



THE PRINCE, THE SHOWGIRL AND ME

BBC Two, 11.20pm

This jaunty and frequently hilarious film is based on the memoirs of Colin Clark, the lesser known brother of the late MP and diarist Alan Clark, written at a time when he was working as a lowly assistant on the 1957 film *The Princess and the Showgirl*. His recollections of events on set provide a fascinating picture of life in Britain in the late 1950s and give us an insider's glimpse into the lives and personalities of some of the biggest names of the day, especially the film's leading lady Marilyn Monroe (above), with whom everybody, including Clarke, was completely smitten — apart from her canterkerous director and co-star Laurence Olivier. **MM**

THURSDAY TELEVISION

Channel Hopper

Gerard O'Donovan

To tie in with *The Alan Clark Diaries*, BBC4 has been showing Clare Beavan's terrific adaptation of another Clark diary, this one by Alan's younger brother, Colin. Published in 1996, *The Prince, the Showgirl and Me* was a hilarious account of the summer 40 years earlier, when 24-year-old aspiring film-director Colin worked on Laurence Olivier and Marilyn Monroe's film version of *The Prince and the Showgirl*. It started with Colin (read winningly by Patrick Barlow) recording: "Larry and Vivien came down to stay the weekend at Saltwood Castle, my parents' home in Kent. Mama told Vivien I wanted to be in films. I was mortified." Thus Colin secured a job with Olivier's film company; and he proved the perfect, wide-eyed guide not only to Pinewood in the mid-1950s but

also to the awful, unwelcoming snob directed by Olivier and his cronies towards Monroe and her entourage. ("A self-satisfied, argumentative, pseudo-intellectual," sneered Sir Larry of Monroe's husband, playwright Art Miller.) Unsurprisingly, the shoot did go well, with Monroe constantly late and corpsing while Olivier seethed in infantile resentment. Colin captured in a scintillating style not dissimilar his brother's, right down to the pithy accounts of sexual encounters, the final chapter, in which he describes how he'd achieved an unsuspected intimacy with Monroe, had his charm whether in reality that conquest was just a young man's fancy or an old rogue's desire to set tongues wagging

The Prince, The Showgirl And Me ★★★★★

9pm BBC4 A spellbinding account of what happened on the set of *The Prince And The Showgirl* — as recorded by diarist Alan Clark's brother Colin, a lowly assistant on the film.

The Prince And The Showgirl And Me ★★★★★

BBC4 9pm A documentary that brings to life the journal of Colin Clark, whose diaries marked the events which took place during the filming of the 1957 Laurence Olivier/Marilyn Monroe movie, *The Prince And The Showgirl*. A witty account of cinema's bygone age, packed with bust-ups, sexual shenanigans and behind-the-scenes gossip.

BBC 4 on BBC 2:
★ The Prince, the Showgirl and Me/★ A Very English Genius I
BBC 2, 11.20 pm/12.20 am
 Two challengingly scheduled documentary transfers, starting with a wry and beautifully pitched account of backstage shenanigans during the making of the Laurence Olivier/Marilyn Monroe film *The Prince and the Showgirl*. It's based on Colin (brother of Alan) Clark's diaries — he was the 24-year-old 3rd assistant director ("a sort of superior messenger boy") on it. Then,