

THE BADLANDS COLLECTIVE
PRESENTS

ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA



EXTENDED DIRECTOR'S CUT
UK CINEMA PREMIERE
WITH SPECIAL GUEST ELIZABETH McGOVERN

RITZY CINEMA BRIXTON, SUNDAY 24 MAY 2015



ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA

EXTENDED DIRECTOR'S CUT

11:05 INTRODUCTION 11:10 FILM BEGINS 14:05 INTERMISSION 14:15 FILM RESUMES
15:30 FILM ENDS / Q&A WITH ELIZABETH McGOVERN 16:00 FINISH

*"After you do the Dollars Trilogy, how do you top it? He managed to top it with
Once Upon a Time in America."* -Quentin Tarantino

"This was a murdered movie, now brought back to life." -Roger Ebert

Sergio Leone intended *Once Upon a Time in America* to be his "homage to the film noir and homage to cinema itself," a poetic, pained epic of memory, friendship, loss, greed, violence and dreamlike ambiguity filtered through the archetypes of classic gangster movies. Having spent the better part of two decades trying to adapt Harry Grey's novel *The Hoods* for the screen, and incorporating his sense of Grey as someone "obscure and miserable," the director ballooned the crime novel into a tragic magnum opus - a mythic, decades-spanning story of Jewish-American New Yorkers, bonded in crime as boys, torn apart in it as men. Pauline Kael would call the film "a compendium of kitsch, but kitsch aestheticised by someone who loves it and sees it as the poetry of the masses. It isn't just the echoing moments that keep you absorbed - it's the reverberant dreamland settings and Leone's majestic, billowing sense of film movement."

Kael would also say, "I don't believe I've ever seen a worse case of mutilation." Because in the United States, *Once Upon a Time in America* was cut from 229 minutes to 139 minutes, and its intricate structure of flashbacks was reordered so the film played in chronological order. Rather than making the film clearer or more audience-friendly, the truncated version was rejected as incomprehensible and bombed at the box office, reaping \$5m of its \$30m budget. The film's widely lauded score by Ennio Morricone also failed to be eligible for an Oscar nomination after a paperwork bungle that Warner Bros. called an "oversight."

In Europe, and eventually on American videotape, the 229-minute version was seen and came to be recognised as one of the greatest of movies. Typical of critics' reactions were Gene Siskel, who called *Once Upon a Time in America* the best film of 1984 after having given thumbs-down to the release version, and Sheila Benson, who called the release version the worst film of the year only to later list the 229-minute cut as the third best film of the 1980s.

Now, with a 4k digital scan of the available negative, and with the discovery of 22 minutes of additional material from Leone's own workprints, the film has been restored by Ciniteca di Bologna, The Film Foundation and Gucci into this 251-minute Extended Director's Cut, so we can see this masterpiece back on the big screen and with an even fuller picture of the material that shaped Leone's vision.

THE REDISCOVERED FOOTAGE



The 22 minutes of restored footage expands the roles of the women in the film, adds new notes to the lifelong hide-and-seek played by Noodles and Max, and contains further exploration and explanation, to mixed effect. There's a previously deleted performance by Louise Fletcher as the director of the cemetery Noodles visits, which elongates the tension of the mystery he's uncovering. A 'swimming' scene after Noodles crashes the car into the harbour recalls the boyhood swimming sequence and transitions into a foreshadowing of the garbage truck ending. Deborah's soliloquy from *Antony and Cleopatra* adds another dramatic, otherworldly layer to her role and shows off her performative skill. One desperately sad new scene with Noodles and a call girl shows him enact the tenderness he had wanted to show Deborah, right after the shocking scene in which he actually did the opposite. Perhaps the least necessary new scene involves union leader Jimmy and 'Mr. Bailey' - while it details the motivation for Bailey's actions late in the film, it is perhaps disruptive of the rhythmic reveal of that character's entrance and too laboured and literal a beat for the film's climax, especially for those who interpret the 'modern' 1960s section of the film as an extended dream sequence.

Please note: The newly inserted scenes are of considerably lower technical quality than the rest of the movie, as they were sourced from discarded strips of film that had originally been printed for reference only.

SPECIAL GUEST ELIZABETH McGOVERN



Born in Evanston, Illinois in 1961, Elizabeth McGovern studied at American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco and The Julliard School in New York. Her film roles include *She's Having a Baby*, *Ordinary People*, *The Bedroom Window* and *Ragtime*, for which she was nominated for an Oscar. Her current work includes playing Cora, Countess of Grantham in *Downton Abbey* and fronting the rock band Sadie and the Hotheads. The Badlands Collective is delighted to welcome her to speak about *Once Upon a Time in America* and her powerful portrayal of Deborah.

CAST & CREDITS



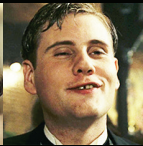
ROBERT DE NIRO
(Noodles)



JAMES WOODS
(Max)



ELIZABETH
McGOVERN
(Deborah)



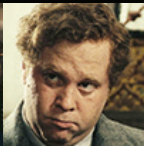
WILLIAM
FORSYTHE
(Cockeys)



JAMES HAYDEN
(Patsy)



TUESDAY WELD
(Carol)



LARRY RAPP
(Fat Moe)



SCOTT TILER
(Young Noodles)



RUSTY JACOBS
(Young Max)



JENNIFER
CONNELLY
(Young Deborah)



ADRIAN CURRAN
(Young Cockeys)



BRIAN BLOOM
(Young Patsy)



NOAH MOAZEZI
(Dominic)



TREAT WILLIAMS
(Jimmy)

Directed by SERGIO LEONE

Produced by ARNON MILCHAN / Written by LEONARDO BENVENUTI, PIERO DE BERNARDI, ENRICE MEDIOLI, FRANCO ARDCALLI,

FRANCO FERRINI, SERGIO LEONE, STUART JAMINSKY, ERNESTO GASTALDI / Based on the book *The Hoods* by HARRY GREY /

Music by ENNIO MORRICONE / Director of Photography TONINO DELLI COLLI / Art Direction by CARLO SIMI / Costumes by GABRIELLA PESCUCCI

1984 Warner Bros. / 251 minutes / DCP booked through Hollywood Classics

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JULIA KELLY

BELLA WINGFIELD

ANGHARAD WOOD

CAMILLA DE LA MORINIÈRE

CHLOE GRAHAM

JAMES BELL

TONY PALEY

LIZZIE HOLLICK

NIKI ALEXANDROU

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AVALON LYNDON

KATE TAYLOR

SUZI RICH

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SHEALEY WALLACE

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