

**STANLEY KUBRICK'S**

# **BARRY LYNDON**

**40th  
ANNIVERSARY  
SCREENING**

**ICA LONDON, 19th DECEMBER 2015**

**THE BADLANDS COLLECTIVE presents**  
**STANLEY KUBRICK'S**



3pm DOORS OPEN 3.10 INTRO 3.15 PART 1 5.00 INTERMISSION 5.15 PART 2  
6.40 PANEL DISCUSSION WITH JAN HARLAN, RICHARD AYOADE, MARIA PRAMAGGIORE  
7.15 FINISH



We are celebrating the 40th anniversary of a film that has always felt like it exists outside of our time. Static, deliberate, using cutting-edge technology to transportively capture 18th Century Ireland and its candle-lit interiors on film, *Barry Lyndon* was certainly an anomaly in 1975, a year defined by thrilling and iconic contemporary American pictures like *Nashville*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Jaws*. Many critics then didn't know what to do with Kubrick's film. Stanley Kauffmann's review in *The New Republic* famously derided it as "three hours and four minutes of pictures," while *Mad Magazine* dubbed it 'Borey Lyndon.'

While *Barry Lyndon* did moderate box office and was nominated for Oscars including Best Picture, many people viewed it as an odd misfire and a backwards step for its director. Failing to land the iconic popular recognition of Kubrick's immediately previous *Dr. Strangelove*, *2001* and *A Clockwork Orange*, it has subsequently felt like *Barry Lyndon* has always been playing catch-up in the context of Kubrick's work. Despite reevaluation that sees the film now routinely place high on best-of lists such as that of *Sight & Sound*, it's still under-seen by viewers fearing a mere 'costume drama.' Chronologically sandwiched between *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) and *The Shining* (1980), we believe *Barry Lyndon* is greater as both an aesthetic exercise and as a piece of storytelling, while sharing those films' concern with dark wit, lurking savagery, mechanical dissection of human nature and families at the mercy of anti-heroes.

One aspect of the film that nobody ever found fault with was its technical quality, which earned it four Oscar wins. Kubrick set himself the challenge of making a film not just about the 18th century, but of the 18th century, utilising the artforms of the era to bring this milieu to life onscreen. The music is drawn from the work of Handel, Mozart, Vivaldi and Bach, while the film's visual scheme is indebted to painters such as Thomas Gainsborough, William Hogarth, Jean-Antoine Watteau and John Constable. Kubrick and cinematographer John Alcott flatten the image to heighten the sensation of their frames being living paintings, while the film's steady momentum allows us the time to drink in the details of each tableau as well as forcing us to readjust our own rhythms as viewers to the pace of life as it was once lived.

What people sometimes fail to recognise in *Barry Lyndon* is how much emotion Kubrick brings to these images. Andrew Sarris observed that “every frame is a fresco of sadness,” and *Barry Lyndon* is one of the films that complicates Kubrick’s reputation as a ‘cold’ filmmaker. On one level, it’s a sardonic take on a classic hero narrative, and we might feel a gratifying sense of schadenfreude as we watch an opportunistic lead character get his comeuppance, a sense accentuated by the ironic tones of the narrator. It is also an achingly moving study of a deeply flawed man, with Kubrick using the film’s point of intermission to neatly divide his adaption of Thackeray’s novel into a story of rise and fall. The first half tracks Redmond Barry’s propitious climb from common Irish rogue and soldier into the noble Lyndon estate, with the character adopting various guises along the way to inveigle himself into these elevated social strata. The second half details his ignominious fall from grace, with Kubrick coolly stripping away the layers of accumulated wealth and influence to put him right back from whence he came.

Barry is a difficult character to like – he’s cocksure, selfish and myopic – but late in the film Kubrick succeeds in making us empathise with him. Having spent much of his journey coming under the protection of a series of father figures (his own father having been despatched in the film’s opening scene), Barry eventually finds solace in the relationship with his own son. His devotion to the boy is absolute, but his happiness is doomed by his failure to build bridges with his resentful stepson Lord Bullingdon, whose impetuous and rebellious nature mirrors that of the younger Barry himself.

So *Barry Lyndon* stands as a powerful examination of human frailty and folly, of fortuitous and ironic twists of fortune, of karmic retribution and of the inevitable fate that awaits us all. While it may appear distant and cold to the touch at first glance, it is arguably Kubrick’s most emotionally rich and wittily conceived picture, as well as being one of the most visually astonishing films ever made. We’re delighted to be screening this painterly vision from a rarely screened 35mm archive print and examining the scale of its achievement and its legacy in our panel discussion, securing the film’s rightful place in the pantheon of this great director’s masterpieces. *Barry Lyndon* may be an object out of time, but in terms of being recognised for its profound achievement, its time has finally come.

#### CAST



RYAN  
O’NEAL  
(Barry)

MARISA  
BERENSON  
(Lady Honoria  
Lyndon)

LEON  
VITALI  
(Lord  
Bullingdon)

DOMINIC  
SAVAGE  
(Young  
Bullingdon)

MURRAY  
MELVIN  
(Reverend  
Samuel Runt)

PATRICK  
MAGEE  
(The Chevalier du  
Balibari)

LEONARD  
ROSSITER  
(Capt. John Quin)

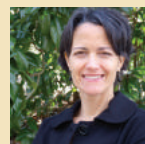
#### PANEL



**JAN HARLAN** is Stanley Kubrick’s brother-in-law and one of Kubrick’s closest collaborators. He was executive producer of *Barry Lyndon*, *The Shining*, *Full Metal Jacket* and *Eyes Wide Shut*.



**RICHARD AYOADE** is a comedian, actor and film director whose work includes *Submarine* and *The Double*. He is a vocal cinephile and ranks *Barry Lyndon* as one of the ten greatest films ever made.



**MARIA PRAMAGGIORE** is Head of Media Studies at National University of Ireland at Maynooth. She is the author of the book *Making Time in Stanley Kubrick’s Barry Lyndon: Art, History and Empire*.



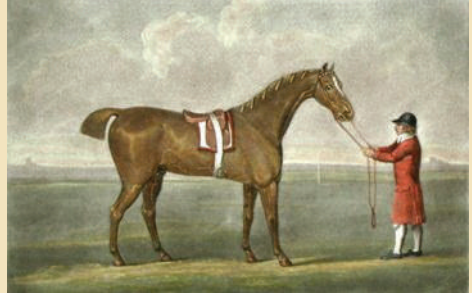
# BARRY LYNDON

## AND 18th CENTURY PAINTING

Kubrick and his team, including director of photography John Alcott, production designer Ken Adam and costume designer Milena Canonero, studied many books of 18th and early 19th Century period painting in order to create the look of *Barry Lyndon*. Here are some examples of their direct reference points.



*Barry Lyndon*



George Stubbs - *Eclipse* (1769)



*Barry Lyndon*



William Hogarth -  
*Marriage A-la-Mode: 2, The Tête à Tête* (1743-44)



*Barry Lyndon*



Johann H. Fussli, *The Nightmare* (1781)



*Barry Lyndon*



John Constable - *Mabvern Hall* (1809)



*Barry Lyndon*



Johann Joseph Zoffany -  
*Morse's Gallery of the Louvre* (1831-33)



*Barry Lyndon*



Joshua Reynolds - *Lady Skipwith* (1787)

# BARRY LYNDON

## A WORK OF PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURISM



One of the incredibly poignant things about *Barry Lyndon* - which adds to its sense of existential reverberation out of the past and into the infinite - is that it's a 20th Century film, framed through the voice of a 19th Century Thackerian narrator, about events from the 18th Century. Not only a 20th Century film, but one that had to use the latest technology to achieve its journey into the past.

Kubrick and Alcott were determined to avoid fill lights and indeed use as little electric light as possible to create the pre-technological age of *Barry Lyndon*, including using some interiors only lit by candles. To achieve this, a number of special lenses were sourced, designed and adapted for the film, including a Zeiss lens originally commissioned by NASA to photograph the Apollo moon landings, with an incredibly wide aperture of  $f/0.7$  and astonishing sensitivity to light. Together with Ed DiGiulio of Cinema Products Corporation, Kubrick's Mitchell BNC camera was reconfigured with microscopic engineering precision so the bespoke lenses would fit and have the proper distance from the film plane in order to capture successfully.

Because this lens had such an incredibly shallow depth of field, actors had to be mostly still to avoid going out of focus, and Kubrick and Alcott flattened their compositions - adding to the sense of *Barry Lyndon* as a living painting, as well as a photographic work that faithfully captured the lighting patterns of a bygone era.





# KUBRICK'S LETTER TO PROJECTIONISTS



December 8th, 1975

Dear Projectionist:

An infinite amount of care was given to the look of "Barry Lyndon"; the photography, the sets, the costumes; and in the careful color grading and overall lab quality of the prints, and the soundtrack - all of this work is now in your hands, and your attention to sharp focus, good sound, and the careful handling of the film will make this effort worthwhile.

Please also note the following:

1. REEL 3B - CHANGEOVER DOTS ERROR:
  - a) The first changeover dots at the end of Reel 3B are correct.
  - b) The last changeover dots at the end of Reel 3B are not correct. They are 1 ft. 9 frames early.
  - c) We have scribed an "X" on to the print on the correct frames for the last changeover dots.
  - d) Please use the "X" as your last changeover cue, instead of the dots.
2. "Barry Lyndon" was photographed in 1-1:66 aspect ratio. Please be sure you project it at this ratio, and in no event at less than 1-1:75.
3. There should be no less than 15 foot lamberts of light on the screen, and no more than 18.
4. "Barry Lyndon" runs for three hours and four minutes (184 minutes).
5. The first half of the film runs for one hour and forty-two minutes (102 minutes).
6. There is an intermission 6 minutes into Reel Six.
7. After the intermission card, there are fourteen feet of black frame, followed by an academy leader to enable you to line up Part Two.
8. Part Two starts in Reel 6, with music, over a black screen, and after nine feet, the Part Two title fades in.
9. Part Two runs for one hour and twenty-two minutes (82 minutes).
10. Hopefully, you have been supplied with an LP record or a tape of the film score.
  - a) Please use Side 1 for the pre-film music.
  - b) During the intermission, play Side 2, starting with Band 2. You can play this for as long as you want, to the end of the record.
  - c) If you play music after the film, repeat what you did on the intermission.

Yours sincerely,

Stanley Kubrick

On with the show...

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THE BADLANDS COLLECTIVE

IS

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THANKS

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RICHARD AYOADE

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