Warner Bros. Pictures

presents

Laurence OLIVIER

in

"THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"

Color by
TECHNICOLOR

Produced by
LAURENCE OLIVIER
and
HERBERT WILCOX

A Warner Bros. Picture

Running Time: 1 hr. 34 min.
Captain Macheath (LAURENCE OLIVIER), dashing highwayman, is in London’s Newgate Gaol. He is to be hanged in the morning. A beggar is thrown into the prison clutching the pages of an opera he has written about Macheath. Macheath tries a few notes of a song and the opera-within-an-opera begins.

Mr. and Mrs. Peachum, proprietors of a shop, learn that their daughter, Polly, is secretly wed to Macheath. The £40 reward for Macheath’s capture spurs them to betray him to the authorities. Polly and Macheath meet in a hayloft and Macheath narrowly escapes capture by the Peachums.

Hiding out in his favorite thieves’ tavern, Macheath cannot resist singing and dancing with the girls. Jenny Diver, bitter because Macheath ignores her, betrays him for a guinea. He is captured by Peachum and Lockit, head of the Newgate Gaol and the father of Lucy whom Macheath often promises to marry. Peachum and Lockit plan to divide the forty pounds reward.

In Newgate, Macheath is visited by Lucy and once again promises to marry her if she will steal her father’s keys. She is almost convinced when his wife, Polly, arrives. Lucy and Polly learn each other’s identity and Macheath comes in for harsh words. Nevertheless, he convinces Lucy of his sincerity.

That night Lucy steals the prison keys and releases Macheath just as Polly arrives with food for him. Polly discovers his disappearance and her surprised cry sounds the alarm. Macheath steals a lord’s cape and gloves and seeks refuge in a gaming house. While he gambles, his borrowed cape bearing the name of Lord Westbury, betrays him. The gaming house proprie-
tress tells Lockit and Peachum of Macheath’s whereabouts. Once again Macheath is captured, and placed in Newgate’s heaviest chains. He is to hang in the morning and sings his farewells to Polly and Lucy.

The next morning the community turns out for the festive occasion — Macheath’s hanging. Macheath sits atop his coffin as a cart takes him slowly to the gallows on a nearby hillside. The scene is a gay one as all London bids fond farewells to the romantic highwayman. At the gallows he kisses Polly and Lucy goodbye for the last time and a black blindfold blots out his vision of the noose.

The camera returns to Newgate. The opera-within-an-opera sung by the prisoners is almost over, and the beggar’s baton is poised to begin the finale. Macheath, in his cell, protests the ending, saying no man should have to hang twice. The beggar ponders and then shouts, “A reprieve!” The cry is taken up by the prisoners. An investigating turnkey is mobbed and forced against Macheath’s cell door. Macheath snatches the prison keys, opens the padlock and flees. At the prison entrance, the death cart containing the coffin is wait-
ing. Ducking under the horse, Macheath swiftly unties the animal from the cart, leaps astride and makes good his escape as he sings “Saved by a beggar with an opera.”
CAST AND CREDITS
Warner Bros. Pictures

presents

LAURENCE OLIVIER as Capt. Macheath

in

"THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"

Color by TECHNICOLOR

with

HUGH GRIFFITH as The Beggar
DOROTHY TUTIN as Polly Peachum
GEORGE DEVINE as Peachum
MARY CLARE as Mrs. Peachum
ATHENE SEYLER as Mrs. Trapes
STANLEY HOLLOWAY as Lockit
DAPHNE ANDERSON as Lucy Lockit
YVONNE FURNEAUX as Jenny Diver
MARGOT GRAHAME as The Actress

The Beggar's Opera
by John Gay
Additional Dialogue and Lyrics by Christopher Fry
Screenplay by Denis Cannan
Music arranged and composed by Sir Arthur Bliss
Color by Technicolor
Technicolor Color Consultant Joan Bridge
Photographed by Guy Green
Produced by Laurence Olivier and Herbert Wilcox
Directed by Peter Brook

(Credits continued on next page)
The Singers

Laurence Olivier

Adele Leigh
Edith Coates
John Cameron

Jennifer Vyvyan
Joan Cross
Bruce Boyce
Stanley Holloway

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Art Director William C. Andrews
Opera Sets and Costumes George Wakhevitch
Supervising Editor Reginald Beck
Production Manager J.D. Wilcox
Associate Producer Eric Goodhead

Sound Recordists
Peter Hanford
Red Law

Camera Operator
Austin Dempster

Assistant Director
Frank Hollands

Production Assistant
John Brabourne

Special Effects
Wally Veevers
George Samuels

Wardrobe Supervisor
Maude Churchill
Casting
Patricia Smith
Continuity
Elaine Schreyeck
Set Dresser
Leonard Townsend
Make-Up
Tony Sforzini
Hairdressing
Joyce Wood
Dance Arrangements
Frank Staff
Repétiteur
William Blezard

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Produced at Shepperton Studios, England
Recorded on Western Electric Apparatus

Sir Arthur Bliss's Score conducted by Muir Mathieson

June 10, 1953