



Location, location: Revenue raised from filming is re-invested back into transport

Caught on camera

THE TUBE TAKES A STARRING ROLE IN FILMS

UNDERGROUND, which is directed by Anthony Asquith, became the first movie to use the capital's Tube network as a location in 1928.

In those days, films were mostly shot in black and white and used relatively simple camera shots.

A century later and movies have become much more ambitious technically, while requests to film at Underground stations have grown substantially, with TfL's film office receiving about 500 to 600 filming enquiries every year.

This increase in demand has mainly been met by the extension of the Jubilee line in 1999 and the extensive station modernisation programmes that have taken place across the network, making it a more desirable place to film.

Kate Reston, manager of TfL's film office, explains: 'The extension meant the existing Jubilee line platforms at Charing Cross were no longer being used, making this an attractive and available space for film crews to shoot.'

'Now they use it for everything from feature films to children's TV shows, documentaries and even music videos.'

It's often not practical to film at busy stations, such as Leicester Square and Covent Garden, but along with Charing Cross, there are other locations available.

These include the disused station at Aldwych, which is used mainly for period-type filming, and others such as Farringdon, where the ticket

halls are generally quieter during off-peak hours.

The Walbrook entrance at Bank station is another ideal location for film productions because when it is closed at weekends and at less busy times during the week, customers can use the other entrances while filming takes place on the escalators and stairs.

It's already been used for the third series of BBC's Killing Eve, as well as Amazon Prime's Hanna 2.

Not only do these films and series increase the profile of London's Underground network around the world, they also raise valuable revenue that is re-invested back into London's transport system.

You may remember the scenes shot on the Underground in these big box office titles.

SKYFALL (2012)

It seems fitting that Britain's most famous spy, James Bond (Daniel Craig), should be filmed on London's iconic Tube network.

Although the spectacular and unforgettable scene of the Tube train crashing through the tunnel in the movie was actually shot at Pinewood studios, a lot of the chase sequences starring Bond and baddie Silva (Javier Bardem) racing down the escalators were shot at Charing Cross station.

Although the platforms may no longer be in use, the escalators are kept in good running order, as they are specifically used in filming.

PADDINGTON (2014)

Scenes for the first of the loveable bear's movies were also filmed at Charing Cross, Paddington itself and Maida Vale, where the entrance to the station was transformed into the imaginary 'Westbourne Oak' Underground station.

Maida Vale has two entrances, so at less busy times, customers can be directed through one entrance while filming is taking place at the other.

THE DARKEST HOUR (2017)

One of the most famous scenes in the film is where Prime Minister Winston Churchill (Gary Oldman) gets on the Underground to travel to Westminster.

Parts of this scene were shot at Aldwych station, which closed to the public in 1994.

THE GOOD LIAR (2019)

Charing Cross station takes centre stage once again in this double-crossing thriller starring Helen Mirren and Sir Ian McKellen, with one heart-in-mouth sequence filmed on the platform. The film is now available on Blu-ray and DVD.

Other more recent film examples include Rocketman, Rogue One: A Star Wars Story and The Gentlemen, and the TV series Mrs Wilson and War of the Worlds.

If you would like more information or to request permission to film on the Underground, visit the website at tfl.gov.uk/filming



Movie platform: Sir Ian McKellen starred in The Good Liar, which was filmed on the Underground WARNER BROS

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