

Friends

UK : 1971 : dir. Lewis Gilbert : Paramount : 102 min
 prod: Lewis Gilbert : scr: Jack Russell & Vernon Harris : dir.ph.: Andrew Winding
[Sean Bury](#); [Anicée Alvina](#)
 Toby Robbins; Pascale Roberts; Sady Rebbot; Ronald Lewis

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω 8 ∞ M ∞	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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“ Who needs the world
 when you own the moon and stars? ”



*Adolescent lust rears its feverish head – in a scene that would scarcely shock Shirley Temple
 Source: A Pictorial History of the Talkies*

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide
 1996 review:

“Yucky early-teen romance about a French boy and girl who run off to the seashore, set up housekeeping, and have a baby... then Mommy and Daddy show up to take them home. Popular in its day, primarily due to an Elton John song score. Buy the album instead. Sequel (!): **"PAUL AND MICHELLE". Bomb** ”

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review – identical
 (more or less) to the above

Halliwell's Film Guide review:

“Teenage lovers run away to a country cottage and have a child. Peculiar idyll¹ given a corny "poetic" treatment: a real non-starter. Scr: Jack Russell & Vernon

¹ Why "peculiar"? Should it have been two boys?

Harris; dir.ph: Andrew Winding; music: Elton John "

Movies on TV (1987) review:

"Sappy tale of a 14-year old French orphan and a neglected 15-year old English child [sic] who steal off to a beach cottage and play house for a year. This could have been passably sentimental, especially the finale where the two deliver a child into the world, if not for the exploitative directing by Lewis Gilbert, and the rip-off rock score by Elton John and Bernie Taupin. * "

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Sean Bury:

"Sean was trained for the stage at the Corona School in London, and was a member of the Westminster Cathedral Choir. A few years after co-starring with a Great Dane in a Children's Film Foundation serial, he was priceless as the diffident new boy, Jute, in Lindsay Anderson's "if....". After a small part in the

musical "**GOODBYE, MR CHIPS**", Sean Bury touchingly shared the lead with Anicée Alvina in a teenage romance, "**FRIENDS**" (US 71), written and directed by Lewis Gilbert for Paramount. He was in "**THE ABOMINABLE DR PHIBES**" (71), "**THE STORY OF A LOVE STORY**" (73), and starred again in "**PAUL ET MICHELLE**" (Fr/GB 74, more or less a sequel to "**FRIENDS**") before being reduced to the naval ranks in "**THE SPY WHO LOVED ME**" (77)."

[no listing in "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. The synopsis reads like "**THE BLUE LAGOON**", only without the lush holiday brochure settings. Today of course, the boy would be regarded a juvenile "sex predator", and have his name added to the McCarthyist "national register of sex offenders". Adolescents must at all costs be prevented from doing what comes naturally.

Such fairy tales for dewy-eyed adults about the "purity" of young love (young *heterosexual* love, needless to say) do not charm with their naïveté, because they reduce adolescents – or, in the case of "**A LITTLE ROMANCE**", younger children than that – to soft-focus parodies of themselves. Adolescent awkwardness becomes "innocence"; the lack of a meaningful sexual education becomes "innocence"; young, fresh faces become "innocence". Essentially dishonest with their protagonists, as one might also say Shakespeare was in "*Romeo and Juliet*", they reveal only adult self-delusions about youth. The same fluffy-bunny view of puberty informed the popular TV sitcom "**The Wonder Years**", with its archly nostalgic reinterpretation of growing up in the sixties (when small boys were obsessed, apparently, with small girls all the way from kindergarten to college).

James Bond director Gilbert fared rather better with later films such as "**SHIRLEY VALENTINE**" and "**EDUCATING RITA**", although the uncharitable might argue he merely transferred his patronising attentions to disenchanted women seeking more from life. [Sean Bury](#) was 17 (safely the right side of the "age of consent" then), having debuted at 10 in the CFF serial "**BEWARE OF THE DOG**" (characteristic wit and invention in the title!). He was 14 in "if...." - though he certainly looked younger - and had a bit part as Lem, the chief surgeon's son, strapped to an operating table by "**THE ABOMINABLE DR PHIBES**", with a key implanted next to his heart and acid set to drip down on his face (shades of Fay Wray in "**MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM**"). Holmstrom does not say he did any television, normally the only avenue for British boy actors unable to emigrate to California. Nothing whatever is known of his co-star, Anicée Alvina.

See subject index under [ORPHANS / ADOPTION](#), [RUNAWAYS / STOWAWAYS](#), [SEASIDE HOLIDAYS](#), [SEX & SEXUALITY](#) and [TEEN LOVE](#).

