

## Document Citation

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## Too Late Blues

John Cassavetes' his first Hollywood pic, after scoring on his improvised indie, "Shadows," shows a flair for movement and character. Needs hard sell.

Paris, Nov. 7.

Paramount release and production. Stars Bobby Darin, Stella Stevens. Directed by John Cassavetes. Screenplay, Cassavetes, Richard Carr; camera, Lionel Lindon; editor, Frank Bracht; music, David Raksin; art director, Tanby Larson. Premiered in Paris. Running time, 100 MINS.

Ghost	Bobby Darin
Jess	Stella Stevens
Benny	Everett Chambers
Charlie	Cliff Carnell
Red	Seymour Cassel
Shelley	Bill Stafford
Countess	Marilyn Clark
Nick	Nick Dennis
Rene	James Joyce

Paramount decided to release this John Cassavetes film—his first Hollywood-made project—in Europe before it hits the domestic (U.S. and Canada) theatres in January. It's primarily for the arties and lesser situations.

Cassavetes was encouraged by Par after his initial shoestring production of "Shadows," produced entirely in Manhattan. With Hollywood facilities at his command it is conventional although he does adhere to his refreshing approach and, also, he accents the "new faces."

"Shadows" was bought by British Lion and distributed in the U.S. by It. Film did better abroad but was a breakthrough for the New York bunch. If it was rough technically there was a feel and flow of life as the tale evolved from within the characters.

Working now from a script, Cassavetes shows certain flaws. This time he shows a tendency to force casebook psychology on the characters at a loss of spontaneity. Thus an idealistic small time jazz pianist and composer, Bobby Darin, loses his way when he is left by his girl due to a physically cowardly act. Used in an explanatory way there may be something psychologically right in this but it is somewhat too flat and contrived for acceptance in a film.

Some goes for the flashily, good looking would-be singer, Stella Stevens.

So everybody, a group of hip jazz musicians, has his articulate ideas about his state and life.

Darin's group is shown playing engagements in orphanages and in a park where nobody comes. A chance for a record date is blown skyhigh when Darin's early insistence on doing what he wants is compromised by his girl's quitting him after his cowardly actions in a pool room brawl.

He becomes the gigolo of an aging woman but finds his spark dampened. He finally seeks out his old girl, now a tramp, and dusts off some elderly suitors and drags her to his old bunch, now playing a sleazy joint. Intimation at ending is that he will take up with them again.

Film never makes it clear whether the Darin character truly has talent or whether he should accept what he has and do his best at it. Ambiguity also robs the pic of a lot of punch. Cassavetes shows at his best in party scenes where characters are deftly blocked good natured "getting-to-love-you" scenes.

Cassavetes does bring out new talents and other aspects in known people. Darin is effective and does not sing a note, though that is his specialty. His flaccid, unformed face and his fumbling idealism fuse well as he fails to give the needed love to his confused girl which is played with forceful anguish by Miss Stevens.

Others in cast score effectively and especially a non-actor—mainly a tv producer—Everett Chambers, as a vindictive, neurotic agent, stands out.

Party-liners might read into the basic situation a dictate of western culture for personal success, but the same pressures to excel are implicit in Russian life, and indeed universal to human ego, although Marxists chose to blame everything on economics. Nobody is more expert at "speed-up" than the Soviets.

"Too Late Blues" includes a neat jazz score by David Raksin. Dubbing for the musician-impersonating actors are Shelly Mann, Red Mitchell, Benny Carter, Uan Ramsey, Jimmy Bowles.

Still, Cassavetes looms a new director with a flair for atmosphere and an interest in newer themes and stories. His free wheeling insights are to be encouraged.

Film has already played the London Film Festival and opens there soon with a probable Paris date in the near future. London fest reviews were fine. Mosk.