

= Thunderball (film) =

Thunderball (1965) is the fourth spy film in the James Bond series starring Sean Connery as the fictional MI6 agent James Bond . It is an adaptation of the novel of the same name by Ian Fleming , which in turn was based on an original screenplay by Jack Whittingham . It was directed by Terence Young with its screenplay by Richard Maibaum and John Hopkins .

The film follows Bond 's mission to find two NATO atomic bombs stolen by SPECTRE , which holds the world to ransom for £ 100 million in diamonds , in exchange for not destroying an unspecified major city in either England or the United States (later revealed to be Miami) . The search leads Bond to the Bahamas , where he encounters Emilio Largo , the card @-@ playing , eye patch @-@ wearing SPECTRE Number Two . Backed by CIA agent Felix Leiter and Largo 's mistress , Domino Derval , Bond 's search culminates in an underwater battle with Largo 's henchmen . The film had a complex production , with four different units and about a quarter of the film consisting of underwater scenes . Thunderball was the first Bond film shot in widescreen Panavision and the first to have running time of over two hours .

Thunderball was associated with a legal dispute in 1961 when former Ian Fleming collaborators Kevin McClory and Jack Whittingham sued him shortly after the 1961 publication of the novel , claiming he based it upon the screenplay the trio had earlier written in a failed cinematic translation of James Bond . The lawsuit was settled out of court and Bond film series producers Albert R. Broccoli and Harry Saltzman , fearing a rival McClory film , allowed him to retain certain screen rights to the novel 's story , plot , and characters , and for McClory to receive sole producer credit on this film ; Broccoli and Saltzman were instead credited as Executive Producers .

The film was a success , earning a total of \$ 141 @.@ 2 million worldwide , exceeding the earnings of the three previous Bond films . In 1966 , John Stears won the Academy Award for Best Visual Effects and production designer Ken Adam was also nominated for a BAFTA award . Thunderball is the most financially successful film of the series after adjusting for inflation . Some critics and viewers showered praise on the film and branded it a welcome addition to the series , while others complained of the repetitively monotonous aquatic action and prolonged length . In 1983 , Warner Bros. released a second film adaptation of the novel under the title Never Say Never Again , with McClory as executive producer .

= = Plot = =

James Bond ? MI6 agent 007 and sometimes simply " 007 " ? attends the funeral of Colonel Jacques Bouvar , a SPECTRE operative (Number 6) . Bouvar is alive and disguised as his own widow , but Bond identifies him . Following him to a château , Bond fights and kills him , escaping using a jetpack and his Aston Martin DB5 .

Bond is sent by M to the Shrublands clinic to improve his health . While being massaged by physiotherapist Patricia Fearing , he notices Count Lippe , a suspicious man with a criminal tattoo (from a Tong) . He searches Lippe 's room , but is seen leaving by Lippe 's clinic neighbour who is bandaged after plastic surgery . Lippe tries to murder Bond with a spinal traction machine , but is foiled by Fearing , whom Bond then seduces . Bond finds a dead bandaged man , François Derval . Derval was a French NATO pilot deployed to fly aboard an Avro Vulcan loaded with two atomic bombs for a training mission . He had been murdered by Angelo , a SPECTRE henchman surgically altered to match his appearance .

Angelo takes Derval 's place on the flight , sabotaging the plane and sinking it near the Bahamas . He is then killed by Emilio Largo (SPECTRE No. 2) for trying to extort more money than offered to him . Largo and his henchmen retrieve the stolen atomic bombs from the seabed . After leaving the clinic for a conference , Bond is pursued by Count Lippe through the countryside roads until Lippe and his car are destroyed by SPECTRE agent Fiona Volpe for failing to kill Bond . SPECTRE has demanded £ 100 million in white flawless uncut diamonds from NATO in exchange for returning the bombs . If their demands are not met , SPECTRE will destroy a major city in the United States or the United Kingdom . At the meeting , Bond recognises Derval from a photograph . Since Derval 's

sister , Domino , is in Nassau , Bond asks M to send him there , where he discovers Domino is Largo 's mistress .

Bond takes a boat to where Domino is snorkelling . After Bond saves her life , the two have lunch together . Later , Bond goes to a party , where he sees Largo and Domino gambling . Bond enters the game against Largo and wins , and subsequently takes Domino to a dance . Recognising each other as adversaries , Bond and Largo begin a tense cat @-@ and @-@ mouse game of attempting to gain advantage over each other while still pretending ignorance of their adversary 's true nature .

Bond meets Felix Leiter and Q , and is issued a collection of gadgets , including an underwater infrared camera , a distress beacon , underwater breathing apparatus , a flare gun , and a Geiger counter . Bond attempts to swim underwater beneath Largo 's boat , but is nearly killed . Bond visits Largo at his estate , Palmyra . Bond 's assistant , Paula , is later abducted by Largo for questioning and kills herself before Bond can rescue her .

Bond is kidnapped by Fiona but escapes . He is chased through a Junkanoo celebration and enters the Kiss Kiss club . Fiona finds and attempts to kill him , but she is shot by her own bodyguard . Bond and Felix search for the Vulcan , finding it underwater . Bond meets Domino scuba @-@ diving and tells her that Largo killed her brother , asking for help finding the bombs . She tells him where to go to replace a henchman on Largo 's mission to retrieve them from an underwater bunker . Bond gives her his Geiger counter , asking her to look for them on Largo 's ship . She is discovered and captured . Disguised as Largo 's henchman , Bond uncovers Largo 's plan to destroy Miami Beach .

Bond is discovered and rescued by Leiter , who orders United States Navy SEALs to parachute to the area . After an underwater battle , the henchmen surrender . Largo escapes to his ship , the Disco Volante , which has one of the bombs on board . Largo attempts to escape by jettisoning the rear of the ship . The front section , a hydrofoil , escapes . Bond , also aboard , and Largo fight ; Largo is about to shoot him when Domino , freed by Largo 's nuclear physicist Ladislav Kutze , kills Largo with a harpoon . Bond and Domino jump overboard , the boat runs aground and explodes . A sky hook @-@ equipped US Navy aeroplane rescues them .

= = Cast = =

Sean Connery as James Bond (007) : An MI6 agent assigned to retrieve two stolen nuclear weapons .

Adolfo Celi as Emilio Largo (voice dubbed by Robert Rietty) : Main antagonist . SPECTRE 's Number Two , he creates a scheme to steal two atomic bombs .

Claudine Auger as Dominique " Domino " Derval (voice dubbed by Nikki van der Zyl) : Largo 's mistress . In early drafts of the screenplay Domino 's name was Dominetta Palazzi . When Claudine Auger was cast as Domino the name was changed to Derval to reflect her nationality . The character 's wardrobe reflects her name , as she is usually dressed in black and / or white .

Luciana Paluzzi as Fiona Volpe : SPECTRE agent , who becomes François Derval 's mistress and kills him before being sent to Nassau .

Rik Van Nutter as Felix Leiter : CIA agent who helps Bond .

Bernard Lee as M : Head of MI6 .

Martine Beswick as Paula Caplan : Bond 's ally in Nassau who is kidnapped by Vargas and Janni .

Guy Doleman as Count Lippe : SPECTRE agent who tries to kill Bond in the health clinic .

Molly Peters as Patricia Fearing : a physiotherapist at the health clinic .

Earl Cameron as Pinder , Bond and Felix Leiter 's assistant in The Bahamas .

Paul Stassino as François Derval and Angelo Palazzi : Derval is a NATO pilot , who is also Domino 's brother . He is killed by SPECTRE agent Angelo Palazzi , who impersonates him . Palazzi is later killed by Largo .

Desmond Llewelyn as Q : MI6 's " quartermaster " who supplies Bond with multi @-@ purpose vehicles and gadgets useful for the latter 's missions .

Roland Culver as the Foreign Secretary : British Minister who briefs the " 00 " agents for Operation Thunderball and has doubts about Bond 's efficiency .

Lois Maxwell as Miss Moneypenny : M 's secretary .

Philip Locke as Vargas : Largo 's personal assistant and henchman who abstains from alcohol , smoking and sexual intercourse , emphasising his devotion as a killer . He is killed by Bond with a spear gun on the beach .

George Pravda as Ladislav Kutze : Emilio Largo 's chief nuclear physicist who aids his boss with the captured bombs . He rescues Domino , pitying her when Largo was torturing her . He later escapes the boat with a life saver and swims away .

Michael Brennan as Janni : One of Largo 's thugs who is usually paired with Vargas .

Anthony Dawson as Ernst Stavro Blofeld , voiced by Eric Pohlmann (both un @-@ credited) : The head of SPECTRE (uncredited)

Bill Cummings as Quist : Another of Largo 's inefficient thugs who , after failing to assassinate 007 , is thrown into a shark pool under orders from his boss . (uncredited)

André Maranne cameos as SPECTRE No. 10 . (uncredited)

Rose Alba as Madame Boitier .

Leonard Sachs as Group Captain .

Edward Underdown as Air Vice Marshal .

Reginald Beckwith as Kenniston .

= = Production = =

= = = Legal disputes = = =

Originally meant as the first James Bond film , Thunderball was the centre of legal disputes that began in 1961 and ran until 2006 . Former Ian Fleming collaborators Kevin McClory and Jack Whittingham sued Fleming shortly after the 1961 publication of the Thunderball novel , claiming he based it upon the screenplay the trio had earlier written in a failed cinematic translation of James Bond . The lawsuit was settled out of court ; McClory retained certain screen rights to the novel 's story , plot , and characters . By then , James Bond was a box office success , and series producers Broccoli and Saltzman feared a rival McClory film beyond their control ; they agreed to McClory 's producer 's credit of a cinematic Thunderball , with them as executive producers .

The sources for Thunderball are controversial among film aficionados . In 1961 , Ian Fleming published his novel based upon a television screenplay that he , and others developed into the film screenplay ; the efforts were unproductive , and Fleming expanded the script into his ninth James Bond novel . Consequently , one of his collaborators , Kevin McClory , sued him for plagiarism ; they settled out of court in 1963 .

Later , in 1964 , Eon producers Broccoli and Saltzman agreed with McClory to cinematically adapt the novel ; it was promoted as " Ian Fleming 's Thunderball " . Yet , along with the official credits to screenwriters Richard Maibaum and John Hopkins , the screenplay is also identified as based on an original screenplay by Jack Whittingham and as based on the original story by Kevin McClory , Jack Whittingham , and Ian Fleming . To date , the novel has twice been adapted cinematically ; the 1983 Jack Schwartzman @-@ produced Never Say Never Again , features Sean Connery as James Bond , but is not an Eon production .

= = = Casting = = =

Broccoli 's original choice for the role of Domino Derval was Julie Christie following her performance in Billy Liar in 1963 . Upon meeting her personally , however , he was disappointed and turned his attentions towards Raquel Welch after seeing her on the cover of the October 1964 issue of Life . Welch , however , was hired by Richard Zanuck of 20th Century Fox to appear in the film Fantastic Voyage the same year instead . Faye Dunaway was also considered for the role and came close to signing for the part . Saltzman and Broccoli auditioned an extensive list of relatively unknown European actresses and models including former Miss Italy Maria Grazia Buccella , Yvonne Monlaur

of the Hammer horror films and Gloria Paul . Eventually former Miss France Claudine Auger was cast , and the script was rewritten to make her character French rather than Italian , although her lines were redubbed for the final cut . Nevertheless , director Young would cast her once again in his next film , Triple Cross (1966) . One of the actresses that tried for Domino , Luciana Paluzzi , later accepted the role as the redheaded femme fatale assassin Fiona Kelly who originally was intended by Maibaum to be Irish . The surname was changed to Volpe in co @-@ ordination with Paluzzi 's nationality .

= = = Filming = = =

Guy Hamilton was invited to direct , but considered himself worn out and " creatively drained " after the production of Goldfinger . Terence Young , director of the first two Bond films , returned to the series . Coincidentally , when Saltzman invited him to direct Dr. No , Young expressed interest in directing adaptations of Dr. No , From Russia with Love and Thunderball . Years later , Young said Thunderball was filmed " at the right time " , considering that if it was the first film in the series , the low budget (Dr. No cost only \$ 1 million) would not have yielded good results . Thunderball was the final James Bond film directed by Young .

Filming commenced on 16 February 1965 , with principal photography of the opening scene in Paris . Filming then moved to the Château d 'Anet , near Dreux , France for the fight in pre @-@ credit sequence . Much of the film was shot in the Bahamas ; Thunderball is widely known for its extensive underwater action scenes which are played out through much of the latter half of the film . The rest of the film was shot at Pinewood Studios , Buckinghamshire , Silverstone racing circuit for the chase involving Count Lippe , Fiona Volpe and James Bond 's Aston Martin DB5 before moving to Nassau , and Paradise Island in the Bahamas (where most of the footage was shot) , and Miami . Huntington Hartford gave permission to shoot footage on his Paradise Island and is thanked at the end of the film .

On arriving in Nassau McClory searched for possible locations to shoot many of the key sequences of the film and used the home of a local millionaire couple , the Sullivans , for Largo 's estate , Palmyra . Part of the SPECTRE underwater assault was also shot on the coastal grounds of another millionaire 's home on the island . The most difficult sequences to film were the underwater action scenes ; the first to be shot underwater was at a depth of 50 feet to shoot the scene where SPECTRE divers remove the atomic bombs from the sunken Vulcan bomber . Peter Lamont had previously visited a Royal Air Force bomber station carrying a concealed camera which he used to get close @-@ up shots of secret missiles (those appearing in the film were not actually present) . Most of the underwater scenes had to be done at lower tides due to the sharks in the Bahamian sea .

Connery 's life was in danger in the sequence with the sharks in Largo 's pool . He had been in fear of this risk when he read the script . He insisted that production designer Ken Adam build a special Plexiglas partition inside the pool , but it was not a fixed structure and one of the sharks managed to pass through it . Connery had to abandon the pool immediately , seconds away from attack . Ken Adam later told UK daily newspaper The Guardian ,

" We had to use special effects but , unlike special effects today , they were real . The jet pack we used in Thunderball was real - it was invented for the United States army . Bloody dangerous , and it only lasted a couple of minutes . The ejector seat in the Aston Martin was real and Emilio Largo 's boat , the Disco Volante , was real . You had power boats at that time but there were no good @-@ sized yachts that were able to travel at 40 to 50 knots so it was quite a problem . But by combining a hydrofoil , which we bought in Puerto Rico for \$ 10 @,@ 000 , and a catamaran , it at least looked like a big yacht . We combined the two hulls with a one @-@ inch slip bolt and when they split it worked like a dream . We used lots of sharks for this movie . I 'd rented a villa in the Bahamas with a salt @-@ water pool which we filled with sharks and used for underwater filming . The smell was horrendous . This was where Sean Connery came close to being bitten . We had a plexiglass corridor to protect him but I didn 't have quite enough plexiglass and one of the sharks got through . He never got out of a pool faster in his life - he was walking on water . "

Another dangerous situation occurred when special effects coordinator John Stears brought in a supposed dead shark carcass to be towed around the pool . The shark , however , was not dead and revived at one point . Due to the dangers on the set , stuntman Bill Cummings demanded an extra fee of £ 250 to double for Largo 's sidekick Quist as he was dropped into the pool of sharks .

The climactic underwater battle was shot at Clifton Pier and was choreographed by Hollywood expert Ricou Browning , who had worked on many films previously such as Creature From the Black Lagoon in 1954 . He was responsible for the staging of the cave sequence and the battle scenes beneath the Disco Volante and called in his specialist team of divers who posed as those engaged in the onslaught . Voit provided much of the underwater gear in exchange for product placement and film tie @-@ in merchandise . Lamar Boren , an underwater photographer , was brought in to shoot all of the sequences . United States Air Force Lieutenant @-@ Colonel Charles Russhon , who had already helped alliance Eon productions with the local authorities in Turkey for From Russia with Love (1963) and at Fort Knox for Goldfinger (1964) , stood by and was able to supply the experimental rocket fuel used to destroy the Disco Volante . Russhon , using his position , was also able to gain access to the United States Navy 's Fulton surface @-@ to @-@ air recovery system , used to lift Bond and Domino from the water at the end of the film . Filming ceased in May 1965 and the final scene shot was the physical fight on the bridge of the Disco Volante .

While in Nassau , during the final shooting days , special effects supervisor John Stears was supplied experimental rocket fuel to use in exploding Largo 's yacht , the Disco Volante . Ignoring the true power of the volatile liquid , Stears doused the entire yacht with it , took cover , and then detonated the boat . The resultant massive explosion shattered windows along Bay Street in Nassau roughly 30 miles away . Stears went on to win an Academy Award for his work on Thunderball .

As the filming neared its conclusion , Connery had become increasingly agitated with press intrusion and was distracted with difficulties in his marriage of 32 months to actress Diane Cilento . Connery refused to speak to journalists and photographers who followed him in Nassau stating his frustration with the harassment that came with the role ; " I find that fame tends to turn one from an actor and a human being into a piece of merchandise , a public institution . Well , I don 't intend to undergo that metamorphosis . " In the end he gave only a single interview , to Playboy , as filming was wrapped up , and even turned down a substantial fee to appear in a promotional TV special made by Wolper Productions for NBC The Incredible World of James Bond . According to editor Peter R. Hunt , Thunderball 's release was delayed for three months , from September until December 1965 , after he met David Picker of United Artists , and convinced him it would be impossible to edit the film to a high enough standard without the extra time .

= = = Effects = = =

Thanks to special @-@ effects man John Stears , Thunderball 's pre @-@ title teaser , the Aston Martin DB5 (introduced in Goldfinger) , reappears armed with rear @-@ firing water cannon , seeming noticeably weathered ? just dust and dirt , raised moments earlier by Bond 's landing with the Bell Rocket Belt (developed by Bell Aircraft Corporation) . The rocket belt Bond uses to escape the château actually worked , and was used many times , before and after , for entertainment , most notably at Super Bowl I and at scheduled performances at the 1964 ? 1965 New York World 's Fair .

Bond receives a spear gun @-@ armed underwater jet pack scuba (allowing the frogman to manoeuvre faster than other frogmen) . Designed by Jordan Klein , green dye was meant to be used by Bond as a smoke screen to escape pursuers . Instead Ricou Browning , the film 's underwater director , used it to make Bond 's arrival more dramatic .

The sky hook , used to rescue Bond at the end of the film , was a rescue system used by the United States military at the time . At Thunderball 's release , there was confusion as to whether a rebreather such as the one that appears in the film existed ; most Bond gadgets , while implausible , often are based upon real technology . In the real world , a rebreather could not be so small , as it has no room for the breathing bag , while the alternative open @-@ circuit scuba releases

exhalation bubbles , which the film device does not . It was made with two CO2 bottles glued together and painted , with a small mouthpiece attached . For this reason , when the Royal Corps of Engineers asked Peter Lamont how long a man could use the device underwater , the answer was " As long as you can hold your breath . "

Maurice Binder was hired to design the title sequence , and was involved in a dispute with Eon Production to have his name credited in the film . As Thunderball was the first James Bond film shot in Panavision , Binder had to reshoot the iconic gun barrel scene which permitted him to not only incorporate pinhole photographic techniques to shoot inside a genuine gun barrel , but also made Connery appearing in the sequence for the first time a reality , as stunt man Bob Simmons had doubled for him in the three previous films . Binder gained access to the tank at Pinewood which he used to film the silhouetted title girls who appeared naked in the opening sequence , which was the first time actual nudity (although concealed) had ever been seen in a Bond film .

On 26 June 2013 Christie 's auction house sold the Breitling SA Top Time watch worn in the film by Sean Connery for over £ 100 @, @ 000 ; given to Bond by Q , it was also a Geiger counter in the plot .

= = = Music = = =

Thunderball was the third James Bond score composed by John Barry , after From Russia with Love and Goldfinger . The original title song was entitled " Mr. Kiss Kiss , Bang Bang " , taken from an Italian journalist who in 1962 dubbed agent 007 as Mr. Kiss Kiss , Bang Bang . The title theme was written by Barry and Leslie Bricusse ; the song was originally recorded by Shirley Bassey , and later rerecorded by Dionne Warwick , whose version was not released until the 1990s . The song was removed from the title credits after producers Albert R. Broccoli and Harry Saltzman were worried that a theme song to a James Bond film would not work well if the song did not have the title of the film in its lyrics . Barry then teamed up with lyricist Don Black and wrote " Thunderball " , which was sung by Tom Jones who , according to Bond production legend , fainted in the recording booth when singing the song 's final note . Jones said of it , " I closed my eyes and I held the note for so long when I opened my eyes the room was spinning . "

Country musician Johnny Cash also submitted a song to Eon productions titled " Thunderball " , but it went unused .

= = Release and reception = =

The film premiered on 9 December 1965 in Tokyo and opened on 29 December 1965 in the UK . It was a major success at the box office with record @-@ breaking earnings . Variety reported that Thunderball was the No. 1 money maker of 1966 at the North American box office by a large margin , with a net profit of \$ 26 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 . The second highest money maker of 1966 was Doctor Zhivago at \$ 15 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 ; in third place was Who 's Afraid of Virginia Woolf ? at \$ 10 @, @ 300 @, @ 000 . It eventually grossed \$ 63 @. @ 6 million in the United States , equating to roughly 58 @. @ 1 million admissions . In total , the film has earned \$ 141 @. @ 2 million worldwide , surpassing the earnings of the three preceding films in the series ? easily recouping its \$ 9 million budget ? and remained the highest @-@ grossing Bond film until Live and Let Die (1973) assumed the record . After adjusting its earnings to 2011 prices , it has made approximately \$ 1 billion , making it the second most financially successful Bond film after Skyfall .

Thunderball won an Academy Award for Best Visual Effects awarded to John Stears in 1966 . Ken Adam the production director was also nominated for a Best Production Design BAFTA award . The film won the Golden Screen Award in Germany and the Golden Laurel Action Drama award at the 1966 Laurel Awards . The film was also nominated for an Edgar Best Foreign Film award at the Edgar Allan Poe Awards .

= = = Contemporary reviews = = =

Upon its release the film received generally positive reviews . Dilys Powell of The Sunday Times remarked after seeing the film that " The cinema was a duller place before 007 . " David Robinson of The Financial Times criticised the appearance of Connery and his effectiveness to play Bond in the film remarking : " It 's not just that Sean Connery looks a lot more haggard and less heroic than he did two or three years ago ; but there is much less effort to establish him as connoisseur playboy . Apart from the off @-@ handed order for Beluga , there is little of that comic display of bon viveur @-@ manship that was one of the charms of Connery 's almost @-@ a @-@ gentleman 007 . "

= = = Reflective reviews = = =

According to Danny Peary , Thunderball " takes forever to get started and has too many long underwater sequences during which it 's impossible to tell what 's going on . Nevertheless , it 's an enjoyable entry in the Bond series . Sean Connery is particularly appealing as Bond ? I think he projects more confidence than in other films in the series . Film has no great scene , but it 's entertaining as long as the actors stay above water . " .

Critics such as James Berardinelli praised Connery 's performance , the femme fatale character of Fiona Volpe and the underwater action sequences , remarking that they were well choreographed and clearly shot . He criticised the length of the scenes , however , and believed they were too long and in need of editing , particularly during the film 's climax . At Rotten Tomatoes , the film received an 86 % " fresh " rating . In 2014 Time Out polled several film critics , directors , actors and stunt actors to list their top action films ; Thunderball was listed at number 73 .