

# Freddie Young (cinematographer) 9/10/02 – 1/12/98

by [Jon Stubbs](#) — last modified Jul 30, 2008 11:35 AM

**BIOGRAPHY** Among the most celebrated of all cinematographers, Freddie Young entered the film industry in the late 1917 at Gaumont Studios in Shepherds Bush. Working initially as a laboratory assistant, he was soon promoted to the camera department and earned his first credit as lighting cameraman in 1928. The following year he was placed under contract at British and Dominions by Herbert Wilcox, shooting numerous films for him before WWII. After the war he was contracted by MGM-British, for whom he had previously shot *Goodbye Mr Chips* (1939). From this point onward, Young worked almost exclusively on big international movies, notably his trio of films for David Lean: *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), *Doctor Zhivago* (1965) and *Ryan's Daughter* (1970). He won Oscars for all three and built a formidable reputation in the industry. Additional credits include *You Only Live Twice* (1967), *Battle of Britain* (1969) and *Nicholas and Alexandra* (1971). **SUMMARY** In this detailed and extensive interview, Freddie Young discusses his seven decades in the British film industry. Highlights include accounts of his early career with Herbert Wilcox, where he was involved in photographing the first British sound film (not *Blackmail*, he claims, but *White Cargo*), his impressions of the Hollywood studio system in the late 1930s, and his experiences working with Michael Powell. Throughout, Young speak frankly about working with a variety of British and American directors, who he categorises as those who were prepared to look through the camera's viewfinder, and those who were content to leave it to him. The latter approach seems to be exemplified by George Cukor, who Young claims was only interested in speaking to actors, while the former is exemplified by David Lean, who Young holds in immensely high regard. The interview also contains a great deal of valuable technical information.

## Document Actions

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