



#### Passing Time

Written and Read by: Terence Davies  
Filmed, Recorded and Produced by:  
James Dowling  
Commissioned by: Film Fest Ghent  
Post-production: Polyphonic Films Limited  
Executive Producer: John Taylor  
Edited by: Gregory Browning  
Composer: Florencia Di Concilio  
UK 2023  
3 mins  
Digital

#### The Long Day Closes

Director: Terence Davies  
Production Company: Film Four International  
In association with: British Film Institute Production  
Executive Producers: Ben Gibson, Colin MacCabe  
Producer: Olivia Stewart  
Executive in Charge of Production: Angela Topping  
Production Co-ordinator: Lesley Stewart  
Production Manager: Chris Harvey  
Location Managers: Andrew Macdonald,  
Jeff Bowen  
Assistant Directors: Gus MacLean,  
Tommy Gormley, David Gilchrist  
Casting: Doreen Jones  
Screenplay: Terence Davies  
Director of Photography: Michael Coulter  
Cloud Photography: Chris Plevin, Jeremy Kelly  
Camera Operator: Harriet Cox  
Special Effects: All F/X Limited  
Model Ships: Areteffects  
Editor: William Diver  
Production Designer: Christopher Hobbs  
Art Director: Kave Naylor  
Scenic Artists: Catherine Goodley, Lynne Whiteread  
Costume Designer: Monica Howe  
Wardrobe Supervisor: Patrick Wheatley  
Make-up: Aileen Seaton, Heather Jones  
Titles: Plume Partners  
Opticals: Peerless Camera Company  
Music Director: Robert Lockhart  
Music Supervisor: Bob Last  
Sound Recording: Moya Burns  
Sound Re-recording: Aad Wirtz  
Sound Editor: Alex Mackie  
Dialogue Editor: Patrick O'Neill  
Sound Effects: Cinesound Effects  
Cast:  
Marjorie Yates (*mother*)  
Leigh McCormack (*Bud*)  
Anthony Watson (*Kevin*)  
Nicholas Lamont (*John*)  
Ayse Owens (*Helen*)  
Tina Malone (*Edna*)  
Jimmy Wilde (*Curly*)  
Robin Polley (*Mr Nicholls*)  
Peter Ivatts (*Mr Bushell*)  
Joy Blakeman (*Frances*)  
Denise Thomas (*Jean*)  
Patricia Morrison (*Amy*)  
Gavin Mawdsley (*Billy*)  
Kirk McLaughlin (*labourer/Christ*)  
Marcus Heath (*black man*)  
Victoria Davies (*nun*)  
Brenda Peters (*nurse*)  
Karl Skeggs (*Albie*)  
Lee Blennerhassett, Peter Hollier, Jason Jevons  
(*bullies*)  
UK 1992  
85 mins  
35mm

Love, Sex, Religion, Death: The Complete Films of Terence Davies

# The Long Day Closes

*The screening on Wednesday 19 November will be introduced by season curator Ben Roberts*

'This is the last of the autobiographical films I shall do; perhaps I've changed. When I was that young, those four years ago, everything seemed fixed and it was such a feeling of security that this is how it will be forever, and I really believed that; I didn't think I'd get any older, nobody would get any older and everything would stay like this forever. But it didn't, of course it's not going to.

I tried to hold the security of those years, but the end of the film says it doesn't stay like that, you've got to come to terms with it. My feelings are mixed. If I could change everything and could go back to it I would, but that's real cowardice because you've got to face life, it's no good saying it was wonderful in 1956, because it's not 1956. I don't like change, I will always resist it, yet I promote it as well, that's the irony.' – Terence Davies

*Sight and Sound*, May 1992

Set in working-class Liverpool, Terence Davies' *The Long Day Closes* is unashamedly autobiographical. And one of the keys to understanding the impact of the film lies in the way the director and his collaborators have reproduced his visual and emotional memories. Design in film is often neglected, but in the case of *The Long Day Closes*, together with the music, it is design that is largely responsible for the film's affectivity, making a significant contribution to its overall meaning and appeal.

Davies frames each shot with the care of a still photographer or a painter seeking out *tableaux vivants*. Before shooting began, he showed [director of photography] Michael Coulter books of 'old master' paintings, including Vermeers and Rembrandts, where intense central light falls away quickly into shadow, together with 50s Kodachrome photographs of Lancashire – both of which he claimed captured the moods and feelings he wanted to convey. The overall look of the film was achieved after exhaustive tests using different film stocks, lenses and filters and the bleach bypass process, in which colour is desaturated in the final wash of the printing. Davies had used this technique in *Distant Voices*, *Still Lives*, but here it was improved upon to give a warmer and more glossy finish as well as the desired contrasts of light and shade. The monochromatic, 'period' look of the 50s snapshots is suggested by the limited range of tones used in the sets and costumes, in combination with coral filters, Eastmancolor and 'old Cooke lenses which are less sharp than modern ones and slightly round everything off.'

Davies uses the warmth achieved by these effects to show Bud as happy; his isolation and sense of being trapped is conveyed through the falling away of light, or by framing him behind shadows, windows, staircases and railings. The use of designed objects in this way was apparently not a conscious one for Davies, but is acknowledged by him in retrospect: 'I didn't see the railings as imprisonment. They were part of the house and comforting in an odd sort of way, but I think subconsciously I must have thought they were a kind of prison, because they do look like that.'

Davies often shows Bud as a spectator looking out on the world. This is in line with one of the film's central concerns: the director's love of cinema. The visual

We're delighted to confirm this screening will be of the BFI Archive's brand new 35mm print made with funding from the National Lottery and the additional support of donors to our Keep Film on Film campaign. The print has been made with the same bleach bypass process to match an original release print.

## Love, Sex, Religion, Death: The Complete Films of Terence Davies

### The Long Day Closes

Tue 28 Oct 20:45; Wed 19 Nov 18:20 (+ intro by season curator Ben Roberts)

### Of Time and the City

Wed 29 Oct 20:45 (+ pre-recorded intro by Jason Wood, BFI Executive Director of Public Programmes & Audiences); Fri 28 Nov 20:40

### The Terence Davies Trilogy

Sat 1 Nov 12:10; Fri 7 Nov 20:55

### The Deep Blue Sea

Sat 1 Nov 15:10; Thu 6 Nov 18:10;  
Wed 19 Nov 20:45

### Sunset Song

Sun 2 Nov 18:00; Mon 3 Nov 20:20

### A Quiet Passion

Fri 7 Nov 18:00; Fri 21 Nov 20:30

### Book Launch: Terence Davies Screenplays, Volumes I and II

Tue 11 Nov 20:00 BFI Reuben Library

### The Neon Bible

Sun 16 Nov 18:20

### The Unrealised Projects of Terence Davies

Tue 18 Nov 18:20

### Benediction

Sat 22 Nov 20:20; Sun 30 Nov (+ intro by season curator Ben Roberts)

### Distant Voices, Still Lives

Sat 29 Nov 18:30

### With thanks to

James Dowling, John Taylor, Dan Copley,  
Sophie Smith, Edge Hill University

## The Terence Davies Estate



### Dear Bud: The Creative Mind of Terence Davies

Edge Hill University, the repository of the Terence Davies Archive, curates a free exhibition of previously unseen materials from Davies' personal archive and the archive of production company Hurricane Films. The exhibition will include materials from both Terence's personal life and film career such as family letters and belongings, behind-the-scenes photos, props and draft scripts, highlighting his career long connection to the BFI, his deep love of music and a glimpse of his creative space with an interactive recreation of his working desk.

1-30 Nov BFI Southbank Mezzanine

style at times recreates 50s Hollywood, as though Davies' child's view saw the world in terms of a film industry that gave a gloss and richness to daily life and things archetypically English: 'It's Hollywood rain you see. I can remember seeing the rain and thinking "Oh, it's just like a Hollywood musical". I try to celebrate Englishness with the panache of the Americans.'

But despite its Hollywood touches, the film is firmly situated within everyday reality, with much of its evocative power coming from the commonplace 50s artefacts and social customs within it. Davies is 'interested in the poetry of the ordinary, ordinary things happening to ordinary people', and celebrates this. His family were poor: 'There were ten of us; we could only afford to have the parlour and downstairs part of the hall painted and papered, so everything else was distempered.' But at the same time there was a richness, 'the culture was incredibly rich with very little; you had the radio, the cinema, the pub and the dance hall, *finito* – but that seemed incredibly rich.'

Sound and camera movement give fluidity, depth and richness to the film. The way the camera tracks and dissolves, together with the symmetrical framings, gives a sense of artifice, celebrating a stylised cinematic view of the world. There is a freedom of movement from one space to another which allusively links different aspects of Bud's life, particularly home, cinema, church and school. The soundtrack combines numerous musical pieces, film quotations and everyday sounds; the film sound clips produce an ironic commentary on the images and the music gives the film an almost symphonic form. Davies has the courage to hold key images so that we listen fully to the music, mainly popular songs, used in conjunction with classical music, which he sees now as complementing the feelings he had then. So important is the combination of visuals and music that for some major shots the music was played as the camera crew was filming.

Davies wanted to recreate both emotional and visual memories, and in *The Long Day Closes* the emotions are reached through the visuals, in particular costume, design and the overall 'look' of the film. Though he denies that making the film was a therapeutic process – 'It's never catharsis because it's too painful' – the effects on our eyes, ears and heart are powerful. By the end of the film we may recall, mourn, celebrate and reflect upon our own as well as Bud's early years; an experience that invokes an acute sense of loss that touches the heart. Few directors dare to do that today.

Pat Kirkham and Mike O'Shaughnessy, *Sight and Sound*, May 1992

## Passing Time

A meditation on loss, love, and of the consoling power of words, music and nature.