writing of the American Declaration of Independence, the American Constitution, the French Constitution, wrote the great book called *The Rights of Man*". An acclaimed screenplay by Trevor Griffiths has been published and the story was eventually staged at Shakespeare's Globe. However, Attenborough, who died last year, remained committed to filming it for the screen: "But nobody wants to make it. Nobody. Because it's politics, it's period, it doesn't have any of the things that now are supposedly our prerequisites to commercial success. I'm going to make it, provided I'll stand on my feet".

