



In the 1970's British Cinema was in the doldrums. Cinema going faced stiff competition from both television and reduced investment from Hollywood. In the main audiences were offered historical films in which the story was set at some period before the outbreak of the Second World War or low budget stalwarts of 60's British cinema – the 'Doctor' and 'Carry On' series. Interest in these was on the wane, reflected in diminishing box office. Television spin offs had some success with Hammer Horror's 'On the Buses' (1971) starting the trend, Hammer, however, struggled for box office successes with their more traditional Horror genre films.

Following the trend for TV adaptations, BBC's 'Monty Python's Flying Circus' repackaged sketches into the film 'And Now for Something Completely Different' in 1971. Very conscious of an international market they followed this with more ambitious films: 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail' (in 1975) and four years later the controversial 'Monty Python's Life of Brian'.

The 70's did however see an increase in less mainstream film making. Smaller Independent films, British Asian cinema, Gay cinema and various regional co-operatives such as Newcastle based Amber Films came into being.

There were also several critically acclaimed movies from Auteur filmmakers making films controversial for their sex and violence such as Mike Hodges' 'Get Carter', Nicolas Roeg's 'Don't Look Now' and Derek Jarman's 'Jubilee'. Stanley Kubrick also scored critical and box office successes with two films: 'A Clockwork Orange' and 'Barry Lyndon'.

The biggest draw at the box office during the 1970s however were the five James Bond films produced by „Cubby“; Broccoli's EON Productions. Released in, 1977 'The Spy Who Loved Me' was the tenth film in the classic Bond series which had started life with Doctor No in 1962. It was the third starring Roger Moore as the fictional British MI6 agent James Bond 007.

Moore seemed the perfect choice to play Bond having previously portrayed debonair Simon Templar in the British mystery spy thriller television series 'The Saint' between 1962 and 1969. His suave, elegant, ladies' man persona laced with a touch of self-effacing humor in this role was perfectly suited to the Bond role.

The storyline involves a reclusive megalomaniac named Karl Stromberg, who plans to destroy the world and create a new civilization under the sea. Bond teams up with a Russian agent, Anya Amasova to stop the plans, all while being hunted by Stromberg's powerful henchman, Jaws.

The Spy who loved me follows the classic Bond pattern - a plot, scheme or crime on the very largest scale: a threat to the whole world, or to a large number of people. Usually the villain has ambitious plans to blackmail, steal or extort wealth or information by some scheme or device. The villain must, of course, be ruthless, deadly and cunning; and the premise ought to involve something exotic and thrilling.

The storyline should feature a number of locations around the world. There should be a female helper in Bond's pursuit of the villain. And the villain should have a henchman who threatens Bond and his accomplice.

For 'The Spy Who Loved Me' regular Bond movie set designer Ken Adam had a new sound stage at Pinewood constructed at a cost of \$1.8 million, dubbed the 007 stage. This was one of the largest film stages in the world, and included a water tank capable of storing approximately 1,200,000 gallons. This would be large enough to house the interior set of the Liparus super tanker, in which captured submarines are contained.

Key to any Bond film is the exciting opening sequence. 'The Spy Who Loved Me' opens with a classic chase, this time on skis ending with Bond skiing over a cliff into free-fall, broken at the last moment with the release of a Union Jack parachute, as he escapes from Russian agents. This seems a fitting ending to the sequence as 1977 was the year of the Queen's Silver Jubilee. 'Cold War' relations between the Soviet Union and the Western Bloc were strained and paranoia of communism and Nuclear War was at its height. Stressing Bond as a patriotic hero would have been a popular decision with the cinema-going public.

When Bond's lover tells him, she needs him he replies, "So does England!"