



## The Bridge on the River Kwai

Alec Guinness, William Holden

Directed by David Lean

1957 161 minutes Colour PG

With an impressive cast, engaging plot, and spectacular visuals, *The Bridge on the River Kwai* is an excellent movie. Set in Burma during the Second World War, it takes place at a Japanese prison camp. A battalion of captured British troops, commanded by Colonel Nicholson (Guinness), is brought in to build a bridge. The Japanese Colonel Sakai (Sessue Hayakawa -- look for him in Disney's *Swiss Family Robinson*) demands that all captured personnel work on the bridge, despite the fact that the Geneva convention states that officers are not to do manual labour. Nicholson points this out, and thus begins the battle of wills between the Japanese captor and British captive. Even after starvation, imprisonment, and torture, Nicholson sticks to his guns, much to the annoyance of the Japanese commander. The British captives do their best to avoid working while the Colonel is locked up. Finally the frustrated Sakai agrees to Nicholson's demands. With their own Colonel in charge, the prisoners start serious work on the bridge -- if they don't finish by the 12th of May, there will be serious consequences.

Here the plot thickens. While Colonel Nicholson

holds to his honour, American naval Commander Shears (Holden) -- another prisoner in the camp -- makes his escape. He winds up on Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) at a British military base. Against his wishes, he is recruited into a commando unit assigned to sabotage the Japanese railroad. Shears is part of a team sent to blow up the Kwai bridge, preferably while a Japanese troop train is passing over it.

Will the Brits finish the bridge on time? Will Shears and co. destroy it? Will they make it out of the jungle alive? You will have to watch the movie to find out.

Acting: Truly stellar. Guinness is great as the immovable and ever-so-British Nicholson, and he received an Oscar for best actor. The rest of the cast is superb; there are simply too many great performances to mention.

Memorable Scenes: A number spring to mind. Nicholson's dinner with the Japanese Colonel is amusing, yet poignant. The officers' planning meeting is also worth careful attention, and the finale, well, it speaks for itself. The scene early in the movie which features Colonel Sakai standing on a box to address the British captives is also memorable -- and it was

copied almost word for word in *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*.

Best Line: Shears has a short monologue about life, death, and honour -- "You and Nicholson, you're both the same. . . you only care about how to die like a gentleman, when the only thing that matters is how to live like a man!" However, the line this writer found most enjoyable takes place during the dinner scene. Sakai explains that if the bridge is not finished on time, he'll have to kill himself. When he asks Nicholson what he would do in such a position, the Colonel thinks for a moment, then replies "I suppose I'd have to kill myself."

Bottom Line: This film won seven Academy Awards (including Best Picture), and not without reason. Forty years later, it still demands viewing. At two hours and forty minutes, however, it is a tad long for Nineties audiences; it is not for people with short attention spans.

One last word -- if you rent a copy with the preview at the first -- DON'T WATCH IT! Fast forward about six minutes. It will ruin part of the movie.

Available: Shouldn't be too hard to find, but some of the smaller video shops might not have it. Blockbuster, Plaza Video, and That's Entertainment definitely have copies.

# GROOVY

## Tunze

Marilyn Manson

*Smells Like Children*

Review by Finley Martin

This industrial metal quintet is by far one of the strangest bands on the music scene today. "Smells Like Children" is glowing proof of this. Overall, the music on this CD is somewhat mediocre. However, there are a couple of highlights on this disk that are worth listening to. Those tracks being the eerily morbid version of the Eurythmics "Sweet Dreams (are made of this)" and "Everlasting C\*\*\*sucker". It should be said that this album is probably not for the faint of heart. There are a number of tracks that will probably make even the most open minded persons say: "what the hell was that?"

54-40

*Trusted by Millions*

Review by Finley Martin

This veteran Canadian band is back with their newest album since their 1994 platinum selling smash hit "Smilin' Buddha Cabaret". "Trusted by Millions" is a good album and has got several smoking tracks like "Cheer Up Peru", "Love You All", and "Frankl's Revenge". In fact I enjoyed almost all of the music on this CD. This is an album fans, new and old, will not be disappointed with. If you don't believe me, check them out yourself at the Barn on Wednesday, Sept. 11th.

Tricky

*Nearly God* (Island)

Joel Gillespie

Don't let the title mislead you -- this CD is neither religious nor godly. Tricky's (and friends) follow-up to '95's "Maxinquaye" dwells mainly in the area of slow grooves, confused rhythms, and rambling lyrics that are often quite hard to hear, let alone understand. I have listened to this CD quite a few times, and nothing sticks out in my mind -- absolutely nothing. Not even guest vocals by Bjork and Neneh Cherry caught my attention, possibly because their voices were bogged down under Tricky's prodding, annoying beats. I had expected a greater scope of sound, but I was quite disappointed. that?"