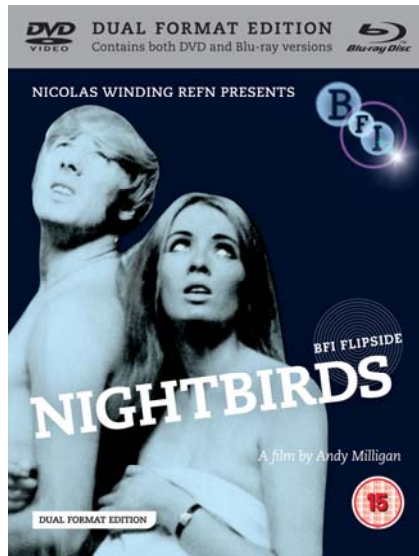


## DVD & Blu-ray press release



### Nicolas Winding Refn & BFI Flipside present **Nightbirds** A film by Andy Milligan

The BFI and Nicolas Winding Refn (celebrated director of *Drive*) have joined forces to bring *Nightbirds* – the ‘lost’ film by New York underground filmmaker Andy Milligan (1929-1991) – to DVD and Blu-ray. Previously seen by no more than a handful of people in a print shorn of five minutes’ worth of footage, the film was shot on location in Spitalfields, East London in 1968 and never given a significant release anywhere in the world. Newly mastered from the original 16mm camera element under Nicolas Winding Refn’s supervision, *Nightbirds* is finally being released on 28 May in a Dual Format Edition on the BFI’s acclaimed Flipside label.

**This much anticipated release also contains Milligan’s British-shot horror feature *The Body Beneath* (1970), original trailers, an audio commentary and an extensive booklet.**

While living rough on the streets of London’s East End, a young man, Dink (Milligan regular **Berwick Kaler** – *Coronation Street*, *Red Riding*), encounters the beautiful and mysterious Dee (**Julie Shaw** – *The Big Switch*). Concerned for Dink’s welfare, she invites him to stay with her. The two soon develop a curious relationship which oscillates, often without warning, between sexual intimacy and raging jealousy. As tenderness gives way to cruelty, they become consumed by darkness and their relationship spirals out of control.

Milligan aficionados have long considered *Nightbirds* to be a lost film, and the preparation involved in this release has been subject to a number of problems and adventures involving tracking down rare and unique film materials. Fascinated by Milligan’s work since he was young, Nicolas Winding Refn has spent years buying up any Milligan-related items on eBay. When he found that Milligan biographer Jimmy McDonough was selling his collection of the director’s own film prints he bought the lot and, as a long-time fan of BFI Flipside titles, approached the BFI to suggest that *Nightbirds* and *The Body Beneath* be included on the label. With Milligan’s own print materials missing some scenes, the BFI has been on a journey much like an archaeological dig to find other elements from which to assemble the most complete and authentic presentations possible.

Nicolas Winding Refn comments: “...when you watch an Andy Milligan movie you’re in no doubt whose film you’re watching. It’s a special quality to have a unique personal style. He was sort of a Douglas Sirk figure: there’s so much subtext in his movies, what you’re seeing is not all that’s going on. First time perception is one thing, but when you get into them, and read more, you begin to realise that these films were made by someone who was very tormented, and also very intelligent, a sensitive man who used film as an art form to express his views on life.”

Newcastle-born Berwick Kaler who plays Dink is nowadays best known for writing, directing and starring as the Dame in one of Britain’s most admired traditional annual pantomimes, at the York Theatre Royal.

#### Special features

- All content presented in both High Definition and Standard Definition
- Newly mastered from original 16mm camera elements and surviving 35mm prints, under the supervision of celebrated filmmaker, and Andy Milligan fan, Nicolas Winding Refn

Cont...

- *Audio commentary with Berwick Kaler (2011)*: The stalwart of British stage and screen looks back at *Nightbirds*, and his other four Andy Milligan roles, with film expert Stephen Thrower
- *The Body Beneath* (Andy Milligan, 1970, colour, 82 mins): Milligan's second British-shot feature is a ghoulish horror in which a young woman comes to visit her distant relative, the Reverend Algernon Ford, only to discover that she is descended from a long line of vampires
- Optional dialogue-only soundtrack presentations for both *Nightbirds* and *The Body Beneath*
- Original *Nightbirds* trailer
- Original *The Body Beneath* trailer
- Extensive illustrated booklet with newly-commissioned essays by filmmaker **Nicolas Winding Refn**, Milligan biographer **Jimmy McDonough** and film experts **Stephen Thrower** and **Tim Lucas**

#### **Product details**

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIB1133 / BFI Flipside no. 023 / Cert 15  
UK / 1970 / black and white / 77 mins + 82 mins / original aspect ratio 1.33:1  
Disc 1: BD50 / 1080p / 24fps / PCM mono audio (48k/16-bit)  
Disc 2: DVD-9 / PAL / Dolby Digital mono audio (320 kbps)

#### **For further information and review copies please contact:**

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Images are available at [www.image.net](http://www.image.net) under BFI DVD 2012

[www.bfi.org.uk/theflipside](http://www.bfi.org.uk/theflipside)

[www.facebook.com/discovertheflipside](https://www.facebook.com/discovertheflipside)

Available from all DVD retailers & BFI Filmstore Tel: 020 7815 1350 or

[www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore)

#### **About BFI Flipside**

Developed from its popular monthly screening slot at BFI Southbank, the BFI's Flipside series is designed to revisit and reappraise British films that have slipped through the cracks of cinema history – films that were overlooked, marginalised, or undervalued at the original time of release, or which sit outside the established canon of recognised classics.

BFI Flipside titles are all newly mastered to High Definition from original film elements, and are presented with rare and fascinating special features, including previously unavailable short films, documentaries and archival interviews, many of which are preserved in the BFI National Archive. Each title comes in collectable numbered packaging and is accompanied by an extensive illustrated booklet with insightful contributions from special guest writers, often including the filmmakers themselves.

#### **About the BFI**

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

April 2012