



# The Main Feature

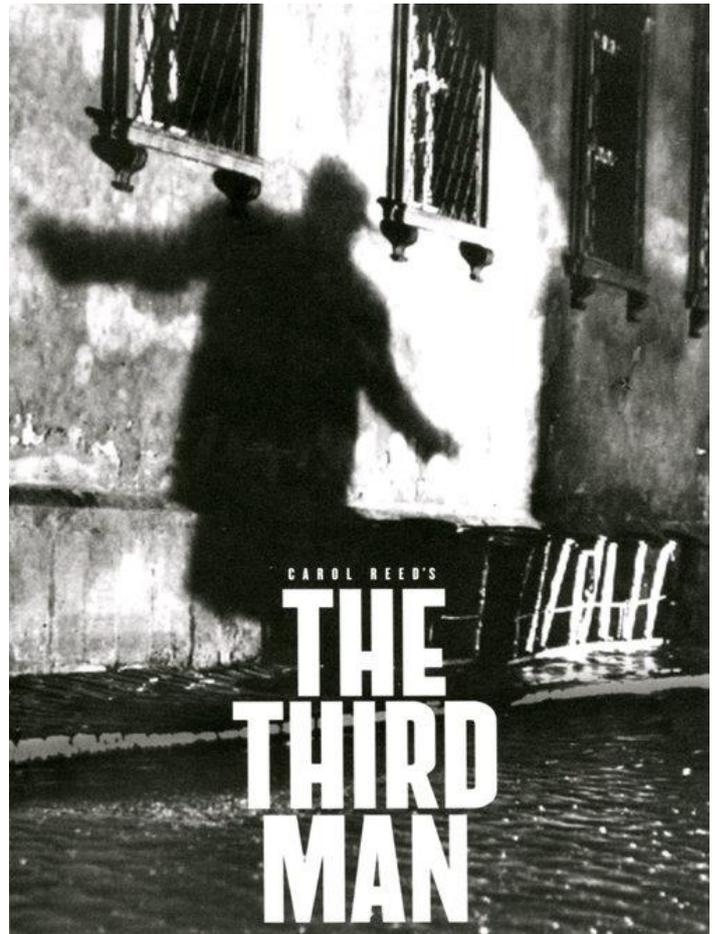
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UK 1949 108 minutes cert PG

Director and Producer Carol Reed  
Screenplay Graham Greene  
Cinematography Robert Krasker-  
Music Anton Karas  
Editor Oswald Hafenrichter  
Distributor British Lion Film Corporation

## Cast

Joseph Cotton	Holly Martins
Aida Valli	Anna Schmidt
Orson Welles	Harry Lime
Trevor Howard	Major Calloway
Paul Horbiger	Karl
Ernst Deutsch	Baron Kurtz
Erich Ponto	Dr Winkel
Siegfried Breuer	Popescu
Hedwig Bleibtreu	Anna's landlady
Bernard Lee	Sergeant Paine
Wilfred Hyde-White	Crabbi



In 1999 the British Film Institute voted The Third Man the greatest British Film of all time.

In 2017 a poll of film luminaries ranked it as the second best British film ever. (Don't ask me what at that time they considered to be the first!) We can expect therefore to see something rather special this evening.

The Third man is a 1949 British film noir directed by Carol Reed, written by Graham Greene, and starring Joseph Cotton, Aida Valli, Orson Welles and Trevor Howard. The black and white cinematography is a major feature of the film, as is the iconic theme music, seedy locations and the acclaimed performances of the cast. Greene wrote the novella of the same name as preparation for the screenplay and Anton Karas wrote and performed the score, which featured only the zither. The title music "The Third Man Theme" topped the international music charts in 1950, bringing the previously unknown performer international fame. It is considered to be one of the greatest films of all time, celebrated for its acting, musical score and atmospheric cinematography.

The full blooded absorbing story is set in post Second World War Vienna, which is controlled by the combined military forces of the four occupying powers American, British, French and Russian. It revolves around the black market and all its unsavoury ramifications. Holly Martins (Joseph

Cotton), a young American writer, arrives to join his friend Harry Lime (Orson Welles), who has promised him a job. However, Holly just gets to him in time to attend Harry's funeral. Suspicious of conflicting evidence and with a strong hunch that Harry was murdered, Holly decides to unravel the mystery. As the evidence builds up that Lime was utterly corrupt and dealing in diluted quantities of black market penicillin, it also becomes clear that this mysterious villain/friend may not be quite so deceased. Especially so when in addition to the two people who were seen to carry the body from the car accident in which Lime was involved, Martins hears of a "third man" at the scene. The mystery deepens and the story continues unabated to its dramatic conclusion.



Curiously, the Grand Gala World Premiere of *The Third Man* was held at the Ritz Cinema in Hastings, East Sussex, on 1 September 1949. In the United Kingdom, it was the most popular film at the British box office for 1949, but in Austria, "local critics were underwhelmed", and the film ran for only a few weeks.

Some at the time criticised the film's unusual camera angles. C A Lejeune in the *Observer* described Reed's "habit of printing his scenes askew, with floors sloping at a diagonal and close-ups deliriously tilted", as "most distracting". American director William

Wyler, Reed's close friend, sent him a spirit level, with a note saying "Carol, next time you make a Picture, just put it on top of the camera, will you?"

However, upon its release in Britain and America, the film received overwhelmingly positive reviews. *Time* magazine wrote that the film was "crammed with cinematic plums that would do the early Hitchcock proud – ingenious twists and turns of plot, subtle detail, full-bodied bit characters, atmospheric backgrounds that become an intrinsic part of the story, a deft comingling of the sinister with the ludicrous, the casual with the bizarre." The *New York Times* movie critic after a prefatory qualification that the film was "designed [only] to excite and entertain", wrote that Reed "brilliantly packaged the whole bag of his cinematic tricks, his whole range of inventive genius for making the camera expound. His eminent gifts for compressing a wealth of suggestion in single shots, for building up agonized tension and popping surprises are fully exercised. His devilishly mischievous humour also runs lightly through the film, touching the darker depressions with little glints of the gay or macabre."

*The Third Man* received numerous nominations and awards. At the Oscars Robert Krasker won the award for Best Cinematography and Carol Reed and Oswald Hafenrichter were nominated for respectively Best Director and Best Editing. At the Baftas it won awards as Best British Film and the Grand Prix at the Cannes Film Festival. *The Third Man* is included in many lists of best films.

This evening, 70 years on, we can make our own judgements.

Neville Ledsome



*We thank Colyer Reppoint for printing these notes free of charge*

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# Enjoyed tonight's film? When in Vienna, do the tour.....

Today, visitors can retrace the footsteps of Harry Lime on the Third Man Tour sewer tour, at the Riesenrad (the Giant Ferris Wheel) and in the Third Man Museum.

The Giant Ferris Wheel in the Prater, the Vienna sewers, Orson Welles and the haunting zither music of Anton Karas – The Third Man painted a picture of Vienna previously unseen on the big screen. Director Carol Reed presented the story of the smuggler Harry Lime, played by Orson Welles, which turns into a game of cat and mouse set in the Vienna of 1948. While Reed portrays the city's dark side, like the sewers and the rubble left by the war, the film also shows the picturesque streets of the old town and Viennese trademarks such as the Giant Ferris Wheel.

Today, "The Third Man" has lost none of its fascinating qualities, as visitors can see for themselves by taking a Third Man tour.

With the help of pictures and music samples, the [Third Man walking tour](#) gives visitors a taste of the film's atmosphere and follows the trail of Harry Lime to original locations in the Old Town, such as Josephsplatz and Mülkerbastei.

The [Third Man Tour - Canal](#) takes visitors down the original staircase from the movie into one of the older parts of Vienna's sewer system. The cholera canals were built in the 1830s and have been nearly untouched to this day. Modern projection and light technology lets the visitors immerse themselves in the world of sewer workers, movie agents, smugglers and spies. The conclusion of the tour offers a unique "subterranean view" of the Wien River. The river disappears in a massive arched vault below the Naschmarkt, impressively illuminated by spotlights.

The Burgkino cinema on Opernring shows The Third Man every Tuesday, Friday and Sunday. A digitally restored version of the film in the new 4K resolution was released worldwide as a collector's edition on DVD and BluRay in summer 2015.



The [Third Man Museum](#) also offers more insights into the world of this cinema classic. Besides numerous props from the film, and photos and objects from the post-WWII era, Anton Karas' zither from the world-famous theme tune is also on display here. The Third Man tour takes in both the Third Man Museum and the Burg Kino cinema. A visit to one of the stopping points entitles visitors to discounts on the others.

Popular destinations for outings include the Zentralfriedhof ([Central Cemetery](#)) in Simmering – which

can be seen at the beginning and end of the film – and the traditional Prater amusement park with its [Giant Ferris Wheel](#). The location for one of the film's main scenes offers amazing views over the city.

# Comments and reactions to: **The Divine Order**

**Score**      **0**      **1**      **2**      **3**      **4**      **5**      **6**      **7**      **8**      **9**      **10**  
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No of reaction slips received = 43

Average Score = 7.56

*A much better film than I anticipated*

**Warm telling of a much neglected story**

*Well acted – an important story very well portrayed*

**Still poignant – well portrayed. Realistic**

*Brilliant film sign of the times and very entertaining*

**The very last scene was not necessary – I think**

*An insight into a little-known side of modern Switzerland*

**Shame on you, Switzerland. It took a long time for you to wake up**

*One of the best films I've seen in a while. Very funny and moving*

**An unusual topic, very frank, more so than we are used to but a very good film!**

*Excellent, well worth seeing. I enjoyed the background music which really seemed to go with the film. I don't normally take notice of music*

**An excellent portrayal of village people coming to terms with a big change in their culture and society**

*Kudos to the committee for selecting – an unknown story, well told with excellent period feel and careful avoidance of clichés*

*What a cracking film*

**Interesting film light hearted**

*Unexpectedly inspiring – and amusing!*

**Women are equal to everything!**

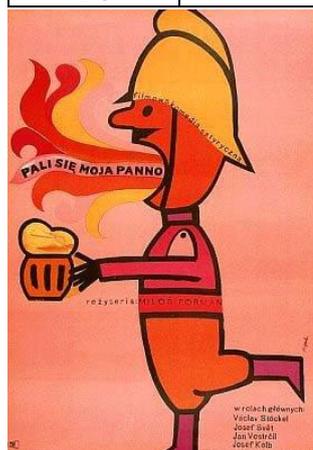
*Entertaining and engaging film*

**A thoroughly engaging story.**

*Enjoyable but over long*

**Excellent**

Position	Film	Average Score
1 <sup>st</sup>	Darkest Hour	8.08
2 <sup>nd</sup>	The Post	7.66
= 3 <sup>rd</sup>	The Divine Order	7.56
= 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Guildford in the Great War	7.56
5 <sup>th</sup>	Florence Foster Jenkins	7.47
6 <sup>th</sup>	Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri	7.4
7 <sup>th</sup>	Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool	7.37
8 <sup>th</sup>	The Violin Teacher	7.2
9 <sup>th</sup>	Revanche	7.0
10 <sup>th</sup>	Les Quatre Cents Coups (400 Blows)	6.74
11 <sup>th</sup>	L'homme du train	6.71
12 <sup>th</sup>	Piccadilly	6.41
= 13 <sup>th</sup>	Bar Bahar (In Between)	6.26
= 13 <sup>th</sup>	Death of Stalin	6.26
15 <sup>th</sup>	The Levelling	5.6
16 <sup>th</sup>	Phantom Thread	5.16



## Next on 23 May, after our AGM:

*"A socio-political satire that thrums with warmth and spontaneity, yet so enraged Communist authorities it was banned."*

*"The Party, the People, and the flames that won't be extinguished."*