

MARCEAU-COCINOR, SOGEXPORTFILM & LES FILMS DU VEILLEUR
present

BULLE OGIER
JEAN-PIERRE KALFON

tiff



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
CANNES CLASSICS
OFFICIAL SELECTION 2023

L'AMOUR FOU

BY
JACQUES RIVETTE



4K MATERIAL AVAILABLE

RESTORATION

Since the 35mm negative burned in a fire at the GTC lab in 1973, this restoration of *L'Amour Fou* was carried out using material from various sources kept at Les Archives du Film and in the stores of Éclair-Préservation.

This film was restored with the support of **Les Films du Veilleur** and the **CNC**.

Shot in Paris in July and August 1967, *L'Amour Fou* was restored at Hiventy's lab in Boulogne-Billancourt, under the supervision of Caroline Champetier, AFC.

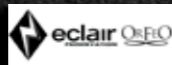
Calibration: **Pauline Bassenne**
Digital restoration: **Frédéric Hedin**
Sound restoration: **Aymeric Gavent**
Work follow-up: **Audrey Birrien**

FRANCE • 1969 • BLACK & WHITE • 4H14 • MONO

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Photos and press pack can be downloaded at <https://filmsdulosange.com/en/film/lamour-fou/>



SYNOPSIS

During the rehearsals for the production of the tragedy *Andromaque*, the leading actress and her director, a couple behind the scenes, can't find a way to leave their personal problems at home. And life imitates fiction, creating a real tragedy for this couple when the man finds comfort with other women while the actress prefers to stay focused on her work, as if nothing is happening with her partner.



THROUGH THE CENTURIES¹

By Véronique Manniez-Rivette

After *La Maman et la Putain* by Jean Eustache last year, Les Films du Losange is now re-releasing Jacques Rivette's *L'Amour Fou*.

For so long, and for different reasons, these two cinematic outliers were very hard to find. Jacques Rivette and Jean Eustache were friends and collaborators. In 1966, they worked together on the editing of *Jean Renoir, le Patron*, a film shot for the TV series *Cinéastes de notre temps* (Filmmakers of our Time), produced by André S. Labarthe and Janine Bazin.

1966 was just one year before the shoot of *L'Amour Fou*. And while *L'Amour Fou* owes a lot to *Le Patron*, as well as to Jean Renoir and all his films, especially *Le Carosse d'Or*, it most definitely owed something to Jean Eustache also.

Jacques talked about their collaboration in a memorable conversation with Hélène Frappat published in *La Lettre du cinéma* in 1999²: "During the three months we spent together, editing day after day the Renoir programs, we chatted constantly as we watched and re-watched all our material, and re-watched Renoir's films (...) A never-ending discussion, with Jean saying, Cinema must be personal. You have to talk about

yourself. And me arguing, No, it's not about talking about yourself, it's about fiction, trying to make up stories. (...) I think we were both right, as usual in such cases, because, in the end, Jean made autobiographical films which, in spite of himself, became fictions, while I tried to make fictions, but a couple of times it so happened that, in those fictions, in spite of myself, I included more or less personal experiences. For *L'Amour Fou*, I realized, of course, but in other films, it was only much later that I noticed they spoke of things that were more secret, first and foremost for me.

These revelations inspire dreams of the film that might have been made about those three, fascinating months of editing. Might one have seen friends of the filmmakers, male or female, passing through? Did Marilù Parolini drop in from time to time?

¹ Go through the centuries, without stopping on any single one, without looking back, and contemplate how the drama unravels." From *Secret Défense*, directed by Jacques Rivette, dialogue by Pascal Bonitzer and Emmanuelle Cuau, Pierre Grise Productions, 1998.

² *La Lettre du Cinéma* n°10 (summer '99) and n°11 (fall '99), Éditions POL. The interview was reproduced by Luc Chessel and Miguel Armas in *Jacques Rivette textes critiques*, Post-Éditions 2018.



A few months after their first meeting, captured in Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin's film *Chronique d'un été*, Marilù and Jacques were engaged for a year, from 1961 to 1962. They broke up, yet remained friends and worked together several times. I was told by Jacques that the premise of *L'Amour Fou* had been suggested to him by Marilù.

I have often watched *L'Amour Fou* in the last thirty years. With each screening, I have experienced it differently. Over time, its bleakness has faded. As a result of various sessions organized during the restoration, and in the light of texts that have recently come to light, it suddenly occurred to me, like an image appears in a carpet, that from end to end the film sketches a gripping portrait of the "evil inclination" or yetzer ha-ra (יצר הרע). This life force, which proves fatal when it is not counterbalanced by yetzer ha-tov (יצר הטוב), is mentioned for the first time in Genesis, early in the chapter relating the Flood.

*The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.*³

Imagining evil all day long, evil thoughts, spiteful words, snapping at people—these are all banana skins that we step on all day long, most often without even realizing it. Evil (*hara*) emerges (*yetzer*) also in jealousy, withdrawing into yourself, all forms of compulsive consumption, or when we waste energy on trivialities—so many examples that *L'Amour Fou* cleverly exposes one by one.

It seems to me that the film's profound modernity and its imperviousness to passing decades find a solid foundation there.

Another of the film's principal qualities is the purity with which the director takes the bull by the horns—a purity similar to that which was "anxiously sought in ancient Judaism, like a way of enabling forces of life to prevail over those of death," in the words of Catherine Chalié.⁴

In an interview with Jacques Rivette, conducted by Yvonne Baby for *Le Monde* and published on October 2, 1968, we read:

³ Genesis 6, 5, New International Version.

⁴ Catherine Chalié, *Pureté, impureté Une mise à l'épreuve*, Bayard, 2019.

« **But what was your precise function?**

"I tried to be someone who incites, urges, coordinates, tries to set things and events in motion, and subsequently to oversee proceedings and just nudge things along whenever useful. I tried to step back as much as possible, and that is definitely the most compelling part: the less you intervene, the more what you see appears to be a spontaneous projection of what you have most deeply hidden. That's when you get the feeling of 'learning yourself,' as if you were looking in a mirror that really plays its role. Actually, by saying that, I'm merely repeating the terms in which Philippe Garrel speaks of his latest films."

But the filmmaker would not have been able to have this unprecedented experience if, to begin with, in late winter 1965, he had not been given one of the artistic shocks of his life the evening he attended a performance of *Les Bargasses* by Marc'O and his company at Théâtre Édouard VII, a production that, in his eyes, was a revolutionary renewal of the art of theatre. Dealing with war, like a buzz followed from a bar where everyone is dancing, the play also gave him the idea for the lead actors of the film he would direct two years later: Bulle Ogier and Jean-Pierre Kalfon.

The alpha and omega of *L'Amour Fou* resides in the combined talents of Bulle Ogier, Jean-Pierre Kalfon, Josée Destoop, Michèle Moretti de Célia, Maddly Bamy, Françoise Godde, Yves Beneyton, Dennis Berry, Michel Delahaye, Didier Léon, Liliane Bordoni and Claude-Éric Richard—the formidable actresses and actors who carry the film.



While making this film about the crisis in a couple's relationship, complemented by a meticulous study of the act of creation, might Jacques Rivette have perceived that he was also putting forward an interpretation and commentary on a verse from Genesis? Who knows? Meantime, among the archives of *L'Amour Fou*, slipped into a blue file containing his preparatory notes, is a sheet of paper bearing the letterhead of *Rome Paris Films Carlo Ponti – Georges de Beauregard*, covered in various scribbled notes including, on the reverse, clear mention that Jacques broke the film down, and composed it musically, in the form of a *mass in five canticles* (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus).

Liz (Jane Birkin)⁵

You'll always surprise me... Always...


⁵ Extrait de *La Belle Noiseuse*, dialogues de Christine Laurent et Pascal Bonitzer, mise en scène de Jacques Rivette, Pierre Grise productions 1991.

ROME PARIS FILMS
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S.A.R.L. AU CAPITAL DE 300.000 N.F. R. C. SEINE 89 B. 1228

1 Oreste
2 Oreste, Pyrrhus
3 Pyrrhus
4 P. A.
5 H. O.
6 O. P.

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Handwritten notes in French and Latin script, including names like 'Oreste', 'Pyrrhus', and 'A.P.'. The notes are organized in columns and rows, some with arrows pointing to specific parts of the architectural drawing. There are also some decorative flourishes at the bottom.

Jacques Rivette's notes.

A.

1 (Anticum 2/ Syria)
Equilibre instable

2 (Anticum 2/ Syria)
Vers Umanisme

3 (Anticum 3/ Crede)
Vers Andronage

4 (Anticum 4/ Sanchi)
Persepolis

5 (Anticum 5/ Aquas)
A testruple

1 (Anticum 1/ R. I-1)
Act

2 (Anticum 2/ R. I-2)
Clair

3 (Anticum 3/ R. I-3)
Act

4 (Anticum 4/ R. II-1)
Clair

5 (Anticum 5/ R. II-2)
Marta

6 (Anticum 6/ R. II-3)
Clair

7 (Anticum 7/ R. III-1)
Clair

8 (Anticum 8/ R. III-2)
Clair

9 (Anticum 9/ R. III-3)
Marta

Handwritten notes in French and Latin script, organized in columns and rows. The notes describe architectural elements and their relationships, with arrows pointing to specific parts of the drawing. There are also some decorative flourishes at the bottom.

INTERVIEW WITH JACQUES RIVETTE

(Extracts) By Bernard Cohn,
Positif n°104, april 1969 (pages 27-38)

Did you plan all along to work with Jean-Pierre Kalfon and Bulle Ogier?

Yes, I started work on the script with them in mind. If they hadn't agreed to the basic idea of the film, I don't think I'd have made it with anyone else. I'd wanted to make a film with them ever since I saw them on stage in productions by Marc'O.

As actors, they have a much more physical style than most, totally unlike the usual French screen actors who are deformed by a particular tradition, by drama school and rational analysis of the characters. Because of that, even some very talented actors are unable to have a truly great dimension. They are caught in the wiring of the psychological role, the character's role, and all the preconceived ideas that come from this tradition of literary textual analysis and logical explanation of the characters. These are the dregs of the prevailing 19th century aesthetic, which was above all an aesthetic of fear, aiming to rationalize everything in order to hide what being really is. It reveals the ghosts that personalities and feelings have become.



(...)

Which scenes were most improvised, the ones in the theatre or in the apartments?

We improvised a little bit everywhere, but it was never the same type of improvisation. It all depended on the moment, the scene.

Some moments are pure documentary. The cast of *Andromaque* rehearsed continuously, 8-10 hours a day, and often did not know when we were filming them.

At other moments, we needed something more precise intended, for example, to accompany a movement made by one of the actors. I only kept a small part of what we shot in the film, especially with regard to the "documentary" footage. When I was shooting, I had no idea what I would keep in editing. It was like casting my line in a river, whereas the apartment scenes were more premeditated. Nothing was set in stone, though. It depended solely on what occurred to Bulle and Jean-Pierre before each scene. There were scenes that they did not feel like just jumping into, while

they wanted to try to improvise other scenes in their entirety, with only basic background and a few pointers. When improvisation did not produce a satisfactory result, we'd rework the scene together in greater detail. There are even one or two scenes that were written entirely on set, with directions for the tiniest inflection, and that required multiple takes. I hope there is no noticeable difference between scenes that were improvised and those that were blocked, rehearsed and shot with planned durations and intonations. In any case, I would never have imposed anything on the actors. I decided which approach to take to each scene in consultation with them.

How did you shoot the scene when Kalfon

lacerates the clothes?

It's a single take, naturally. The interesting part of this film was that we would only do one take of some things because, physically or materially, we were prevented from doing more. That was wonderful. It feels very pleasant to set up a shot, knowing that the first take has to be the one. When we broke the door, for example, it was all or nothing because we didn't have a replacement door. Lots of things were done like that. That's why we didn't rehearse too much, just enough to have a frame of reference, and to aim to give it all we had on the first take. We only went again if the actors wanted to.

Do you think it's possible to see your film as an adventure movie?

Why not... There's even the attack by the Indians. Either way, the film is for that purpose—for everyone to make what they want of it. It's the archetype of a film that requires audience collaboration, and only means anything through that. It's a bit like inkblots in a Rorschach test. And, considering that the film runs for four hours, it perhaps offers greater liberty to choose one thing or another.

Was it the film's running time that made you think you had to stop, or could you have kept going to 5-6 hours, like Bulle Ogier playing with the nesting dolls?

Keep going with the shoot or in editing? It was a five-week shoot and we shot for five weeks. If we'd had one more week, we'd have shot for one more week. There was no lack of material. When we started editing, I'd no preconception of the eventual running time: when we were shooting, we never asked ourselves what we would keep. After four months' editing, when the film began to take shape, we showed it to Truffaut. If François had found it boring, I would have made cuts to try to shorten it.

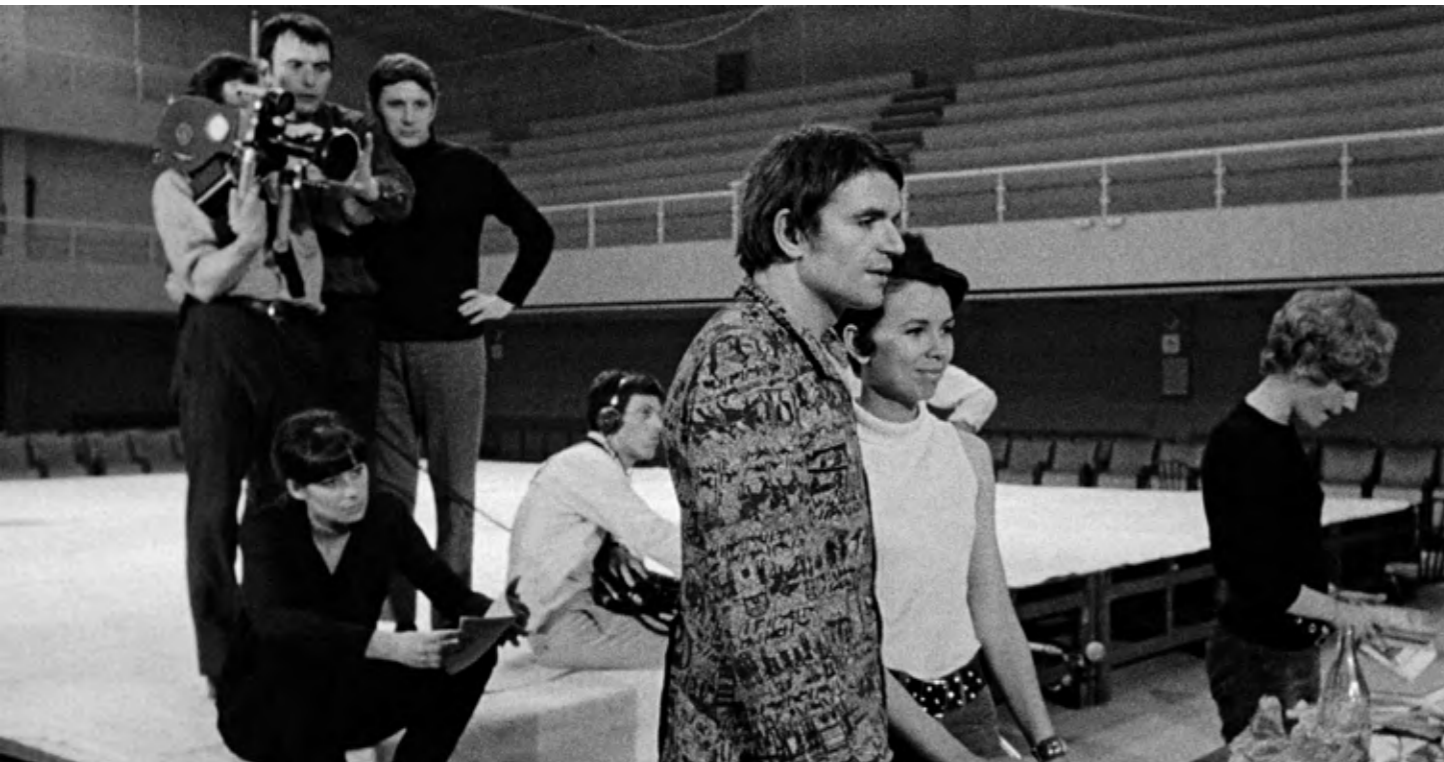
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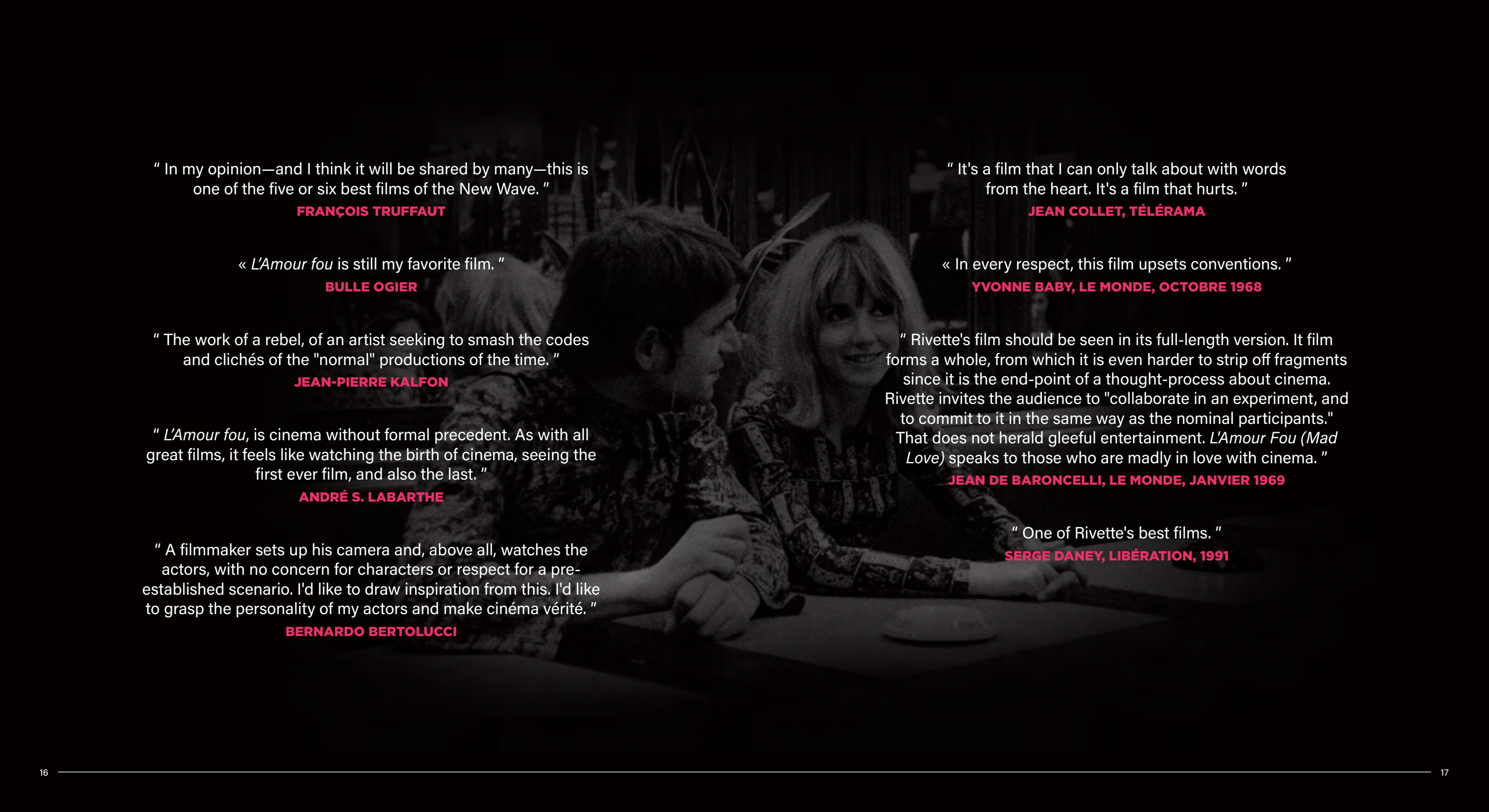
How did you work with your two camera operators, on 16mm and 35mm?

For the 16mm, Etienne Becker practically had free rein. He is definitely one of France's best—if not the best (I don't know them all)—with a Coutant in his hands, and equally proficient in the documentary parts and the "staged" scenes. His work on Jean Rouch's segment of *Paris vu par...*



was quite magnificent. When I asked him to work on this film, I told him I was hiring him as a co-director. I want to edit a separate film of all that he shot (roughly six hours of footage) because, to my mind, it's far more interesting in full length than in flashes that are manipulated to a greater or lesser extent to become part of the film. When we worked with two cameras, directions were, of course, more specific. For example, at the start of the opening scene, the 35mm camera is on Jean-Pierre, while Etienne follows Bulle, and the scene is shot in one go with two cameras, with the result that it goes shot-reverse shot, and the edited scene looks like it was the result of an extensive breakdown, but it was shot in its entirety in one go. Most of the time, though, Etienne filmed only when he felt that something interesting was about to happen. Alain Levent, operating the 35mm camera, was more closely connected to my point of view. Cameramen are not people (speaking only for myself) with whom you have long conversations: you agree on the basic idea and trust them as you go along. ■





" In my opinion—and I think it will be shared by many—this is one of the five or six best films of the New Wave. "

FRANÇOIS TRUFFAUT

« *L'Amour fou* is still my favorite film. "

BULLE OGIER

" The work of a rebel, of an artist seeking to smash the codes and clichés of the "normal" productions of the time. "

JEAN-PIERRE KALFON

" *L'Amour fou*, is cinema without formal precedent. As with all great films, it feels like watching the birth of cinema, seeing the first ever film, and also the last. "

ANDRÉ S. LABARTHE

" A filmmaker sets up his camera and, above all, watches the actors, with no concern for characters or respect for a pre-established scenario. I'd like to draw inspiration from this. I'd like to grasp the personality of my actors and make *cinéma vérité*. "

BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI

" It's a film that I can only talk about with words from the heart. It's a film that hurts. "

JEAN COLLET, TÉLÉRAMA

« In every respect, this film upsets conventions. "

YVONNE BABY, LE MONDE, OCTOBRE 1968

" Rivette's film should be seen in its full-length version. It film forms a whole, from which it is even harder to strip off fragments since it is the end-point of a thought-process about cinema. Rivette invites the audience to "collaborate in an experiment, and to commit to it in the same way as the nominal participants." That does not herald gleeful entertainment. *L'Amour Fou (Mad Love)* speaks to those who are madly in love with cinema. "

JEAN DE BARONCELLI, LE MONDE, JANVIER 1969

" One of Rivette's best films. "

SERGE DANÉY, LIBÉRATION, 1991



CAST

Claire - **Bulle Ogier** · Sébastien - **Jean-Pierre Kalfon** · Marta-Hermione - **Josée Destoop** · Michèle - **Michèle Moretti** · Celia / Andromaque - **Celia** · Françoise / Cléone - **Françoise Godde** · Maddly-Céphise - **Maddy Bamy** · Puck - **Liliane Bordoni** · Yves / Oreste - **Yves Beneyton** · Dennis / Pylade - **Dennis Berry** · Michel / Phoenix - **Michel Delahaye** · Television director - **André S. Labarthe** · Musicien - **Didier Léon** · Philippe - **Claude-Eric Richard**

And:

Television operator - **Etienne Becker** · **Patrice Wyers**

CREW

Coproduction by **Marceau-Cocinor**, **Sogexportfilm** · Director **Jacques Rivette** · Line producer **Georges de Beauregard** · Screenplay **Marilù Parolini**, **Jacques Rivette** · Image 35 **Alain Levent** · Images 16 **Etienne Becker** · Sound 35 **Bernard Aubouy** · Sound 16 **Jean-Claude Laureux** · Mixing **Jacques Maumont** · Editing **Nicole Lubtchansky**, **Anne Dubot** · 1st director's assistant **Philippe Fourastié** · Script-girl **Lydie Matias** · Photographer **Pierre Zucca** · Key grip **Roger Robert** · Production manager **Roger Scipion** · Music **Jean-Claude Eloy**

In memoriam **Jean-Pierre Biesse**

JACQUES RIVETTE

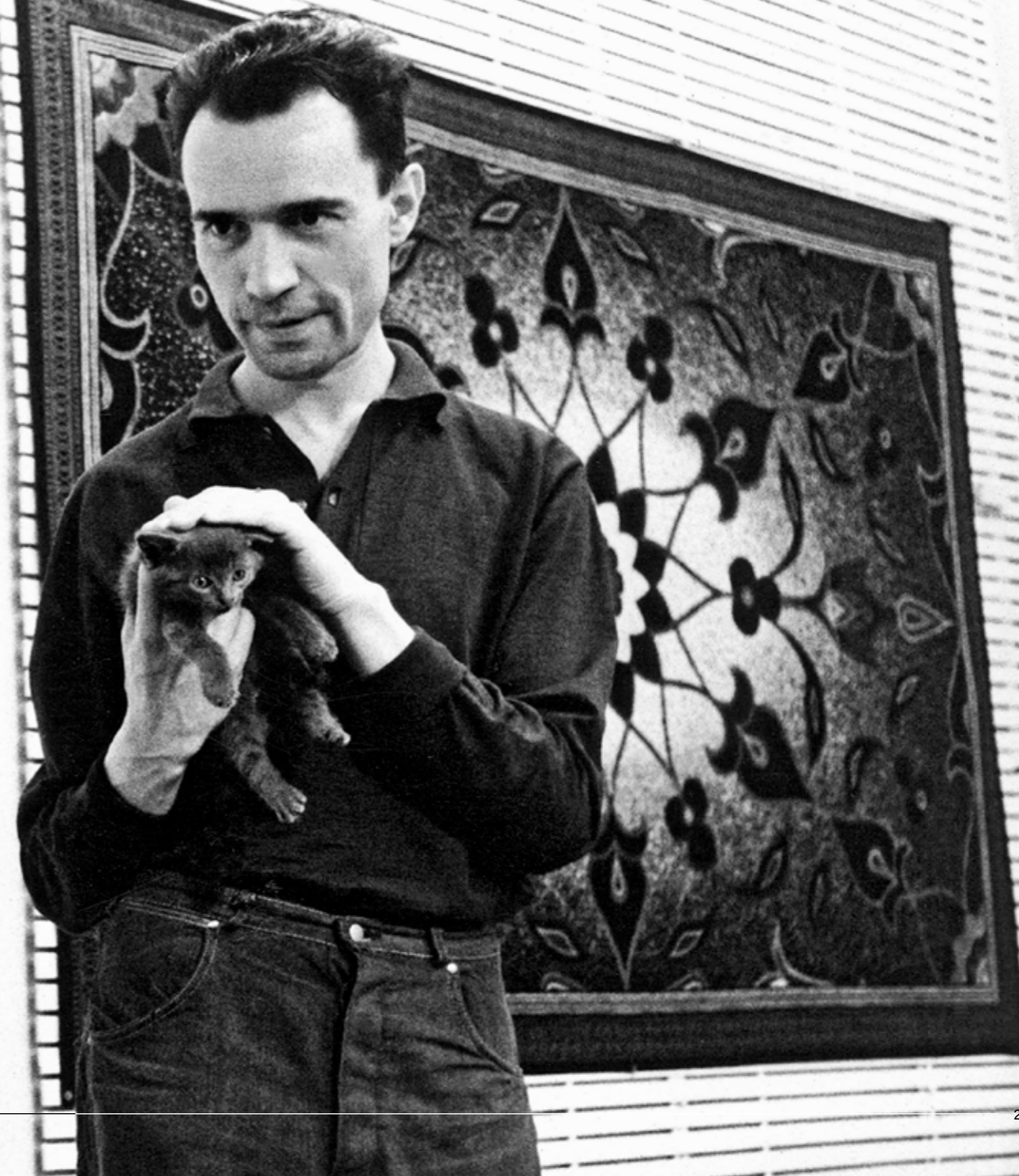
Director (feature films)

1961 - **Paris Belongs to Us** ▪ 1966 - **The Nun** ▪ 1967 - **Jean Renoir, le patron** (*television, Filmmakers Of Our Time collection*) ▪ 1968 - **L'Amour fou** ▪ 1971 - **Out 1 : Noli me tangere** (*lengh 12h40 - in co-direction with Suzanne Schiffman*) ▪ 1972 - **Out 1 : spectre** (*short version*) ▪ 1974 - **Celine and Julie Go Boating** ▪ 1976 - **Duelle** ▪ 1976 - **Northwest Wind** ▪ 1980 - **Merry-go-round** ▪ 1981 - **A North Bridge** ▪ 1984 - **Love on the Ground** ▪ 1985 - **Wuthering Heights** ▪ 1989 - **Gang of Four** ▪ 1991 - **The Beautiful Troublemaker** ▪ 1992 - **Divertimento** (*short version of The Beautiful Troublemaker*) ▪ 1994 - **Joan the Maid: The Battles** ▪ 1994 - **Joan the Maid: The Prisons** ▪ 1995 - **Up, Down, Fragile** ▪ 1998 - **Secret defense** ▪ 2001 - **Who Knows** ▪ 2003 - **The Story of Marie and Julien** ▪ 2007 - **The Duchess of Langeais** ▪ 2009 - **Around a Small Mountain**

MARILÙ PAROLINI

Marilù Parolini have been secretary of Cahier du Cinema, actress, screenwriter, photographer, and film director

1961 - **Chronicle of a Summer** by Edgar Morin and Jean Rouch : actress (herself) ▪ 1969 - **L'Amour fou** by Jacques Rivette : *screenwriter* ▪ 1970 - **Aussi loin que mon enfance** : *director* ▪ 1970 - **The Spider's Stratagem** by Bernardo Bertolucci : *screenwriter* ▪ 1970 - **Eyes Do Not Want to Close at All Times, or, Perhaps One Day Rome Will Allow Herself to Choose in Her Turn** by Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet : *actress* ▪ 1976 - **Duelle** by Jacques Rivette : *screenwriter* ▪ 1976 - **Northwest Wind** by Jacques Rivette : *screenwriter and dialoguist* ▪ 1977 - **Every Revolution Is a Throw of the Dice** (*short film*) by Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet : *narrator* ▪ 1984 - **Love On the Ground** by Jacques Rivette : *screenwriter and dialoguist* ▪ 1992 - **The Keys** by Richard Compton : *screenwriter*



BULLE OGIER

Actress (selective)

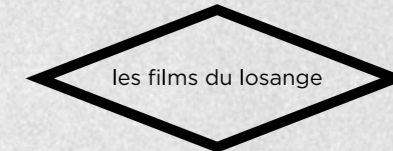
1968 - **The Idoles** by Marc'O • 1968 - **L'Amour fou** by Jacques Rivette • 1970 - **Paulina Is Leaving** by André Téchiné • 1971 - **The Salamander** by Alain Tanner • 1972 - **Out 1 : Noli me tangere** by Jacques Rivette • 1972 - **The Valley** by Barbet Schroeder • 1972 - **Le Discret Charme of the Bourgeoisie** by Luis Buñuel • 1974 - **La Paloma** by Daniel Schmid • 1974 - **Celine and Julie Go Boating** by Jacques Rivette • 1974 - **Marriage** by Claude Lelouch • 1975 - **Un Ange passe** by Philippe Garrel • 1976 - **Entire Days in the Trees** by Marguerite Duras • 1976 - **Nevermore, Forever** by Yannick Bellon • 1976 - **Goldfolken** by Werner Schroeter • 1976 - **Duelle** by Jacques Rivette • 1976 - **Mistress** by Barbet Schroeder • 1979 - **The Navire Night** by Marguerite Duras • 1981 - **The North Bridge** by Jacques Rivette • 1984 - **Tricheurs** by Barbet Schroeder • 1986 - **My case** by Manoel de Oliveira • 1987 - **Das weite Land** by Luc Bondy • 1988 - **Gang of Four** by Jacques Rivette • 1991 - **North** by Xavier Beauvois • 1994 - **See How They Fall** by Jacques Audiard • 1995 - **Fado Major and Minor** by Raoul Ruiz • 1995 - **Don't Forget You're Going to Die** by Xavier Beauvois • 1996 - **Irma Vep** by Olivier Assayas • 1999 - **The Color of Lies** by Claude Chabrol • 1999 - **Venus Beauty Institute** by Tonie Marshall • 2002 - **Two** by Werner Schroeter • 2005 - **Good Girl** by Sophie Fillières • 2006 - **Belle Always** by Manoel de Oliveira • 2007 - **The Duchess of Langeais** by Jacques Rivette • 2007 - **Let's Dance!** by Noémie Lvovsky • 2010 - **Chantrapas** by Otar Iosseliani • 2015 - **Hopefully** by Benoît Graffin • 2019 - **Wonders in the Suburbs** by Jeanne Balibar • 2022 - **Both Sides of the Blade** by Claire Denis

JEAN-PIERRE KALFON

Actor (selective)

1965 - **The Decadent Influence** by Claude Lelouch • 1965 - **Long March** by Alexandre Astruc • 1966 - **Les Grands moments** by Claude Lelouch • 1966 - **Voilà l'ordre** by Jacques Baratier • 1968 - **The Idoles** by Marc'O • 1968 - **L'Amour fou** by Jacques Rivette • 1969 - **The Virgin's Bed** by Philippe Garrel • 1970 - **Le Maître du temps** by Jean-Daniel Pollet • 1972 - **The Valley** by Barbet Schroeder • 1972 - **The Inner Scar** by Philippe Garrel • 1975 - **Un Ange passe** by Philippe Garrel • 1976 - **The Good and The Bad** by Claude Lelouch • 1977 - **The Apprentice Heel** by Michel Deville • 1977 - **The Sorcerer's Apprentice** by Eduardo Cozarinsky • 1980 - **The Woman Cop** by Yves Boisset • 1981 - **Strange Affair** by Pierre Granier-Deferre • 1981 - **Bolero : Dance of Life** by Claude Lelouch • 1982 - **Chassé-croisé** by Arielle Dombasle • 1982 - **Hécate** by Daniel Schmid • 1983 - **Finally, Sunday!** by François Truffaut • 1983 - **Liberty belle** by Pascal Kané • 1984 - **L'Amour par terre** by Jacques Rivette • 1984 - **Do Day** by Yves Boisset • 1985 - **The Night Wears Suspenders** by Virginie Thévenet • 1986 - **In the Shadow of the Blue Rascal** by Pierre Clémenti • 1987 - **The Cry of the Owl** by Claude Chabrol • 1995 - **The One Hundred and One Nights of Simon Cinema** by Agnès Varda • 1998 - **I Love L.A.** by Mika Kaurismäki • 2000 - **The King's Daughters** by Patricia Mazuy • 2001 - **Replay** by Catherine Corsini • 2007 - **La Vie d'artiste** by Marc Fitoussi • 2007 - **The Human Question** by Nicolas Klotz • 2007 - **I Always Wanted to Be a Gangster** by Samuel Benchetrit • 2008 - **Parc** by Arnaud des Pallières • 2015 - **This Summer Feeling** by Mikhael Hers





60 years of cinema

In 2023, Les Films du Losange celebrates its 60th anniversary. Throughout the years, from the French New Wave until today, with three Palme d'Or awards in Cannes, one Academy Award, and over sixty international awards, the Paris-based company has been a key player in the history of cinema. It will continue to promote a director-oriented collection of over 300 films around the world. Founded by Barbet Schroeder and Eric Rohmer in the 1960s, Les Films du Losange is the oldest French independent company still in operation and remains connected to the best of cinema today. Since Charles Gillibert and Alexis Dantec took over the company, the journey continues with the same loyalty and commitment to filmmakers. ♦