

CRY OF THE CITY
Directed by Robert Siodmak
USA, 1948, 96 mins, Cert 12A
A BFI release

Richard Conte, Victor Mature, Shelley Winters



Opening on 17 April 2015 at BFI Southbank and selected cinemas UK-wide

Robert Siodmak's fast-paced crime thriller, a tale of law and disorder shot mainly on location, is a great *noir* classic awaiting rediscovery. Anticipating the films of Martin Scorsese, it offers a vivid depiction of life in New York City's Little Italy. ***Cry of the City*** will be re-released in cinemas UK-wide on 17 April. It will also be the centrepiece of a major retrospective of the director's work – **Robert Siodmak: Prince of Shadows** – taking place at BFI Southbank in April and May.

Adapted from the novel *The Chair for Martin Rome* by Henry Edward Helseth, the film tells the story of a charismatic criminal (Richard Conte) and his nemesis, Lieutenant Candella (Victor Mature), a one-time friend from the same immigrant Italian community – who is chasing him down with obsessive determination.

Cry of the City opens with Rome, petty thief and cop killer, lying badly wounded in a prison hospital with the police watching over him. Soon, however, he is desperate to escape in order to clear the name of his fiancée, implicated in a jewel robbery.

Richard Conte's dazzling performance as Rome conveys a seductive ruthlessness that contrasts with the stolid decency of Victor Mature as Lieutenant Candella, the 'good guy' in the film's running battle between darkness and light. They are supported by a brilliant cast including Debra Paget (as Rome's girlfriend Teena

Riconti), Shelley Winters, and the mesmerising, scene-stealing Hope Emerson in her most remarkable incarnation as Rose Given, a monstrous masseuse with a killer touch.

Having fled Nazism, the German director Robert Siodmak (1900–1973) worked first in France, then in Hollywood, establishing himself, alongside his compatriot Fritz Lang, as a major exponent of *film noir*.

Although less well known than *Phantom Lady* (1944), which saw him hailed as 'the new Hitchcock', or *The Killers* (1946), ***Cry of the City*** is wonderfully accomplished filmmaking and arguably the finest of Siodmak's American thrillers.

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Notes to editors

- *Cry of the City* is released in cinemas UK-wide on 3 April.
- The two month season, *Robert Siodmak: Prince of Shadows* runs at BFI Southbank throughout April and May.

20 February 2015