

Tobor the Great

US : 1954 : dir. Lee Sholem : Republic : 77 min
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
Billy Chapin
 Charles Drake; Karin Booth; Taylor Holmes; Steven Geray; Peter Brocco; Henry Kulky

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	KBytes	Ω	□	≠	Z	⊗	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Danger! Kid scientist at work!

Source: Those Endearing Young Charms

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide
 1996 review:

"Scientist allows his genius grandson to become pals with the robot of the title, leading to complications when spies try to glom onto the plans; terrible acting and dialogue. A botched attempt at a heartwarming sci-fi comedy-thriller. *½ "

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

"Weak SF film about enemy agents who want to steal secret robot plans. Appalling acting and ghastly dialogue. *½ "

Those Endearing Young Charms note:

"The son of a top scientist thwarts enemy agents in their attempts to steal the plans of a new type of robot. Billy portrays the over-ambitious but well-meaning son."

Video Movie Guide 1993 review:

"Kids foil commie plot to steal secret robot plans. Terrific-looking robot is the only saving grace in this juvenile Republic Pictures programmer. ** "



Behold what science has wrought!
Source: Amazon.com

Amazon.com review:

“Two brilliant scientists create a robot for the purpose of exploring deep space, but the mechanical marvel is stolen by enemy agents. Only the scientists’ psychic link with the robot can save it from being reprogrammed for evil purposes.”

Amazon.com customer’s review:

“ **"TOBOR"** is one of the most delightful juvenile sci-fi B-movies of the 1950s, and one of the best movie robots of all time! Although **"TOBOR"** was closer related to the tin-can clanking robots in the old Republic movie serials of the 1940s than to more futuristic versions like Robby and R2-D2, he endeared himself to 1954 audiences of kids who loved to see a 7-foot-tall robot as a hero. The archetypal boy-and-his-robot movie, like Robby in **"THE INVISIBLE BOY"** (1957) this one works as sheer entertainment and no doubt inspired many young boys in the Fifties to grow up to be scientists.

Billy Chapin as Gadge heads an all-star cast of sterling character actors during the cold war McCarthy era. Stephen Geray is tops as the villainous spy you love to hate, and was supported by top character heavies Peter Brocco and Henry Kulky. They were nicely counterbalanced with Taylor Holmes as TOBOR's inventor, Professor Nordstrom, and Charles Drake as a pre-NASA-era rocket scientist. Highly recommended! Great fun for all ages! Three cheers for **"TOBOR THE GREAT"**! ” - Donald J Long, San Jose, Calif

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "A Pictorial Guide to the Talkies", "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" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Billy Chapin, Robert Mitchum's quarry in **"NIGHT OF THE HUNTER"**, was 11. His first screen performance was at the grand old age of 22 days, as Gary Cooper's daughter in **"CASANOVA BROWN"**, but gender-bending baby roles aside, his films included **"AFFAIR WITH A STRANGER"** (53), **"THE KID FROM LEFT FIELD"** (53, in title role), **"A MAN CALLED PETER"** (55) and **"VIOLENT SATURDAY"** (55). For a boy whose given hobby was "dogs", he seems to have scrupulously evaded boy-and-his-dog films, of which there was no shortage in the forties and fifties. Holmstrom observes in *The Moving Picture Boy*: "He had an attractively dreamy expression, and sometimes needed galvanising into action. This happened forcefully enough when Charles Laughton directed him in **'NIGHT OF THE HUNTER'**. Laughton praised him afterwards as an 'acting technician', but the effect is sometimes as if Billy were acting by numbers, responding to instructions from the director, strange, abrupt, startled-fawn reactions which are undoubtedly beautiful yet not quite real... "

See subject index under **KIDS OUTWIT THE CROOKS**, and under **SCIENCE FICTION** for a sub-section on robots. Undoubtedly the cinema's most famous robot (until **"STAR WARS"** at any rate) was Robbie, from **"FORBIDDEN PLANET"**. After being paired with Richard Eyer in **"THE INVISIBLE BOY"** his career hit the skids, and he was condemned to a robotic purgatory as stooge to Dr Zachary Smith on TV's **"Lost in Space"**, with Billy Mumy.