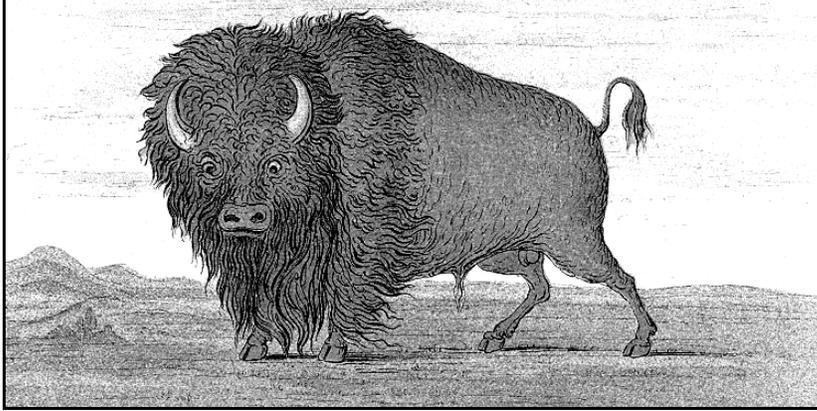


# The Buffalo Film Seminars



**MICHAEL POWELL** (30 September 1905, Bekesbourne, Kent, England—19 February 1990, Avning,, England, cancer)

**EMERIC PRESSBURGER** (Imre Józef Pressburger 5 December 1902, Miskolc, Austria-Hungary—5 February 1988, Suffolk, England)

“Written Produced and Directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger”—that’s the finest credit title in the world.” Martin Scorsese



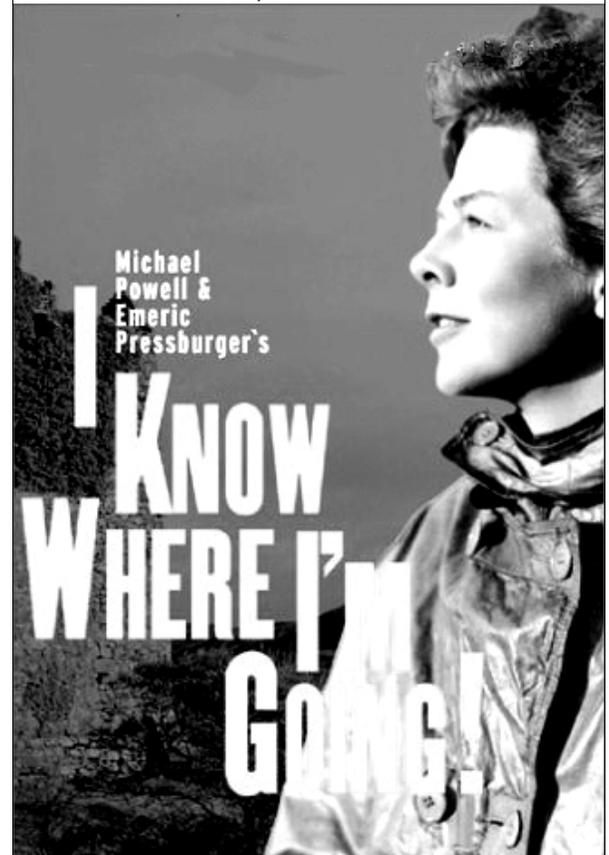
Under the logo of their production company, The Archers, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger shared writer, director and producer credits on 16 films: *The Tales of Hoffmann* (1951), *One of Our Aircraft Is Missing* (1942), *The Volunteer* (1943), *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943), *A Canterbury Tale* (1944), *I Know Where I'm Going!* (1945), *A Matter of Life and Death* \Stairway to Heaven (1946), *Black Narcissus* (1947), *The Red Shoes* (1948), *The Small Back Room* \Hour of Glory (1949), *The Elusive Pimpernel* \The Fighting Pimpernel (1950), *Gone to Earth* (1950), *The Wild Heart* \Gypsy Blood (1952), *Oh... Rosalinda!* \Fleidermaus '55 (1955), *The Battle of the River Plate* \Graf Spee \Pursuit of the Graf Spee (1956), *Ill Met by Moonlight* \Intelligence Service \Night Ambush (1957).

**ERWIN HILLIER** (1911, Germany): IMDB: “Of mixed German and English family, Erwin studied briefly at an art school in Berlin but was then forced to leave and find a job. A friend introduced him to the great genius of German silent films, F.W. Murnau who looked at Erwin's paintings and asked him to become a camera assistant on his next (and final) picture, *Tabu* (1931). Because Murnau was a promiscuous homosexual, Hillier's father forced Erwin to stop working with Murnau. Murnau took no offence and instead introduced Erwin to another director friend of his: Fritz Lang. So Erwin's first real job was as a camera assistant on Lang's first sound film, *M* (1931), starring Peter Lorre.” He was cinematographer on about 50 films, among them *42:6 - Ben Gurion* (1970), *The Valley of Gwangi* \The Lost Valley \The Valley Time Forgot \The Valley Where Time Stood Still (1969), *The Shoes of the Fisherman* (1968), *The Quiller Memorandum* (1966), *Sands of the Kalahari* (1965), *Operation Crossbow* (1965), *School for Scoundrels* (1960), *Shake Hands with the Devil* (1959), *The Mark of Cain* (1947), *A Canterbury Tale* (1944), and *Lady from Lisbon* (1942)

**WENDY HILLER** (15 August 1912, Bramhall, Cheshire, England), Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) 1971, Dame of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) 1975. Biography from Leonard Maltin's *Movie Encyclopedia*: “Primarily a stage actress, Wendy Hiller has brightened the screen with some of its most memorable performances, beginning with her inspired Eliza Doolittle in Shaw's *Pygmalion* (1938, opposite Leslie Howard), which earned her an Academy Award nomination.... She was particularly striking as Shaw's *Major Barbara* (1941), a wealthy young British lady who joins the Salvation Army. As her stage career flourished, Hiller made few films, but always impressed audiences when she did—even if the films themselves were less than memorable. She won a Best Supporting Actress Oscar for her portrayal of a lonely innkeeper in the all-star drama *Separate Tables* (1958), and was nominated for her costarring turn as Alice More in Fred Zinnemann's acclaimed *A Man for All Seasons* (1966). She has also starred in productions of *Witness for the Prosecution* (1982) and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1985) for British TV.” Some of her other films are *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne* (1987), *The Elephant Man* (1980), *Voyage of the Damned* (1976), *Murder on the Orient Express* (1974), *A Man for All Seasons* (1966), *Toys in the Attic* (1963), *Sons and Lovers* (1960), and *Something of Value* (1957).

**ROGER LIVESEY** (25 June 1906, Barry, Wales—5 February 1976, Watford, Hertfordshire, England, cancer of the bowel), who appeared as lead and character actor in 34 films, first appeared on stage (according to his IMDB bio) “as the office boy in *Loyalties* at St. James's theatre in 1917. He has since played in everything from Shakespeare to modern comedies. He played various roles in the West End from 1920 to 1926. He toured the West Indies and South Africa then returned to join the Old Vic/Sadler's Wells company from September 1932 until May 1934. In

January 29, 2002 (V:2)



**I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING!** (1945)  
92 min. English / Gaelic

Written, produced and directed by Michael Powell & Emeric Pressburger

Wendy Hiller.... Joan Webster  
Roger Livesey.... Torquil MacNeil  
George Carney.... Mr. Webster  
Pamela Brown .... Catriona Potts  
Walter Hudd.... Hunter Captain  
Duncan MacKenzie.... Captain of 'Lochinvar'  
Ian Sadler.... Iain Finlay  
Currie.... Ruairidh Mor  
Murdo Morris on.... Kenny  
Margot Fitzsimmons.... Bridie  
Captain C.W.R. Knight.... Colonel  
Barnstaple  
Donald Strachan.... Shepherd  
John Rae .... Old Shepherd  
Duncan McIntyre.... Old Shepherd's Son  
Petula Clark.... Cheril  
Boyd Steven.... Singer in the Ceildhe  
Maxwell Kennedy.... Singer in the Ceildhe  
Jean Houston.... Singer in the Ceildhe  
Arthur Chesney.... Harmonica Player  
Original music by Allan Gray  
Cinematography by Erwin Hillier  
Film Editing by John Seabourne Sr.  
Art Director... Alfred Junge  
David Rawnsley.... tank constructor  
Captain C.W.R. Knight.... falconry advisor  
John Laurie.... ceildhe advisor

1936 he appeared in New York in the old English comedy *The Country Wife* and also married Ursula Jeans whom he had known previously in England. At the outbreak of war Roger and Ursula were among the first volunteers to entertain the troops before he volunteered for flying duties in the R.A.F. He was turned down as too old to fly so went to work in an aircraft factory at Desford aerodrome near Leicester to 'do his bit for the war effort.' He was chosen by Michael Powell to play the lead in *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943). This was shown in New York and established his international reputation as a brilliant character actor. He continued playing many theatrical roles during his film career from 1935 until 1969." His first screen appearance was in *The Four Feathers* 1921; his second was in *East Lynne on the Western Front* a decade later. His began doing regular film work in 1935 with *Midshipman Easy* and *Lorna Doone*. Some of his other films were as the 1<sup>st</sup> player and Gravedigger in *Hamlet* (1969), the Shepherd in *Oedipus the King* (1968), the Drunken Parson in *The Amorous Adventures of Moll Flanders* (1965). He also appeared in *Of Human Bondage* (1964), *The Entertainer* (1960), *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946), and *Rembrandt* (1936).

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Mark Dugid, "Fantastic Life," from bfi online [<http://www.bfi.org.uk/features/pilgrims/fantastic.html>]:

"There is not a British director with as many worthwhile films to his credit as Michael Powell" - David Thomson

If Twentieth Century cinema is characterised as a battle between 'realism' and fantasy, then Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, at least after 1943, allied themselves with the forces of fantasy. In this respect, they found themselves at odds with almost the entire British cinematic tradition, which helps to explain why their work largely fell out of favour with British critics until a National Film Theatre retrospective played a key role in reviving their reputation in 1978.

Like Alfred Hitchcock, Powell cut his teeth on silent films, and he carried into the sound era a strong sense of visual storytelling. Powell, too, eventually found himself in Hollywood, though some forty years later and on rather different terms. Born in Bekesbourne, near Canterbury, Kent on 30 September 1905, Powell served his apprenticeship with arch stylists Rex Ingram and Harry Lachman before graduating, via still photography on Hitchcock's *Champagne* (1928) and *Blackmail* (1929), to directing a number of so-called 'quota quickies' - small-scaled, medium length films designed to help cinema's meet their legal obligations to show a proportion of British material.

Pressburger, born 5 December 1902, Mikolc, Hungary, was almost penniless when a published short story brought him into the German film industry as a scriptwriter, working on early productions by Robert Siodmak and Max Ophüls. He arrived in England in 1935, having fled Germany for France following the Nazis' rise to power in 1933. In 1938, he joined the Hungarian coterie of Alexander Korda, and like his compatriots he had much to invest in the dream of England as an outpost against tyranny and beacon of decency in a Europe tumbling to fascism. It was Korda too, who 'discovered' Powell, after his first substantial work, *The Edge of the World* (1937), and partnered the two for *Spy in Black* in 1939.

The duo spent the early part of the war making inspiring propaganda films, notably *49th Parallel* (1941) for which Pressburger won an Oscar, although Powell's collaboration on the spectacular fantasy *Thief of Bagdad*, released in 1940, was an indication of their later direction. In 1942 they established their own production company, The Archers, with its distinctive target logo, and thereafter their films carried the label "Written, Produced and Directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger". It was all but unprecedented for a director to share credit in this way.

*The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943), a domestic success despite earning the displeasure of Churchill (who tried to ban it) marked the beginning of Powell and Pressburger's departure from realist orthodoxy, with its non-linear chronology and its use of the same actress - Deborah Kerr - to play the three women in the life of its hero. They went further with its follow-up, *A Canterbury Tale* (1944), which imbued the Kent countryside with an almost pagan mysticism in its tale of three modern pilgrims pursuing a haphazard path to spiritual awakening. The film was their first flop, and an early sign that they couldn't depend on carrying either critics, audiences or industry along with their most ambitious explorations. Moreover, in its central conceit, the hunt for the 'glue man', a bizarre character who puts glue in young women's hair to deter them from fraternising with American troops, it sowed the seeds of the critical hostility that would emerge following Powell's *Peeping Tom* (1960).

In a similarly mystical vein was their second, and Powell's third, trip to the Scottish islands (following *Edge of the World* and *Spy in Black*), *I Know Where I'm Going!* (1945), a strange love story with supernatural overtones. Undeterred by the failure of critics and audiences to appreciate their increasingly individual vision, Powell and Pressburger turned an assignment from the Ministry of Information to make a film to further Anglo-American relations into their most extravagant fantasy yet. Memorably contrasting a monochrome afterlife with a real world of radiant technicolor, *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946) was a feast of cinematic invention, from the appearance of a camera obscura to the celebrated moving stairway to Heaven, to the closing of the huge eyelids as David Niven's romantic pilot

succumbed to anaesthesia.

The pair continued to explore this new terrain of fantasy and their next film, *Black Narcissus* (1947), further estranged them from the British cinema establishment. Rebuilding a Himalayan palace on a Pinewood sound stage, the film was a sustained erotic tour-de-force detailing the conflicts of a group of English nuns beset by a hostile environment and an unruly local population, and featuring an extraordinary scene-stealing performance from the virtually unknown Kathleen Byron.

The ballet extravaganza *The Red Shoes* (1948) was a deceptively simple tale of a young dancer torn between love and her career, based on a story by Hans Christian Anderson. The film's centrepiece was a seventeen-minute ballet which is still perhaps the most concentrated imaginative sequence in British films.

*The Red Shoes* was a high-water mark for Powell and Pressburger. They found themselves at odds with the industry, falling out first with Rank, then with Korda. They continued to make interesting films - *The Small Back Room* (1949) was an unexpectedly straight thriller, albeit with touches of fantasy, while *Gone to Earth* (1950) was a visually sumptuous, if flawed, rural melodrama. *Tales of Hoffman* (1951) attempted, with some success, to recapture the magic of *The Red Shoes*, and contained some stunning sequences; a further musical, *Oh... Rosalinda!* was less satisfying.

By 1957 the two were pulling in different directions, and the partnership came to an end. In 1960, Powell scandalised critics with *Peeping Tom*, an intense study of a voyeuristic killer - a film cameraman who photographs his victims as they die by the sharpened leg of his tripod - portrayed with disquieting sympathy by young Austrian actor Carl Boehm. It was a highly sophisticated film, but despite being released in the same year as Hitchcock's *Psycho* - and arguably a better film - it was too much for a Britain yet to leave behind the conservatism of the 1950s, and it attracted universal condemnation, not least for a sequence in which Powell himself played the killer's father, with his own son playing the boy.

The backlash was such that much of The Archers' earlier work from *A Canterbury Tale* onwards was damned retrospectively for its supposed 'morbidly'. The film all but ended Powell's career: he managed to make a few more films, including two more with Pressburger, then languished in obscurity until Francis Coppola invited him to become 'director in residence' at his Zoetrope studios in the early 1980s. By the time of his death in 1990, however, *Peeping Tom* had been recognised as a masterpiece: as Powell ruefully commented in his autobiography, "I make a film that nobody wants to see and then, thirty years later, everybody has either seen it or wants to see it".

Despite their separation, Powell and Pressburger remained friends until the latter's death in 1988. Theirs was a truly complementary partnership: Powell was English through and through, but with an international spirit and an imagination which owed nothing to English reticence; Pressburger brought the insights of an outsider, and had a delight in the language and culture of his adopted home. Powell had a rich visual sense; Pressburger wrote dialogue crackling with wit and energy. Powell was exuberant and confident; Pressburger shy, but with a fierce intelligence. Above all, they were both tireless and inventive storytellers.

Powell's own favourite of their films, *A Matter of Life and Death*, struck a chord with a British public starved for fantasy and romance in the immediate aftermath of war. But the Archers' films became too rich for British palates; audiences preferred American escapism, while the British film industry was more comfortable with smaller, realist pictures than the baroque - and costly - experiments of Powell and Pressburger. They left behind a set of films unlike anything seen before or since in the British cinema - at least five masterpieces among them - and a sense of what is possible in film that will continue to inspire well into the medium's second century.

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Some Powell lines we like:

"My master in film, Buñuel, was a far greater storyteller than I. It was just that in my films miracles occur on the screen."

"Art is merciless observation, sympathy, imagination, and a sense of detachment that is almost cruelty."

"I got my first assignment as a director in 1927. I was slim, arrogant, intelligent, foolish, shy, cocksure, dreamy and irritating. Today [1987], I'm no longer slim."

"I am the teller of the tale, not the creator of the story."

**And a Pressburger take on movie magic:** "I think that a film should have a good story, a clear story, and it should have if possible, something which is probably the most difficult thing - it should have a little bit of magic ... Magic being untouchable and very difficult to cast, you can't deal with it at all. You can only try to prepare some nests, hoping that a little bit of magic will slide into them." NYC 1980

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**From Michael Powell, James Howard, B T Batsford Ltd. London, 1996**

[Powell on IKWIG] "We were guessing a year ahead what the general position of the war would be and what would be the propaganda message. After all, films take a year to make and get out. . . and so we had to be good guessers."

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**from Emeric Pressburger *The Life and Death of a Screenwriter*. Kevin Macdonald, Faber & Faber, 1994**

In 1947, while on a trip to Hollywood, Emeric visited his old friend Anatole Litvak at Paramount. Having lunch in the studio restaurant Emeric was introduced to the head of the script department. Paramount, he said, owned its very own print of IKWIG. Whenever his writers were stuck for inspiration, or needed a lesson in screenwriting, he ran them the film, as an example of a perfect screenplay. He had already screened it a dozen times.

The partners had been taken aback by the strength of feeling aroused by *Blimp*, and set about to make something in a less combative register. Instead of challenging the status quo, *A Canterbury Tale* and *I Know Where I'm Going!* reinforce it. They are celebrations of the oddities, the irrationalities, the mysteries of British life. They are intimate films, stories of self-discovery, about individuals finding the correct values to live by. No longer were the Archers interested in how to win the war (by 1943 an American-aided victory seemed assured sooner or later), but in the moral health of the country. They were asking the population to remember the values they had fought for, and to think about what sort of brave new world they would like post-war Britain to be. The film-makers had turned from propagandists into preachers.

The provisional title was 'The Misty Island'. Emeric had a simple plot outline in his head: 'I have always wanted to make a film about a girl who wants to get to an island,' he told Michael. 'At the end of the journey she is so near that she can see the people clearly on the island, but a storm stops her getting there, and by the time the storm has died down, she no longer wants to go there, because her life has

changed quite suddenly in the way girls' lives do.'

'Why does she want to go to the island?' asked Michael.

Emeric smiled. 'Let's make the film and find out.'

The values espoused in *I Know Where I'm Going!* hardly seem to differ from those of the standard Hollywood romantic-comedy: love conquers all, and money isn't everything. But the love is not of the saccharine variety, it is passionate, physical, at times almost destructive. As for the anti-materialism, it can be seen as part of a nationwide disgust at the black-marketeers and war profiteers. Sir Robert Bellinger, it is insinuated, is one of these.

In October, the crew returned to Denham for the interiors. A huge tank was constructed by Rank's art department head, David Rawnsley, in which an imitation whirlpool was created, using a technique of jellied water learned from Cecil B. de Mille's classic 'parting of the waves' in *The Ten Commandments*. Back projections shot by Erwin Hillier—myself and the operator went out in a boat and almost got ourselves drowned in the whirlpool collecting the stuff!—completed the illusion. It was the kind of technically challenging task which made the best technicians in the business want to work with The Archers.

[re *Black Narcissus*] Emeric was in sympathy with the novel and, thematically, at least, it has something in common with his own work. Like *I Know Where I'm Going!* and *Blimp*, it dwells on the brute power of sexuality to shape our lives.

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**from *A Life in Movies An Autobiography*. Michael Powell, Knopf, 1987**

Roger Livesey, playing Torquil MacNeil in *I Know Where I'm Going!*, never came within five hundred miles of the Western Isles. I know that those of you who have seen the film won't believe it, but it's true.

I'm not sure, but I think it's one of the cleverest things I ever did in movies. Of course, in quota-quickies you were always doubling somebody, and in *49th Parallel* I doubled about half a dozen well-known personalities, but to double the leading man in all the exterior scenes of the film and intercut them with studio close-ups with such a distinctive person as Roger Livesey, was a miracle. We tested twenty young men before we found one who had Roger's height and could copy his walk, which was very distinctive. Roger came to the studio and took endless trouble teaching him to walk and run and, hardest of all, stand still. Then there was the little matter of wearing the kilt. No two men walk the same way in a kilt. We had six weeks of exteriors in front of us and Torquil was in all of them. The secret of doubling an actor is not to run away from the camera or turn your back on it; on the contrary, you walk straight up to it. The camera is just as easily fooled by calm assurance as people are. Erwin Hillier and I would work out the scene and rehearse it, and the script-girl would make notes of the places where we proposed later to cut in medium shots and close-ups of Roger filmed in the studio. Then we would shoot the scene exactly as if Roger was playing the part. Of course, there were all sorts of tricks: sudden cuts and turns and masking pieces in the foreground, which we used to help the editor of the film. But so perfect is the illusion that I couldn't tell myself, now, which is Roger and which is his double in certain scenes.

...In the weeks that I had been travelling around, I had read everything that I could lay my hands on about the Western Isles. I was determined to make the film as authentic as possible in every detail. Every face was chosen by me, and every voice. I persuaded Malcolm Mac Kellaig of Morar, where the sands are as white as the sands of Kiloran are golden, that he had to come and be my Gaelic dialogue director and he came, besides playing a small part in the film. I engaged Ian MacKenzie and his powerful great diesel motorboat to be with us permanently throughout the film, so that I could always be sure of transport, or of taking advantage of a change in the weather. Ian had his big motorboat undocked, because he used it in the spring for transporting cattle to the uninhabited isles, for instance the Isles of the Sea; he left them there all summer to get fat on the good grazing,

and then fetched them in September for the markets, fattened up at no expense to himself. He knew the islands and the cliffs and the currents and the tides, and was not afraid to go anywhere. I could never have got half the shots without him. Once, when we had been shooting all day at Lochbuie Castle a few miles along the coast of Mull, he brought the whole unit back in his boat, cameras and all. I remember how, as we sailed up the coast, the wind got up and became a strong headwind. We were so heavily laden that there was very little freeboard, and I began to wonder what would happen if the wind got stronger and the big open boat ran under. I stood up by the foremast, and every now and then glanced back at Ian. He was completely unmoved. A tall, lean, handsome man with eyes like a deer's, he always wore the kilt and a battered mackintosh, and an even more battered Highland bonnet. He was a man you could trust. He had a wicked sense of humor.

The black and white cinematography on *I Know Where I'm Going!* was inventive, poetic, miraculous. Only Johnny Seitz, Rex Ingram's cameraman, who taught me to appreciate romantic photography was [Erwin Hillier's] equal. Erwin has done many wonderful films since then, but his work on *A Canterbury Tale* and *I Know Where I'm Going!* was original and unforgettable.

We had brought back with us the actual open motorboat which we used in the film. I was determined to construct a machine with two iron hands which could grip the keel of the boat, and mount it on an eccentric screw with variable speeds worked by a motor, which would toss the boat about in a realistic manner, or at least in a manner to which we were all accustomed. For we had spent many dozens of hours in an open boat and knew what it was like. Later on, such machines were common for scenes involving acrobatics and for small boats, but at the time this was quite a new idea and our machine shop became really interested in it, and gave me what I wanted. The actors were able to work in a real boat, surrounded by wind and water machines, a working close up against a back projection screen, so close that they could almost feel the whirling waters of Corryvreckan.

But in 1945, our distributors were cautious. We had all of us had the stuffing knocked out of us by the reception given *A Canterbury Tale*. We had mistimed that

picture and I had an uneasy feeling that they felt we had mistimed this one too. They weren't very sure that the public wanted a strange wayward story loaded with Celtic sounds and voices, and which seemed to them to have no relation to the facts of 1945. I think they thought we were an unpredictable couple. Today, of course, the picture stands on its own legs as a romantic and moving farewell to a European culture that was vanishing. It was also a wry salute to the materialism which was fast taking over Europe after the war.

IKWIG has had its admirers among the professionals. Only another writer can appreciate the skill with which Emeric plots his love story, by word and look, until both lovers are caught in the net. We played it straight, Wendy and Roger and I masking every emotion and refusing any tell-tale intonations. It worked. It's the sweetest film we ever made.

Allan turned in one of his best scores. Not even the most touchy Scotsman has ever protested at his orchestral simulation of the pipes. I persuaded Sir Hugh Robertson and the Glasgow Orchestra, men and women this time, to take part in the recording, and actually to appear on the screen in the Ceilidh sequence. We recorded some of their famous Mouth Music and we had three pipers of the Black Watch.

For the peal of the bells in Canterbury's Bell Harry Tower, [for *A Canterbury Tale*—during the war the cathedral's organ and stained glass windows were dismantled for safekeeping] it was not possible to shoot the real bells because the design of the shot I wanted called for the camera to track up to the bells and shoot through them. We did it in the studio. Alfred Junge's art department constructed the bells in miniature out of fiberglass and to scale with the real ones, and then hung them with the advice of experts. Allan Gray selected the notes of the peal to mix with his music at the beginning and end of the film. This peal was recorded on playback. When all was ready, a team of expert bell-ringers came to the studio, the recorded peal was played back over the loud-speakers for them to follow, and they rang the peal on the miniature bells, using the finger and thumb to pull the tiny ropes. This was the kind of ark the Archers were always getting up to in those days. It was the right way to do the shot, but who else would have taken the trouble to work it out and do it? It was problems like the bells of Canterbury, the whirlpool of Corryveekan in *I Know Where I'm Going!*, and Dr Reeves's camera obscura in *A Matter of Life and Death*, that made people want to work with us.

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**from *Million Dollar Movie* Michael Powell. Random House, 1992**

Corryveekan is the name given the tidal race off the Scottish island of Scarba, which produces the whirlpool in *I Know Where I'm Going!* By lashing himself to the mast of a motorboat, Michael managed to film the whirlpool forming, which was later combined with special effects footage created in the studio. Pamela accompanied him on the dangerous boat ride.

I spent some time in the story department [at Paramount], where the writers welcomed us and told us that when they had a spiritual flat they ran *I Know Where I'm Going!* So far they had run it nine times. I told this, later on, to Emeric.

"Not enough," he said.

"When you told me the story about the girl and the island, you said that she did know what she wanted."

"She did, but she was mistaken. That is what the story is all about."

"You really want to start the film with a little girl, who can hardly walk, in a comfortable, middle-class nursery, crawling across the floor in a straight line?"

"Yes, Michael."

"Are you sure it won't empty the cinema?"

"Yes, Michael. We will mix shots of the baby and the little girl with the credit titles of the film. *I Know Where I'm Going!* is a good title. The audience will get the idea."

Erwin [Hillier] was always very polite, a true Continental, a true artist. I think that his photography on *I Know Where I'm Going!* is a high-water mark of black-and-white photography in the 1930s and '40s. It's so delicate and emotional, and he has complete control of every inch of the screen.



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**from *The St. James Film Directors Encyclopedia* ed. Andrew Sarris. Visible Ink Press, NY 1998**

**Powell & Pressburger [entry signed by Stephen L. Hanson]**

Thematically, Powell and Pressburger operate in a limbo somewhere between romance and realism. The former, characterized by technical effects, camera angles and movements, and the innovative use of color, often intrudes in the merest of details in fundamentally naturalistic films. In the eyes of some, this weakens the artistic commitment to realism. On the other hand, the psychological insights embodied in serious fantasies like *A Matter of Life and Death* are too often dismissed as simply entertainment. Most of the Powell-Pressburger efforts are, in fact, attempts at fundamental reconciliations between modern ideas and the irrational, between science and savagery, or between religion and eroticism.

Although such mergings of reality and fantasy met with approval by the moviegoing public, Powell and Pressburger were less successful with the British film establishment. In a sense they were alienated from it through their exercise of a decidedly non-British flamboyance.

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**Join us next week for another good movie: Humphrey Bogart and Gloria Graeme in Nicholas Ray's dance through Hollywood's darkside, *In A Lonely Place* (1950).**

**And, should you want to get out of the house in the interim, which you should, the place to go in Buffalo is the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, where there's an exhibit of photos from the New York Times and more, including a Harley-Davidson and some comic books that will make your head swim....for more info on all that's going on there visit <http://csac.buffalo.edu/thefifties>**

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