

Great Directors: Kubrick

Paths of Glory 1957

Friday, November 21 - Thursday, November 27, 2008



Film Information

Directed by

Stanley Kubrick

Language

English

Running Time

87 minutes

Film Notes

The enduring impression of Stanley Kubrick the person is that of a reclusive genius self-exiled from the clutches of Hollywood, an outsider living and working from the literal and figurative distance of his manor in the English countryside. But around 1957, Kubrick, then in his late twenties, became a hot name in Hollywood, commanding the attention of critics, audiences, and studios alike. The shine would quickly dull, though, with Kubrick retreating from the star-centric, box-office-obsessed environment of Hollywood following the production debacle of SPARTACUS in 1960.

Within that brief period of time came PATHS OF GLORY, at once considered Kubrick's "breakthrough" moment and yet perhaps one of his most overlooked works. Adapted from the book by Humphrey Cobb, the film brought immediate acclaim (much of it for Kirk Douglas' performance, thought to be one of his finest) as well as infamy. PATHS OF GLORY was effectively

banned in France and drew criticism elsewhere in Europe for its portrayal of the French military, though it was also praised for its realist portrayal of war.

One final piece of trivia: There's an emotional moment near the end of PATHS OF GLORY featuring a woman singing a German folk song. The artist playing the role—the only female role in the film—is credited as Susanne Christian. The year after the film's release, she and Kubrick married and were together until the director's death 41 years later.

—Casey



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“There are times that I’m ashamed to be a member of the human race and this is one such occasion.”

More Information

Screenplay by

Stanley Kubrick
Calder Willingham

Based on the novel by

Humphrey Cobb

Featuring

Kirk Douglas
Ralph Meeker
Adolphe Menjou
George Macready
Wayne Morris
Richard Anderson
Joe Turkel
Christiane Kubrick

Cinematography by

Georg Krause

Original Music by

Gerald Fried

Film Editing by

Eva Kroll

Country of Origin

USA

“I think that for a movie or a play to say anything really truthful about life, it has to do so very obliquely, so as to avoid all pat conclusions and neatly tied-up ideas. The point of view it is conveying has to be completely entwined with a sense of life as it is, and has to be got across through a subtle injection into the audience’s consciousness. Ideas which are valid and truthful are so multi-faceted that they don’t yield themselves to frontal assault. The ideas have to be discovered by the audience, and their thrill in making the discovery makes those ideas all the more powerful. You use the audience’s thrill of surprise and discovery to reinforce your ideas, rather than reinforce them artificially through plot points or phoney drama or phoney stage dynamics put in to power them across.”

—Stanley Kubrick, 1960

Also Recommended, by Kubrick

Spartacus 1960
Dr. Strangelove 1964
Full Metal Jacket 1987