

<p>Volume 26 Number 5  MAY 2023</p>		<p>Website <a href="https://www.williamstown-film-society.org">https://www.williamstown-film-society.org</a> Email michaeljslee58@gmail.com Phone 0478 624 528</p>
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Council Chamber of the Town Hall, 104 Ferguson St, Williamstown, 7.30pm, Wednesday 31st May, 2023.

2023 Program

# Carmen Jones

**Carmen Jones was adapted by director Otto Preminger from Oscar Hammerstein's hit Broadway musical, which was itself based on George Bizet's classic 19th century opera Carmen. Featuring an all-black cast, and shot in the then pioneering widescreen 'Scope' format, it's energetic and passionate, if slightly stilted in its execution. Dorothy Dandridge plays the alluring Florida factory worker Carmen, who seduces an upstanding soldier Joe (Harry Belafonte) with tragic consequences.**

The best reason to revisit Carmen Jones lies in Dorothy Dandridge's electrifying performance, which saw her become the first African-American to be nominated for a Best Actress Oscar. In a series of strikingly coloured outfits, she brings a sensual physicality to the role, bringing to mind that description of Jeanne Moreau's Catherine in Jules Jim, "she wasn't a woman, she was a force of nature." Belafonte too impresses in conveying how the initially level-headed Joe becomes morbidly jealous of the proudly defiant Carmen, who refuses to conform to society's expectations of female behaviour.

The set-piece song-and-dance routines in Carmen Jones don't entirely catch fire however, perhaps because the filmmakers decided to dub Dandridge and Belafonte with the voices of the opera singers Marilyn Horne and Le Vern Hutcherson, leaving the leads to lip-synch their arias. Indeed the most memorably choreographed musical sequence here, "Beat out that Rhythm on a Drum", is sung by the actress Pearl Bailey herself. Sadly, the film's star Dandridge was to commit suicide barely a decade later aged just 42.

Reviewed by Tom Dawson for BBC online, 1st February 2007



## Starbox Results

	5	4	3	2	1	Average
The Book Thief	29	5	2	0	0	4.8

To watch a trailer (& read more) head to the 2023 program on our website

[https://: www.williamstown-film-society.org](https://www.williamstown-film-society.org)