



BARRY MARSDEN

# Viewfinder

## Brighton Rock

Previews of 'Brighton Rock' start at the Almeida Theatre, London N1 (020 7359 4404) on Monday.

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[www.telegraph.co.uk/view](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/view)

Huddled against the back wall of Islington's Almeida Theatre, like schoolboys gathered for a smoke behind the bike shed, are four of the most talented men in British theatre. Trailing Academy Awards, OBEs and countless critical plaudits, the four - from left to right, composer John Barry, lyricist Don Black, writer Giles Havergal and director Michael Attenborough - have teamed up to create a new musical based on Graham Greene's thriller, *Brighton Rock*. "For obvious reasons, I know the film of *Brighton Rock* rather well," says Attenborough, whose father, Richard, portrayed

17-year-old villain, Pinkie, in John Boulting's 1947 movie. "But, until recently, I had never read the novel. In it, I discovered a second narrative that the film scarcely touches on: embedded in the tale of mob-rule and murder is an extraordinary portrait of a psychotic teenager. That is the aspect we looked at, asking what kind of damaging childhood could have turned Pinkie into a murderer." With violent crimes by boys of Pinkie's age an almost permanent fixture in the news, the time seems ripe for Attenborough's psychologically complex musical debut. **BS**