

Joseph Andrews

In 1963, director Tony Richardson struck gold with his film adaptation of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*. Beloved by critics and audiences, *Jones* was a huge hit, the fourth most successful film of that year and a winner of four Academy Awards – including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Score. Fourteen years and many films later, Richardson decided to pay Henry Fielding another visit, hoping the same formula would result in another box-office winner. This time the source was Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, the author's first full-length published novel and, indeed, one of the earliest novels written in English. Fielding described the book (published in 1742) as a "comic epic poem in prose." A stage adaptation by Samuel Jackson Pratt followed in 1778 at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane – and, two centuries later, *Joseph Andrews* came to the screen.

For the film, Richardson assembled a stellar team, both behind and in front of the camera. The freewheeling screenplay was by Allan Scott and Chris Bryant. The director of photography was the brilliant David Watkin, whose credits include many of Richard Lester's films (*The Knack, Help!, How I Won the War, The Bed-Sitting Room, The Three Musketeers, The Four Musketeers* and *Cuba*),

Peter Brook's *Marat/Sade*, Mike Nichols' *Catch-22*, Ken Russell's *The Boy Friend* and *The Devils*, *Chariots of Fire* and *Yentl*. He also worked with Richardson on *Made-moiselle*, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, *A Delicate Balance* and *The Hotel New Hampshire*. The cast included Peter Firth as the eponymous Joseph (Firth made his stage debut in *Equus*, a role he repeated on film the same year as *Joseph Andrews*), Ann-Margret as Lady Booby, Michael Hordern, Jim Dale, Beryl Reid and Penelope Wilton (of *Downton Abbey*), along with cameos by John Gielgud, Hugh Griffith (repeating his role of Squire Western from *Tom Jones*) and Peggy Ashcroft. Also along for the ride was composer John Addison, who'd won the Oscar for Best Score for Richardson's *Tom Jones*, and who had an amazingly long and fruitful composer/director collaboration with Richardson, resulting in great scores for films such as *The Entertainer*, *A Taste of Honey*, *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, *The Loved One*, *Dead Cert* and *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Alas, the film did not repeat the success of *Tom Jones*. It probably was a case of bad timing – 1977 also gave us *Star Wars*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Satur-*

day Night Fever, *Smokey and the Bandit*, *Annie Hall*, *The Goodbye Girl*, *The Spy Who Loved Me* and *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*. Contemporary audiences just didn't seem to want to see a ribald and risqué period piece. But, years later, it's easy to appreciate the film away from its time – it is a period film that has never dated. It's very entertaining, with wonderful performances (Ann-Margret was nominated for a Golden Globe), beautiful photography, and a captivating musical score from John Addison.

Addison's score is wonderful and melodious music – it's pastoral, jaunty and often quirky in its instrumentation, conjuring up the world of Fielding and all of the film's colorful characters. Addison was a master at this kind of score and *Joseph Andrews* is prime John Addison.

This world-premiere release of Addison's music for the film was taken from the mono mixdown tapes, which were in great condition in the Paramount vaults.

— Bruce Kimmel