

IT'S...

The 50th Anniversary of

MONTY PYTHON

The 40th Anniversary of

**MONTY PYTHON'S
LIFE OF BRIAN**

(He's NOT the messiah! He's a very naughty boy!)

The 40th Anniversary of



the film studio started by a Beatle to help some Pythons...

The US Premiere of



The new documentary about that film studio

So now it's time for



Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of



AND SO MUCH MORE!

THE UPCOMING PREMIERE & FILM FESTIVAL IN HOLLYWOOD

- SALUTING THE 40th ANNIVERSARY OF GEORGE HARRISON'S MOVIE STUDIO
- SALUTING THE 40th ANNIVERSARY OF "MONTY PYTHON'S LIFE OF BRIAN"
- AND ALSO SALUTING THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF MONTY PYTHON

October 10th – 20th 2019 • The Fine Arts Theatre – Beverly Hills

1) One day in early 1978, **George Harrison** received an agitated telephone call from his pal **Eric Idle** of Monty Python. Just three days before shooting was due to start on the new Python film "Life of Brian" - the studio had pulled the plug! The studio chairman had - quite uncharacteristically - decided to read one of his company's scripts! He chose to skim through "Life of Brian". He rapidly denounced the about-to-shoot movie as blasphemous. And canceled the film funding.

"Have looked rather quickly through the script of the new Monty Python film and am amazed to find it is not the zany comedy usually associated with his [sic!] films. But is obscene and sacrilegious. Every few words there are outrageous swear words..."

– Telex sent by EMI Films CEO Lord Bernard Delfont to his subordinates – February 20th 1978

2) Stirred by his friend's dilemma and urgent plea, George immediately offered to finance the entire film himself. It cost him \$4 million. Though he didn't tell the Pythons at the time - he actually mortgaged his house and his office to raise the money. When asked later why he'd done it he replied: "Well I'd read the script - I wanted to see the film!" It was, he later reflected, "the most expensive cinema ticket ever issued!"



***George Harrison in 1978 on the set for his cameo in “Monty Python’s Life of Brian”
With (left) Eric Idle and (right) John Cleese***

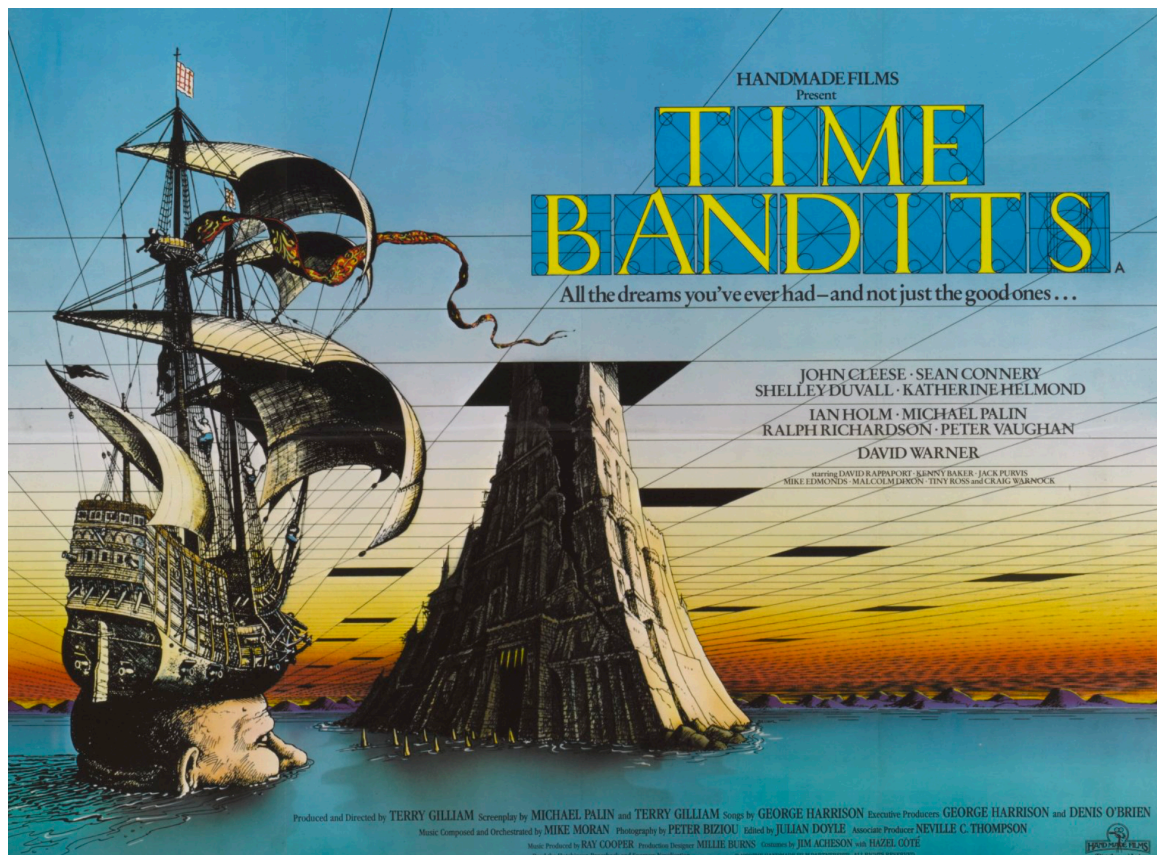
3) "Life of Brian" of course became a huge worldwide success. And George decided to go further into films. The company he'd created to produce "Life of Brian" would become a small boutique film studio. He named it **HandMade Films**. Its declared mission was to make a couple of high-quality films each year. No cookie-cutter or conveyor-belt approach to filmmaking. Blessed with an artist's understanding of the creative process, George's taste and instincts invariably led him to champion projects that the traditional studios had rejected as uncommercial.



4) In the span of ten years HandMade created just 23 films. But they were some of the most acclaimed and successful movies of the era. The studio provided opportunity to a new generation of talents to make their passion projects. Along the way giving the first chance to many new directors, writers and actors. HandMade's canon of productions in the 1980s almost single-handedly revitalized the British film industry that had been in a downward spiral since the late 1960s. It also enlivened independent cinema worldwide. Making an especial impact in the USA.

5) There were several comedic films featuring members of Monty Python - including:

- ***Life of Brian***
- ***Time Bandits***
- ***Nuns on the Run***
- ***The Missionary***
- ***A Private Function***
- ***Privates on Parade***
- ***Live at the Hollywood Bowl***



There were satires such as the two **Bruce Robinson-Richard E. Grant** collaborations and the two films written by iconic comedy scriptwriters **Dick Clement & Ian La Frenais**

- ***Withnail & I***
- ***How To Get Ahead In Advertising***
- ***Water***
- ***Bullshot***



And contemporary British crime thrillers such as the two **Bob Hoskins** dramas (one co-starring a young **Helen Mirren**)

- ***Mona Lisa***
- ***Long Good Friday***



6) Among actors, actresses and musicians who appeared on-screen in films made and/or distributed by HandMade:

**Jason Alexander • Sean Bean • Pierce Brosnan • Sir Michael Caine • Seymour Cassel
Graham Chapman • Eric Clapton • John Cleese • Robbie Coltrane • Sir Sean Connery • Sir
Billy Connolly • Jeff Daniels • Bruce Dern • Denholm Elliott • Terry Gilliam • Richard E. Grant
Graham Greene • Richard Griffiths • Fred Gwynne • George Harrison • Sterling Hayden • Sir
Ian Holm • Sir Michael Hordern • Bob Hoskins • Trevor Howard • Eric Idle • Neil Innes • Terry
Jones • Klaus Kinski • Eriq La Salle • Christopher Lloyd • Alfred Molina • A Martinez • Gary
Oldman • Sir Michael Palin • Bill Paterson • Sean Penn • Pete Postlethwaite • Oliver Reed
Sir Ralph Richardson • Tim Robbins • Julian Sands • Dick Shawn • Timothy Spall • Ringo
Starr • Fisher Stevens • Wes Studi • John Turturro • David Warner • Nicol Williamson**

**Sandra Bernhard • Shelley Duvall • Jodie Foster • Susan George • Katherine Helmond
Dame Wendy Hiller • Holly Hunter • Madonna • Sarah Miles • Valerie Perrine • Theresa
Russell • Prunella Scales • Dame Maggie Smith • Dame Janet Suzman • Brenda Vaccaro
Rachel Ward • Kathleen "Bird" York**

7) Directors and writers of films made and/or distributed by HandMade include:

**Alan Bennett • Tony Bill • Graham Chapman • Jack Clayton • John Cleese • Dick Clement
Joe Eszterhas • Terry Gilliam • Piers Haggard • Bob Hoskins • Terry Hughes • Eric Idle
Terry Jones • Neil Jordan • Barrie Keeffe • David Leland • Richard Loncraine • Jonathan
Lynn • John Mackenzie • Peter Nichols • Michael Palin • Dennis Potter • Bruce Robinson
Nicolas Roeg • John Patrick Shanley**

8) The studio had just one uncharacteristic mis-step - its equivalent of the 1963 flop "Cleopatra" (that nearly bankrupted 20th Century Fox) - the notorious **"Shanghai Surprise"** - starring the newly-wed **Sean Penn** and **Madonna**. Ever sanguine and philosophical, George shrugged off the disappointment... (And satirized it in a brilliant new song called "Cockamamie Business"!)



9) **George Harrison** contributed ten compositions to the twenty three HandMade films he produced - eight of the songs custom-written for specific films. He also performed music on-screen in two of the films (recruiting appearances from pals such as **Ringo Starr** and **Eric Clapton**). And he made discreet Hitchcock-like cameos in several of the other movies.

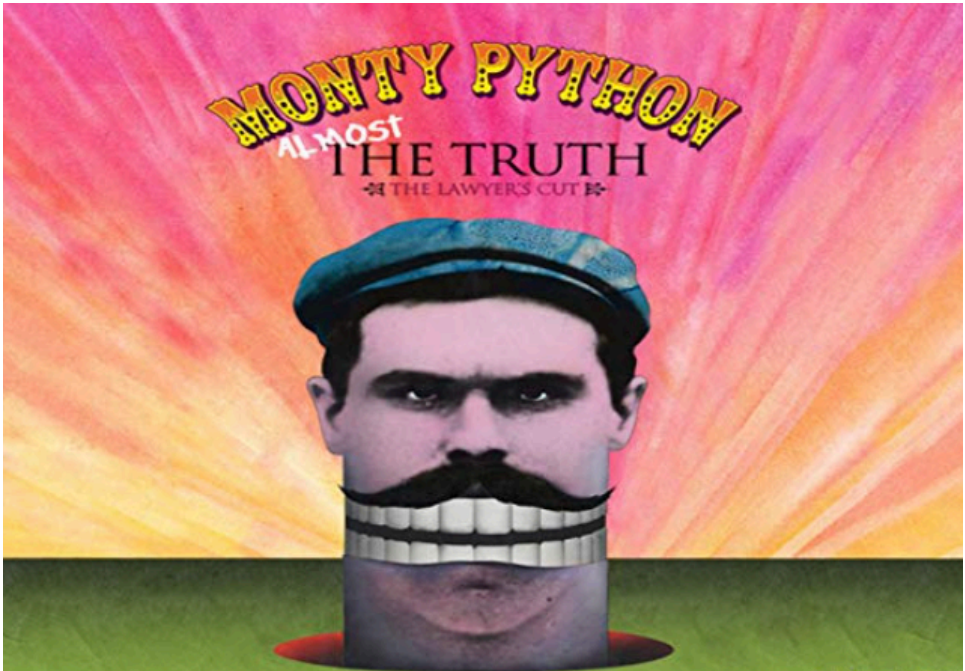


George Harrison performs as a night club singer in "Shanghai Surprise" (1986)

10) After HandMade’s stellar first ten years, **George Harrison** returned his focus to making music in the 1990s - and HandMade Films became something else...

11) British filmmaking duo - **Bill Jones & Ben Timlett** - sensed that this particular HandMade's tale was a story that deserved being told on film. So they made a definitive full-length documentary - **"An Accidental Studio"** - featuring new and historic interviews with all the studio's key participants. And incorporating other unseen footage. The source material included a long-forgotten, hour-long filmed conversation of reminiscences about the studio between **George Harrison** and **Michael Palin** - of which only a few seconds had previously been seen.

12) Filmmakers Bill Jones (son of Python **Terry Jones**) & Ben Timlett had already cut their teeth as directors of the six-hour documentary series **"Monty Python: Almost the Truth - The Lawyer's Cut"** (2010). They also directed & produced **"A Liar's Autobiography: The Untrue Story of Monty Python's Graham Chapman"** (2012) and produced the final film written and directed by **Terry Jones** - **"Absolutely Anything"** (2015) starring **Simon Pegg**, **Kate Beckinsale**, **Robin Williams** - and the voices of all five remaining members of Monty Python.



13) Now their film **"An Accidental Studio"** is to receive its US Premiere - followed by a multi-night retrospective of movies created by HandMade Films.

14) The Premiere will take place in Los Angeles on Thursday October 10th - in the presence of its makers, and of participants in the HandMade adventure and friends, associates and admirers of **George Harrison** and **Monty Python**.



VIEW THE TRAILER: <https://youtu.be/FWuedGaxTmA>

15) The retrospective will run from Friday October 11th to Sunday October 20th, 2019

16) The Premiere and all the retrospective screenings will take place at the historic art-deco Fine Arts Theatre in Beverly Hills - run by long-respected Laemmle Theatres. (Pronounced LEM-lee).

17) The Premiere and retrospective commemorate several notable anniversaries:

- ***The 40th Anniversary of the founding of HandMade Films***
- ***The 40th Anniversary of "Life of Brian"***
- ***The 50th Anniversary of Monty Python***

18) The festival is presented by Laemmle Theatres in association with the Mods & Rockers Film Festival – the iconic Hollywood festival established in 1999 to celebrate films from the latter half of the 20th Century – with especial regard for comedic, musical and documentary subjects.

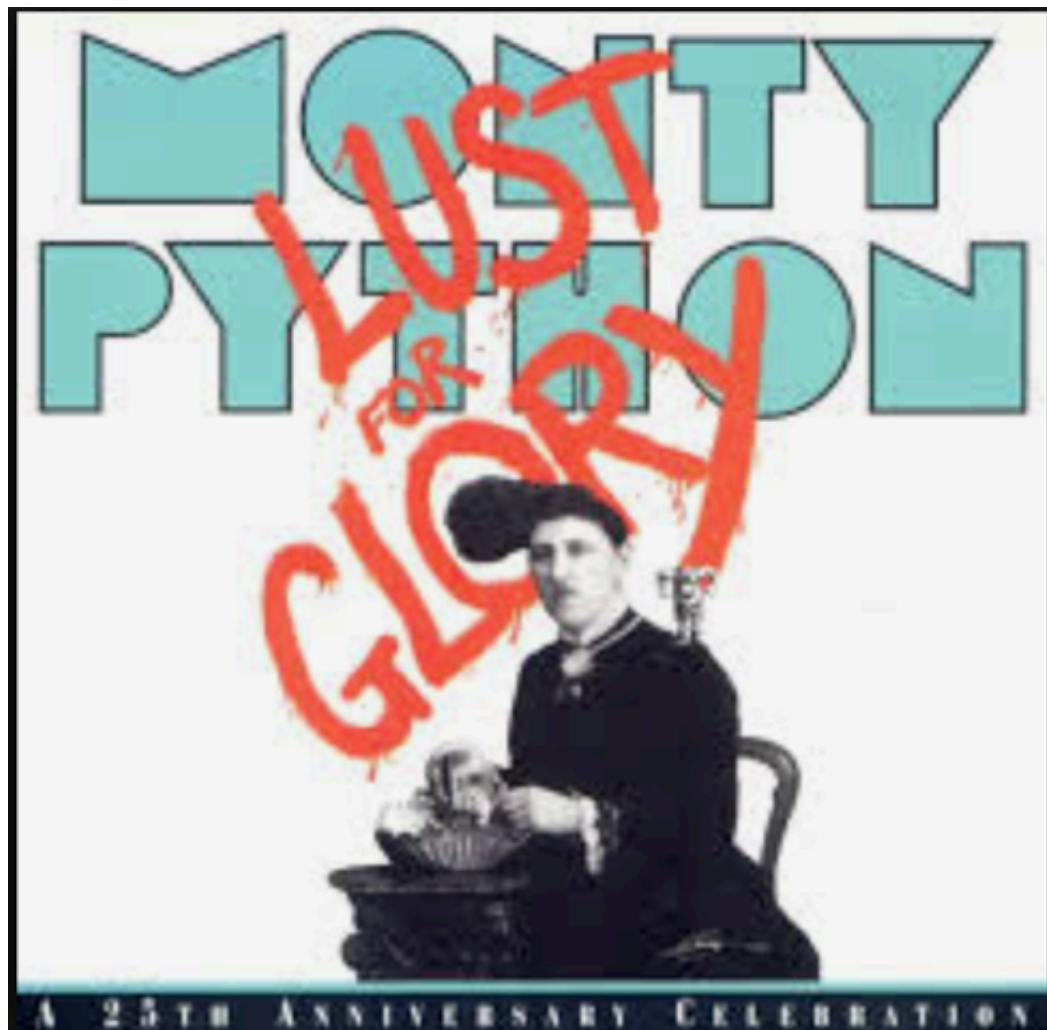
19) The Premiere and the retrospective have been instigated and curated by British-born, US-based, producer/humorist **Martin Lewis** - who has had a four-and-a-half decades-long relationship and friendship with the Monty Python team - starting with his work as co-creator/producer of the **"Secret Policeman's Ball"** series of benefit shows and movies that has featured all the Python members – along with the cream of Britain's rock musicians recruited by Lewis.



***Backstage at "The Secret Policeman's Other Ball" – London. September 1981
(Left-to-right) Co-Creator/Producer Martin Lewis, Jeff Beck, John Cleese, Eric Clapton***

Among his other Python-related work: In 1994, Lewis conceived, produced and hosted **"Monty Python: Lust For Glory!"** the film festival and celebrations of the troupe's 25th Anniversary - held in Los Angeles – attended by five Monty Python members and associates. In 1999 he conceived and executive-produced the special **"South Park"** animated tribute to Monty Python for the Python's 30th anniversary. In 2012 – as Producer Emeritus of the first US **"Secret Policeman's Ball"** (held at Radio City NYC) – he conceived and produced a running gag of Pythonic video inserts for the show featuring **Michael Palin, Terry Jones and Eric Idle** – that culminated in a new filmed skit **"The Python Legacy"** – that he co-wrote with **Michael Palin** and for which he recruited **Robert De Niro, Whoopi Goldberg, Kyra Sedgwick and Annette O'Toole** as honorary Pythons.

Lewis is a protégé of Beatles publicist the late **Derek Taylor** and is also noted for his extensive work as a producer and marketing strategist of numerous **Beatles**-related projects. Lewis founded the **Mods & Rockers Film Festival** in 1999 and has been its curator, producer and host.



Logo designed by Terry Gilliam for the Python 25th Anniversary celebrations in L.A. in 1994



A screen-grab from South Park's tribute for Monty Python's 30th Anniversary in 1999



A screen-grab from the skit written by Michael Palin & Martin Lewis for the first-ever US "Secret Policeman's Ball" in 2012