

Institut Lumière presents

OFFICIAL SELECTION

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TORONTO INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL 2016

# LUMIÈRE!

Directed by Thierry Frémaux

A series of cinematographic short films by Louis Lumière, Alexandre Promio, Gabriel Veyre, Francesco Felicetti, Constant Girel, Félix Mesguich and Charles Moisson.

1895-2016 / 90min / Black & White / France

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# SYNOPSIS

In 1895, Louis and Auguste Lumière invented the Cinématographe and shot some of the very first films in the history of moving pictures: *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory*, *Tables Turned on the Gardener*... With their discovery of *mise-en-scène*, tracking shots and even special effects and remakes, they also invented the art of cinema itself!

From among more than 1,400 of their films, Thierry Frémaux, director of the Cannes Film Festival and the Institut Lumière, has selected 114: universally celebrated masterpieces or previously unknown golden discoveries, restored in 4K and assembled to celebrate the legacy of the Lumières.

**A journey into the universe of the founders of cinema, narrated by Frémaux with passion and humour, LUMIÈRE! delivers unforgettable images and a unique view of France and the world at the dawn of the modern era; truly essential films that illuminate the world of contemporary filmmaking.**

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"There was a time when the cinema emerged from the trees, burst from the sea, when the man with the magic camera stopped in squares, in cafes, when the screens opened a window onto infinity. It was the era of Louis Lumière."

*Henri Langlois*

"Louis Lumière was indeed a descendant of Flaubert, via the Impressionists, but also of Stendhal, whose mirror he carried along the way."

*Jean-Luc Godard*



# 120 YEARS OF THE CINÉMATOGRAPHE LUMIÈRE

Louis and Auguste Lumière invent the Cinématographe in 1895. On March 19 of that year, they shoot their first film, "*Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory*". On March 22, they present the film to the Society for the Encouragement of National Industry. Throughout 1895, largely under the direction of Louis, they shoot dozens of films, mainly in Lyon or at La Ciotat. On December 28, 1895, they screen their films in front of a paying audience for the first time. It is a resounding success. Starting the following year, they recruit cameramen and send them to the four corners of the world.

Often considered merely an inventor, it is scarcely known that Louis Lumière was also a creator. From the outset, he and his cameramen would ask themselves questions as directors. The likes of Georges Sadoul, Henri Langlois and Jean-Luc Godard have all declared the existence of 'Lumière the filmmaker'.

There are 1,422 films\* in total, each approximately fifty seconds long, filmed by Louis and his cameramen. This represents about twenty hours of footage. Hundreds have never been seen, and others never screened outside the era in which they were filmed.

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Established on rue du Premier-Film, Lyon in 1982, and under the presidency of Bertrand Tavernier, the Institut Lumière celebrated in 2015 the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cinématographe Lumière with a series of events:

The exhibition "Lumière ! Le cinéma inventé" (Spring 2015). Organised at the Grand Palais in Paris, the event was acclaimed by both critics and audiences alike. After Bologna in 2016, the touring exhibition will move to the Musée des Confluences in Lyon in 2017, followed by Buenos Aires, Evian and other cities throughout the world.

The book *Lumière!* (2017), jointly published by Actes Sud and the Institut Lumière.

And most importantly, the film LUMIÈRE!, created from a selection of 114 Lumière films, restored in 4K and narrated by Thierry Frémaux. Screened in the Grand Theatre of the Palais at Cannes in 2015 and warmly acclaimed by an international audience of some 2,000 people, the film is now making its North-American debut, at the Toronto International Film Festival.

With a live narration by Thierry Frémaux, the Lumière films will once again dazzle with their power and modernity.

The magic of the earliest works of the Cinématographe is finally available to all.

*\*Inventory by Béatrice de Pastre from the CNC Film Archives.*

# STATEMENT BY THIERRY FRÉMAUX & BERTRAND TAVERNIER

2015 marked the 120th anniversary of the Cinématographe Lumière. Now is the time to proclaim the value and *cinematographic* quality of these Lumière films, as well as to reiterate the importance of those “inventors” of cinema. “Inventors” in quotation marks because, without underrating the major event that occurred in Lyon-Monplaisir in 1895, we must remember that a universal discovery such as cinema was a long process, in which Muybridge, Marey, Demeny, Reynaud, and Edison were all key players. The Lumière brothers masterfully brought to fruition an idea that, as Louis Lumière said, “was in the air”.

Let us simply call it a “giant leap” that these pioneers made with the moving image, changing its very nature by taking these films outside, letting them discover life and projecting them in front of an audience.

But this was not merely a technical advance. The Cinématographe encapsulates the whole of cinema. This selection of more than a hundred ‘little films’ confirms this proposition, revealing Lumière’s work as stemming from creative inspiration, from an inestimable imagination and vision of the world. The Cinématographe very quickly imposed its different worlds on a lively crowd. By asking themselves questions about *mise-en-scène*, by inventing themes that would inspire thousands of directors, by sending cameramen to the four corners of the globe, Lumière was acting as a filmmaker.

So... *Le siècle des Lumière* - The other Age of Enlightenment: that of Louis, Auguste and Antoine, the father. An *oeuvre* that happily anticipates the future of cinema, and preserves its power at a time when the revolution of images is constant. Faithful to the words of Jean Renoir: “With Lumière, it is not history that is revealed, it is life. And life is something more profound. That is why these films are so important: they open the door to our imagination - precisely what today we like to call a “work of art.”

Thierry Frémaux & Bertrand Tavernier

# BIOGRAPHIES

## THE LUMIÈRE BROTHERS

The Lumière brothers, Louis (1864-1948) and Auguste (1862-1954) are among the most famous of French inventors. While their most important work was undoubtedly the invention of the Cinématographe, in 1895, they were also involved in still photography and in 1907 they invented the first color photography process, the Lumière Autochrome.



## THIERRY FRÉMAUX

Thierry Frémaux is the director of both the Cannes Film Festival and the Institut Lumière in Lyon. For many years he has been deeply involved in the preservation of the Lumière collection (films and photography) and the restoration of the first Cinématographe movies. Frémaux compiled LUMIÈRE! with the aim of celebrating the Lumière brothers, not as inventors but as the first directors in the history of cinema.

## BERTRAND TAVERNIER

Internationally acclaimed French director Bertrand Tavernier is Honorary President of the Institut Lumière and since 1983 been involved in the preservation of the legacy of the Lumière Brothers. As president of the institute, he acted as producer on LUMIÈRE!

# LUMIÈRE! – Film chapters

- Chapter 1 - The first films
- Chapter 2 - The Lyon of Lumière
- Chapter 3 - Childhoods
- Chapter 4 - France at Work
- Chapter 5 - France at Play
- Chapter 6 - Paris 1900
- Chapter 7 - The World Nearby
- Chapter 8 - Comedy!
- Chapter 9 - A new century
- Chapter 10 - Vanguards of cinema
- Chapter 11 - See you soon, Lumière

## CREW

The 114 films that comprise LUMIÈRE! were selected from the 1,422 cinematographic works produced by the Lumière Company between 1895 and 1905.

A series of cinematographic short films by Louis Lumière, Alexandre Promio, Gabriel Veyre, Francesco Felicetti, Constant Girel, Félix Mesguich and Charles Moisson.

**Directed by** Thierry Frémaux

**Editors** - Thierry Frémaux and Thomas Valette, with the participation of Fabrice Calzетtoni and Maelle Arnaud

**Commentary written and spoken by** Thierry Frémaux

**Original Music** - Camille Saint-Saëns

**Production** - Institut Lumière

**Producers** - Thierry Frémaux, Bertrand Tavernier

With the participation of Laurent Cormier, Béatrice de Pastre, Laurent Mannoni, Davide Pozzi and Serge Toubiana.

# RESTORATION

The restoration was funded by the CNC (National Center of Cinema and the moving image) through the selective assistance for the digitization of heritage cinematographic works programme.

It received the support of the Total Foundation as part of its association with the Heritage Foundation. With the support of la Ville de Lyon and la Région Rhône-Alpes.

The restoration was conducted under the direction of the Institut Lumière and performed by Eclair Group using negative and positive elements from the collections of the Cinémathèque française, the Institut Lumière and the French film Archives of the CNC.

The 4K scan was performed by the Immagine Ritrovata laboratory of Bologna (Italy).

LUMIÈRE! is also supported by France 2 and France 3, Le Monde, Télérama, Première and AlloCiné.



# THE INSTITUT LUMIÈRE WOULD LIKE TO THANK

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Wim Wenders

As well as

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Gilles Trarieux-Lumière  
and the Lumière family

And

Alice and Bernard Chardère  
Mijo and Raymond Chirat  
And everyone at the Institut Lumière





“In the history of cinema, there are numerous examples of breakaway figures where all of a sudden you feel you are in the midst of something extraordinary... The most beautiful is Lumière. And it’s even more important than the fact that he invented film projection.

Because here, there’s a sort of miracle. Lumière as a realist is the all-round champion. But for me, his films are truly *fantastic*. It’s strange because this type of the fantastic - which should be in all films - isn’t found after (Lumière).

It exhausted itself, it wore itself out because after, everything was rigged.

Lumière’s cinema shows life like we’d never seen it before... There are a few films by Edison but it’s striking, they are worthless. Lumière’s work isn’t realism; it belongs to the miraculous. And yet it is reality, for the first time. Then, there’s a naivety, a purity that has since been lost.”

*Maurice Pialat*



wild bunch