

Quadrophenia — Louth Cine Circle

I remember exactly how I discovered *Quadrophenia*. I was a teenager, my boyfriend was 17 and a mod, and on his bedroom wall was this enormous black-and-white poster based on the *Quadrophenia* album image, the mod sitting with his back to us on the scooter with the words **“I’m not schizophrenic, I’m quadrophenic.”**

Obviously I wanted to know what *that* was. And that was my way into *Quadrophenia*. I got the VHS, watched it to death and knew the soundtrack.

But the thing is, in 1980s Louth *Quadrophenia* didn’t feel like a film about something that had happened in 1964. Mods were everywhere. They were at school with us. They were our friends and boyfriends.

Scooters came through Lincolnshire heading for rallies up the east coast. It was a tribe, and it was incredibly detailed. My boyfriend and his mate John would discuss the stitching on a suit. The paintwork on the scooters mattered. Rabbit skins were stitched onto seats, raccoon tails hung from aerials.

Then there were the clothes. Fred Perry, Ben Sherman, Lonsdale t-shirts, beautiful suits under fishtail parkas, desert boots, monkey boots, shoes you’d wear for ten pin bowling.

We went to the Bunker Club at the old RAF Manby, where there would be nights full of The Who, The Jam, The Specials, Madness and Northern Soul. You didn’t even have to be a mod to wear half of it, Louth Army surplus shop on Queen Street did a roaring trade in parkas and army bags.

On Saturdays we’d go to the pool club in Louth opposite the old police station and put *My Generation* on the jukebox. You’d spend a Sunday listening to somebody’s record collection. Music, clothes, scooters... it all mattered.

So watching *Quadrophenia* at Louth Cine Circle, was quite something.

And God, it still works. Phil Daniels is brilliant. Jimmy is angry, funny, selfish, vulnerable, completely obsessed with Steph and desperate to belong. Everything matters too much because he's young.

And he belongs to that great line of angry young men on film James Dean, Tom Courtenay all those kitchen-sink boys railing against whatever world they've been born into. But Jimmy gets a scooter, a tribe and a bloody fantastic soundtrack. There's something delicious about all that youthful anger finding an outlet in music, clothes and belonging.

And it still looks fantastic. The rain, Brighton, the sea, the scooters, Jimmy silhouetted in that fishtail parka and his face reflected back in the 4 scooter mirrors - iconic. Those images clearly got into my head because for my A-level art project I painted a mass of mods on scooters coming towards me down a Lincolnshire country lane. I still have my old *Mods!* book today, full of those original photographs, the clothes and the scooters covered in an absurd number of mirrors and lights.

I even dressed for the screening last night in Louth: a vintage Austin Reed of Regent Street suit jacket and a POW T-shirt in memory of Keith Moon.

That's why I loved seeing *Quadrophenia* at Louth Cine Circle. For some of us, it doesn't really feel like a period film. We remember when its afterlife was happening here. And that's why programmes like this matter: they give us the chance to see films like *Quadrophenia* properly on a cinema screen again, but also to reconnect them with the places, people and memories they still belong to.

We're all considerably older now, obviously. But stick *My Generation* on the jukebox and I'm a teenager again.

I was singing along last night, thanks for that.