How I Won the War
Directed by Richard Lester
Michael Crawford, John Lennon
Dual Format Edition release on 20 May 2019

Co-starring John Lennon in his only non-musical big screen performance, How I Won the War is both a biting satire on the madness of war and a merciless lampoon of the popular war-movie genre. Surreal, farcical, strange and fantastically infused with life by Richard Lester’s sharp and stylish direction, this unique and influential black comedy is presented here on Blu-ray for the first time in the UK. It will be released by the BFI on 20 May 2019, packaged with extras including a new commentary by Richard Lester authority Neil Sinyard, Richard Lester in Conversation, an audio interview from 1999 and the long-thought lost short film Plod (1971), a fusion of poetry and pop music starring The Scaffold and shot on the streets of Liverpool.

In How I Won the War, the hapless but relentlessly optimistic Lieutenant Goodbody (Michael Crawford) enthusiastically leads his troops in a series of dreadful debacles on the battlefields of the Second World War – before receiving orders to install a cricket pitch behind enemy lines. John Lennon, who plays Gripweed, not only had a army regulation haircut for the part, but was also given what was to become his signature accessory, a pair of National Health ‘granny glasses’.

Special features
- Presented in High Definition and Standard Definition
- Animated Genesis (1952, 22 mins) and A Short Vision (1956, 7 mins): stylish, striking, outstanding anti-war animations
- Head Rag Hop (1970, 3 mins): bold jazz-soundtracked Pop-art abstraction
- Plod (1971, 21 mins): long thought lost, this absurdist anti-authoritarian fusion of poetry and pop music was shot on the streets of Liverpool, and stars supreme sound-satirists The Scaffold
- Trailers From Hell: Allan Arkush on THE KNACK...and how to get it (1965/2014, 4 mins) and John Landis on The Bed Sitting Room (1969/2014, 4 mins)
- Richard Lester in Conversation with Steven Soderbergh (1999, 88 mins, audio only): the director discusses his career in an interview recorded at the NFT
- New feature commentary by Richard Lester authority Neil Sinyard
- Illustrated booklet with two new essays, film credits and notes on all the extras (first pressing only)

Product details
RRP: £19.99/ Cat. no. BFIB1344 / 12

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- Cares for the BFI National Archive – the most significant film and television archive in the world
- Actively seeks out and supports the next generation of filmmakers
- Works with Government and industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally

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