



BFI Flipside presents
Expresso Bongo

A film by Val Guest

**Starring Laurence Harvey, Sylvia Syms,
Yolande Donlan and Cliff Richard**

BFI Flipside is back! On 25 April 2016 Val Guest's 1959 musical film, *Expresso Bongo* will become the 31st release on the BFI's collectable Flipside label. Newly remastered, the film is presented in both High Definition and Standard Definition in a Dual Format Edition (DVD and Blu-ray discs). The original full length theatrical version is presented on home video for the first time, accompanied by the shorter 1962 re-issue version, which has an audio commentary, plus there are alternative sequences, Michael Winner's debut film, *The Square* (1957) and lots more.

When Soho hustler Johnny Jackson (Laurence Harvey), a drummer-turned-music agent, discovers teen bongo player Bert Rudge (Cliff Richard), in an espresso bar, he renames him Bongo Herbert, and secures him a record deal and a TV appearance. Soon, Jonny is riding the coat-tails of Bert's stardom. Val Guest's sharp, witty satire of the music industry (which beautifully captures the pre-sanitised world of Soho's delis, coffee bars and strip clubs) was adapted from the successful 1958 West End musical by Wolf Mankowitz.

Designed as a star vehicle for the young Cliff Richard and The Shadows, *Expresso Bongo* also features a revelatory turn by Sylvia Syms as Johnny's stripper girlfriend.

Expresso Bongo is released alongside two more new Flipside titles – *Beat Girl* (Edmond T Gréville, 1959) and *Symptoms* (José Ramón Larraz, 1974).

Special features

- Newly remastered in 2K and presented in both High Definition and Standard Definition
- Full-length theatrical version (111 mins): DVD and Blu-ray premiere of the original long cut from 1959
- 1962 re-issue version (106 mins – Blu-ray exclusive): shorter alternative cut which removed a number of songs
- Audio commentary for the 1962 re-issue version featuring Val Guest, Yolande Donlan and film historian Marcus Hearn (Blu-ray only)
- *Alternative sequences from the 1962 cut* (2 mins, DVD only): the scenes which were added to replace cut songs
- *Expresso Bongo Gallery*: a selection of promotional material, including stills, theatrical posters, lobby cards, and original US and UK press books
- Original theatrical trailer (3 mins)
- *Youth Club* (Norman Prouting, 1954, 17 mins): COI documentary about dealing with juvenile delinquency
- *The Square* (Michael Winner, 1957, 16 mins): Michael Winner's touching, long-thought lost short film about an elderly gent saying goodbye to his home in Kings Cross
- Original US and UK press books (downloadable PDF, DVD only)

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- Illustrated booklet with new writing by Andrew Roberts, Vic Pratt and Steve Chibnall, and full film credits

Product details

RRP: £19.99/ Cat. no. BFIB1241 / BFI Flipside No. 31 / Cert 12

UK / 1959 / black and white / 111 mins / English with optional hard-of-hearing subtitles / original aspect ratio 2.35:1 // BD50: 1080p, 24fps, PCM 2.0 stereo (48kHz/24bit) / DVD9: PAL, 25fps, Dolby Digital 2.0 stereo (192kbps)

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Images are available to download at www.image.net under BFI DVD & Blu-ray

BFI releases are available from all good home entertainment retailers or by mail order from the BFI Shop Tel: 020 7815 1350 or online at www.bfi.org.uk/shop

About BFI Flipside

Developed from a 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.

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