

Panther sequel wins

by donalee moulton

Peter Sellers is back - unchanged as the fumbling Clousseau, but this time not as Detective Clousseau but as Inspector Clousseau.

The usual Inspector has cracked, under Clousseau absurdities, and has been residing in a mental institution. By the unusual turn of events, the one time Inspector escapes to turn criminal but his

criminal activities are not motivated by normal reasons. Rather his only goal is the death of Clousseau, and his success in this new role leads to Clousseau becoming an internationally wanted (dead only) man.

Unlike film sequels, which can usually survive the reproduction, film series have generally been failures. However, this is not the case with *The Pink Panther Strikes*

Again. Its success rests with the director and Peter Sellers. Where other Pink Panther imitations have been disasters, Seller's Clousseau has been continual sell-outs. His secret is more than good acting and good script writing. It is a naturalness that serves to erase the line between Clousseau as Clousseau and Sellers as Clousseau. There exists no distinction.

The Pink Panther Strikes Again is as much an enjoyment and a success as its predecessors. Depending not on its plot to evoke positive audience reaction it relies instead on its characters, both the fictional personalities and the ability of the performers who in turn depict them. In the latest Panther film, all of the regulars return unchanged to delight the audience. It is not one character or one actor

who "makes the show" but the interaction of the core Panther group. Sellers is, as usual, superb and is such because of his involvement with the one time Inspector, his Chinese valet, the untypical run through of women, and so on.

The Pink Panther is a comedy, not because it can be fitted into literary definitions of this genre, but because it is funny. The characters in and of themselves can create spontaneous laughter.

The success of the *Pink Panther Strikes Again* is a result of familiarity with former Panther films which have built the Panther character collection to original and unique degrees of humour. Perhaps Panther films can be exaggerated into symbolism and satire but this is totally unnecessary to the success and the enjoyment of them.

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