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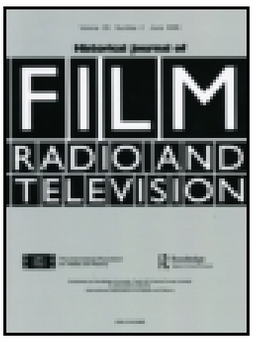
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RESISTING HOLLYWOOD DOMINANCE IN SIXTIES BRITISH CINEMA: THE NFFC/RANK JOINT FINANCING INITIATIVE

Duncan Petrie

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The 1960s are regarded as a period of substantial change and transformation in the British film industry. While cinema attendances continued their steady decline, film production not only remained relatively buoyant but, perhaps more astonishingly, British films garnered an unprecedented level of critical and commercial success. One of the lesser known episodes of the period was a short-lived and ill-fated collaboration between the National Film Finance Corporation (NFFC), a specialised film bank set up by the government in 1949 to rescue an ailing production sector, and the Rank Organisation, the largest commercial company in the British film industry to co-finance a slate of medium budget feature films. This joint initiative led to the production of six feature films released in 1966 and 1967. Unfortunately, this group of productions failed to generate sufficient critical or commercial interest and the initiative quickly folded, consigned to little more than brief valedictory mentions in the standard histories. Making extensive use of government papers held in the National Archives and the files of the completion guarantee company, Film Finances, this article considers the initiative in detail, demonstrating how it can provide valuable insights into some of the underlying tensions and challenges as well as the opportunities facing British film production at a key moment marked not only by commercial and critical success but also by considerable turbulence and uncertainty. Among the factors examined here are the complex and sometimes contradictory impact of increased American funding, the ongoing concerns about the monopolistic tendencies within the industry, and the debates with government and industry prompted by the gradual erosion of the NFFC's ability to support and nurture independent British film-making during the decade.

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The 1960s witnessed a period of considerable change and transformation in the British film industry. While cinema attendances continued their steady decline, film production not only remained relatively buoyant but, perhaps more astonishingly, the profile of British cinema achieved unprecedented new heights. This was epitomised by the international box office success of the 'James Bond' films, particularly *Goldfinger* (1964) and *Thunderball,* (1965); the Best Picture Oscars won by *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), *Tom Jones* (1963), *A Man For all Seasons* (1966) and *Oliver!* (1968); and similar recognition at the Cannes Film Festival where *The Knack* (1965), *Blow-Up* (1966) and *If …* (1968) were awarded the coveted Palme d'Or. Robert Murphy concludes his study of the decade with the assertion that 'the 1960s saw a greater number of significant and exciting films made in Britain than at any time before or since'.[1] Much of this achievement was underwritten by American finance and while the Hollywood majors were actively encouraged by the industry and the government, the increasing dependence of British producers on foreign investment also generated concerns about the sustainability of the 60s boom. These were borne out when, faced with major losses on bloated production programmes, American support evaporated, plunging the industry once more into a state of crisis just as the decade was coming to a close.

One of the minor episodes of the period was a short-lived collaboration between the National Film Finance Corporation (NFFC), a specialised film bank set up by the government in 1949 to rescue an ailing production sector, and the Rank Organisation, the largest and most powerful commercial player in the British film industry to co-finance a slate of medium budget feature films. This joint initiative led to the production of six feature films released in 1966 and 1967. Unfortunately, this group of productions failed to generate sufficient critical or commercial interest and the initiative quickly folded, consigned to little more than brief valedictory mentions in the standard histories of the period.[2] But sometimes a closer consideration of failure can yield as much if not more insight than success, and the NFFC/Rank joint financing scheme can only be understood in relation to the key challenges and opportunities facing British film production at a moment marked not only by commercial and critical achievement but also by considerable turbulence and uncertainty. For example, the increasing involvement of the Americans in British production was beginning to undermine the effectiveness – and therefore the perceived value and even necessity – of the NFFC. The Hollywood presence was also driving up budgets and fuelling demand for big stars and high production values, which not only rendered British film-making more speculative and therefore risky, but also eclipsed the kind of low to medium budget production that had been the stock in trade of many British producers. Another defining trend closely interrelated with the concentration on the production of fewer, larger films was the continuing reduction in the frequency of cinema-going with many increasing regarding this as more of a special occasion than a routine leisure pursuit. If Hollywood dominance was increasingly regarded as a double-edged sword, so the decline in the audience intensified concerns about the monopoly exercised by Rank and the Associated British Picture Corporation, which came to a head during the production crisis in the winter of 1963 when a number of independent films struggled to gain a release on the two main circuits release.[3] Therefore, a collaborative initiative to support medium budget British films was regarded as providing

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potential solutions to very different problems being confronted by the NFFC and the Rank Organisation in the mid-1960s.

In examining the conditions that gave rise to the NFFC/Rank joint funding scheme, the selection and production of the slate of films, and their subsequent critical and commercial reception, this article will make extensive use of archive resources including files from the Board of Trade, held at the National Archives, that reveal the relationship between the NFFC and the British government, the holdings of Film Finances, the company that provided completion guarantees for the films, the annual reports of the NFFC, contemporary reports in the trade press and reviews of the six films. As such the analysis will also attempt to demonstrate how this short episode functions as a barometer for the state of the wider British film industry at a crucial moment in its history.

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The origins and preparation of the NFFC/Rank scheme

The origins of a joint-financing initiative between the NFFC and the Rank Organisation can be located in the context of a changing market for British films which in 1963 precipitated a major production crisis. One consequence of the declining domestic audience and the attendant closure of cinemas (more than 1000 shut down during the first half of the decade, representing one third of the total) was that an increasing number of independent British films began experiencing lengthy delays in gaining a cinema release. As profit margins were already tight, this led to many companies going out of business and a significant decline in the volume of domestic feature production between 1963 and 1964.[4] One of the reasons given for the failure of so many films was that their budgets and production values – and thus their commercial aspirations – were deemed insufficiently high to attract cinema bookings in an increasingly competitive market. At a press conference in October 1963, John Davis, Managing Director of the Rank Organisation, stated that a realistic budget for a totally British production was now between £250,000 and £400,000, yet many independent producers were continuing to make films for around £150,000.[5]

Moreover, as this was also the sphere of production that the NFFC tended to be most actively involved in, the crisis had particularly serious implications for their own operations. To make matters worse, the Corporation was already struggling with an inherent weakness in their business model whereby their loans to producers typically constituted 'end money' or the final 30% of production budgets which was the last to be recouped out of box office revenues. The rest of the production costs were covered by a guarantee provided by a distribution company against which producers could secure a bank loan. As the Hollywood majors expanded their activities in Britain, so they began offering 100% distribution guarantees, an inducement that helped secure the most ambitious and commercial propositions. Thus, the NFFC were increasingly restricted to providing the highest risk loans on the most unfavourable recoupment terms to the films with the least commercial potential. The result was that the Corporation routinely sustained losses that in turn eroded the revolving fund it operated to support independent production. Thus, following two years of modest profitability, the loss sustained by

the NFFC for the year to March 1963 was £219,867, which was largely in line with the deficits incurred in 1959 and 1960.[6]

Following the successful sale of British Lion (which the NFFC had been forced to acquire in 1955) in March 1964 to a consortium led by Sir Michael Balcon, the Corporation's managing director John Terry began to advocate a change in lending policy that was more attendant to the new economic realities of the industry. Terry's preferred option was to establish joint-funding schemes with the three major British distributors: British Lion, Rank and Associated British (which distributed through its subsidiary company Warner-Pathe, operated in partnership with the Hollywood major), to provide 100% finance to producers for medium budget films that stood a better chance of competing with the American-backed product. Moreover, investment would be shared and so recoupment would be on a *pari passu* (at the same rate or on an equal footing) basis, with the NFFC's having an equal claim on revenues with their co-investors. This was apparently confirmed by a report in the trade press that the Corporation was changing its lending policy towards more profitable larger budget productions, investing in projects with obvious box office appeal and not just the more 'chancy' ones.[7] It was also noted that the proceeds of the sale of British Lion had been re-advanced to the NFFC, providing a necessary boost to funds that more ambitious lending would require.

By this time, John Terry was actively discussing potential schemes with both British Lion and Rank, with the latter negotiations proving the most productive. However, the NFFC's operations were strictly controlled by legal statute and the Corporation required the agreement of government for such a new approach to their lending operations to go ahead. On 20 August 1964 John Terry wrote to the Board of Trade explaining the proposed 'backing funds' scheme with Rank which involved both partners each investing £500,000, with the National Provincial Bank providing cash-flow facilities of up to £1.5 million.[8] For Terry, perhaps the most exciting aspect of the proposal was that Rank had agreed to the control and management of the scheme, including the selection of films, being exclusively in the hands of the NFFC. The Corporation's annual report for 1965 boasted that 'the withdrawal of the distributor-financier from any control over selection and administration is in the Corporation's experience without precedent'.[9] This arrangement also headed off an anticipated objection to the scheme; as Terry notes:

> (t)here can therefore be no suggestion that NFFC would be providing finance to the Rank Organisation. On the contrary the Rank Organisation would be providing £500,000 for the benefit of films to be made by independent producers selected by the NFFC.[10]

This concern was justified given the wider politics of the industry at the time. The decline of the domestic audience had intensified the domination and control of cinema exhibition – and therefore arguably of the entire industry – by Rank and ABPC, the only vertically integrated combines operating in Britain. Following the publication in 1962 of *The Decline of the Cinema* by the economist John Spraos, demand had been increasing, both within the industry and in Parliament, for something to be done to address some of the familiar underlying problems, with the Federation of British Film-Makers particularly active in lobbying the Board of Trade.[11] The production crisis and its fall out brought things to a head and in

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August 1964 the government announced that the Monopolies Commission had been asked to investigate the supply of films to exhibitors.[12] While the NFFC had worked with a wide range of distributors over the years, their closest association was with British Lion, widely regarded as an essential 'third force' that, unlike Rank and ABPC, was closely aligned with the interests of the independent producers. Therefore, a strategic new alliance with a large and powerful corporate player, one regarded in some quarters as being antagonistic towards this community, entailed certain risks for the NFFC.[13]

Following a protracted period of discussion and clarification between John Terry and civil servants at the Board of Trade, formal proposals for the NFFC/Rank scheme were submitted to ministers on 9 November 1964. The briefing document was broadly supportive, noting that the scheme carried no apparent danger of additional liability to the taxpayer through increased funding to the NFFC and judging that the involvement of Rank represented a genuine attempt to make additional funds available to independent producers.[14] But progress remained slow, prompting the NFFC Chairman, Hilary Scott, to write to Sir Richard Powell, permanent secretary at the Board of Trade, pressing him for a decision to be made.[15] The problem behind the scenes in Whitehall came from the Treasury, which preferred to wait until the completion of a review of film finance currently being conducted before agreeing to the NFFC entering into any new commitments.[16] Government files clearly indicate a consistent level of scepticism bordering on hostility towards the Corporation from Treasury ministers and civil servants during the decade. Fortunately for John Terry and his colleagues, key figures within the Board of Trade were more supportive and following rather protracted deliberation, the Board's President, Douglas Jay, judged the scheme too far advanced to be put at risk. Consequently, on 11 January 1965 he informed Terry by letter of the government's approval for the joint backing fund with Rank.[17] But in a placatory gesture towards his colleagues at the Treasury, Jay attached special importance to assurances that the NFFC would be able to withdraw from the scheme at any time, giving no more than six months' notice.[18] The scheme was subsequently announced in the trade press on 21 January.[19]

As anticipated, this prompted a rather mixed response from the industry. While the British Film Producers Association (which counted Rank and the other major companies among its membership) expressed satisfaction with the NFFC/Rank co-financing scheme, the Federation of British Film Makers were unhappy with the initiative, exclaiming in a press statement that 'It is very undesirable that in a period when monopolistic practices in the industry are under review a public body should in this way strengthen the position of one of the combines'.[20] On 22 January a deputation from the Federation met with the Minister of State at the Board of Trade to discuss the problem of monopolistic practices in the industry and related matters. An internal report of the meeting reveals that the FBFM deputation considered the NFFC/Rank initiative 'a thoroughly bad development', arguing that Rank would take a profit at every stage and that a large sum of public money would be in jeopardy as a result. The scheme would ultimately create another source of tied production thus aggravating the monopoly situation in the industry. One member of the FBFM deputation, the experienced director/producer John Boulting, went so far as to argue that no-one at the NFFC understood

film production and as it was the job of producers and distributors to assess public taste the new fund would in practice be dominated by Rank.[21]

Boulting's assertion not only betrays an astonishing lack of faith in the expertise of John Terry and his colleagues, it is also apparently blind to the advantage that the proposed decision-making arrangement afforded Rank. In 1964 the Organisation had posted record pre-tax profits of £16,977,000, an increase of £4.6 million on the previous year.[22] By this time Rank was involved in five distinct sectors: films, leisure, industry, xerography and education, but their association with the cinema remained strong and John Davis was keen to protect this prestigious position. The following year saw profits soar to £22,085,000 and this time the Chairman used the news to argue that the future of the industry was largely dependent on co-productions as a pretext to note, rather pointedly, that his company was …

> … making further finance available to independent producers through our agreement with the NFFC and the National Provincial Bank … We hope that the NFFC/Rank scheme will prove a valuable source of the good entertainment films which the cinema the world over so desperately needs. Incidentally, I made it a condition of our support that the films would be chosen by the NFFC, not by ourselves. So much for the allegations of Empire building![23]

And while acknowledging in their detailed investigation into the industry that the timing could have been more propitious given the investigation by the Monopolies Commission, Terence Kelly, Graham Norton and George Perry appear to concur with Davis, concluding that while the joint financing scheme 'increases the proportion of the industry in its sphere of influence, it seems a fair bargain and a badly needed outside capital into film-making, i.e. from the National Provincial Bank'.[24] For their part, the NFFC attempted to address concerns by pointing out that this was a limited initiative, a pilot scheme 'small in relation to existing production requirements' and that the £1.5 million funding 'could quite easily be absorbed by two films'.[25] Meanwhile, the response from the press was generally welcoming; Robin Bean writing in *Films and Filming* that while

> (t)he new scheme seems to lack a definite policy of exactly what it wants to encourage as 'independent' – and maybe the final result will be to produce the same old routine. But at the moment it remains the one bright hope, and a very important one. Without the NFFC, British production would be a very sad spectacle.[26]

Selecting the films[27]

The Corporation subsequently received around 80 applications from independent producers and the first project to be supported was announced in May 1965. *Passage of Love* – subsequently re-titled *I Was Happy Here* – was an intimate drama set in London and the West of Ireland about a young Irish woman who returns home to escape her boorish English husband and attempts to rekindle an earlier romance with a local fisherman. The project was to be made by Partisan, a new company set up by first-time producer Roy Milichip and director Desmond Davis who co-wrote the script with Edna O'Brien, author of 'The Woman at the Seaside',

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the short story on which the film was based. Milichip and Davis had worked together on the Woodfall productions *A Taste of Honey* (1961) and *Tom Jones*, as production manager and camera operator respectively, and when Davis subsequently directed the Woodfall production of *The Girl with Green Eyes* (1964), also adapted from an O'Brien original, Milichip served as his assistant director. On their next collaboration, *The Uncle* (1965), Milichip was an associate producer. The crew for *I Was Happy Here* also comprised a number of experienced technicians associated with the previous films, such as cinematographer Manny Wynne, editor Brian Smedley Aston and composer John Addison. The principal cast included Sarah Miles playing the heroine, Cass, supported by Julian Glover as her husband, the veteran Irish actor, Cyril Cusack, the proprietor of the seaside hotel where she resides and newcomer Sean Caffrey, her childhood sweetheart.

The second project selected for the scheme was *The Sandwich Man*, a farcical contemporary comedy featuring the exploits of a middle aged widower who wanders around London wearing a advertising 'sandwich' board and morning dress, observing the absurd interactions of his fellow citizens. The eponymous protagonist, Horace Quilby, was to be played by Michael Bentine (closely associated with the Goons) who had also written the script with director Robert Hartford-Davis. The producer and cinematographer was Peter Newbrook and the film was to be made under the auspices of Hartford-Davis and Newbrook's company, Titan Films. The former had previously been associated with low-budget exploitation films such as *The Yellow Teddy Bears* (1963), *The Black Torment* (1964) and *Gonks go Beat* (1965), which was also the first Titan production. Newbrook was a respected cinematographer who first worked with Hartford-Davis on *The Black Torment* and his expertise was crucial to the concept of *The Sandwich Man* which was to be shot in Eastmancolor entirely on location in London. The producers also assembled a very impressive cast that included Dora Bryan, Harry H. Corbett, Bernard Cribbins, Diana Dors, Ian Hendry, Stanley Holloway, Wilfred Hyde-White, Ron Moody, Anna Quale, Terry Thomas, Norman Wisdom and Donald Wolfitt. Promoted as 'a comedy of our time, for the family audience', *The Sandwich Man* appeared to provide a new twist on a familiar genre that had served Rank well and which they continued to mine successfully during the 1960s with the Norman Wisdom vehicles and the *Doctor* films by director/producer team Ralph Thomas and Betty Box.[28]

In sharp contrast, the third project to be supported was a much more specialist and self-consciously 'high-brow' affair: a film version of the Royal Ballet's celebrated production of *Romeo and Juliet* with Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev dancing the principal roles. It was to be directed and produced by the veteran Viennese émigré Paul Czinner for his company Poetic Films. Czinner had established a productive relationship with the company and Fonteyn in particular with *The Royal Ballet* (1960) which had been shot on the stage of the Royal Opera House and featured extracts from Giselle, the Firebird and Swan Lake. The original *Romeo and Juliet* ballet had been choreographed by Kenneth Macmillan as a three act adaptation of Shakespeare's play set to music by Sergei Prokofiev and on its triumphant opening night in New York the principals received 43 curtain calls.[29] Czinner's version sought to recreate the live experience of the ballet by

shooting on a specially constructed stage at Pinewood with a sprung floor, using seven fixed-position cameras, supervised by S.D. Onions who had previously collaborated with the director on *The Bolshoi Ballet* (1957), *The Royal Ballet* (1960) and *Der Rosenkavalier* (1962). Other key creatives attached to the project included the editor Philip Barnikel, who had also worked on *Der Rosenkavalier,* and Nicholas Giorgiadis, whose sets and costumes had been designed for the original ballet. As such, *Romeo and Juliet* positioned itself in a classical tradition that, in addition to Czinner's own recent work, included Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's films *The Red Shoes* (1948), *Tales of Hoffman* (1951) and *O Rosalinda!!* (1955). The project's potential appeal beyond the UK was confirmed by a major financial commitment from the American distributor Embassy International in return for the Western Hemisphere rights.

These first three productions were announced by the NFFC in their annual report for the year to 31 March 1965, in which they also noted their active consideration of loans to co-productions between British and with Commonwealth partners.[30] One of these projects, *The Trap,* a period piece set in Canada, was erroneously reported in some quarters to be part of the NFFC/Rank scheme.[31] But the other film alluded to, an Australian comedy, *They're a Weird Mob*, to be produced and directed by the highly experienced film-maker Michael Powell, did become the fourth production to be part of the joint funding initiative. Adapted from John O'Grady's novel by Powell's long-time collaborator Emeric Pressburger (writing under the pseudonym of Richard Imrie), *They're a Weird Mob* depicts the experiences of Nino Culotta, a newly arrived Italian immigrant in Sydney who, on discovering that the newspaper run by his cousin he intended to work for has folded, finds a job as a brick layer. This introduces Nino to the strange inhabitants and customs of contemporary Australia – which provide much of the humour and atmosphere for the project – before he falls in love with the daughter of the boss of local construction firm, a liaison complicated by the fact she had lent Nino's cousin money before he absconded. The film was to be made under the auspices of Williamson-Powell, a production company also involving the Australian cinema chain owner J.C. Williamson, and shot entirely in Sydney with a mainly Australian crew and cast.[32]

An international theme was also central to the fifth project to be included in the NFFC/Rank scheme. *Maroc 7* offered the prospect of a glamorous and exotic thriller featuring a gang of international jewel thieves operating behind the cover of a respected fashion magazine infiltrated by an undercover policeman who accompanies them to Morocco where they plan to steal a priceless Arabian medallion. Clearly inspired by a combination of James Bond, the slick thrillers of Stanley Donen such as *Charade* (1963) and *Arabesque* (1966), and the swinging London of *Darling* (1965) and *Blow Up* (1966), this ambitious project was to be produced by Cyclone, a new company run by John Gale and Leslie Philips, with the more experienced Martin C. Schute, associate producer on Otto Preminger's features *The Cardinal* (1963) and *Bunny Lake is Missing* (1965), as executive producer. Director Gerry O'Hara's previous credits include *That Kind of Girl* (1963), produced by Robert Hartford-Davis, and the swinging London film, *The Pleasure Girls* (1965), and the script was by David Osborn who also wrote *The Trap*. The cast was

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suitably international and glamorous and featured Americans Gene Barry and Cyd Charisse, Italian Elsa Martinelli and Canadian Alexandra Stewart alongside Philips and Denholm Elliot. While the crew largely comprised experienced technicians, notably cinematographer Kenneth Talbot and editor John Jympson, who were suited to the rigours of a production involving extensive location work in Morocco.

The final film included in the scheme had the distinction of being the first to be made under the new Franco-British co-production treaty signed in 1965.[33] The advantage of this arrangement was that it allowed participating films to qualify for both the British Quota and Eady money and the French *Fonds de Soutien*. *A Coeur Joie/Two Weeks in September,* was constructed around its star, Brigitte Bardot, as a French fashion model who becomes torn between two lovers while on a job in London. The script was by Oscar-winning director Serge Bourguignon, written in collaboration with Pascal Jardin and Vahé Katcha, and the co-producers were highly experienced figures in their respective industries: Kenneth Harper, whose credits include the highly successful Cliff Richard musicals *The Young Ones* (1961), *Summer Holiday* (1963) and *Wonderful Life* (1964); and Francis Cosne, principally associated with the *Angelique* series of features with Michele Mércier.[34] In addition to Bardot, the cast included Laurent Terzieff and Jean Rochefort as the rival suitors, alongside Mike Sarne as a rather lugubrious fashion photographer and James Robertson Justice as a suitably-kilted Scottish laird; while the mainly French crew included cinematographer Edmond Séchan and editor Jean Ravel, who had cut Chris Marker's *La Jetée* (1962). It was reported in *The Daily Cinema* that the production was to be made with 70% French investment and a 30% British contribution, with locations shot in London and Scotland followed by interiors at the Billancourt Studio in Paris.[35]

The production process

All of the films, with the exception of *Romeo and Juliet,* were provided with completion guarantees by Film Finances, a London-based company founded in 1950. As Charles Drazin notes, the origins of Film Finances are closely tied to the wider transformations in the British film production sector that had motivated the establishment of the NFFC.[36] The files for *I Was Happy Here, The Sandwich Man, They're a Weird Mob* and *Maroc 7* provide detailed insights into the financing and production process of these films.[37] The script, budget and schedule of projects were subject to a rigorous assessment by Film Finances associate John Croydon before a guarantee could be offered. In the case of *I Was Happy Here,* Croydon, expressed concerns about producer Roy Milichip's lack of experience and queried certain aspects to be under-budgeted and under-scheduled, but he also found the schedule well prepared and the script well put together, noting that 'The story is very simple and the completed film will obviously rely a great deal more on direction and artists performances than it will on story telling. This remark is obviously applicable to everything Davis has done to date'.[38] Film Finances subsequently gave Partisan Film Productions the green light for a budget of £169,200, the lowest of any of the films to be made under the NFFC/Rank scheme, and production began with a six-week shoot in County Clare in June 1965, followed by three weeks in

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central London and one final week back in Ireland. Despite encountering some minor problems due to a local transport strike in Ireland, progress was relatively smooth and Milichip and Davis brought the film in slightly under budget at £167,779.[39] A location report in *Films and Filming*, provides further evidence of a tightly run production, indicating that interior sets had been prepared in the event of rain disrupting filming, minimising the risk of any delays and the author, Robin Bean, notes that 'I don't think I've ever seen a British unit working so well as on this film'.[40]

The Sandwich Man was also proposed as an all-location production to be shot in just over eight weeks but this time Croydon's assessment contained more substantial reservations. In addition to unfamiliarity with the key people involved in the production, he raised doubts about the quality of the script which he described as 'badly put together. Too many scenes are, in effect, sequences, and I find it particularly difficult to assess their scheduled values'.[41] Croydon also considered the film to be seriously under-scheduled by as much three to four weeks, and he indicated that no-one on the unit appeared to appreciate the problems that may be encountered during the location shooting. But despite these concerns, Film Finances agreed to provide a completion guarantee on the provision that the budget be revised – raising the figure from £214,188 to £250,253, a move that appeared necessary as the shoot subsequently ran for a period of 61 days between early September and late November 1965.[42] But in the end the film actually came in at £214,452, proving the producers' original assessment to have been accurate and prompting John Terry to request a larger no claims discount be given by Film Finances, a plea rejected by Robert Garrett on the grounds that the original assessments and completion guarantee had been made in good faith based on available evidence.[43]

Despite being made on the other side of the world, *They're a Weird Mob* appeared a much more straight-forward proposition. Film Finances had provided a guarantee for several of Powell's previous films beginning with *O Rosalinda!* (1955) and as Charles Drazin notes, after a shaky start a good working relationship between the two had developed.[44] Croydon's assessment of *They're a Weird Mob* was upbeat, noting that the script is written in a 'very practical manner' and is appropriate to a nine week schedule of six days per week. On observing that the film is to be made entirely in Australia, he opines that this presents no problems 'provided Powell is prepared to accept some limitations on the quality of work he will obtain'. Croydon's report concludes by stating 'we will be able to Guarantee this proposition with some degree of confidence, provided Powell is prepared to tackle the film in the way he did "Peeping Tom"'.[45] The agreed budget was £234,925, with £166,925 provided by the NFFC and Rank and the balance covered by Williamson-Powell.[46] The producer's contribution was backed by a deal with the Australian exhibitor Greater Union (which was 50% owned by the Rank Organisation) whose distribution arm, British Empire Films, would handle the release in the local market.[47] Shooting began in Sydney in October 1965 with Powell quickly winning the confidence of his largely local crew by emphasising the Australian aspects of what was a genuine co-production.[48] But he also enjoyed the reliable services of British cinematographer Arthur Grant who had a reputation for his effective and efficient location work. Indeed, the only snag encountered on the

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production was a dispute which arose between Powell and the ACTT over the union membership status of some of the crew and the alleged anti-union sentiments of Associate Producer, John Pellat which generated some heated correspondence with ACTT General Secretary George Elvin, who threatened to boycott the film due to the breach of faith on Powell's part. But in the end the production was completed on time and slightly under budget.[49]

It was to prove a very different story with *Maroc 7* however. John Croydon's initial assessment here was particularly withering. He considered the script to be over length and 'written in a curious mixture of breakdown and master scenes, which make it very difficult to assess and, I would think, well-nigh impossible for a director to find his way through it;' while the schedule was described as 'a very, very dangerous one' with only some days feasible and several impossible to achieve.[50] And although a subsequent meeting with executive producer Martin Schute and director Gerry O'Hara gave Croydon a bit more confidence in the project, he continued to stress his concerns about the costs of location transport and hotel budgets in Morocco. Film Finances judged that the film had been budgeted for eight rather than seven weeks and demanded an additional £2000 be added to the contingency from deferments to producers' fees, but then offered a guarantee to Cyclone films on a budget of £316,000.[51]

Production began on 6 July 1966 in Morocco and the shoot was beset by a catalogue of mishaps that began almost as soon as the unit arrived. First of all there was a problem getting the lighting equipment sent out to the location. It was then discovered that the local water was undrinkable and bottled water would have to be provided at a considerable additional cost. Moreover, the productivity of the Moroccan workers also proved a major issue, necessitating the hiring of additional staff which in turn required additional transport and subsistence costs. Thus, after just two weeks it was clear that O'Hara was struggling to shoot at the rate he had confirmed to the producers and so the film began to slip radically behind schedule. This in turn led to longer shooting days which required additional overtime payments for crew.

At Film Finances' behest, John Croydon went out to Morocco, arriving on 21 July.[52] At this stage, the film was an estimated £31,767 over budget but Croydon was convinced this would rise further by £10–£15,000. He immediately pressed for O'Hara's removal from the production but this was resisted by the producers. Ten days later, Croydon and John Gale flew to London for a meeting with Rank and the NFFC which resulted in an additional £10,000 being added to the budget cover costs of shooting at Fort Immouzer, a key location in the Middle Atlas Mountains, but a two-hour drive from the nearest town of any size. At this point, Film Finances were bracing themselves for a total overspend of around £35,000.[53] Meanwhile back in Morocco, a visit of the King of Saudi Arabia resulted in the production's hotel accommodation being commandeered, forcing the unit to live in camp at the remote location for seven days. As a result of these problems, the location-shoot finished six days behind schedule. Following the receipt of a detailed report on the production expenditure in Morocco by Peat Marwick, Douglas Gosling, cost advisor at the NFFC, noted in a letter to Film Finances that

> … it is now becoming crystal clear why this film has gone so far over budget and yet only a week or so over schedule. I think you will agree that the use

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> of 65 vehicles daily on a film of this nature is something of a record in production management. The budget prepared by Martin Schute provided for 18 vehicles daily.[54]

The report also notes that the company hiring the vehicles added 40% to their invoices when they discovered that the vehicles were being used to transport everything to the location at Fort Immouzer. This is confirmed by the producers who noted that doing business with the Moroccans had been very problematic: the production office had great difficulty obtaining accurate cost information with even written quotations being subject to change. This led to significant extra costs for hotels and transport. But even when the unit had moved to London, O'Hara's progress continued to be slower than scheduled. Finally, problems with the score delayed the completion of the film for a further four weeks. The true financial picture took some time to emerge as various bills were settled. A letter from Film Finances to Peat Marwick on 19 June 1967 confirmed that the monies they had advanced under the Guarantee of Completion as at 31 May amounted to £61,138, while the final cost statement for film indicated that £399,835 in total had been spent, some £73,000 more than the revised budget of £326,000.[55]

The critical and commercial response

The initial critical response to *I Was Happy Here* was very promising. Prior to its British release in early July 1966, the film won two Prizes at the San Sebastián International Film Festival in Spain, including the Golden Shell for Best Film. It subsequently opened at the prestigious Warner West End, following a run by *My Fair Lady* and was met with generally positive reviews in the press. *I Was Happy Here* was variously described as possessing 'a captivating poetic quality' (*Sunday Express*), being 'warm, sincere and almost completely beautiful' (*The Sun*) and 'a film of a rare lyrical quality (that) … completely justifies the faith of the National Film Finance Corporation and the Rank Organisation' (*Evening News*).[56] Writing in the *Sunday Times* the veteran critic Dilys Powell celebrated the film's British backing, a sentiment echoed by Nina Hibbin in *The Morning Star*.[57] Desmond Davis's direction, Manny Wynne's cinematography and Sarah Miles' acting were routinely singled out for praise. But there was also a widely shared sense among reviewers that *I Was Happy Here* suffered from being a little too self-conscious: The *Monthly Film Bulletin* critic identified the influence of a French-derived style of storytelling associated in Britain with Tony Richardson, while John Mortimer in the *Observer*, felt that Davis 'makes a gallant attempt at freedom in time and place, moving his story backwards and forwards in the way of Godard, but without the sudden inspiration of that true cinematic master'.[58] Taken as a whole, the critical reception betrays an underlying uncertainty or ambivalence about *I Was Happy Here* which is captured in the words of the *Times* review: 'Courageous and uncommercial, it is the sort of film every critic is willing to salute in principle. But such unwavering determination to fashion all into a thing of beauty grows wearisome'.[59]

Romeo and Juliet also met with an ostensibly warm reception, with the Trade Press on both sides of the Atlantic setting the tone. *Variety* described the film as

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'surefire for ballet lovers … an absorbing excursion into its particular art form, a beautifully executed and sometimes-spectacular attraction which carries must-appeal to every devotee of ballet', while *Kine Weekly* opined that 'Fonteyn and Nureyev alone would be enough to ensure this as an artistic success. It is a beautiful film in every sense, and is sure to earn a steady income'.[60] The film initially opened in America before being given a special gala screening at the Royal Festival Hall on 31 October 1966. Many of the newspaper reviews shared the enthusiasm of the trades, with Ann Pacey in *The Sun* praising it as 'a revelation of the great beauty that art can achieve' and Richard Buckle in *The Sunday Times* appreciating Czinner's achievement in documenting this great ballet performance, noting that it was something his mother in Norfolk would enjoy.[61] But again, there was a body of critical opinion that was less enthusiastic, particularly about the feature's merits beyond being a facsimile of a pre-existing event. *The Times* reviewer argued that 'as cinema the film has little to offer', Philip French in *The Observer* that 'as a record of a production or an experience it fails' while the critic in *Time* compared *Romeo and Juliet* unfavourably with *The Red Shoes*.[62] The ballet's choreographer Kenneth Macmillan also disliked the film, feeling that 'his choreography had been betrayed by Czinner's preoccupation with Nureyev and Fonteyn at the expense of the rest of the dancing'.[63]

Released around the same time as *Romeo and Juliet, They're a Weird Mob* was less extensively reviewed but also drew some positive notices, particularly from the trades. *Kine Weekly* called it 'a highly original film, full of sentiment and simple comedy. Lacking star names it should nevertheless build up a large following by word-of-mouth', while *The Daily Cinema's* review noted: 'Bright, brisk and breezy tale of an Italian's misadventure's Down Under; Sydney locations eye-filling; script and native characterisation slyly witty; rough-and-ready horseplay fresh and funny; local colour vivid; Walter Chiari engaging. First-rate box-office comedy bet for popular halls'.[64] *Variety* was a little more circumspect in terms of the film's prospective wider appeal which was to prove prophetic: 'Doubtless the picture is going to be a big money-spinner down under, but for overseas it seemingly has little appeal. But if cut somewhat, it might prove an acceptable supporting feature'.[65] But following its release, *Monthly Film Bulletin* was scathing, calling *They're a Weird Mob* 'patronising' and noting (in a manner that reveals the ingrained hostility towards popular and female taste) that 'nothing … can really conceal the fact that this is just a routine women's magazine romance in a new setting; and the acting is mostly indifferent'.[66]

The other three films were subject to more consistently negative criticism. Even the usually supportive trade press found it difficult to muster enthusiasm for *The Sandwich Man,* with the reviewer in *Kine Weekly* noting: 'Funny in parts and pathetic in others this film never quite justifies the terrific comic talent lurking in the huge cast', while *The Daily Cinema* opined that it was 'scrappily scripted and aimlessly directed', and *Variety* that the 'directing, editing and screenplay are mainly uneven'.[67] Unsurprisingly, the more highbrow critics were even harsher with Raymond Durgnat in *Films and Filming* exclaiming that any.

> … sporadic, rather tentative, virtues are lost in a sadly inadequate script. Trying too hard to be relaxed, it gives up trying to be funny. It's underwritten and

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> content with corn … Further, the slapstick sequences are mostly obvious in idea and unconvincing in staging … It's rather odd to find so thinly written a film garnished with so expensive a cast; and personally I'm disappointed to see the Rank-NFFC set-up subsidising sub-standard material better examples of which have never had any difficulty in finding finance from the usual sources.[68]

The trades were split on the virtues of *Maroc 7*. Graham Clarke in *Kine Weekly* judged that 'After a slowish and over-mysterious start, this picture gets into a very entertaining stride and the double-twist ending is fun'. He also praises 'the imaginative and often pictorially beautiful use of the genuine Moroccan settings'.[69] But *Variety* was less certain, noting that 'Barry lacks punch as the hero (while) … O'Hara's direction is competent but somehow lacks the spark of audacity and dash which would have knitted together some of the loose ends of this workmanlike but brittle piece'.[70] While the *Monthly Film Bulletin* critic was downright scathing:

> Despite an attractive cast and a fashionably post-Bond script, something seems to have gone sadly awry with this thriller. Certainly it demonstrates that exotic locations and a bevy of glamorous models can become more of a burden than an asset, even in disguising the inadequacies of a script which has little but intricacy to recommend it.[71]

Finally, *A Coeur Joie/Two Weeks in September* was almost universally panned: the *MFB* describing it as a 'Supremely ludicrous amalgam of all the clichés of women's magazine fiction, flashily photographed, and directed … At a snail's pace and in a style that fully matches the inanities of the plot … It might almost be a parody'.[72] While Jean-Louis Comolli in *Cahiers du Cinema* describes director Bourguignon as one of the two most superficial film-makers in French cinema (alongside Robert Enrico) and compares his style to the construction of the functional but ugly state housing: made of prefabricated elements, their value tested but without surprises and at a knock down price.[73]

Whatever the response to the individual films, the scheme was already being described as a failure before the final two productions had been released. In the January 1967 issue of *Films and Filming,* Robin Bean proclaimed that 'The saddest event of the year was the failure of the joint NFFC/Rank financing scheme to 'encourage independent *production*' … Artistically, the majority of their productions were highly questionable and had the appearance of being projects where the producers had been unable to raise money from commercial resources'.[74] Bean pointed out that two of the films – *They're a Weird Mob* and *The Sandwich Man* – had been only been released as co-features in Britain, while the one supported by the scheme he considered to be outstanding, *I Was Happy Here,* had yet to gain proper nationwide distribution. The NFFC's annual report for the year to March 1967 attempted to provide a less devastating assessment of progress. Of the five films then in distribution, *Romeo and Juliet* is declared an artistic success with box office revenues described as 'promising'; in line with predictions, *They're a Weird Mob* had broken box office records in Australasia but had failed to replicate this success elsewhere. *I Was Happy Here* and *The Sandwich Man* were judged commercial failures, while the jury remained out on *Maroc 7*.[75] In subsequent correspondence with the Board of Trade, John Terry revealed the overseas earnings of a

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number of NFFC-funded films including *They're a Weird Mob* and *Maroc 7,* which had made £207,821 and £214,494, respectively.[76] These are respectable figures but the failure of either to generate much interest in the British market was perhaps more indicative of their overall performance.

But if the Corporation were attempting to put on a brave face, the Rank Organisation was more sanguine. In his annual report to accompany the Organisation's published accounts for the year (which revealed profits of £22,437,000, a rise of 18.9% on the previous year), John Davis noted that:

> Whilst our arrangements with the National Film Finance Corporation to which I referred in 1965 and 1966 have worked smoothly and harmoniously, I am sorry to say that we have had to provide in excess of £200,000 against anticipated losses. These losses emphasise the inherent risk in film production which does not grow less with rising costs and tighter markets; but if a producer does make the right form of entertainment the public seeks, then he secures his rightful reward.[77]

In terms of the financial picture, the NFFC's annual accounts indicate that loans were advanced as part of the scheme over a period of three years: in the year to March 1966 the figure was £272,926, in 1967 it was £325,010 and in 1967 £3538 was lent. This amounts to a total investment by the NFFC of £601,464 which given the 50-50 deal with Rank indicates that the scheme ended up costing just over £1.2 million. Information contained in the 1967 annual reports suggests that a total of £693,128 was advanced to the first three films in the scheme – *I Was Happy Here, The Sandwich Man* and *Romeo and Juliet*.[78] It is also indicated that a further £496,000 was loaned to *They're a Weird Mob* and *Maroc 7*.[79] This concurs with the information in the Film Finances files, but appears to makes no allowance for the claim that Paramount had provided a distribution guarantee for *Maroc 7* amounting to 50% of the production costs.[80] These figures also fail to account directly for the investment made in *Two Weeks in September,* but it is likely that they have been primarily absorbed into the figures for the year to March 1967 and offset by the American investment in *Romeo and Juliet* or *Maroc 7*. Whatever the individual sums involved, it is undoubtedly the case that returns on the scheme were far smaller than the costs. The NFFC accounts indicate the following loan repayments: 1966: £42,000, 1967: £33,096, 1968: £192,908, a combined total recoupment of just £268,004. This means that in the year to March 1968 the NFFC's total deficit on the joint financing scheme was £333,470, which after a provision for losses of £200,000 was deducted, left a further loss of £133,470.[81]

Conclusion

The impetus for the NFFC in initiating the joint-financing scheme was to enable the Corporation to participate in the production of higher budgeted films with a correspondingly greater chance of earning a return at the box office. The Corporation had clearly stated that the guiding principal behind the selection of subjects to be the possession of 'those qualities of entertainment necessary to attract modern cinema audiences'.[82] But the results noted above indicate that the failure to realise

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this aspiration had been almost total, with the NFFC's inability to pick winners starkly apparent, delivering instead a sub-Woodfall slice of poetic realism, an unfunny mad cap comedy, a rather staid ballet documentary, an overly domestic Australian comedy, a tepid thriller and a clichéd Gallic romance. All of this made Rank's strategy of ceding all decision-making to their partner a wise move, at least in terms of avoiding blame and recrimination. At the very least it does call into question the ability of John Terry and his colleagues to fully evaluate projects in line with audience tastes in a rapidly changing market.

It is also the case that time has not revealed any of the NFFC/Rank films to have been a misrecognised masterpiece. Despite occupying an important place in the annals of Anglo-French co-production, Justin Smith suggests that along with Jack Cardiff's, *Girl on a Motorcycle* (1968), *A Coeur Joie/Two Weeks in September* is 'probably best forgotten'.[83] And while Gerry O'Hara and Robert Hartford-Davis may have received attention from cult film enthusiasts, this is usually for their earlier low budget exploitation work. *They're a Weird Mob,* on the other hand, is regarded as a landmark in the development of Australian cinema, initiating a popular cycle of 'ocker comedies' that irreverently and energetically played with and perpetrated Australian stereotypes.[84] Tom O'Regan describes it as 'perhaps the most classic statement of Australian alterity' which paved the way for a vibrant and highly successful tradition of cinema that includes *The Adventures of Barry Mackenzie* (1972), *Strictly Ballroom* (1992), *Muriel's Wedding* (1994) and *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (1994).[85] Perhaps the talents of Michael Powell and Emeric Presburger, albeit past their peak of their creative powers, provided the 'x factor' lacking in the other projects selected for the NFFC/Rank scheme.

The difficulty in picking winners, in a market where the most talented filmmakers and the most commercial projects were still being routinely scooped up by the Hollywood majors, was the scheme's downfall. Ironically, the NFFC also continued to be involved in more obviously risky fare outside the main focus of the joint financing scheme that proved to be more successful with critics and audiences alike, including *Cul de Sac* (1966), *Accident* (1967), *Poor Cow* (1967) and *Ulysses* (1967). But by the mid-1960s, the NFFC was also in an increasingly parlous position. Just as the first productions in the scheme began to be released, the credit squeeze of 1966 was exacerbating the financial crisis at the NFFC and in October the Corporation announced it was being forced to suspend all lending activities until further notice. In a reminder of the sometimes fractious relationship between the Corporation and its paymaster, the refusal of the government to provide the guarantees that would have allowed the NFFC to borrow an additional £1.25 million to replenish its funds was cited as a major reason for the lending freeze.[86] This suspension of activities was to subsequently last until August the following year, by which time the joint funding scheme with Rank was already practically dead in the water, the failure of any of the films to achieve commercial success allowing both partners to withdraw quietly. The collapse of the joint funding scheme with Rank ensured that the NFFC continued to struggle with dwindling funds and uncertainty until the end of the decade. But by this point the Americans had shipped out and the British film industry was left yet again to pick up the pieces and ponder what had gone wrong.

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Notes

1. Robert Murphy, *Sixties British Cinema* (London: BFI, 1992), 278.
2. Alexander Walker dedicates half a page to the scheme in *Hollywood, England: The British Film Industry in the Sixties* (London: Harrap, 1986), 336.
3. The best account of this is provided by Terence Kelly, Graham Norton, and George Perry, *A Competitive Cinema* (London: institute of Economic Affairs, 1966), 34–6.
4. The figures for production given in the BFI Yearbook are 113 films in 1963 and 95 in 1964. The figures for British films over 65 min long released in these two years derived from Dennis Gifford indicate an even more drastic reduction from 114 to 82.
5. Reported in *Kine Weekly*, 3 October 1963.
6. NFFC Annual Report to 31 March 1963.
7. *Kine Weekly*, July 23, 1964, 3.
8. Memo from John Terry to R.B. Tippets at the Board of Trade, 20 August 1964, BT 258/2039 National Film Finance Corporation Rank – Joint Backing Fund Proposal for Film Finance 1965. While Terry admits the multiplier effect of 1.5% is on the low side, the bank has agreed to review the scheme in 12–18 months with a view to possibly increasing resources.
9. NFFC Annual Report to 31 March 1965, 5.
10. Ibid.
11. John Spraos, *The Decline of Cinema: An Economist's Report* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1962).
12. *Kine Weekly*, August 6, 1964.
13. During 1963, John Davies had denied that there was a production crisis, claiming instead that too many producers were unprepared to accept the new realities and make films with sufficient audience appeal. In one speech, Davis provocatively drew parallels with changes occurring in the rail industry: 'Dr. Beeching did not want to close railway line, but the pubic had shown, by not using the lines, that they did not need the services which were offered, with the result that the lines had become uneconomic'. *Kine Weekly*, December 19, 1963, 123.
14. Submission to Ministers, 9 November 1964. BT 258/2039 National Film Finance Corporation Rank – Joint Backing Fund Proposal for Film Finance 1965.

15. Letter from Hilary Scott to Sir Richard Powell, 3 December 1964. BT 258/2039 National Film Finance Corporation Rank – Joint Backing Fund Proposal for Film Finance 1965.
16. This position is made clear in a memo of 17 December 1964 from John Diamond at the Treasury to Douglas Jay, at the BoT. BT 258/2039 National Film Finance Corporation Rank – Joint Backing Fund Proposal for Film Finance 1965.
17. Letter from RR Powell, BoT to J Diamond, Treasury, 22 December 1964; letter from Douglas Jay to John Diamond, January 7, 1965. BT 279/261 NFFC and Backing Funds 1964.
18. Letter from R.B. Tippets to John Terry, January 11, 1965. BT 258/2039 National Film Finance Corporation Rank – Joint Backing Fund Proposal for Film Finance 1965.
19. *Kine Weekly,* January 21, 1965.
20. Reported in *The Daily Cinema*, January 5, 1965.
21. 22 January 1965 – meeting of Minister of State (Home) with a deputation from the Federation of British Film Makers led by Lord Archibald who pressed the minister on the point that he wanted to see the NFFC investing in British Lion (rather than initiate another joint backing scheme) BT 258/2039 National Film Finance Corporation Rank – Joint Backing fund Proposal for Film Finance 1965.
22. Reported in *Kine Weekly*, September 10, 1964.
23. *Kine Weekly*, September 9, 1965, 19.
24. Terence Kelly, Graham Norton, and George Perry, *A Competitive Cinema* (London: The Institute of Economic Affairs, 1966).
25. NFFC Annual Report to 31 May 1965, 5.
26. Robin Bean, 'Stalemate', *Films and Filming*, November 1965, 50.
27. While there is no clear information on how films were selected by the NFFC, the implications are that John Terry assumed the major role in the decision-making process.
28. *Kine Weekly*, September 2, 1965, 3.
29. http://www.kennethmacmillan.com/ballets/all-works/1960-1966/romeo-and-juliet.html (accessed August 12, 2015).
30. NFFC Annual Report to 31 May 1965, 6.
31. This was reported as such in *Kine Weekly,* 16 September 1965 and by Robin Bean, 'Stalemate', *Films and Filming*, November 1965. Directed by Sidney Hayers and featuring Oliver Reed and Rita Tushingham, *The Trap* was supported by both Rank and the NFFC with the participation of a Canadian co-financier.
32. One of the executives at Williamson during this period was the British actor John McCallum.
33. For an account of this see Justin Smith, 'Une Entente Cordiale?: A Brief History of the Anglo-French Coproduction Agreement, 1965–79', in *Je t'aime … moi non plus: Franco-British Cinematic Relations*, ed. Lucy Mazdon and Catherine Wheatley (Oxford: Berghahn, 2010).
34. Bourgignon's debut feature, *Sundays and Cybele* (1962) won the Oscar for Best Foreign film.
35. *The Daily Cinema*, September 5, 1966, 1.
36. Charles Drazin, 'Film Finances: The First Years', *The Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 34, no. 1 (2014): 2–22.

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37. The Film Finances files for *Two Weeks in September* are not available.
38. May 31, 1965, letter from John Croydon to Robert Garrett, *I Was Happy Here,* Film Finances Archive.
39. June 9, 1967 – Peat Marwick report on production costs of *I Was Happy Here*. Direct costs – £147,043, Finance and legal charges – £13,938, Overheads – £6798, Total costs – £167,779. Film Finances Archive.
40. Robin Bean, 'Passage of Love', *Films and Filming*, September 1965, 43.
41. August 15, 1965 – report from John Croydon to Robert Garrett. *The Sandwich Man,* Film Finance Archive.
42. Original Production budget (9 July 1965): Direct costs – £167,295, Finance and legal charges – £20,164, Overheads – £100,000, contingency – £16,729, Total budget: £214,188. Revised production budget (19 August 1965) – Direct costs – £197,337, finance and legal – £23,183, Overheads – £10,000, contingency – £19,733, Total: £250,253. *The Sandwich Man*, Film Finance Archive.
43. April 7, 1966, Cost Statement, and correspondence between John Terry and Robert Garrett, dated 28 January and 7 February 1966. *The Sandwich Man,* Film Finance Archive.
44. Charles Drazin, 'Film Finances: The First Years', 12–13.
45. September 19, 1965 – letter from John Croydon to Robert Garrett, *They're a Weird Mob*, Film Finances Archive.
46. Agreement of 2 August 1966 between Film Finances and Williamson Powell International.
47. David Stratton, *The Last New Wave: The Australian Film Revival* (London: Angus & Robertson, 1980), 5.
48. October 15, 1965 – Letter from Michael Powell to Robert Garrett.
49. July 24, 1967 – Peat Marwck report on final costs of the film. Direct costs – £196,457, Finance and Legal charges – £25,062, Overheads – £9500, Total cost – £231,019. This was £3906 less than the original budget of £234,925.
50. June 20, 1966 – Letter from John Croydon to Robert Garrett, *Maroc 7,* Film Finances Archive.
51. June 27, 1966 – letter from Film Finances to Cyclone Films. The fee for the guarantee is £13,934 payable within 14 days of the first day of shooting. *Maroc 7,* Film Finances Archive.
52. Croydon recounts his experiences on the shoot in great detail in 'On Location with "Maroc 7"', *Classic Images*, no. 131, May 1986, continued in no. 132, June 1986.
53. August 8, 1966 – letter from John Terry to the Manager of the National Provincial Bank, Piccadilly Branch, *Maroc 7,* Film Finances Archive.
54. November 2, 1966 – letter from Douglas Gosling, Cost Advisor at NFFC to Robert Garrett at Film Finances. *Maroc 7*, Film Finances Archive.
55. June 19, 1967 – letter from Film Finances to Peat Marwick. *Maroc 7*, Film Finances Archive. The final cost was made up of directs costs of £354,928, finance and legal charges of £33,783, and Overheads of £11,124.
56. Michael Thompson, *Sunday Express*, July 10, 1966, Ann Pacey, *The Sun,* July 6, 1966, *Evening News*, July 7, 1966.
57. Dilys Powell, *Sunday Times*, July 10, 1966; Nina Hibbin, *Morning Star*, August 6, 1966.

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58. *Monthly Film Bulletin* 3, no. 391 (August 1966). John Mortimer, *The Observer*, July 10, 1966. This attitude can also been seen in criticism of Jack Clayton's 1964 feature *The Pumpkin Eater* by Penelope Giliat and others in terms of 'keeping up with the Antonionis'. See Neil Sinyard, *Jack Clayton* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 110–1.
59. *The Times*, July 7, 1966.
60. *Variety*, October 5, 1966, 6; *Kine Weekly*, October 13, 1966, 22.
61. Ann Pacey, *The Sun*, October 27, 1966; Richard Buckle, *Sunday Times*, October 30, 1966.
62. *The Times*, October 27, 1966; Philip French, *The Observer*, October 30, 1966; *Time*, November 4, 1966.
63. Jann Parry, *Different Drummer: The Life of Kenneth Macmillan* (London: Faber & Faber, 2009), 299.
64. *Kine Weekly*, October 13, 1966, 10; *The Daily Cinema*, October 12, 1966, 9.
65. *Variety*, September 14, 1966.
66. *Monthly Film Bulletin* 33, no. 394 (November 1966): 173.
67. *Kine Weekly*, August 11, 1966, 10; *Daily Cinema*, August 10, 1966, 8; *Variety*, August 17, 1966.
68. Raymond Durgnat, 'The Sandwich Man', *Films and Filming*, November 1966, 57.
69. *Kine Weekly,* March 18, 1967.
70. *Variety*, March 29, 1967, 6.
71. *Monthly Film Bulletin* 34, no. 400 (May 1967): 77.
72. *Monthly Film Bulletin* 34, no. 406 (November 1967): 172. It is interesting that *I Was Happy Here* and *Two Weeks in Summer* were considered 'women's films', *They're a Weird Mob* was discussed by critics in relation to women's genres, while *Maroc 7* was also invested in the feminine world of fashion.
73. *Cahiers du Cinema*, no. 192, July–August 1967, 71.
74. Robin Bean, 'Trapped in a Sandwich', *Films and Filming* (January 1967): 60.
75. NFFC Report to 31 March 1967, 1–2.
76. December 14, 1967 – memorandum to the Board of Trade from the Board of the NFFC, BT 279/283 Review of Film Support Policy and Legislation 1967/1968.
77. John Davis, report in published Annual Accounts of the Rank Organisation, 1967, BT 258/2040 National Film Finance Corporation Rank – Joint Backing Fund Proposal for Film Finance 1965.
78. NFFC Annual Report to 31 March 1967, 2. Given that the budgets of the first two combined came to £420,000, this suggest that Czinner's ballet film cost £270,000, which is considerably more than the £215,000 estimate given to the Board of Trade and does not appear to discount the guarantee provided by Joseph E. Levine's Embassy Pictures.
79. NFFC Annual Report to 31 March 1967, 2.
80. NFFC Annual Report to 1967.
81. International Exposure for the slate of films according to IMDB: *I Was Happy Here* – UK, Mexico, Ireland, Denmark, East Germany one offs at San Sebastian, New York, Adelaide) (alt titles suggest releases in Greece, Poland, West Germany) Continental Distributing in the USA. *The Sandwich Man* – UK, Ireland. *Romeo and Juliet* – the USA, the UK, Finland, Embassy all media. *They're a Weird Mob* – Australia, UK, Ireland, Hungary (alternative titles suggest releases

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in Italy, Spain, Mexico, Portugal). *Maroc 7* – releases in UK, West Germany, Portugal, France, USA (Paramount), Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Mexico. *A Coeur Joie/Two Weeks in September* – France, the USA, the UK, Turkey, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Portugal (alternative titles also suggest releases in Austria, Brazil, Greece, West Germany, Poland) Paramount noted as exhibitors for all media.

82. NFFC Annual Report to 31 May 1965, 5.
83. Justin Smith, 'Une Entente Cordiale?: A Brief History of the Anglo-French Coproduction Agreement, 1965–79', in *Je t'aime … moi non plus: Franco-British Cinematic Relations*, ed. Lucy Mazdon and Catherine Wheatley (Oxford: Berghahn, 2010), 56.
84. Scott Murray, 'Australian Cinema in the 1970s and 1980s', in *Australian Cinema*, ed. Scott Murray (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1994), 76.
85. Tom O'Regan, *Australian National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1996), 251.
86. *Kine Weekly,* October 27, 1966.

Notes on contributor

Duncan Petrie is a professor of Film and Television at the University of York. He has published widely on British, Scottish and New Zealand Cinema. His most recent book is *Educating Film-Makers: Past, Present, Future* (Bristol: Intellect, 2014), co-written with Rod Stoneman.

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