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*A film by* Johan van der Keuken, produced for VPRO-television  
*Running time* 28 minutes [B/W]  
*Information and distribution* VPRO-television, Hilversum

# BIG BEN

Ben Webster, nicknamed 'Big Ben' and sometimes referred to as 'the Brute' or 'the Frog', is one of the great figures of American jazz. He played the alto-saxophone with practically all the big bands of the thirties, including Duke Ellington's. More recently, he spent a few years travelling round Europe before coming to a temporary halt in Amsterdam. Johan van der Keuken's camera follows the 58-year-old Big Ben round the rather odd district of South Amsterdam in which he lives and accompanies him on his wanderings through the city, to the Zoo and to the small cafés where he plays billiards. Van der Keuken has combined the various episodes and scenes to form one of his futuristic film portraits in which the different facets of his subject, intermingled with all kinds of mood-creating elements, fit together and merge one into the other like the planes of a cubist painting.

