



Twentieth Century House

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Brian Robinson's List of Films from 20th Century Fox with British Cultural Elements

Twentieth Century Fox has played a major role in British cultural life as both a production house and distributor of films over 80 years since the company was founded in 1935. Although Fox films were originally incorporated in London as early as 1918.

The company employed many important British actors, writers and directors both in Hollywood and in the UK, releasing films which were often based on British original novels or told stories of British life. Where there was no direct British connection audiences took leading stars to their hearts. It is hard to underestimate the impact of such a body work on the cultural and emotional life of the UK.

Wings of the Morning (1937) was the first Technicolor full-length feature film shot in the UK (or indeed anywhere in Europe) starring Tyrone Power, Annabella and the famous tenor John McCormack.

The first feature film in the widescreen process CinemaScope, The Robe (1952), a biblical epic was released by Fox and ushered in a new era in cinema. Film musicals such as The King and I (1956) and Carousel (1956) were also released in the new process.

The Longest Day (1962) was a three hour film which told the story of the D-Day landings and was an epic undertaking, partly directed by Englishman Ken Annakin and featuring a host of British acting talent including Richard Burton, Kenneth More, Roddy McDowall, Leslie Phillips, Michael Medwin and many more alongside John Wayne, Robert Mitchum, Sal Mineo etc.

The Sound of Music starring Julie Andrews played for over three years from its first release in 1965, 29th March until 31st June 1968 at the Dominion Theatre and remains a much-loved cultural icon which is regularly screened in a Singalong Version.

That fact alone would single out Fox and its London office as a major cultural force in British life but when you add up the range of films which include Fantastic Voyage (1966), Planet of the Apes (1968), Star Wars (1977) and Alien (1979) it is very important.

We can add to this a very significant range of British films, especially those made during the war. This list gives a flavour of 20th Century Fox films some of whose production was organised from Soho Square, but all of their publicity and press screenings would have been handled through these offices.

Gracie Fields starred in We're Going to be Rich (1938) which was filmed in England.

The Pied Piper (1942) starring Monty Woolley as an English caught in France when the Nazis invaded, based on a story by English novelist Nevil Shute

On the Sunny Side dir. Harold Schuster (1942) starring Roddy McDowall in a story of a 12 year English boy discovering life in Ohio

Jesse James (1939) starring Tyrone Power and Henry Fonda

The Story of Alexander Graham-Bell (1939) starring Don Ameche as the Scottish inventor of the telephone

The Grapes of Wrath (1940) dir. John Ford, based on the Pulitzer-prize-winning novel by John Steinbeck. Winner of the Academy Award for Best Picture.

Mark of Zorro (1940) dir. Rouben Mamoulian, starring Tyrone Power, Linda Darnell and Basil Rathbone

They Came by Night (1939) British crime caper starring Phyllis Calvert, Kathleen Harrison and a diverse British cast

Charley's Aunt (1940) set in Oxford, based on the British play, starring Arthur Askey in the title role

The Black Swan (1942) starring Maureen O'Hara and Tyrone Power, a pirate romp set in Jamaica

The Rains Came (1939) dir. Clarence Brown, set in Ranchipur, India, a drama of love lost and found against the backdrop of intense political change

Scotland Yard (1941) dir. Norman Foster based on a play by Dennison Clift, a tale of murder and false identity set in World War II

Son of Fury (1942) dir. John Cromwell, starring Tyrone Power and Elsa Lanchester

Spencer Tracy in Stanley & Livingstone (1939), the tale of the explorer and the missionary

Step Lively, Jeeves (1938), early P.G. Wodehouse adaptation starring Arthur Treacher as Jeeves

Thank You, Jeeves (1936) starring Arthur Treacher and David Niven

The Remarkable Mr. Kipps (1942) dir. Carol Reed, based on the novel by H.G. Wells starring Michael Redgrave and Phyllis Calvert

Thunder Birds (1942), a tale of an English airman

Desert Victory (1943), an epic documentary outlining the battle for El Alamein, with some scenes recreated at Pinewood Studios

Candlelight in Algeria (1944) starring James Mason as a British spy in North Africa

Four Jills in a Jeep (1944), four female Hollywood stars recreate their tour of US army bases across Europe during World War II

This Above All (1942) dir. Anatole Litvak starring Joan Fontaine, Tyrone Power and Gladys Cooper in a story of love in wartime Britain

Wee Willie Winkie (1937)dir. John Ford starring Shirley Temple, based on a story by Rudyard Kipling

A Yank in the RAF (1941) dir. Henry King, an impulsive young American joins the Royal Airforce in a comedy of the early days of World War II

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (1939)

Laura (1944) dir. Otto Preminger, a much-loved and celebrated film noir, starring Gene Tierney in a murder mystery

Lifeboat (1944) dir. Alfred Hitchcock, a gripping story by one of Britain's greatest film directors tells the story of survivors of a torpedoed merchant ship who find themselves sharing a lifeboat with the enemy when their boat goes down too

Uncensored (1944) dir. Anthony Asquith, a mainly British cast including Phyllis Calvert and Eric Portman in a tale of resistance set in Nazi-occupied Belgium

The Challenge (1948), a military man's death sets a murder mystery for Bulldog Drummond, ace detective

Confirm or Deny (1941), Don Ameche stars as a newspaper reporter in Nazi-strafed London who uncovers the details of a planned German invasion

Four Men and a Prayer (1938) dir. John Ford, starring Loretta Young, David Niven and C. Aubrey Smith in a story of a family fighting to save the honour of a disgraced British serviceman

Frenchman's Creek (1944) dir. Mitchell Leisen, based on a Daphne Du Maurier story set in Cornwall, starring Joan Fontaine and Basil Rathbone

Hangover Square (1945) based on the Patrick Hamilton novel of London life

The Hound of the Baskervilles (1939) starring Basil Rathbone as Sherlock Holmes

How Green Was my Valley (1941) dir. John Ford, starring Maureen O'Hara and Roddy McDowall, won Academy Award for Best Picture

Jane Eyre (1943), produced by Orson Welles, with a script by John Houseman and Aldous Huxley, starring Joan Fontaine and Orson Welles

Kidnapped,(1948) produced by Daryl F. Zanuck, based on the Robert Louis Stevenson story set in Edinburgh, starring Freddie Bartholomew and Miles Mander

The Little Princess (1939) based on the novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett starring Shirley Temple and Arthur Treacher

Lloyds of London (1937) dir. Henry King, starring Freddie Bartholomew and Madeleine Carroll

The Lodger (1944) dir. John Brahm, a variation on the story of Jack the Ripper, starring Merle Oberon, George Sanders and Cedric Hardwicke

Manhunt (1941) dir. Fritz Lang, based on the novel by Geoffrey Household, starring George Sanders, John Carradine and Roddy McDowall,

Moss Rose (1947) dir. Gregory Ratoff starred Peggy Cummins