

The Strange Death of Adolf Hitler

US : 1943 : dir. James Hogan : Universal : 74 min
 prod: Ben Pivar : scr: Fritz Kortner : dir.ph.:
[Charley Bates](#); [Merrill Rodin](#)
 Ludwig Donath; Fritz Kortner; Gale Sondergaard; George Dolenz; FredGiermann;
 William Trenk; Ludwig Stossel

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	KBytes	Ω □ € Z ☼	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Suspicious Hitlerjugend: Charlie Bates (left) and Merrill Rodin

Source: The Moving Picture Boy

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide
 1996 review:

"Hitler's double helps set trap for his demise.
 Dated, forgettable melodrama. ** "

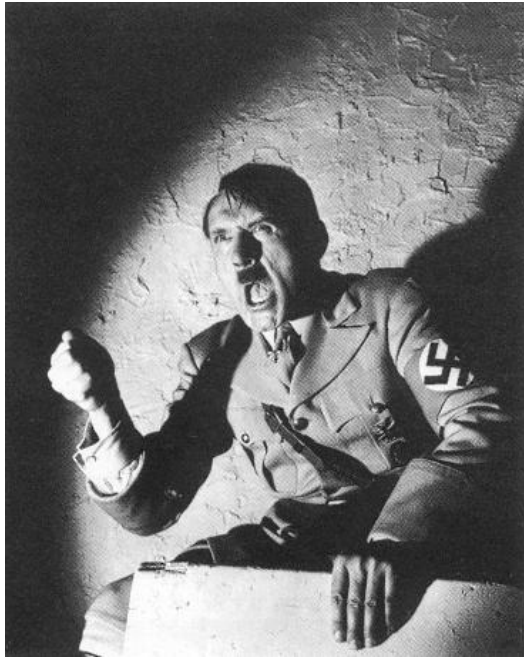
Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

"Likeable tale about Hitler's double who must
 lure the Führer into a deadly trap. ** "

Halliwel's Film Guide review

"A stage impressionist murders the Führer and
 takes his place, steering Germany deliberately
 into losing the war. One of the more eccentric
 curios of World War II, especially from a
 mundane studio like Universal. Once one

recovers from the shock of its existence, the thing is moderately well done. * ”



Yes, it *is* possible to overplay the Führer...
Source: *The Universal Story*

Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89
review:

“Facial double for Hitler is forced by the Gestapo to pose as Der Führer. Doesn’t mean much now but still an intriguing idea. ** ”

The Universal Story comment:

“A lurid exploitation melodrama, **“THE STRANGE DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER”** was a curiosity that starred Ludwig Donath in a dual role: Adolf Hitler and Viennese Franz Huber, Hitler’s double. Gale Sondergaard played Huber’s wife who, in the course of the screenplay Fritz Kortner wrote from his and Joe May’s original story, has the misfortune to shoot her husband in the belief that he is really

Hitler. Under James Hogan’s direction it all added up to little more than potboiler entertainment. Also cast were George Dolenz, Frederick Giermann, William Trenk, Merrill Rodin, Charles Bates and Ludwig Stossel. The production was by Ben Pivar.”

[no listing in "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Bates:

“The dark, usually disruptive Bates was in many famous films of the Forties. He was Teresa Wright’s kid brother, for instance, in **“SHADOW OF A DOUBT”**, Gregory Peck’s guilty buried self in **“SPELLBOUND”** and Ernest Severn’s antagonist in **“PURSUED”**. Later, Charley was in **“SHOCKPROOF”** (49) and **“THE SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO”** (53) before fading from the scene.”

The Moving Picture Boy entry on Rodin:

“Merrill Guy Rodin was a neat, freckled boy with a serious face and sandy hair – the last not too apparent in his first notable role, as a Dutch refugee child in **“THE PIED PIPER”**, for which he had been shaved virtually bald. He’s probably better remembered, with his normal thatch, as the younger of the heroine’s brothers in **“THE SONG OF BERNADETTE”**.”

No further information currently available. *The Moving Picture Boy* cites the American spelling “Adolph Hitler”, but all sources beside Holmstrom give the title as spelt here. A virtually identical plot was filmed by Columbia in 1951 as **“THE MAGIC FACE”**, starring Luther Adler as the Hitler impersonator. George Dolenz was the father of Monkee Mickey Dolenz, who starred on TV as **“Circus Boy”** under the name Mickey Braddock.

Charley Bates was about 9, and Merrill Rodin 11. They met again in **“THE SONG OF BERNADETTE”**. Bates cropped up in **“SON OF DRACULA”** (43), **“THE CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE”** (43), **“DANNY BOY”** (46), **“THE GREEN YEARS”** (46) and others.

See subject index under **WAR** for more interesting titles with a Hitler Youth element.