

# The Main Feature



## Season 34 - Issue 16 (screening 8.5.14)

UK  
Cert 12A

released 17 July 2012  
99 minutes

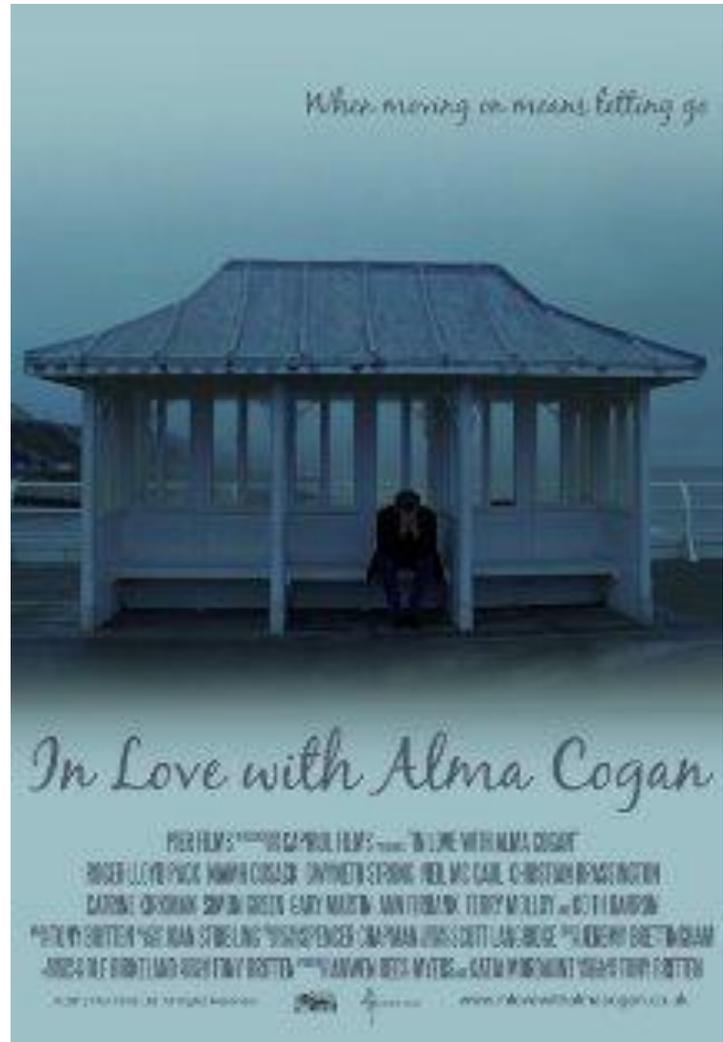
Written and Directed by Tony Britten  
Produced by Anwen Rees-Myers and Katja Mordaunt  
Director of Photography Ole Birkeland  
Edited by Jeremy Brettingham  
Costume Designer Scott Langridge  
Music by Tony Britten

### Starring

Roger Lloyd Pack	Norman
Niamh Cusack	Sandra
Gwyneth Strong	Laura
Neil McCaul	Eddie
Christian Brassington	George
Simon Green	Julian
Keith Barron	Cedric
Gary Martin	Larry
Ann Firbank	Mrs Craske
Terry Molloy	Barry Bates
Catrine Kirkman	Alma

Earlier this year I contacted the film company responsible for tonight's film, and received a very pleasant response which included the following note from the director, Tony Britten:

*"The original idea for the film came out of conversation with my Los Angeles based younger son, as we sat eating fish and chips on Cromer Pier, one freezing November day some years ago. As a serious cinephile, Oliver could instantly sense the very English attraction of the pier and its theatre - unique qualities which would lend themselves so well to the film medium."*



*The title, 'In Love with Alma Cogan' literally came to me in the bath, as I prepared to go and see a poetry recital by Roger Lloyd Pack – the star of the film and a neighbour of mine in North Norfolk.*

*The inspiration is altogether more difficult to define; certainly my distant memories of Alma Cogan gave the script its hook, but this film is not a biopic and the character of Alma, whilst three dimensional, exists primarily as a plot device. My dislike of bureaucracy, my concerns about ageism and my love of music are, I hope quite obvious*

*throughout. But what probably really defines what I'm trying to achieve is my affection for Cromer and North Norfolk in general; places that without being fossilised seem to embody an ageless charm which I hope is reflected in a film which doesn't seek to confront, but rather to reflect.*

*Anyway, If you enjoy getting to know our slightly eccentric characters – brought to real life by a uniformly excellent cast, if you admire the beautiful images created by our brilliant cinematographer, Ole (pronounced Ula) Birkeland., above all if you leave the cinema with a smile on your face, I will consider my part in the proceedings as a job well done.”*



The company's website for the film provides further background information:

“It's five years since I wrote the first draft of "In Love with Alma Cogan", in response to a suggestion from our local film agency, Screen East. It had been hinted that if I were to write a romantic comedy with lots of music and set it in what was then an Objective 2 area for EC regeneration (I kid you not), they would look favourably at investing. Needless to say, they eventually passed on it and not long after passed themselves into history. Twelve drafts of the script later and, faced with the imminent threat of major repairs to the central location, Cromer

Pier, we raised some money from some very supportive private investors and we now have a film that we are all very pleased with.

If it was cold on the pier as I ate fish and chips with my son, it was as nothing to the brutality of filming there during the coldest November in living memory. The details will have to wait for the 'making of' DVD extra; but one of our leading, indefatigable actors spoke for all of us one day as she was propelled through the door of Tides Cafe by a sub-zero force nine easterly gale: What the f..k am I doing here, she demanded - and she had a point. Luckily, neither she nor anyone else in the cast and crew dwelled on that question - they all stuck it out through ice, snow and golf ball sized hail - which only goes to show that the Dunkirk spirit is alive and well in the British film industry. “

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**The death from pancreatic cancer of Roger Lloyd-Pack (born February 8 1944, died January 15 2014) naturally adds a poignant aspect to tonight's screening.**

A keen cyclist, recycler, and campaigner for Left-wing causes, he revealed he would like to be buried in “a cardboard coffin”. As for his obituaries: “I don't really care what [they] say, so long as they are fair. I know I will be best remembered for Trigger in Only Fools and Horses, but I hope all my other work will be acknowledged, too.”

His television credits included Spyder's Web; Moving; The Bill; The Old Guys; and The Vicar of Dibley. Film credits included The Naked Civil Servant; 1984; Wilt; Interview with the Vampire; Vanity Fair; Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire; and Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy.

Lloyd Pack described Trigger as both a blessing and a curse, as it made him susceptible to cheerily sarcastic greeting on the streets. This was not false modesty. The actor lived a full life in his local communities in north London and Fakenham, Norfolk, and was highly visible in all sorts of political and charitable activities, where his good nature and deep feeling about issues such as schools, the ambulance service and integrated traffic policies engaged him fully.

Iain McGlashan

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### Alma Cogan (19 May 1932 – 26 October 1966)

Nicknamed 'the girl with the giggle in her voice', her bright and breezy image seemed to fit perfectly with the decade. She continued to record in the 1960s, but despite some quality releases, she became better known as party host to the stars.

She was born Alma Cohen on 19 May 1932, in Golders Green, north London. She was pushed into a showbiz career by a star-struck mother and, aged 16, she became resident singer at the Cumberland Hotel. Whilst performing there, she was spotted by A&R man Wally Ridley, who ran EMI's HMV label.

Alma's initial releases were mainly forgettable ballads, but slowly, her bright personality began to shine through on record, and in July 1953, her trademark was established. Whilst recording 'If I Had a Golden Umbrella', she broke out into a giggle, and it was decided to keep this on the recording.

During the 1950s Alma Cogan appeared frequently on the BBC Light Programme after passing an audition which reported 'a Judy Garland type voice with very good diction'. She was a cast member of the comedy series *Gently Bentley* and *Take It From Here* and of the variety programme *The Forces Show*. Her television début came in 1954 in garrison theatre, where she sang her first hit song, 'Bell Bottom Blues', which sold more than 100,000 copies. Alma became the resident singer on the Morecambe and Wise television series *Running Wild*. She was adept at using the new medium, and by the 1960s she had her own BBC series.

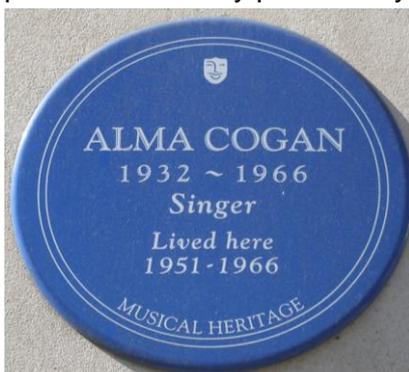
In 1955 she appeared at the royal variety performance and had a number one hit with 'Dreamboat'. She had more hits than any other female singer of the era; her other successes included 'Twenty Tiny Fingers', 'Sugartime', and 'Cowboy Jimmy Joe'. She also appeared in summer season in Blackpool and in the pantomime *Aladdin* at the Chiswick Empire, London. She was renowned for her extravagant stage costumes. A dress created for an appearance at the London Palladium contained over 12,000 rhinestones and diamond beads and 250 yards of nylon tulle.

She was the most successful British female singer on the hit parade during the 1950s, enjoying 18 hits.

In 1965 Cogan was admitted to hospital with appendicitis but doctors discovered she had cancer. An operation caused a remission, allowing her to make a final tour of Sweden. She returned to hospital early in October 1966, and died three weeks later, on 25 October, at the Middlesex Hospital, Marylebone, London. A posthumously released album included her recording of Lennon and McCartney's 'Yesterday'.

A blue plaque commemorating Cogan was installed by the entrance of her longtime residence, 44 Stafford Court, on 4 November 2001. Here Cogan lived with her widowed mother and sister, and the lavishly decorated ground-floor flat, which became a legendary party-venue. Regular visitors included Princess Margaret, Noël Coward, Cary Grant, Audrey Hepburn, Michael Caine, Frankie Vaughan, Bruce Forsyth, Roger Moore and a host of other celebrities, including Lionel Bart, the actor Stanley Baker, and members of the Beatles, with whom she had struck up a friendship. She was known to John Lennon as 'Sara Sequin', and Paul McCartney wrote the melody of 'Yesterday' at the Cogan apartment.

The following photos were kindly provided by club member Phil Boylett



## Reactions on 8.5.14 to: **Not One Less**

**Score**    **0**    **1**    **2**    **3**    **4**    **5**    **6**    **7**    **8**    **9**    **10**  
               ~    ~    ~    ~    1    4    9    15    3    1    ~

Total received – 33

Average Score – 6.55

### Your Comments

Simple, pleasant, amateur production.

Very good ending.

Delightful story, unfortunately too slow.

Wonderful

A surprising, moving, well acted and interesting film.

Children were delightful

A really enjoyable film, so beautifully done.

The children were fantastic!

Unusual and charming film, beautifully filmed. Sobering too.

Interesting to see something of rural life in China.

No different from our usual programme but well worth seeing.

Big cultural differences evident in this film – East/West

The sort of real life that reminds us what a huge world we live in and so many different levels of existence.

Position	Film	Average Score
1 <sup>st</sup>	West Side Story	8.78
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Intouchable	8.29
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Argo	8.07
4 <sup>th</sup>	All About Eve	7.79
5 <sup>th</sup>	Even the Rain	7.38
6 <sup>th</sup>	The Hunt	7.13
7 <sup>th</sup>	Delicacy	6.83
8 <sup>th</sup>	Not One Less	6.55
9 <sup>th</sup>	Never Let Me Go	6.53
10 <sup>th</sup>	Amour	6.46
11 <sup>th</sup>	No	6.44
12 <sup>th</sup>	Le gamin au vélo (The Kid with a Bike)	6.42
13 <sup>th</sup>	The First Movie	6.04
14 <sup>th</sup>	Rare Exports	5.71
15 <sup>th</sup>	Ivan's Childhood	5.22
16 <sup>th</sup>	Sightseers	4.56
17 <sup>th</sup>	A Useful Life	2.89

*Our next film:*

**On Thursday 11  
September 2014**

Our new season starts with the critically acclaimed performances by Emma Thompson and Tom Hanks, in "Saving Mr Banks" of which once critic said "Forget super. This bighearted and intelligent drama is supercalifragili. . . .you get the idea"!

