

## THE LADYKILLERS – Club Indigo, May12th, 2017

By Joe Kirkish

Mainly in the 50s, the Ealing Studios (considered the foremost British film company) hit on a series of hilarious comedies including “Lavender Hill Mob,” “Kind Hearts & Coronets” and “The Ladykillers,” all of which received great enthusiasm from both critics and general audiences around the globe.

Sir Alec Guinness acted in most of them, performing with the genius of losing himself by playing his characters so ingratiating that he would ingratiate himself right into invisibility in each role – and that was the secret of his work in “The Ladykillers” as well as all his other films.

Employing actors like Sir Guinness. Director Alexander Mackendrick made millions for the Studios with this movie.

All the films in the series had a similar plan: start off slowly, set the stage for some outlandish situation, then develop it to a rousing non-stop series of laughs to a surprise ending. It was a formula that never failed.

“The Ladykillers” came to script writer William Rose, or so he claimed, in a dream that was so vivid all he had to do upon awakening was write it down.

The plot was simple enough: a group of not-too-bright crooks headed by a supposed music professor (Guinness, of course) who rent a room from a harmless old lady, who discovers they're not the musicians they pretend to be, but thieves planning the hoist of their lives. When she discovers their plans and confronts them with her discovery, they realize that she must be done away with. Of course, nothing goes according to plans, so after one unexpected mishap after another, the comedy concludes with a surprising and delightfully ironic ending.

Starring as the leader of the band, Guinness loads his character role with clever little tricks that make the character ridiculously humorous. Wearing an odd set of teeth and wrapping a very long scarf around his neck that he handles like a major prop, he assumes one of the funniest portrayals he ever concocted. (He was reported to have claimed he created his persona after the great character actor Alister Sim, and it was so successfully carried off that to this day many people still believe it WAS Sim, not Guinness, who played the role.)

A top notch cast including Peter Sellers, Cecil Parker and Herbert Lom rounds out the film, but it's Katie Johnson playing the old lady who runs away with critical awards. You'll never forget her.

If you're not familiar with the Ealing Studio series, after seeing this zany comedy, you'll want to see them all. Don't be surprised if they begin showing up at future Club Indigo events.



You can see it at  
the Calumet Theatre on  
Friday May 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:15pm.

Enjoy a mystery buffet from the  
Miscowaubik Club of Calumet, beforehand, at 6pm.

Buffet and movie, \$22. Movie alone, \$7.  
For the buffet, reservations are requested no later than  
Friday the 5<sup>th</sup>: 337-2610 or 337-2166