

MIKE LEIGH



IN FOCUS

Week Six

Welcome to *Mike Leigh In Focus*

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Welcome back, after our short break, to *Mike Leigh in Focus*. I hope you did terribly dramatic things since we last saw each other, potentially – in keeping with this week's themes – to musical accompaniment.

Yes, that's right – we're focusing on a single film this week – the period musical comedy drama extravaganza that is *Topsy-Turvy*, Mike Leigh's paean to those esteemed gentlemen Messrs. WS Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan.

Seen as a sharp left turn, by some, away from his usual cinematic offerings, in truth it contains much that is familiar to those (like us) who had followed his career to date. And certain seems a fitting subject for someone who had dedicated a large portion of his life and career to the theatre. And, of course, many of his own repertory company rock up to do their bit.

That being said, by dint of its period and its detailed production design, it was a departure of sorts – in retrospect of a piece, perhaps, with *Mr Turner* or *Peterloo*.

So, this week, we're going to dig into the question of quite *how* different *Topsy-Turvy* is from the 'typical' Mike Leigh film and what that meant for his continued development as a filmmaker.

We shall, in fact, be the very model of a modern major movie mob.

FILMS – WEEK SIX

The Story of Gilbert and Sullivan (1953)

The Mikado (1966)

Pirates of Penzance (1983)

Topsy-Turvy (1999)

Theatre Talk (Topsy Turvy) (2000)

Rare Delicacies (Review) (2019)

SUGGESTED READING

Mike Leigh on Mike Leigh

Amy Raphael and Mike Leigh

Mike Leigh: Interviews

Howie Movshovitz