

Document Citation

Title	Breaking the waves
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Pusan International Film Festival</i>
Date	1996
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Breaking the waves, Trier, Lars von, 1996

BRIGADOON

Considering all the first-rate talent involved in the transfer of *Brigadoon* from stage to film, it is too much less than it should have been.

Vincente Minelli, who directed, had little chance to utilize his flair for joie de vivre. Reason: Alan Jay Lerner's lack of Gaelic wit and grace, and the vacillation in his book between serious and comic fantasy. Result: the charmed village of Brigadoon, where time stands still except for one day a century, is less credible than the noontime bedlam of "21," which is aptly burlesqued in *Brigadoon*'s funniest scene.

Lerner's lyrics, however, sound as fresh as when sung on the stage, and Frederick Loewe's music is equally durable and pleasing. But Gene Kelly's choreography and dancing seem repetitive and tired, and the gestures, patterns, and facial expressions of *An American in Paris* and *Singin' in the Rain*, appear, in *Brigadoon*, as clichés. Also Kelly's singing voice is hollow and strained, and he further spoils the beautiful ballad "Almost Like Being in Love" by ignoring the caesura after the word "it's" in the chorus. As for Cyd Charisse, she neither looks nor dances like a Highland lass.

Brigadoon's exterior sets are shoddy and it is surprising that unimaginative flats were used instead of process shots of CinemaScoped Scotland in rear projection. Weather conditions were advanced as the reason for *not* getting CinemaScope footage in Scotland, but similar problems were solved creatively in Ireland for *The Quiet Man*.

Although Hugh Laing, of the New York City Ballet Company, is listed in the credits, he does not dance (but Van Johnson does—pedestrianly). And the lovely song "Come to Me, Bend to Me," mentioned in the advance advertising for *Brigadoon*, must be on the cutting room floor, IN since Jimmy Thompson, who would have sung it, doesn't.

Finally, some of *Brigadoon*'s virtues: the opening "MacConnacchy Square" number is delightful; all the ensemble dancing is colorful; and "I'll Go Home with Bonnie Jean" engenders good feeling.

EDWARD JABLONSKI