

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Casino Royale 1967: Too much... for one director](#)

Lead

Production of the 1967 Bond spoof was chaotic to say the least: it cost double the budgeted amount, saw no fewer than five directors take the reigns, and had a plot so erratic that even the main Bond character became confused. But at least the theme tune was nominated for an Oscar...

Given that a gifted young comedian named Woody Allen stormed off the set and headed for the airport still wearing his make-up and costume, it's fairly clear that the filming of Casino Royale didn't run too smoothly. The film suffered a major setback early on, with producers failing to agree terms with Eon – and, as a result, a satirical narrative was adopted. As production stumbled on, this meant references to the original novel were severed one by one (and it has about as much in common with the 2006 remake as Lady Gaga does with Maria Callas). Still, characters such as master villain Le Chiffre and Bond playmate Vesper Lynd are present in both the book and the two film adaptations.

Episodic film with all-star ensemble

Having an intricate storyline and a host of running gags hardly made Casino Royale the ideal candidate for an episodic format, but with star names filling even the smallest roles, the best was made of some odd decisions. Sellers, Niven, Allen, Andress and Welles were of course given starring roles, but perhaps more interesting was Jean-Paul Belmondo's star billing despite his relatively insignificant role – and of course Sir Stirling Moss's uncredited performance, where he ironically takes off on foot after being told to "follow that car".

It might have been panned at the time, but Casino Royale is a curio worth the watch, if only for the cast, the stunts, and the comical editing workarounds to cover unforeseen difficulties (which included Sellers leaving production before his final scenes had been filmed). It certainly makes for a more interesting proposition than watching E.T. again this Christmas.

Gallery

Includes video

Has video

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/classic-life/casino-royale-1967-too-much-one-director>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.