

Milestone Film & Video Presents:

Alfred Hitchcock's
Bon Voyage
and
Aventure Malgache



A Milestone Film Release
PO Box 128 • Harrington Park, NJ 07640-0128
Phone: (201) 767-3117 • Fax: (201) 767-3035 • Email: milefilms@aol.com

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BON VOYAGE

1944. England. B&W. 26 minutes. 1:1.33. In French with English subtitles.

Produced byThe British Ministry of Information
Director.....Alfred Hitchcock
Camera.....Günther Krampf
Art Direction.....Charles Gilbert
ScreenplayJ.O.C. Orton and Angus McPhail
Based on original idea byArthur Calder-Marshall
Featuring.....John Blythe and The Molière Players
SubtitlesTom Milne

Restored by The British Film Institute, the National Film and Television Archive (U.K.) and the Piper-Heidsieck Champagne Classic Film Collection.

SYNOPSIS by Tom Milne

A Scottish RAF air gunner, who has escaped from a POW camp in Germany and made it safely back to Britain, is being interrogated by a Free French Intelligence officer. As he explains how he was helped and guided by a Polish fellow-escapee, we watch (in flashback) the perilous last stages of his journey through France, passed from hand to hand by ambivalent strangers through a series of sinister rendezvous that — he hopes — adds up to an underground Resistance network. In London, though, he learns that the Pole was not what he seemed. And we plunge straight back into a re-run of the journey, with details that seemed off-key before now properly in tune...

AVENTURE MALGACHE (Madagascar Landing)

1944. England. B&W. 31 minutes. 1:1.33. In French with English Subtitles.
Produced byThe British Ministry of Information
Director.....Alfred Hitchcock
Camera.....Günther Krampf
Art Direction.....Charles Gilbert
Featuring.....The Molière Players
SubtitlesTom Milne

Restored by The British Film Institute, the National Film and Television Archive (U.K.) and the Piper-Heidsieck Champagne Classic Film Collection.

SYNOPSIS by Tom Milne

The film opens in a dressing room where the leading players are making-up and discussing the roles they are about to embark on. One of them is an elderly lawyer from Madagascar; and he is playing himself as the film chronicles his evolution into a resistance hero. In flashback, with periodic returns to the dressing-room for comment and clarification, we see how the lawyer's battle against the

police chief, whom he fruitlessly denounces as corrupt, comes to a head after the fall of France. Bucking the Vichy regime, the lawyer organizes an underground railway, helping those anxious to continue fighting to escape and join De Gaulle. One moment of weakness — he reluctantly allows a volunteer to say goodbye to his betrothed before his sudden departure — results in the denunciation by the disappointed bride. Bent on revenge, the police chief contrives to have the lawyer arraigned before a military tribunal, only to be disappointed when the resulting death sentence is commuted to imprisonment by Pétain, intervening personally on the grounds of the lawyer's distinguished WWI service record. Maddened to realize that the lawyer is somehow contriving to remain in touch with his clandestine group even in his cell, threats and blandishments proving equally ineffective in persuading him to talk, the police chief vindictively has him shipped to a penal colony. Rescued in a fortuitous encounter with the British navy, the lawyer immediately returns to the attack with a series of freedom radio broadcasts to Madagascar.

BACKGROUND

by J. Bret Wood, author of *Orson Welles, A Bio-Bibliography*

BON VOYAGE and AVENTURE MALGACHE were a rare hybrid of the World War II propaganda forces of the United States, Great Britain, Scotland and France. Ever since John Grierson coined the term documentary and started the cinematographic arm of the Empire Marketing Board in 1929, England had been a great source of government funded informational films. The British documentary movement gained momentum in the following decade, and by the time the nation was embroiled in war, it was producing masterful films that mingled drama with data, thanks to the talents of such cinema artists as David Lean, Carol Reed, Noël Coward, Michael Powell and Alberto Cavalcanti.

Once the U.S. entered the war, the British Ministry of Information's film division, headed by Sidney Bernstein, entered into an arrangement with the major studios by which war-related shorts would circulate with their theatrical releases. From the start of this endeavor, Bernstein was concerned that the British product might not play well to American audiences and stated that "Our imperative need is for films to suit *their* tastes, films which will command equal attention with the best American films."

Bernstein put this idea to the test when he had his old friend, American producer David O. Selznick, screen NEXT OF KIN, one of the Ministry of Information's proudest works. Speaking on behalf of himself, Director Ernst Lubitsch and screenwriter Nunnally Johnson, Selznick fired off one of his legendary four-page memos explaining — in no uncertain terms — why the short was entirely unsuitable for American exhibition. Screening it, he wrote, "*would be [a] dreadful error from the standpoint of British American relations ... All here believe the film could be more profitably run in Germany for home consumption and for building German morale.*" Bernstein took Selznick's words to heart and decided to recruit a filmmaker whose work *could* "command equal attention with the best American films."

It had been known for some time that Alfred Hitchcock was willing to make a propaganda film for Great Britain. In August of 1940, Michael Balcon, one of Hitchcock's past producers, (THE 39 STEPS, THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH), openly criticized an unnamed "*plump young junior technician in my studios whom I promoted from department to department. Today he is one of our most famous directors and he is in Hollywood while we who are left behind short-handed are trying to harness the films to our great national effort.*" Hitchcock responded in the press, saying that "Balcon's

view is colored by his own person experiences with Hollywood He's a permanent Donald Duck ... The British government has only to call upon me for my services."

Three years later, England did. An agreement was quickly reached and at the end of 1943, the master of suspense returned to take up the national cause. Selznick, to whom Hitchcock was under contract at the time, reluctantly gave his star director temporary leave, provided that in England, Hitchcock would work on a scenario for their next collaboration, *The House of Doctor Edwardes* (later retitled SPELLBOUND).

By the time Hitchcock arrived in England, Bernstein had acquired an original story by Arthur Calder-Marshall whose anti-nazi novel *The Way to Santiago* had been the basis of an aborted film that Orson Welles had planned to make as a follow-up to CITIZEN KANE. To help adapt the short film, Bernstein hired Scottish scenarist Angus McPhail, a silent-era cohort of Hitchcock's. Somewhere along the way, the government decided that the films would be now made in French for the liberated territories and Claude Dauphin was brought in to help with the dialogue. (Dauphin later collaborated that year on another propaganda film, Jean Renoir's SALUTE TO FRANCE.)

Entitled BON VOYAGE, the film was conceived as an espionage thriller in the tradition of FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT and SABOTEUR, in which a downed RAF gunner traverses the French countryside, surrounded by Resistance fighters and treacherous double agents. Bernstein arranged that the Molière Players, a theatrical company formed in London by exiled French actors, would comprise the cast of the film, which would be shot in French. As Hitchcock told François Truffaut "*The idea was to show them in parts of France where the Germans were losing ground in order to help the French people appreciate the role of the Resistance.*" As for the Molière Players, their individual names were never credited in either BON VOYAGE or AVENTURE MALGACHE. An interview with Hitchcock shortly after the films were made explains why: "*I had to round up every available French actor in London, but there were not enough of them. Most of the players were members of the underground and fighting French who had never had any stage or screen experience. It was incredible to find myself find myself working with men who, only a day or two before, had been in Paris.*"

Hitchcock was given a token salary of £10 per week and a room at Claridge's. There, he, McPhail, screenwriter J.O.C. Orton and a group of French technical writers (including Jean Mercure and a number of military officers) hashed out a script that was dramatically and politically agreeable to all. This proved to be a much more difficult task than Hitchcock had expected, for the representatives of the French government seemed to be in constant disagreement with the filmmakers. "*We realized that the Free French were very divided against one another,*" Hitchcock remembered, "*and these conflicts became the subject of the next film, AVENTURE MALGACHE.*" Based on the experiences of one of the Molière Players, it dramatizes the political indecisiveness that plagued France during the war.

Once the two screenplays were sketched out, sound stages were dressed at the Associated British Studios at Welwyn Garden City and there Hitchcock shot the two pictures in quick succession between January 20 and February 25, 1944. BON VOYAGE received limited exhibition in France before the end of 1944, but the cynical undertones of AVENTURE MALGACHE caused it to be withheld from distribution by the British government. Ironically, the two films, which had been conceived as breakthrough propaganda for American audiences, were never shown in the United States.

In 1989, the British Film Institute, at the instigation of Milestone Film & Video and copyright expert David Pierce, started the campaign to have these two films released from their "restricted"

status. In 1993, with the help of the Piper-Heidsieck Champagne Classic Film Collection, this was achieved. With the further assistance of the National Film and Television Archive (U.K.), new prints and subtitles were commissioned.

GÜNTHER KRAMPF

Austrian by birth, Günther Krampf was a well-established cinematographer in Germany with the famed UFA studios. Some of his major work included Robert Wiene's *THE HANDS OF ORLAC* (1924), Henrik Galeen's *THE STUDENT OF PRAGUE* (1926), and G.W. Pabst's *PANDORA'S BOX* (1928). In 1931 he joined many of his associates (including Otto Kanturek, Alfred Junge and Ernö Metzner) in fleeing Nazi Germany to work in England. His first film for Michael Balcon (known for hiring many of the German émigrés) was Walter Forde's *ROME EXPRESS* (1932) starring Conrad Veidt, Esther Ralston and Cedric Hardwicke with an early script credit for Sidney Gilliat. Other films Krampf shot in the 1930s include Balcon's productions of *THE GHOUL* (1933) with Boris Karloff and Cedric Hardwicke; Anthony Asquith's *THE LUCKY NUMBER* (1933); Berthold Viertel's *LITTLE FRIEND* (1934); and *HIS LORDSHIP* (1936) with George Arlis. After *BON VOYAGE* and *AVENTURE MALGACHE*, Krampf went on to film *LATIN QUARTER* (1945), John and Roy Boulting's *FAME IS THE SPUR* (1946), and *THE FRANCHISE AFFAIR* (1951). A distinguished and creative cameraman, Krampf has been compared to Edward Tisse and Gregg Toland.

JOHN BLYTHE

John Blythe, a character actor in English cinema appeared in such notable films as David Lean's *THIS HAPPY BREED* (1944), Sydney and Muriel Box's *HOLIDAY CAMP* (1947), *LILLI MARLENE* (1950) and Richard Lester's *THE BED SITTING ROOM* (1969)

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(The following is a transcription of a Director's Guild of America publicity questionnaire that Alfred Hitchcock filled out in 1954. Courtesy of David Shepard and Film Preservation Associates.)

Your name: Alfred Joseph Hitchcock
Address: 10957 Bellagio Road, Bel Air, LA2
Telephone: Brighton 04818

APPRENTICESHIP

1. *What was your first job?*
Estimating clerk in an Electrical Engineering Corp.
2. *Will you summarize the jobs you have held that prepared you to become a Director?*
Technical Clerk (Electrical Engineering)
Advertising Layout man
Art Title writer and designer
Script Writer
Art Director
Cutter
3. *What job, or professional experience has proved most helpful to you as a Director? Why?*
Engineering Training
Art School
Experience in many studio departments (Script — Art — Cutting, etc)

4) *What person or persons influenced you most professionally during the years which you were learning your craft? Has this influence continued in your mature work?*

Various English Thriller novelists
Buchan — Belloc Lowndes, etc.

5) *What was your first job as a director, and how did you get it?*

Directing the “Pleasure Garden” in Munich as a co-operative Anglo-German production — starring Virginia Valli, 1925. Promoted from Writer & Art-Director by Michael Balcon.

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

1. *How many years have you been active as a director?*

29 years.

2. *Please list the productions that you feel represent your work best. Will you list them chronologically together with the dates of each production, and the medium (stage, screen, radio, TV)*

1926 The Lodger — Marie Belloc Lowndes
1927 The Ring (Boxing Film with Carl Brisson)
1929 Blackmail (First British Sound Film)
1929 Juno & the Paycock (1st film with Abbey Theatre Players)
The Man who Knew too much
39 Steps
Lady Vanishes
Rebecca
Foreign Correspondent
Suspicion
Shadow of a Doubt
Lifeboat
Spellbound
Notorious
Rope
Stranger [sic] on a Train
Rear Window.

3. *How many media have you worked in? Name a production in each.*

Motion Pictures (See above)

4. *Have you received any awards or honors for directing? Please list them, together with the dates you received them.*

always a bridesmaid and never the bride.

OPINION

1. *What basic principle, if any, do you observe in your work as a Director?*

Maintain a standard

2. *What qualities do you think make a great director?*

No idea

3. *What was the most memorable experience in your professional career?*

Still working for it

4. *What was the most amusing experience?*

5. *What was the most difficult production you ever directed, and why?*

Lifeboat — self explanatory

6. *What is your favorite production and why?*

Shadow of a Doubt

7. *Have you developed, or helped to develop, any famous motion picture personalities? In what pictures?*
Don't know.
8. *Who, in your opinion, is the greatest director of all time?*
so many good ones.
9. *Who do you think is the finest screen actor of all time?*
ditto
10. *What, in your opinion, were the 5 greatest pictures of all time?*
too many in the world
11. *How important do you think 3D is? Cinemascope? Cinerama? Will you give your ideas about its future, and how you think it may affect your style?*
Too embryonic to say.
12. *What do you feel a film director can contribute to direction in television?*
Nothing, because television is only an instrument and nothing to do with pure motion pictures.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. *In what national or community projects have you taken a particular interest? In what capacity have you participated in them? (Community Chest, Red Cross, etc.)*
Yes
2. *Have you received any honorary degrees?*
no
3. *Would you be willing to speak before public, professional, and college groups on phases of the director's role in films?*
no
4. *What phase of directing do you feel especially qualified to discuss?*
none
5. *Have you a hobby or avocation? What is it?*
none
6. *Do you speak any language other than English? Write?*
German. no.
7. *Will you be kind enough to attach a recent photograph of yourself to this file?*

The Ettinger Company, together with your Public Relations Committee, has worked out an overall program of public relations and publicity to further the interest of your profession and the Guild. any suggestions you may have for furthering this activity will be given the closest study.

Members of the Public Relations Committee of the Screen Directors' Guild are: Rouben Mamoulian, Chairman, Willis Goldbeck, Fred Zinnemann, King Vidor, Mervyn LeRoy, George Stevens.

Editor's Footnote: Mr. Hitchcock went on to further his career, perhaps due to the valiant efforts of the Public Relations Committee. On the subject of television, Mr. Hitchcock seems to have changed his mind by the following year.

MILESTONE FILM & VIDEO

Milestone enters its seventeenth year of operation with a reputation for releasing classic cinema masterpieces, new foreign films, groundbreaking documentaries and American independent features. Thanks to the company's rediscovery, restoration and distribution of such important films as Charles Burnett's *Killer of Sheep*, Mikhail Kalatozov's *I am Cuba*, Marcel Ophuls' *The Sorrow and the Pity*, and Alfred Hitchcock's *Bon Voyage* and *Aventure Malgache*, the company has long occupied a position as one of the most influential independent distributors in the industry. In 1995 Milestone received a Special Archival Award from the National Society of Film Critics for its restoration and release of *I am Cuba*. *L.A. Weekly* chose Milestone as the 1999 "Indie Distributor of the Year." On January 2, 2004, the National Society of Film Critics awarded Milestone Film & Video their prestigious Film Heritage award. In December 2004, the International Film Seminars awarded Milestone its prestigious Leo Award, named for indie distribution pioneer Leo Dratfield and the New York Film Critics Circle voted a Special Award "in honor of 15 years of restoring classic films. In 2006, Milestone/Milliarium won for Best Rediscovery in the Il Cinema Ritrovato DVD Awards for its release of *Winter Soldier*. In November of 2007, Milestone will be awarded by the Fort Lee Film Commission the first Lewis Selznick Award for contributions to film history.

Such stellar contemporary filmmakers as Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola, Woody Allen, Steven Soderbergh, Thelma Schoonmaker, Jonathan Demme and Dustin Hoffman have co-presented important Milestone restorations.

In 2003, Nadja Tennstedt joined the company as director of acquisitions and international sales.

"Since its birth the Milestone Film & Video Co. has steadily become the industry's foremost boutique distributor of classic and art films — and probably the only distributor in America whose name is actually a guarantee of some quality."
— William Arnold, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

"Milestone Film & Video is an art-film distributor that has released some of the most distinguished new movies (along with seldom-seen vintage movie classics) of the past decade"
— Stephen Holden, *New York Times*

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