

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

THE FILM AND VIDEO WORKS OF
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB
AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

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JEAN-MARIE STRAUB & DANIEÈLE HUILLET

Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub directed twenty-eight feature films in their fifty-two years of shared life and work, creating an oeuvre that is one of the most unique and uncompromising in modern cinema. Their vast filmography is as diverse as the material that served as the bases of many of their narratives, including writings by Brecht, Hölderlin, Duras, Kafka, Pavese and Vittorini, as well as music by Bach and Schoenberg. Straub and Huillet often reinterpreted forgotten or overlooked classical works, investing them with a renewed polemical relevance. Their films bring stories of class struggle and resistance to the surface, examining post-war power relations and offering a critique of capitalism throughout history and across linguistic and territorial borders. Created with intense rigor, beauty and political commitment, each of their deeply inventive films demands our full attention at every moment, presenting cinema as something both surprising and necessary.

Straub and Huillet's films reflect the couple's creativity and generosity, their solidarity with their collaborators, and their respect for language and nature. Critic Louis Séguin wrote that Straub and Huillet "belong to a non-hierarchical and frontierless clan of rebels, stateless persons and social misfits, and the challenge of their cinema matches this permanent irreducibility."



MACHORKA-MUFF

1963, West Germany, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 18 min.

Film by

JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on “Bonn Diary” by Heinrich Böll. With Erich Kuby, Renate Langsdorff.

Relishing his political and sexual prospects in postwar Germany, a former Nazi colonel muses on the stupidity of the bourgeoisie, who can be easily duped in the voting booth and in the bedroom. Straub and Huillet’s first released film is a powerful, almost surreal, distillation of Böll’s story, skewering the German soul through gallows humor, an interior monologue of calculation and cynicism, and a montage of jingoistic newspaper headlines. Straub would observe that the film is “built on the equation M [military] = M₃ [murder].”

[The] former Nazi officer enters the West German capital in triumph to lay the cornerstone for the Academy of Military Memories and is welcomed by the political, religious, and aristocratic elites. In interviews, Straub has referred to Machorka-Muff as the story of a rape—the rape of Germany by the military—whereas Not Reconciled is the story of the frustration of violence, since a German rebellion against twentieth-century militarism and Nazism never occurred.

— Barton Byg

CREDITS

Ein bildhaft abstrakter Traum, keine Geschichte. Jean-Marie Straub. (A metaphorically abstract dream, not a story.) [Handwritten in opening credits].

Text: Heinrich Böll, "Hauptstädtisches Journal" (Bonn Diary) in the collection *Dr. Murkes gesammeltes Schweigen* (*Murke's Collected Silences*), 1958.

Direction: Jean-Marie Straub, Assistance: Danièle Huillet.

Actors: Renate Langsdorff (Inn), Dr. Johannes Eckardt (the priest), Dr. Rolf Thiede (Murcks-Maloch), Günther Strupp (Heffling), Heiner Braun (the minister), Gino Cardella (the waiter), Julius Wikidal (the mason).

Photography: Wendelin Sachtler, Assistance: Hans Christof Brüning; Lighting: Franz Schinabeck; Window Dressing: Franz Schinabeck.

Sound: Janos Rozmer, Jean-Marie Straub.

Music: François Louis, organ, from his composition "Permutations," 1957; J. S. Bach, *The Musical Offering*, BWV 1079, "Ricercar a 6," 1747.

Editing: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub, C.P. Lemmer.

Production: Straub and Huillet, Munich; Atlas-Film, Duisburg; Cineropa-Film, Munich; Producer: Walter Krüttner; Production Manager: Hans von der Heydt; Location Manager: Hansdieter Seel. Production dates and locations: September 1962, 10 days, Bonn and Munich. Budget: 31,000 DM.

First screenings: 1963 International Short Film Festival Oberhausen (February), out of competition; 1969 New Yorker Theater (February 23); London Film Festival, (November 18). TV: 1969 ARD – West Germany (August 25).



NICHT VERSÖHNT ODER ES HILFT NUR GEWALT, WO GEWALT HERRSCHT
(NOT RECONCILED, OR ONLY VIOLENCE HELPS WHERE VIOLENCE RULES)

1965, West Germany, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 55 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Billiards at Half-Past Nine* by Heinrich Böll. With Henning Harmssen, Ernst Kutzinski, Ulrich von Thüna.

“Long live dynamite!”

Straub and Huillet attempt to unmoor their audience by denying them the soothing reassurances of conventional storytelling, spatial continuity, or psychological explanation as they hopscotch across the chronologies of Heinrich Böll’s novel, moving freely between the Kaiser autocracy of the 1910s and the Adenauer economic miracle of the 1950s. In doing so, they chart the origins and legacy of Nazism, and the moral demands of obedience and sacrifice within the German bourgeois family.

The film and the novel on which it was based concentrate a vigorous critique of German fascism and militarism, a memorial to the victims, and fragments of German history and domestic life over the decades as viewed through the kaleidoscope of a single day. The relation of history, time, and memory in Not Reconciled anticipates the dichotomy between word and image in Moses and Aaron: memory is invoked here by the lack of an image, by absence and paralyzed time. Not Reconciled traces the recovery of denied memories in three generations of a family of Cologne architects. The men have repeatedly subordinated their architectural skill to military purposes, at great human cost, and the grandmother, Johanna, commits a “terrorist” act to force a confrontation with this legacy.

— Barton Byg

CREDITS

Anstatt der Eindruck hervorrufen zu wollen, er improvisiere, soll der Schauspieler lieber zeigen, was die Wahrheit ist: er zitiert. Bertolt Brecht. (Instead of wanting to create the impression that he is improvising, the actor should instead show what is the truth: he is quoting.) [Quote in opening credits].

- Text: Heinrich Böll, *Billard um halbzehn* (*Billiards at Half-Past Nine*), 1959.
- Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
- Actors: Henning Harmssen (Robert Fähmel, 40 years old), Georg Zander (Hugo, hotel boy and Ferdinand "Ferdinand" Progulske), Ulrich Hopmann (Robert Fähmel, 18 years old), Ernst Kutzinski (Schrella, 15 years old), Jochen Grüner, Günter Göbel, Peter Berger, Klaus Weyer, Eberhard Ellrich, Norbert Pritz, Bernd Wagner, Michael Krüger, Joseph Vollmert, Dieter Hornberg, Egbert Meiers, Ralf Kurth, Jürgen Beier, Michael Holy, Engelbert Greis, Wolfgang Kück, Herbert Gammersbach, Rolf Buhl, Peter Kneip, Gerd Lenze, Erdmann Dortschy, Piero Poli, Margrit Borstel (blond who knits), Diana Schlesinger, Karin Kraus, Claudia Wurm, Frouwke van Herwynen, Ise Maassen, Dagmar von Netzer, Hartmut Kirchner, Jürgen Kraeft, Achim Wurm, Max Dietrich Willutzki, Hannelore Langhoff, Johanna Odry, Günther Becker, Willy Bruno Wange, Stefan Odry, Anita Bell (old woman playing cards), Erika Brühl (Edith, Schrella's sister), Werner Brühl (Trischler), Helga Brühl (Mrs. Trischler), Paul Esser, Hans Zander, Karl Bodenschatz (porter), Heiner Braun (Nettlinger), Heinrich Hargesheimer (Heinrich Fähmel, Robert's father, 80 years old), Huguette Sellen (Robert Fähmel's secretary), Ulrich von Thüna (Schrella, 35 years old), Walter Brenner, Chargesheimer, Rudolf Thome, Claudio Domberger, Lutz Grübna (first abbot), Hans Schönberger, Karsten Peters, Kai A. Niemeyer, Danièle Straub (young Johanna), Franz Menzel, Martin Trieb (second abbot), Kim Sachtler, Walter Talmon-Gros, Joe Hembus, Max Zihlmann, Maurie Fischbein, Martha Ständer (Johanna Fähmel, Robert's mother, 70 years old), Christel Meuser, Wendelin Sachtler (Mull), Eva-Maria Bold (Ruth Fähmel, Robert's daughter), Joachim Weiler (Joseph Fähmel, Robert's son), Hiltraud Wegener (Marianne, Joseph's fiancée), Kathrin Bold (Ferdinand's sister), Annie Lautner, Johannes Buzalski, Eduard von Wickenburg (M.), Gottfried Bold (M.'s colleague), Victor von Halem (M.'s other colleague), Beate Speith.
- Photography: Wendelin Sachtler, Gerhard Ries, Christian Schwarzwald, Jean-Marie Straub.
- Sound: Lutz Grübna and Willi Hanspach; Sound Mix: Paul Schöler, Aventin, Munich.
- Music: Conducted by François Louis, Geneva. Bela Bartók, *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion* (first movement, measures 1–10); J.S. Bach, *Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B Minor, BWV 1067* (opening).
- Production: Straub and Huillet, Munich; Production Manager: Danièle Huillet, Assistance: Max Dietrich Willutzki, Uschi Fritsche. Production dates and locations: August–September 1964 and April 1965, 6 + 2 weeks, at 45 different locations, in and around Cologne, in the Eifel Mountains, and Munich. Budget: 117,000 DM.

First screenings: 1965 Berlin Film Festival (July 4), unofficial; Bergamo Film Festival, Grand Prize; New York Film Festival (September 18); London Film Festival (November 15); 1966 *Cahiers du cinéma* Week, Paris; Pesaro

Film Festival, Young Critics Prize and New Film Prize – jury: G. Amico, M. Bellochio, B. Bertolucci, J.-L. Godard, J. Ivens, J. Jires and P. P. Pasolini. TV: 1969 ARD, West Germany (August 25), Originally shown in the New York and London film festivals as *Unreconciled*.



CHRONIK DER ANNA MAGDALENA BACH
(CHRONICLE OF ANNA MAGDALENA BACH)

1968, West Germany, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 93 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Johann Sebastian Bach and his wife Anna Magdalena endured the successive deaths of ten of their young children, a grief we can scarcely fathom any more than we can articulate the beauty of Bach's music, at once an expression of his earthly anguish and his joyous faith in divine love. Nonetheless, Straub-Huillet attempt to capture Bach's ineffable artistry in one of their most sublime films. The seemingly musical structure is based on recitations of Anna Magdalena's intimately domestic, yet fictionalized letters to her husband, and on performances in period clothes with period instruments and orchestrations—a radical conceit for the 1960s—of Bach's cantatas, sonatas, and *Passion According to Saint Matthew* in the very rooms and churches where he composed and conducted them. "With the Bach film," Straub said, "we have almost entirely a documentary reality—the actual music and actual manuscript pages, real musicians—and only one seventeenth of fiction, and despite it all, the totality becomes very nearly a novel....[There is] no divorce in Bach between art, life and intellect, sacred and secular music."

The method of letting musical structures suggest the form of the film rather than being subordinate to it became a consistent aspect of Straub and Huillet's treatment of all the material they select for their films.

With Gustav Leonhardt, harpsichordist, in the role of J.S. Bach. Orchestras: Concentus Musicus, Ensemble für Alte Musik, Vienna, conducted by Nikolaus Harnoncourt. Konzertgruppe der Schola Cantorum Basiliensis [Basel], conducted by August Wenzinger.

CREDITS

Ein bildhaft abstrakter Traum, keine Geschichte. Jean-Marie Straub. (A metaphorically abstract dream, not a story.) [Handwritten in opening credits].

- Text: Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and J. F. Agricola, *Necrology*, 1754; letters and memoirs by Johann Sebastian Bach and other period documents.
- Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
- Actors: Gustav Leonhardt (Johann Sebastian Bach), Christiane Lang-Drewanz (Anna Magdalena Bach), Paolo Carlini (Dr. Hölzel, advisor), Ernst Castelli (Steger, court advisor), Hans-Peter Boye (Born, adviser to the religious chapter), Joachim Wolf (rector), Rainer Kirchner (superintendent), Eckart Brüntjen (Kittler choir prefect), Walter Peters (Krause choir prefect), Kathrien Leonhardt (Catharina Dorothea Bach), Anja Fähmann (Regina Susanna Bach), Katja Drewanz (Christina Sophia Henrietta Bach), Bob van Asperen (Johann Elias Bach), Andreas Pangritz (Wilhelm Friedemann Bach), Bernd Weikl (singer, BWV 205), Wolfgang Schöne (singer, BWV 82), Karl-Heinz Lampe (singer, BWV 42), Christa Degler (voice of Anna Magdalena Bach for BWV 244a), Karlheinz Klein (bass of the duet BWV 140).
- Photography: Ugo Piccone, Saverio Diamanti, Giovanni Cienfarelli, Hans Kracht (Defa), Uwe Radon (Defa); Rear projection: Thomas Hartwig.
- Sound: Louis Hochet, Lucien Moreau; Sound Mix: Paul Schöler.
- Music: J. S. Bach: *Brandburg Concerto* No. 5, BWV 1050, first movement (allegro 1), measures 147–227, harpsichord and orchestra, 1720–1721; *Little Clavier Book for Wilhelm Freidemann Bach*, BWV 128, Prelude no. 6, clavichord, 1720; *Little Clavier Book for Anna Magdalena Bach*, BWV 812, 1722; *French Suite No. 1 in D Minor*, Minuet II, spinet; Sonata No. 2 in D Major for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord, BWV 1028, adagio, ca. 1720; Organ Sonata No. 2 in C Minor, BWV 526, largo, organ, 1727; *Magnificat in D Major*, BWV 243, movements 11 and 12 through measure 19 (“Sicut locutus est” and Gloria), 1728–1731; *Little Clavier Book for A.M.B.*, BWV 830, Tempo di gavotta of the Partita No. 6 in E Minor, spinet, 1725; Cantata BWV 205, “Der Zufriedengestellte Aeolus,” recitative for bass (“Ja! ja! Die Stunden sind nunmehr nah”) and aria (“Wie will ich lustig lachen”), 1725; Cantata BWV 198 (Funeral Ode), final chorus, 1727; Cantata BWV 244a (Funeral music for Prince Leopold), aria “Mit Freuden sei die Welt verlassen,” measure 25 to the end, 1729; *St. Matthew Passion*, BWV 244, opening chorus, 1727; Cantata BWV 42, “Am Abend aber desselbigen Sabbats,” Sinfonia (da capo, measures 1–53) and Tenor Recitative, 1725; Prelude and Fugue in B Minor, BWV 544, 1727–1731; Mass in B Minor, BWV 232, first Kyrie eleison, measures 1–30, 1722–1731; Cantata BWV 215, first chorus, measures 1–181, 1734; *Ascension Oratorio*, BWV 11, second part of final chorus, 1735; Clavier-Übung III, BWV 671, “Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist,” 1739; Clavier-Übung II, *Italian Concerto*, BWV 971, andante, 1735; Cantata BWV 140, first duo, measures 1–36, 1731; *Goldberg Variations*, BWV 988, 25th variation, 1741–1742; Cantata BWV 82, “Ich habe genug,” final recitative and final aria, 1727; *The Musical Offering*, BWV 1079, Ricercar a 6, measures 1–39, harpsichord, 1747; *Art of the Fugue*, BWV 1080, Contrapunctus XIX, measures 193–239, clavichord, 1750; Choral Preludes, BWV

668, “Vor deinen Thron tret’ ich,” first part, measures 1–11, 1750. Leo Leonius: Conventional Sunday motet (11th after Trinity), from the “Florilegium Portense” by Erhard Bodenschatz.

Orchestras: Concentus Musicus, Ensemble für Alte Musik, Vienna, conducted by Nikolaus Harnoncourt [orchestra at the court of Cöthen, with Nikolaus Harnoncourt in the role of Prince Leopold d’Anhalt-Cöthen]; Konzertgruppe der Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Basel, conducted by August Wenzinger [church orchestra in Leipzig]; Choirs: Knabenchor, Hanover, conducted by Heinz Hennig [chorus of the Saint-Thomas school], Sopranos: Bernhard Wehle of the Regensburger Domspatzen [for BWV 140].

Editing: Danièle Huillet.

Costumes: “Casa d’arte Firenze,” Vera Poggioni, Renata Morroni, Wigs: “Parrucche Rocchetti,” Todero Guerrino.

Instruments: Harpsichords, spinet and clavichord from Martin Skowronek, Bremen, and Carl August Gräbner, Dresden.

Technicians: Hans Eberle, Max Jörg, Walter Eder, Max Strobl, Heinz Krähnke (Defa), Peter Algert (Defa), Jürgen Zanner (Defa), Jürgen Schlobach (Defa).

Production: German-Italian co-production: Franz Seitz Filmproduktion, Munich; Gianvittorio Baldi, IDI Cinematografica, Rome; Straub and Huillet; Kuratorium Junger Deutscher Film, Munich; Hessischer Rundfunk, Frankfurt; Filmfonds e.V., Rome; Telepool, Munich; RAI; Production Manager: Danièle Huillet, Assistance: Georg Föcking, Aldo Passalacqua, Joachim Wolf, Horst Winter (Defa), Günter Maag (Defa). Production dates: August 20 to October 14, 1967. Budget: 470,000 DM.

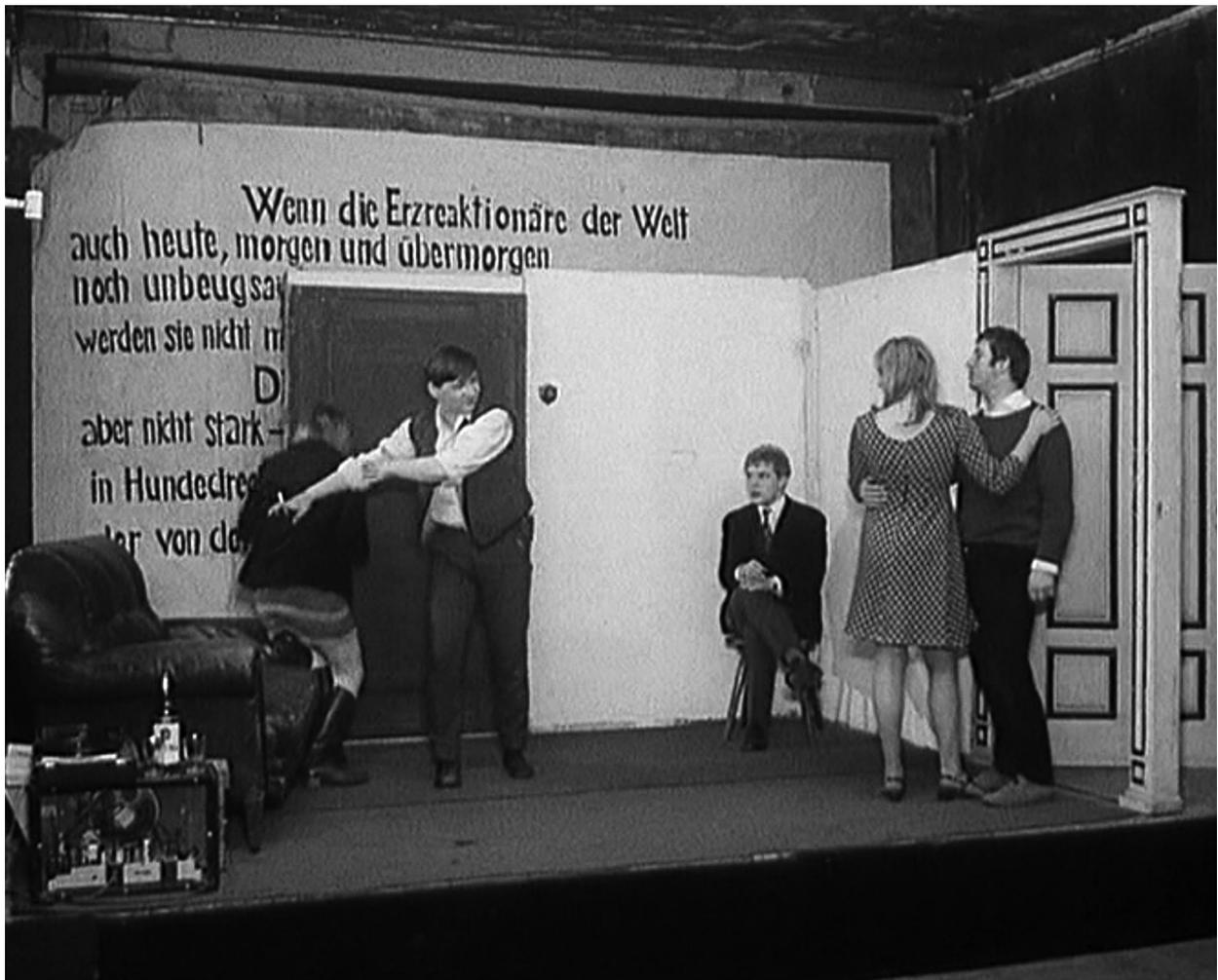
Locations: Eutin (castle [Prince of Anhalt-Cöthen’s castle]); Preetz (monastery church [organ loft no. 3, Cöthen Cathedral]); Stade ([churches] St. Wilhaldi and St. Cosmae [organ loft no. 1, St. Thomas Church in Leipzig; organ loft no. 2, at the university]); Leipzig (facade of the city hall [Leipzig marketplace]); Lüneburg (Lüne Abbey [St. Thomas School: refectory, Cantor’s lodgings]); Haseldorf (castle [Cantor’s lodgings: composition room; superintendent’s lodgings]); Lübeck (Füchting court [municipal counsel’s room, Leipzig Town Hall]); Nuremberg (National Germanic Museum [Cantor’s lodgings: music room]); Freiberg in Saxony (cathedral [organ loft no. 5, Notre-Dame of Dresden church]); Grosshartmannsdorf (church [organ loft no. 4, St. Sophie of Dresden church]); [East] Berlin (Opera House [“Apollo” room]).

For Jacques Rivette, Jean-Luc Godard, Michel Delahaye, Peter Nestler, and many others. —Jean Marie-Straub [End of opening credits].

In addition to subtitled versions, there exist 4 versions with the voice-over commentary read in different languages. French version: dialogue subtitled by Danièle Huillet, commentary read in French with a strong German accent by Christiane Lang; Dutch version: dialogue subtitled with Henk de By, commentary read in Danish by Margret Schumacher; Italian version: dialogue subtitled with Adriano Aprà, commentary read in Italian with a slight German accent by Rita Ehrhardt; English version: dialogue subtitled with Misha Donat, commentary read in English with a slight German accent by Gisela Hume.

First screenings: 1968 Cinemanifestate Festival, Utrecht (February 3); Cannes Film Festival, “Critic’s Week”;

Berlin International Film Festival (June 30); Prades Film Festival, Special Prize; London Film Festival, Grand Prize. German Critics' "Bambi" Prize: Best German film of 1968. TV: 1969 Hessisches Rundfunk, HRIII, West Germany (September 29); 1971 ARD, West Germany (April 8).



DER BRÄUTIGAM, DIE KOMÖDIANTIN UND DER ZUHÄLTER
(THE BRIDEGROOM, THE ACTRESS, AND THE PIMP)

1968, West Germany, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 23 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Pains of Youth*, by Ferdinand Bruckner and verses by St. John of the Cross. With Irm Herrmann, James Powell, Hanna Schygulla, Peer Raben, Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

Love is a tawdry transaction, and a coercive weapon of the ruling class, in this exhilarating, controversial product of the Munich Action-Theater, an immediate forerunner to Rainer Werner Fassbinder's Anti-Theater productions of the late 1960s. Invoking the writings of Chairman Mao and the events of Paris 1968, Straub and Huillet cast Hermann, Schygulla, and Raben (who would soon become regulars of the Fassbinder acting ensemble) along with Fassbinder himself in this radical condensation of Ferdinand Bruckner's 1926 play, a single 11-minute shot that is subsumed within an intricately structured, 12-shot constellation of other quotations, including poetry by Saint John of the Cross and musical passages from Bach's *Ascension Oratorio*.

The first of the three sequences constituting the film is a long tracking shot from a car showing prostitutes playing their trade on the night-time streets of Germany; the second is the staged Bruckner play, cut down to 10 minutes by Straub and photographed in a single take; the final sequence covers the marriage of James and Lilith, and Lilith's subsequent execution of her pimp, played by Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

The revolutionary political impulse of this film remains even more general than the reference to "resistance" in the Bach and Böll films. As in the earlier work, artistic forms are the means chosen to express this liberation, and the connection to Germany, or any other political entity, remains metaphorical.

CREDITS

stupid old Germany I hate it over here I hope I can go soon Patricia 1.3.68 [Shot of a wall with graffiti in opening credits].

Text: Ferdinand Bruckner *Krankheit der Jugend (Pains of Youth)*, 1929, condensed by Jean-Marie Straub; Juan de la Cruz, "Romance on the Gospel," "Spiritual Canticle," stanza 22 (first version) or stanza 29 (second version), translated into German by Straub, Huillet and Helmut Färber.

Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Irm Hermann (Désirée), Kristin Peterson (Irene), Hanna Schygulla (Lucy), Peer Raben (Alt/Willy), Rudolf Waldemar Brem (Petrell), James Powell (James), Lilith Ungerer (Marie/Lilith), Rainer W. Fassbinder (Freder/the Pimp).

Photography: Klaus Schilling, Hubs Hagen.

Sound: Peter Lutz, Klaus Eckelt, Herbert Linder.

Music: J.S.Bach, Cantata BWV 11, "Du Tag, wenn wirst du sein... Komm, stele dich doch ein," 1735.

Technicians: Herbert Meier, Heina Pust, Dietmar Müller, Bernward Wember, Jan Bodenham.

Production: Danièle Huillet and Klaus Hellwig; Janus Film und Fernsehen, Frankfurt. Production dates and locations: April 1, 1968, 1/2 day in the Action Theater (Munich); May 1968, 4 days in Munich. Budget: 17,500 DM.

English subtitles by Danièle Huillet and Bernard Eisenschitz, French subtitles by Huillet.

First screenings: 1968 Mannheim Film Festival (October 10); 1969 New Yorker Theater (February 23); London Film Festival (November 28).



LES YEUX NE VEULENT PAS EN TOUT TEMPS SE FERMER OU PEUT-ÊTRE
QU'UN JOUR ROME SE PERMETTRA DE CHOISIR A SON TOUR
(EYES DO NOT WANT TO CLOSE AT ALL TIMES, OR PERHAPS ONE DAY ROME
WILL PERMIT HERSELF TO CHOOSE IN HER TURN [OTHON])

1970, Italy/France, 16 mm, Color, 1.33:1, (subsequently blown up to 35 mm, 1.37:1), 88 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Othon*, by Pierre Corneille. With Adriano Aprà, Anne Brumagne, Olimpia Carlisi, Anthony Pensabene, Jubarite Semaran.

The cinematographer Renato Berta, a frequent collaborator of Straub and Huillet, presents the first film that the partners shot together in Italy (on the Palatine Hill of Rome), which was also the first they made in color. A faithful adaptation of Pierre Corneille's *Othon*, the classic tragedy that premiered at the court of Louis XIV at Fontainebleau in 1664 and today is more hallowed than actually performed, *Eyes Do Not Want to Close...* depicts the power vacuum that followed Emperor Nero's death. Against a crowd of obsequious and scheming pretenders to the throne, Corneille has Camille as his epic heroine, the mother of all conscientious objectors.

Othon juxtaposes the irreconcilable requirements of a drive for power with the urgencies of tragic love... By placing their film in ancient settings (the Palatine Hill, and later, the Villa Doria Pamphili) that are however surrounded by the sights and sounds of contemporary Rome (traffic is the background noise for the earlier parts of *Othon*; an unnaturally loud fountain for the later parts) Straub and Huillet have included themselves in the historical time scheme of considerable, multi-layered complexity – including, of course, 17th-century France (and the Rome of 17th-century France) as well as the ancient and modern worlds. Straub himself plays the role of Lacus.

Such complexity is perfectly typical of Huillet and Straub, as is their ease with history, with literature, and with art... Although in color, and handsomely costumed, this film makes very few concessions to ordinary sensuous response. Characters speak Corneille's verses rapidly and with minimal expression...

This film is dedicated to the very great number of those born into the French language who have never had the privilege to get to know the work of Corneille; and to Alberto Moravia and Laura Betti who obtained permission for me to shoot on Palatine Hill and in the gardens of the Doria-Pamphilj villa in Rome.

— Jean-Marie Straub

CREDITS

- Text: Pierre Corneille, *Othon*, 1664.
- Direction: Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, Assistance: Leo Mingrone, Anna Raboni, Sebastian Schadhauser, Italo Pastorino, Elias Chajula. Actors: Irm Hermann (Désirée), Kristin Peterson (Irene), Hanna Schygulla (Lucy), Peer Raben (Alt/Willy), Rudolf Waldemar Brem (Petrell), James Powell (James), Lilith Ungerer (Marie/Lilith), Rainer W. Fassbinder (Freder/the Pimp).
- Actors: Adriano Aprà (Otho), Anne Brumagne (Plautina), Ennio Lauricella (Galba), Olimpia Carlisi (Camilla), Anthony Pensabene (Vinius), Jubarite Semaran [Jean-Marie Straub] (Laco), Jean-Claude Biette (Marcianus), Leo Mingrone (Albinus), Gianna Mingrone (Albiana), Marilù Parolini (Flavia), Edoardo de Gregorio (Atticus), Sergio Rossi (Rutile), [Sebastian Schadhauser (1st soldier), Jacques Fillion (2nd soldier)].
- Photography: Ugo Piccone, Renato Berta; Film Processing and Prints: Luciano Vittori, Rome.
- Sound: Louis Hochet, Lucien Moreau.
- Production: Janus-Film, Klaus Hellwig. Production dates and location: August–September 1969, 4 weeks in Rome. Budget: 170,000 DM.

This film is dedicated to the very great number of those born into the French language who have never had the privilege to get to know the work of Corneille; and to Alberto Moravia and Laura Betti who obtained permission for me to shoot on Palatine Hill and in the gardens of the Doria-Pamphili villa in Rome. —J-M.S. [In closing credits].

Subtitled in English by Danièle Huillet and Misha Donat, in Italian with Adriano Aprà, in German with Herbert Linder.

First screenings: 1970 Rapallo Film Festival (January 4); Mannheim Filmwoche (October 8); New York Film Festival. TV: 1971 ZDF, West Germany (January 26), followed by a discussion with Jean-Marie Straub, Ulrich Gregor, Ivan Nagel, Karsten Peters and Rudolph Ganz. Released for one week in New York at St. Mark's Cinema (November) and shown at Film Forum (November 17).



GESCHICHTSUNTERRICHT
(HISTORY LESSONS)

1972, Italy/West Germany, 16 mm, Color, 1.33:1, 85 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *The Business Affairs of Mr. Julius Caesar* by Bertolt Brecht. With Benedikt Zulauf, Gottfried Bold, Johann Unterpertinger, Henri Ludwig, Carl Vaillant.

An extended shot from a car coursing through the streets of Rome in 1972—which is to say, the ancient Republic in ruins—sets the stage for Straub and Huillet's complex interpretation of Brecht's unfinished experimental novel. The work explores history as it has been written by the victors, with their hero worship of tyrannical leaders (whether Caesar or Hitler), and offers an alternate view of history writing as fractured and potentially revolutionary. Caesar's former slave and former banker are both featured, providing their own differing perspectives on the Emperor's career in the political, economic, and military life of ancient Rome.

The story emphasizes the problem of the narrator's position by making him into a contemporary protagonist. The young man in modern dress questions four contemporaries of Cesar, all in costumes of antiquity: a banker, a jurist, a poet, and a peasant legionnaire. These interviews are separated by three by now legendary long shots of the man driving through contemporary Rome, with the camera in a fixed position over his shoulder from the back seat of a small car.

History Lessons is perhaps most responsible for bringing Straub and Huillet into the discussions of anti-narrative and political modernism. Its production and reception coincided with the burgeoning of film theory in the 1970s, a search for a theoretical praxis forged out of psycho-analysis, Marxism, and feminism.

Filmed in Rome, Frascati, Trentino-Alto Adige, and on Elba.

CREDITS

Text: Bertolt Brecht, *Die Geschäfte des Herrn Julius Caesar* (*The Business Affairs of Mr. Julius Caesar*), 1937–39, unfinished, published in 1957.

Direction: Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet.

Actors: Gottfried Bold (the Banker), Johann Unterpertinger (the Peasant), Henri Ludwig (the Lawyer), Carl Vaillant (the Writer), Benedikt Zulauf (the Young Man).

Photography: Renato Berta, Emilio Bestetti; Color: Luciano Vittori.

Sound: Jeti Grigioni, Assistance: Leo Mingrone, Sebastian Schadhauer, Benedikt Zulauf.

Music: J. S. Bach, *Saint Matthew Passion*, BWV 244, 1727.

Production: Production dates and locations: June–July 1972, 3 weeks in Rome, Frascati, Trentino-Alto Adige and on Elba. Budget: 65,000 DM.

Subtitled in English by Danièle Huillet and Misha Donat, in French by Huillet, in Italian by Huillet and Adriano Aprà, Leo and Gianna Mingrone, in Dutch by Huillet and Frans van da Staak.

First screenings: 1972 Mannheim Film Festival (October 10), private; 1973 New York Film Festival. TV: 1974 ARD, West Germany (May 20); 1976 HR III, West Germany (May 16).



EINLEITUNG ZU ARNOLD SCHÖNBERGS
BEGLEITMUSIK ZU EINER LICHTSPIELSCENE
(INTRODUCTION TO ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S
"MUSICAL ACCOPMANIMENT TO A CINEMATOGRPHIC SCENE")

1973, West Germany, 16 mm, Color/B&W, 1.33:1, 15 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on letters by Arnold Schoenberg and a speech by Bertolt Brecht. With Straub, Huillet, Günter Peter Straschek, Peter Nestler.

In 1923, sensing the gathering storm of “fear, danger, and catastrophe” in Germany, the composer Arnold Schoenberg wrote a devastatingly prescient and heartbreaking letter to his former friend, the painter Wassily Kandinsky. Schoenberg aligned his fate with that of all Jews, knowing they were soon to face exile or violent death. Straub-Huillet’s film, a recitation both of Schoenberg’s letter and Bertolt Brecht’s 1935 speech to the International Congress in Defense of Culture, is a fierce condemnation of anti-Semitism, German crimes against humanity, and the barbaric war machine of capitalism.

Straub and Huillet’s essay on the social responsibility of artists is, as its title portends, a densely-packed experience—almost shockingly so—and every inch as relevant today as it was in 1972, at the height of the Vietnam debacle. Commissioned by German television for a series of short films on famous composers, *Introduction...* is the very antithesis of PBS bio-schmaltz: a formally rigorous, thematically adventurous, politically scathing, reflexive dialectical argument that unfolds slowly before burning up the screen with the intensity of cinematic napalm. By reputation, and perhaps on cursory viewing, another arid disquisition—*Lehrstück*—by two monarchs of minimalism, it is instead intensely personal, passionate, and, as a bonus, deserves a place among the greatest Holocaust documentaries.

CREDITS

Text: Arnold Schoenberg, letters to Wassily Kandinsky, April 20 and May 4, 1923; Bertolt Brecht, extract from a speech to the International Congress in Defense of Culture, 1935.

Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Günter Peter Straschek, Danièle Huillet, Peter Nestler.

Photography: Renato Berta, Emilio Bestetti; Color: Luciano Vittori.

Sound: Jetti Grigioni, Harald Lill; Sound Mix: Adriano Taloni.

Music: Arnold Schoenberg, *Begleitmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene*, opus 34, 1929–1930.

Production: Straub and Huillet; commissioned by Südwestrundfunk. Production dates and locations: June and October 1972, 1 day in Rome and 1 in Baden-Baden (TV studios). Budget: 7,500 DM.

Subtitled in English by Danièle Huillet and Misha Donat, in French by Huillet, in Italian by Huillet and Gianna and Leo Mingrone, in German by Huillet and Sebastian Schadhauer.

First screenings: 1973 International Short Film Festival Oberhausen (April 9); New York Film Festival. TV: 1975 HR III/WDR III/NDR III, West Germany (March 29); S3, West Germany (March 30).



MOSES UND ARON
(MOSES AND AARON)

1975, Austria/Italy/West Germany, 35 mm (two shots in 16 mm), Color, 1.37:1, 105 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Opera in three acts by Arnold Schoenberg. With Günter Reich, Louis Devos, Austrian Radio Choir, Austria Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Straub and Huillet filmed Schoenberg's unfinished opera in the Roman amphitheater of Alba Fucense. Taking nearly fifteen years to finance, *Moses and Aaron* was based on their rigorous consideration and questioning of Biblical and archeological history, particularly with respect to the collective memory—passed down and transcribed over hundreds of years, however inaccurately—of the Egyptian enslavement of the Hebrews and the Exodus. Straub and Huillet's concern is with the myth of human progress, and the transition from polytheism to monotheism. Lost in the process, they suggest, was a kind of tenderness and rootedness in nature, a traumatic absence into which a new kind of violence was born.

The action of *Moses and Aaron* is Schoenberg's retelling of the story of Moses' presentation of the Ten Commandments to the people of Israel and their worship of the Golden Calf (Exod. 3, 4, 30–32). The work breaks off at the resulting impasse between the invisible law of monotheism, for which Moses stands, and the more accessible religion Aaron represents, which includes miracles, sacrifices, and the worship of the Golden Calf. The unfinished third act occupied Schoenberg until his death in 1951, when he expressed the wish, carried out by Straub and Huillet in the film, that the final act "be staged merely spoken, in case I cannot complete the composition." Schoenberg envisioned the opera more as a staged oratorio, and Straub and Huillet's exploration of this form in film extends from *Chronicle* to the Hölderlin films.

Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet's 1975 film of Arnold Schoenberg's opera brings to life, on location in the desert, a reinterpretation of several crucial episodes of Biblical history—Moses' presentation of God's covenant to his chosen people, his recruitment of his eloquent brother Aaron to preach to them on his behalf, and Aaron's weakening during Moses' forty-day sojourn on Mt. Sinai, resulting in the worship of the golden calf and Moses' breaking of the tablets bearing the Ten Commandments. By way of the brothers' conflict—between word and image, idea and emotion—the directors make the case for their own radically austere style. Their rarefied aesthetic coheres perfectly with the opera to come off as a kind of twelve-tone filmmaking which, like Schoenberg's music, reclaims a classical ideal for a progressive cause that owes nothing to nostalgia. Oblique angles, long takes, and static tableaux allow Straub and Huillet to go straight to the drama inherent in the story and the composition. The stark images are as passionate and engaging, profound and beautiful as the complex music to which they insightfully respond.

— Richard Brody

CREDITS

Page fragment of Luther's translation of the Bible (1523): Exodus, 32, 25–28. [Image appears pre-credits].

For Holger Meins* —J.-M.S., D.H. [Handwritten in opening credits].

Text: Arnold Schoenberg, letters to Wassily Kandinsky, April 20 and May 4, 1923; Bertolt Brecht, extract from a speech to the International Congress in Defense of Culture, 1935.

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Günter Reich (Moses), Louis Devos (Aaron), Eva Csapó (Young Girl), Roger Lucas (Young Man), Richard Salter (Other Man), Werner Mann (Priest), Ladislav Illavsky (Ephraimite), Friedl Obrowsky (Sick Woman); Austrian Radio Choir, Preparation: Gottfried Preinfalk.

Photography: Ugo Piccone, Saverio Diamanti, Gianni Canfarelli, Renato Berta; Film Processing and Prints: Luciano Vittori, Rome.

Sound: Louis Hochet, Ernst Neuspiel, Georges Vaglio, Jeti Grigioni.

Music: Musical Direction: Michael Gielen, Assistance: Bernard Rubenstein; Austrian Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Technicians: Francesco Ragusa, Alvaro Nannicini, Gianfranco Baldacci; Assistants: Paolo Benvenuti, Hans-Peter Böffgen, Leo Mingrone, Basti Schadhauer, Gabriele Soncini, Harald Vogel, Gregory Woods.

Costumes: Renata Morroni, Augusta Morelli, Maria-Teresa Stefanelli; Shoes: Ernesto Pompei.

Hair: Guerrino Todero.

Choreography: Jochen Ulrich, Dancers: Helmut Baumann, Jürg Burth, Nick Farrant, Wolfgang Kegler, Michael Molnar.

Production: A co-production of Austrian Radio and the ARD (including West Berlin) under the direction of Hessen Radio; Produced by Janus-Film und Fernsehen with financing from Straub and Huillet, RAI, ORTF and Taurus-Film; NEF Diffusion; Production Management: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub. Production dates and locations: May 1973, 2 shots in Luxor (Egypt), shots 42 and 43, pans over the Nile Valley, in 16mm; August–September 1974, 6 weeks recording of the orchestra in Vienna; 5 weeks in the amphitheater in Alba Fucense (Abruzzo, Italy) and Lake Matese (last shot, Act III). Budget: 720,000 DM and the support (orchestra and choir in Vienna) of Austrian Radio (ORF): about 600,000 DM.

First screenings: 1975 International Film Festival Rotterdam; Edinburgh Film Festival; New York Film Festival.



FORTINI/CANI

1976, Italy, 16 mm, Color, 1.33:1, 83 min.

Film by

JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *The Dogs of Sinai* by Franco Fortini. With Franco Lattes.

Franco Fortini, a Communist critic and writer of the Italian New Left, reads excerpts of his book *The Dogs of Sinai*, which condemns capitalism and the state of Israel in the aftermath of the Six Day War in 1967, while also reflecting on his own Jewish heritage. Cinematographer Renato Berta's panoptic camera surveys the Italian landscape where partisans resisted German soldiers. *Fortini/Cani* is an elegiac and damning meditation on abuses of power and historical amnesia.

The film essay is a fairly recondite genre, but it's safe to say that there has never been an example like this. It's a film of a book [...] Although Straub and Huillet completely respect the integrity of Fortini's words, they 'context' the argument in a number of provocative ways. A haunting image of a seashore at night, or a brief extract from Schoenberg's *Moses and Aaron*, are enough to underline the element of melodrama in Fortini's autobiography; a placid study of the hills where Nazis massacred the Italian resistance is enough to generate a meditation on the meaning of Fortini's anti-fascism. The film draws attention to issues of frightening relevance, and yet allows the viewer plenty of space to think and feel. — *Time Out London*

CREDITS

Dissensi 5, Franco Fortini, *I cani del Sinai*, De Donato Editore. [Shot of the book cover in pre-credits].

Text: Franco Fortini, *I cani del Sinai* (*The Dogs of Sinai*), 1967.
Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Franco Lattes (Franco Fortini), Luciana Nissim, Adriano Aprà.
Photography: Renato Berta, Emilio Bestetti; Film Processing and Prints: LV Luciano Vittori.
Sound: Jeti Grigioni.
Assistants: Leo Mingrone, Gabriele Soncini, Gregory Woods, Bernard Mangiante.
Production: Straub and Huillet; Financing: André [Andi] Engel, Artificial Eye; Daniel Talbot, New Yorker Films; Stéphane Tchaladjieff, Sunchild; Polytel International; RAI, Rete 2. Production dates and locations: June 1976, 3 weeks in Cotoncello (Elba), Marzabatto, Sant'Anna di Stazzema, San Terenzo, Vinca, San Leonardo/Frigido, Bergiola (Apuan Alps), Florence, Milan, Rome.
Budget: 22,000,000 Italian lira.

This film is known as *Fortini/Cani*, but the title does not appear in the film. Subtitled in English by Danièle Huillet and Misha Donat, in French by Huillet, in German by Huillet, Manfred Blank and Andrea Spingler.



TOUTE RÉVOLUTION EST UN COUP DE DÉS
(EVERY REVOLUTION IS A THROW OF THE DICE)

1977, France, 35 mm, Color, 1.37:1, 10 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on “A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance” by Stéphane Mallarmé. With Huillet, Helmut Färber, Michel Delahaye, Georges Goldfayn, Manfred Blank, Marilù Parolini, Aksar Khaled, Andrea Spingler, Dominique Villain.

Straub and Huillet invited friends to recite Stéphane Mallarmé’s 1897 poem “A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance,” with its radically modern use of free verse, in a park alongside the wall in Père Lachaise cemetery where the last 147 men and women of the Paris Commune were lined up and shot dead in 1871. It is not hard to understand why these ambitious filmmakers were drawn to Mallarmé’s late-19th-century poem, which casts readers adrift in a sea of elusive meanings, a playfully and hermetically cubist constellation of words that can assume myriad visual, aural, and symbolic forms.

Straub’s simplest film is also his most mysterious, a tribute to Mallarmé that not only asserts the continuing relevance of his work, but also confronts its literary ambiguities with political and filmic ambiguities of its own. In outline, the film could not be more straightforward: it offers a (re)citation of one of Mallarmé’s most celebrated and complex poems—it was his last published work in his own lifetime, appearing in 1897, a year before his death—and proposes a filmic equivalent for the author’s original experiment with typography and layout by assigning the words to nine different speakers, separating each speaker from the other as she or he speaks, and using slight pauses to correspond with white spaces on the original page. But it is clear that Straub’s aim was not simply to render the poem in film; as he has consistently stressed in interviews, he and Danièle Huillet choose to work with pre-existing texts in their films precisely because they are attracted to texts that ‘resist’ them, that retain their challenge at some level.

— Tony Rayns

CREDITS

Toute révolution est un coup de dés. —Jules Michelet [Quote in opening credits].

Text: Stéphane Mallarmé, *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* (*A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance*), 1897.

Actors: Helmut Färber, Michel Delahaye, Georges Goldfayn, Danièle Huillet, Manfred Blank, Marilù Parolini, Aksar Khaled, Andrea Spingler, Dominique Villain.

Photography: Willy Lubtchansky, Dominique Chapuis; Color: LV Luciano Vittori.

Sound: Louis Hochet, Alain Donavy.

Production: Production dates and locations: May 9–10, 1977, Père-Lachaise cemetery, Paris.

First screenings: 1977 Released in Paris with Jean-Claude Biette's *Le Théâtre des matières* (December 7); 1981 Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (April).



DALLA NUBE ALLA RESISTENZA
(FROM THE CLOUD TO THE RESISTANCE)

1979, Italy, 35 mm, Color, 1.37:1, 105 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Dialogues with Leucò* and *The Moon and the Bonfires*, by Cesare Pavese. With Olimpia Carlisi, Mauro Monni, Carmelo Lacorte, Mario di Mattia.

Straub and Huillet's *From the Cloud to the Resistance* bridges history and myth, and modernity and antiquity. Based on six mythological encounters in Cesare Pavese's *Dialogues with Leucò*, and on Pavese's last novel, *The Moon and the Bonfires*, about the savage murders of Italian anti-Fascist resistance fighters during World War II, the film has affinities with *History Lessons*, *Too Early/Too Late*, and a series of films of the 2000s in which they returned to Pavese's *Dialogues*.

From the Cloud to the Resistance is based on two works by Cesare Pavese. It falls into the category of *History Lessons* and *Too Early, Too Late*. It too has two parts—a 20th-century text, and a text regarding the myths of antiquity, each set in the appropriate landscape. Pavese's *The Moon and the Bonfires* looks back on the violent deaths of Italian anti-Fascist resistance fighters; *Dialogues with Leucò* is a series of dialogues between heroes and gods, connecting myth and history and returning to an ambiguous stage in the creation of distinctions, such as that between animal and human, which are fundamental to grammar and language itself. Such a juxtaposition of political engagement with profoundly contemplative issues such as myth, nature, and meaning points to the characters of *Empedocles* and *Antigone* in the Hölderlin films.

— Barton Byg

CREDITS

Text: Cesare Pavese, *Dialoghi con Leucò* (*Dialogues with Leucò*), 1947; *La luna e i falò* (*The Moon and the Bonfires*), 1950.

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: First Part:
1. Olimpia Carlisi (The Cloud), Guido Lombardi (Ixion); 2. Gino Felici (Hippolochus), Lori Pelosini (Sarpedon); 3. Walter Pardini (Oedipus), Ennio Lauricella (Tiresias); 4. Andrea Bacci (First Hunter), Lori Cavallini (Second Hunter); 5. Francesco Ragusa (Lityerses), Fiorangelo Pucci (Hercules); 6. Dolando Bernardini (Father), Andrea Filippi (Son);
Second Part:
Mauro Monni (The Bastard), Carmelo Lacorte (Nuto), Mario di Mattia (Cinto), Luigi Giordanello (Valino), Paolo Cinanni (The Cavalier), Maria Eugenia T., Alberto Signetto, Paolo Pederzoli, Ugo Bertone, Gianni Canfarelli, Domenico Carrosso, Sandro Signetto, Antonio Mingrone (People at the Bar), Gianni Toti (The Priest).

Photography: Saverio Diamanti, Gianni Canfarelli; Film Processing and Prints: LV Luciano Vittori.

Sound: Louis Hochet, Georges Vaglio; Transcription: Fono Rete.

Music: J. S. Bach, *The Musical Offering*, BWV 1079, "Sonata sopr' il soggetto reale, trio," 1747, conducted by Gustav Leonhardt.

Costumes: Cantini; Shoes: Pompei.

Hair: Silvana Todero.

Technicians: Gaffer: Francesco Ragusa; Grip: Gianfranco Baldacci.

Assistants: Leo Mingrone, Isaline Panchaud, Manfred Blank, Rotraud Kühn, Vincent Nordon, Stéphanie de Mareuil, Paolo Pederzoli.

Production: Straub and Huillet; RAI, Rete 2; Janus Film & Fernsehen; Artificial Eye; presented by L'Institut National de l'Audiovisuel. Production dates and locations: June–July 1978, 5 weeks in Maremme, Mount Pisano, Tripalle near Pisa, in the Langhe (Piedmont). Budget: 200,000 DM.

*In memory of Yvonne without whom there would be no Straub-Films. —J.-M.S. [Handwritten in closing credits].

Subtitled in English by Danièle Huillet, Misha Donat and Gregory Woods, in French by Huillet, in German by Huillet and Andrea Spingler, in Dutch by Huillet and Frans van de Staak.

First screenings: 1979 Cannes Film Festival, "Un Certain Regard"; 1980 Berkeley Museum and Pacific Film Archive (February 5); 1981 Albright- Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (April).



ZU FRÜH, ZU SPÄT – TROP TÔT, TROP TARD
– TROPPO PRESTO, TROPPO TARDI
(TOO EARLY, TOO LATE)

1981, France/Egypt, 16 mm, Color, 1.33:1, 100 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on a letter by Friedrich Engels and *Class Conflict in Egypt: 1945-1970*, by Mahmoud Hussein. With Danièle Huillet, Bahgat el Nadi.

Inspired by a letter by Friedrich Engels and *Class Conflict in Egypt: 1945-1970* account of two militant Marxist writers who had been imprisoned by the Nasser regime, Straub and Huillet filmed *Too Early/Too Late* in France and Egypt during the anxious months of 1980 that followed the Camp David Accords and culminated in Anwar Sadat's assassination the following year. They reflect on Egypt's history of peasant struggle and liberation from Western colonization, and link it to class tensions in France shortly before the Revolution of 1789, quoting texts by Friedrich Engels as well as the pioneering nonfiction film *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory* (1895). The film was a major influence on contemporary filmmakers like Harun Farocki, Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucci, and John Gianvito.

The first text, read by Huillet, is an excerpt from a letter written by Friedrich Engels to Karl Kautsky describing the impoverished state of the French peasantry on the eve of the French Revolution—accompanied by a shot moving through a busy Paris intersection. Then come longer excerpts from the Cahiers de Doléances, while we see the various places in France that are described as they appear today—ranging from spots just outside Lyon and Rennes to more rural places including Tréogan, Mottreff, Marbeuf and Harville. These sequences, filmed by a mainly panning camera in June 1980, are practically all devoid of people, giving them, in Straub's words, a "science fiction, deserted-planet aspect." The second part of the film, roughly twice as long, uses a more recent Marxist text about the Egyptian peasants' resistance to the English occupation prior to the "petit-bourgeois" revolution of Neguib in 1952—a more journalistic text by Mahmoud Hussein, author of Class Conflict in Egypt: 1945-1970. In both sections, it is suggested that the peasants revolt too soon and succeed too late. Once again, the locations cited in the text are filmed by Straub and Huillet (the shooting of this portion was done in May 1981), basically the sites of revolutionary struggle, again mainly rural. Here the camera occasionally remains motionless—most noticeably in the longest single take in the film, which shows workers leaving a factory in Cairo. But there are also a certain number of slow lateral and circular pans, as well as more rapid views from a car moving through various villages. (The only shot taken from a moving vehicle in the first part, if memory serves, is of the busy Paris intersection.) After this section is a sort of Egyptian coda containing unsubtitled newsreel footage from TV of a speech relating to the 1952 revolution, followed by a downward pan that passes from a skyscraper in contemporary Cairo to waves from the Nile beating relentlessly against the shore.

Central to the unique impact of Too Soon, Too Late—which Dave Kehr, the very perceptive critic of the Chicago Reader, called "the most sensually captivating film" he saw in 1982—is the resonance it gives to specific places, particularly in the second part; no other film has come even remotely close to making me feel I've been to Egypt, which this film does. A lot of this has to do with tempo, rhythm, pacing: the sight and sound of a donkey pulling a cart down a road towards the camera is recorded in long shot and at leisure, with no sense of either ellipsis or dramatic underlining according to any principle other than the placement of camera and microphone in relation to the event. The extraordinary result of this technique is that one almost feels able to taste these places, to contemplate them—to observe and think about them.

...Too Soon, Too Late may have no characters, but it is the most densely populated and inhabited of all Straub and Huillet's films—a paradox that the entire film is structured around.

...Too Soon, Too Late *inverts the usual relationship in a Straub and Huillet film between landscape and text—the landscape becoming the film’s central text, the verbal text becoming the film’s “setting.” Practically speaking, this reduces the relative importance of the verbal texts in the films—although when I mentioned this notion to Straub, he countered that nevertheless the film could never have been made without those texts.*

— *Jonathan Rosenbaum*

CREDITS

Text: First part: Letter from Friedrich Engels to Karl Kautsky (February 20, 1889); F. Engels, "Die Bauernfrage in Frankreich und Deutschland," in *Die Neue Zeit (The Peasant Question in France and Germany)*, 1894–95, excerpt; statistics in first part from the *Cahiers de doléance*; Second part: Mahmud Hussein, *La Lutte de classes en Égypte de 1945 à 1968 (Class Conflict in Egypt: 1945-1970)*, 1969, postface.

First part: Friedrich Engels.

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Photography: Willy Lubtchansky, Caroline Champetier.

Sound: Louis Hochet, Manfred Blank.

Assistants: Radovan Tadic, Vincent Nordon, Leo Mingrone, Isaline Panchaud.

Production: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Second part: Mahmud Hussein.

Narration: Bahgat el Nadi, Gérard Samaan.

Sound: Louis Hochet, Manfred Blank.

Photography: Robert Alazraki, Marguerite Perlado.

Assistants: Mustafa Darwish, Magda Wassef, Gaber Abdel-Ghani, Bahgat Mostafa.

Production dates and locations: First part – June 1980, 2 weeks in France; Second part – May 1982, 3 weeks in Egypt. Budget: 400,000 FF.

Four soundtracks exist: in German, French, English and Italian. Danièle Huillet reads the commentary of the first part in all versions; Bahgat el Nadi reads the commentary for the second part in French and English, Gérard Samaan in German and Italian.

First screenings: 1981 Berlin International Film Festival (November 10); 1982 Collective for Living Cinema, New York (April 30).



EN RACHÂCHANT

1983, France, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 7 min.

Film by

JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on "Ah! Ernesto!" by Marguerite Duras. With Olivier Straub, Nadette Thinus, Bernard Thinus, Raymond Gérard.

Beneath the subversive comedy of Marguerite Duras' 1971 short story "Ah! Ernesto!," about a precocious and determined nine-year-old boy, lies a terse and tough rejection of all forms of authority, whether family, school, or nation. *En rachâchant* was released in France on a double bill with Eric Rohmer's *Pauline at the Beach*.

CREDITS

Text: Marguerite Duras, *Ah! Ernesto!*, 1971.
Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
Actor: Olivier Straub (Ernesto), Nadette Thinus (The Mom), Bernard Thinus (The Dad), Raymond Gérard (The Master).
Photography: Henri Alekan, Louis Cochet; Film Processing and Prints: LTC Saint-Cloud.
Sound: Louis Hochet, Manfred Blank.
Assistants: Dominique Gentil, Ariane Damain.
Production: Straub and Huillet; Diagonale; presented by L'Institut National de l'Audiovisuel. Production dates and location: August 1982, Straub and Huillet apartment, Paris.

Subtitled in English by Danièle Huillet and Misha Donat, in German by Huillet and Andrea Spingler.

First screenings: 1983 Released in France with Éric Rohmer's *Pauline on the Beach* (March 23);
PublicTheater, New York (November).



KLASSENVERHÄLTNISSE
(CLASS RELATIONS)

1984, West Germany/France, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 130 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Amerika* by Franz Kafka. With Christian Heinisch, Mario Adorf, Harun Farocki, Manfred Blank, Libgart Schwarz.

Straub and Huillet's brilliant distillation of Franz Kafka's incomplete first novel, *Amerika*, is perhaps the most authentically German treatment of Kafka ever made. An ecstatic and haunted fever dream of the United States—the place where Kafka longed to disappear, if only in his imagination—*Amerika* is told from the perspective of a young German immigrant who encounters a strange new world, with its violent lies and quixotic optimism, like a modern-day *Parsifal*. Straub and Huillet took pains to render the German mannerisms and dialect of Kafka's novel faithfully, and shot their film almost entirely in the port city of Hamburg. But their depiction of injustice and exploitation transcends historical specificity; as Straub said in 1984, "Kafka, for us, is the only major poet of industrial civilization, I mean, a civilization where people depend on their work to survive."

The utopian force to be found in countering the "patriarchal orchestration of the look" can be found in Straub and Huillet's film *Class Relations*. Unlike the films before and after it, *Class Relations* was widely admired by the critics, who called it perhaps their best film and "probably . . . the only Kafka film that can stand the test of time."

CREDITS

- Text: Franz Kafka, *Der Verschollene (Amerika)*, 1927.
- Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
- Actors: Christian Heinisch (Karl Rossmann), Nazzareno Bianconi (Giacomo), Mario Adorf (The Uncle), Laura Betti (Brunelda), Harun Farocki (Delamarche), Manfred Blank (Robinson), Reinald Schnell (Chauffeur), Anna Schnell (Line), Klaus Traube (Captain), Hermann Hartmann (Head Treasurer), Gérard Samaan (Schubal), Jean-François Quinque (Steward), Willi Vöbel (Pollunder), Tilmann Heinisch (Green), Anne Bold (Klara), Burckhardt Stoelck (Mack), Aloys Pompetzki (Mack), Willi Dewelk (Pollunder's Chauffeur), Libgart Schwarz (Theresa), Kathrin Bold (Head Cook), Alfred Edel (Manager), Andi Engel (Head Porter), Alf Bold (Waiter), Salvatore Sammartino (Other elevator boy), Klaus Feddermann Henning Rademaker (Police), Franz Hillers (Taxi Driver), Lydia Bozyk (Inn Keeper), Georg Brintrup (Student), Thom Andersen and Barton Byg (Americans).
- Photography: Willy Lubtchansky, Caroline Champetier, Christophe Pollock; Lighting and Grips: Jim Howe, David Scott, Georg Brommer.
- Sound: Louis Hochet, Georges Vaglio, Manfred Blank.
- Assistants: Klaus Feddermann, Ralf Olbrisch, Berthold Schweiz, Manfred Sommer.
- Production: French-German co-production of Janus-Film, Frankfurt, with the Hessischen Rundfunk and Nef-Diffusion, co-financed with the BMI, FFA and the Hamburger Filmförderung. Production dates and locations: July 2–September 20, 1983, Hamburg and Bremen; September 21–25, 1983, New York and St. Louis. Budget: 600,000 DM.

Subtitled in English by Danièle Huillet and Barton Byg, in French by Huillet, in Italian by Huillet and Domenico Carosso, in Dutch by Huillet and Frans van de Staak.

First screenings: 1984 Berlin Film Festival, Special Jury Prize (February); New York Film Festival; released in France in October; distributed by Nef-Diffusion.

PROPOSTA IN QUATTRO PARTI
(PROPOSITION IN FOUR PARTS)

1985, Italy, video, color and B&W, 4:3, 41 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

D. W. Griffith's 1909 short film *A Corner in Wheat*, a Biblical tale of avarice, divine retribution and the prolonged suffering of the masses, is the prelude to this political film essay. Straub and Huillet offer a dialectical montage of cause (capitalist greed) and effect (the poverty of the farmer and the urban underclass), and draw from excerpts of their earlier work: *Moses and Aaron*, *Fortini/Cani*, and *From the Cloud to the Resistance*.

CREDITS

Video montage in four parts by Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub:

1. *A Corner in Wheat*, D.W.Griffith, 1909 [14', in its entirety, silent].
 2. from *MOSES AND AARON*, Arnold Schoenberg, 1932, Straub and Huillet, 1974.
 3. from *FORTINI/CANI*, Franco Fortini, 1967, Straub and Huillet, 1976.
 4. from *FROM THE CLOUD TO THE RESISTANCE*, Cesare Pavese, 1948–50, Straub and Huillet, 1978.
- [Titles preceding each section, in Italian.]

Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.

For Enrico Ghezzi's TV program, *La magnifica ossessione*, broadcast on RAI 3 over forty hours from December 25–26, 1985. It is also titled *Montaggio in quattro movimenti per "La magnifica ossessione"* (in the program for the complete retrospective at the 2001 Turin Film Festival) and subtitled "Blut und Boden" (Blood and Soil) in the catalogue for the 2003 Viennale retrospective.



DER TOD DES EMPEDOKLES ODER:
WENN DANN DER ERDE GRÜN VON NEUEM EUCH ERGLÄNZT
(THE DEATH OF EMPEDOCLES, OR
WHEN THE GREEN OF THE EARTH WILL GLISTEN FOR YOU ANEW)

1987, West Germany, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, 132 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on the first version of *The Death of Empedocles* by Friedrich Hölderlin. With Andreas von Rauch, Vladimir Baratta, Martina Baratta, Ute Cremer, Howard Vernon.

The pre-Socratic Greek philosopher Empedocles possessed magical healing powers through his communion with the gods and nature. He inspired awe and trust in the people by prophesizing a vision of a new Earth, a communist utopia, before committing a noble suicide. However, at the start of Straub and Huillet's mesmerizing film—an adaptation of the first version of Hölderlin's tragic poem, written during the outbreak of the French Revolution—Empedocles is at the point of death. An enemy of the priestly state, he is cast into darkness, suffering the torments of loneliness and doubt, but finds renewed strength, even immortality, through the will of the people.

Friedrich Hölderlin is perhaps the quintessential European author for an investigation of relations of politics to culture, Germanness to “other” cultural traditions, myth to everyday language. The broadest spectrum of twentieth-century thinkers have written about him: Georg Lukács, Theodor W. Adorno, Thomas Mann and Heinrich Mann, Martin Heidegger, Michel Foucault. Even the Nazis turned to the reclusive poet as a nationalist icon: the Hölderlin Society was founded under the patronage of Josef Goebbels.

In their film of Hölderlin's *Death of Empedocles*, confronting the dense German poetry of the drama fragment with the intensity of the natural landscape near Mount Etna in Sicily, Straub and Huillet again displaced a German cultural icon. Despite the rhetoric of European unity and increased attention in many quarters to “the threatened destruction of the earth,” the film encountered a generally hostile reaction, especially in West Germany. Huillet offered the following interpretation:

I think the scandal of Hölderlin and of the film is that one attempts to avoid giving up anything, either in regard to the individual, or the subject, as Hölderlin says, or the others, the people. That one doesn't give something up in order to gain something else, but tries to keep everything. And that in a time where people let themselves be closed in more and more, also with their feelings, with all their might. That is the scandal, somehow. I believe that is what led Hölderlin to the brink of madness; that is the madness of Empedocles and that is what makes the film an object of scandal. Because one can sense that everything tries to close people in and to separate them from life, and that here just the opposite is being attempted: to open up and renounce nothing and neglect nothing or destroy in order to preserve something else.

– Danièle Huillet

CREDITS

- Text: Friedrich Hölderlin, *Der Tod des Empedokles* (*The Death of Empedocles*), 1798, tragedy in two acts. The film script was established by Huillet and Straub in collaboration with D. E. Sattler, the editor of Hölderlin's complete works, *Frankfurter Hölderlin-Ausgabe*, 1975.
- Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
- Actors: Andreas von Rauch (Empedocles), Vladimiro Baratta (Pausanias), Martina Baratta (Panthea), Ute Cremer (Delia), Howard Vernon (Hermocrates), William Berger (Critias), Federico Hecker, Peter Boom, Giorgio Baratta (Three Citizens), Georg Bintrup, Achille Brunini, Manfred Esser (Three Slaves), Peter Kammerer (Peasant).
- Photography: Renato Berta, Jean-Paul Toraille, Giovanni Canfarelli; Film Processing and Prints: Luciano Vittori; Color Timing: Sergio Lustri.
- Sound: Louis Hochet, Georges Vaglio, Alessandro Zanon; Sound Mix: Louis Hochet.
- Music: J. S. Bach, Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, BWV 1001, performed by Andreas von Rauch.
- Costumes: Giovanna del Chiappa, "Costumi d'Arte."
- Hair: Guerrino Todero.
- Assistants: Michael Esser, Hans Hurch, Leo Mingrone, Roberto Palí, Cesare Candelotti.
- Production: A French-German co-production of Janus-Film with Les Films du Losange; co-financed by the Hessischen Rundfunk, the Hamburger Filmförderung, the FFA and the CNC. Production dates and locations: Late May–late July 1986, 8 weeks in a park in Ragusa (southern Sicily) and on Mount Etna. Budget: 800,000 DM.

This is based on the *first version* of the film. Four different versions exist – four edits (by Huillet and Straub) and sound mixes from different takes of the same shots in the same order.

First version: edited in Rome, late Summer 1986; timed, printed and stored at Vittori. Print screened at the Berlin International Film Festival. The "Lizard Version."

Second version: edited in Rome, Autumn 1986; Timed, printed and stored at LTC, Saint-Cloud, France. Prints subtitled in French by Danièle Huillet, in English with Barton Byg and in Italian with Domenico Carosso and Vladimiro Baratta. "Paris Version."

Third version: edited at the Filmhaus of the Friedenshalle in Hamburg during a seminar with students, March 1987; Timed, printed and stored at Geyer- Werke laboratory in Hamburg.

Fourth version: edited in 1987.

First screenings: 1987 Berlin Film Festival; Festivals des films du monde, Montreal (August–September); 1988 Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (October 11); Facets Media Center, Chicago (December, for one week).



SCHWARZE SÜNDE
(BLACK SIN)

1989, West Germany, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, 42 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on the third version of *The Death of Empedocles* by Friedrich Hölderlin. With Andreas von Rauch, Vladimir Theye, Howard Vernon.

Straub and Huillet filmed the third version of *The Death of Empedocles*, the unfinished late-18th-century play by the German lyric poet Friedrich Hölderlin, in the dazzling sunlight and mottled shadow of the Sicilian landscape. It was there that the Greek pre-Socratic philosopher Empedocles legendarily cast himself into the volcanic fires of Mount Etna to prove his immortality. Empedocles debates Pausanias, his loyal disciple (erômenos), about the divine powers of love and strife that govern all matter, whether the strange and mystical elements of air, fire, water, and earth, or the mercurial and tragic behavior of gods and humans, mad in their compulsion to forsake nature and each other. *Black Sin* is a meticulous rereading and reworking of a play whose first version Straub and Huillet had adapted in *The Death of Empedocles*.

The Death of Empedocles and *Black Sin*, are based on versions one and three of Hölderlin's fragmentary Empedocles drama. The filmmakers had originally considered the third version unfilmable, but while they were editing *The Death of Empedocles* at the film school in Hamburg, one of the students showed them a videotape of a Berlin stage production. Appalled by what they saw, Straub and Huillet decided to film the work after all, "to avenge Hölderlin," and the result was *Black Sin*. This project also allowed them to continue their work with a few of the actors from the Empedocles film and to push some of their methods to an extreme, for instance, the variation of the pauses in the rhythms of the lines, the harshness of the light.

CREDITS

Text: Friedrich Hölderlin, *The Death of Empedocles*, 1798, excerpts.
Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Andreas von Rauch (Empedocles), Vladimir Theye (Pausanias), Howard Vernon (Manes).
Photography: William Lubtchansky, Christophe Pollock, Gianni Canfarelli; Film Processing and Prints: Luciano Vittori, Rome; Color Timing: Sergio Lustrì. Sound: Louis Hochet, Georges Vaglio, Alessandro Zanon; Sound Mix: Louis Hochet.
Sound: Louis Hochet, Alessandro Zanon, Pierre Donnadiéu.
Music: Ludwig van Beethoven, *String Quartet No. 15 in A Minor*, op. 132.
Assistants: Francesco Ragusa, Michael Esser, Hans Hurch, Leo Mingrone, Arnold Schmidt, Roberto Pali.
Production: Straub and Huillet with Dominique Païni. Production date and locations: Late July and August 1988, 3 weeks on Mt. Etna (altitude: 1900 m.); The Ernst Barlach sculptures, "Mother Earth" and "The Avenger," which appear before the opening credits, were filmed in the Ernst Barlach House by Helmut Herbst; "Der schwer gefaßte Entschluß" was recorded in London in 1935 with Adolf Busch, Gösta Andreasson, Karl Doktor, Hermann Busch. Budget: 300,000 DM.

There are four versions of this film. The second was subtitled in French by Danièle Huillet, and in Italian by Huillet and Domenico Carosso.

First screening: 1989 Cannes Film Festival, "Un Certain Regard."



CÉZANNE

DIALOGUE AVEC JOACHIM GASQUET

(CÉZANNE

CONVERSATION WITH JOACHIM GASQUET)

1990, France, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, French version, 51 min., German version, 63 min.

Film by

JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Cézanne* by Joachim Gasquet. With Huillet, Straub.

Joachim Gasquet's 1921 memoir of his friend Paul Cézanne is an invaluable portrait of the painter's life and work. Straub and Huillet use passages from this book, together with pastoral scenes from Jean Renoir's film adaptation of *Madame Bovary* (1933) and photographs of Cézanne by the painter Maurice Denis, to make a moving and profound personal essay. Cézanne (along with Giotto) was a guiding light for Straub and Huillet. They shot the film, in part, at Mont Sainte-Victoire, where Cézanne revolutionized the history of art, marveling, "Look at this mountain—it was once fire."

It is true that there is hardly one modern artist of importance to whom Cézanne is not father or grandfather, and that no other influence is comparable with his.

— Clive Bell, 1922

CREDITS

Text: Joachim Gasquet, “Ce qu’il m’a dit...” (What He Told Me) in *Cézanne*, 1921, excerpts. A reel of Jean Renoir’s *Madame Bovary*, 1933, is used (based on Gustave Flaubert’s novel) centered around the “comices agricoles,” as well as two excerpts from *The Death of Empedocles* and various documents (photos of Cézanne by Maurice Denis, paintings by Cézanne).

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Narration: Danièle Huillet (Cézanne); Jean-Marie Straub (Gasquet).

Photography: Henri Alekan; Lighting: Louis Cochet, Assistance: Hopi Lebel; Camera: Stefan Zimmer, Michael Esser.

Sound: Louis Hochet, Georges Vaglio.

Production: Musée d’Orsay, S.E.P.T., Diagonale, Straub and Huillet. Production dates and locations: September–October 1989, 3 weeks in Paris, London, Edinburgh, Bâle, Ascona and Mount St.Victoire. Budget: 900,000 FF.

We thank Éditions Gallimard for the excerpt from the film *Madame Bovary* by Jean Renoir; Monsieur Antoine Salomon for the photographs of Paul Cézanne; and Virginie Herbin for having provoked this film. The works by Cézanne that we filmed are found in the following museums: National Gallery, London, Musée d’Orsay, Paris, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, Kunstmuseum, Basel, Petit Palais, Paris, Courtauld Institute Galleries, Tate Gallery, London, Cabinet des Dessins of The Musée du Louvre, Paris. [In closing credits.]

The Musée d’Orsay ultimately rejected this film that it had commissioned.

The film also exists in a German version, co-produced by Hessischer Rundfunk: *Paul Cézanne im Gespräch mit Joachim Gasquet*. The two versions are different (two negative edits), and the German version is 12 minutes longer.

First screenings: TV: 1990 La Sept, France (March); 1991 Club Publicis, Paris (April 3); National Film Theater, London; 2006 Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York.



DIE ANTIGONE DES SOPHOKLES NACH DER HÖLDERLINSCHEN ÜBERTRAGUNG
FÜR DIE BÜHNE BEARBEITET VON BRECHT 1948
(THE ANTIGONE OF SOPHOCLES AFTER HÖLDERLIN'S TRANSLATION ADAPTED
FOR THE STAGE BY BRECHT 1948)

1992, Germany, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, 100 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Antigone* by Bertolt Brecht. With Astrid Ofner, Ursula Ofner, Werner Rehm.

A fearless and stubborn Antigone, refusing to allow the dishonored body of her murdered brother Polynices to be devoured by vultures and dogs, defies the Thebian tyrant Creon by burying him. In punishment, Creon orders Oedipus's rebellious daughter to be entombed alive, lest she sow insurrection among the people. Sophocles's timeless tragedy is refracted through several media: a late-18th-century German translation by the poet Hölderlin, a post-World War II stage adaptation by Bertolt Brecht, and a 1990s film interpretation by Straub and Huillet that they shot over five weeks in the ancient Teatro di Segesta in Sicily. The myth of Antigone loses none of its dramatic force across the centuries, its themes of bloodlust and blindness, wisdom and sacrifice, resonating ever more intensely after war and genocide.

Antigone incorporates in many ways the return to mythic origins suggested by films such as *Moses and Aaron* or *From the Cloud to the Resistance*. It returns to the aesthetic origins of contemporary film and theater in its use of the visual simplicity of the silent cinema and the staging of Sophocles' play in a Greek theater of his era. It also returns to the mythic origins of civil society in the death of the heroic individual: Antigone's voluntary self-sacrifice parallels Moses' sojourn in the desert and Empedocles' plunge into volcanic fire. And its visual images, like its language, straining to be both German and Greek, mark the border between Europe and the other continents: the "African sun" shines on Sicily, as Huillet has put it.

Danièle Huillet's love for the light and landscape of Sicily, the fascination with the Teatro de Segesta (a Greek theater in Sicily dating from the fourth century B.C.E. and one of the best-preserved Greek theaters of antiquity, discovered by the filmmakers some twenty years earlier while scouting locations for *Moses and Aaron*) led her and Straub to conclude their ten-year consideration of Hölderlin while returning to Brecht's political aesthetics. Brecht's version of the Hölderlin *Antigone* translation is rather obscure among his works and seldom performed, but Straub has emphasized that the text is "very much Brecht," including some of the strongest writing he ever did for the theater.

CREDITS

- Text: Sophocles, *Antigone*, 411 BC, after Friedrich Hölderlin's translation, 1800–1803, adapted for the stage by Bertolt Brecht, 1948 – without Brecht's prologue. Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
- Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
- Actors: Astrid Ofner (Antigone), Ursula Ofner (Ismene), Hans Diehl, Kurt Radeke, Michael Maassen, Rainer Philippi (Elders), Werner Rehm (Creon), Lars Studer (Guard), Stephan Wolf-Schönburg (Haemon), Albert Hetterle (Tiresias), Mario di Mattia (Child), Michael König (Messenger), Libgart Schwarz (Servant-Messenger).
- Photography: Nicolas Eprendre, William Lubtchansky and Irina Lubtchansky; Film Processing and Prints: Geyer-Werke, Berlin.
- Sound: Louis Hochet, Georges Vaglio, Sandro Zanon.
- Music: Extract from *Die Soldaten* by Bernd Alois Zimmermann, conducted by Michael Gielen.
- Costumes: Ruggero Peruzzi; Shoes: Pompei.
- Hair: Guerrino Todero.
- Assistants: Michael Esser, Hans Hurch, Francesco Ragusa, Daniele Rossi, Yu-Jung Nam; Olivier Moeckli, Stephan Settele, Stefan Ofner, Marco Zappone, Ernaldo Data.
- Production: Co-production Regina Ziegler, Filmproduktion, Berlin; Martine Marignac, Pierre Grise Productions, Paris; Hessischer Rundfunk; Straub and Huillet; with the support of the Berliner Filmförderung, the Filmförderungsanstalt and the CNC; Production Manager: Danièle Huillet with Hartmut Köhler, Rosalie Lecan. Production dates and location: Summer 1991, 5 weeks at the ancient Teatro di Segesta (Sicily). Budget: 3,000,000 FF.

The memory of humanity for sufferings borne is astonishingly short. Its gift of imagination for coming sufferings is almost even less. It is this callousness that we must combat. For humanity is threatened by wars compared to which those past are like poor attempts and they will come, without any doubt, if the hands of those who prepare them in all openness are not broken. —Bertolt Brecht, 1952 [quote in closing credits.]

Thank you, thank you Marco Müller and Jean-Luc Godard [handwritten in closing credits].

There are two versions of the film, made from different takes of the same shots. Danièle Huillet subtitled the second in French.

The play was performed at the Schaubühne in Berlin (premiere on May 3, 1991), then for a single performance on August 14 at the Teatro di Segesta. First screening: 1992 Berlin International Film Festival.



LOTHRINGEN!

1994, Germany/France, 35 mm, 1.37:1, color, 21 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Colette Baudoche* by Maurice Barrès. With Emmanuelle Straub, André Warynski, Dominique Dosdat.

Straub, who was born in Metz, Lorraine, in 1933, once observed, “I like the Alsatians—they are the only French who have as much irony as Corneille.” In this film, which conjures “a conspiratorial atmosphere of fear and hatred,” Straub and Huillet draw upon a pair of novels by Maurice Barrès, a celebrated Alsatian author, extreme nationalist, crude anti-Semite, and ardent anti-Dreyfusard, to tell tales of perfidy, humiliation, and resistance during the German occupation of Alsace-Lorraine between 1870 and 1918.

CREDITS

Text: Maurice Barrès, *Colette Baudoche. Histoires d'une jeune fille de Metz* (*Colette Baudoche: Story of a Young Girl from Metz*), 1909.

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Emmanuelle Straub (Colette Baudoche); Narration: André Warynski (French) and Dominique Dosdat (French), Jean-Marie Straub (German).

Photography: Christophe Pollock, Emmanuelle Collinot; Film Processing and Prints: LTC, Saint-Cloud.

Sound: Louis Hochet, Georges Vaglio; Sound Mix: Euro Studios.

Music: Franz Joseph Haydn, performed by the Amadeus Quartet.

Production: Peter Brugger, Saarländischer Rundfunk, Straub- Huillet, Martine Marignac, Pierre Grise Productions; Lab: LTC, Saint-Cloud. Production dates and locations: June 1994, Metz and surrounding areas, Koblenz.

In the German version, Jean-Marie Straub speaks the parts of the narration recited in French by A.Warynski; Emmanuelle Straub's lines and the grandmother's story spoken by D. Dosdat are subtitled.

First screenings: 1994 Locarno Film Festival; Cinémathèque Française (December); 2011 New York Film Festival.TV: 1995 Arte (January 12).



VON HEUTE AUF MORGEN
(FROM TODAY UNTIL TOMORROW)

1997, Germany, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 62 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Von Heute auf Morgen* by Arnold and Gertrud Schoenberg (as Max Blonda). With Richard Salter, Christine Whittlesey, Claudia Barainsky, Ryszard Karczykowski.

Schoenberg's rarely performed one-act opera, a withering portrait of a suffocating bourgeois marriage, gets the Weimar treatment in Straub and Huillet's staged film. As the husband retreats into impotent sexual fantasy and his wife into aching loneliness—shades of Erich von Stroheim and Jacques Rivette—they are plunged into a *mise en abyme* of jagged atonal music and slashing crepuscular light.

Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Michael Gielen

CREDITS

Wo liegt euer Lächeln begraben?! (Where does your hidden smile lie?!) [Shot of a wall with graffiti in opening credits.]

Text: Arnold Schoenberg, *Von heute auf morgen* (*From Today until Tomorrow*), Opera in One Act; Libretto by Max Blonda, 1929.

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Richard Salter (Man), Christine Whittlesey (Wife), Annabelle Hahn (Child), Claudia Barainsky (Friend), Ryszard Karczykowski (Singer).

Photography: William Lubtchansky, Irina Lubtchansky, Marion Befve; Lighting: Jim Howe, Barry Davis, Andreas Niels Michel.

Sound: Louis Hochet, Georges Vaglio, Sandro Zanon, Klaus Barm, Charly Morell, Hans-Bernhard Bätzing, Björn Rosenberg.

Music: Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Michael Gielen, Assistance: Till Drömann, David Coleman.

Hair: Jutta Braun.

Set Design: Max Schoendorff, Jean-Marie Staub, Danièle Huillet.

Assistants: Rosalie Lecan, Jean-Charles Fitoussi, Arnaud Maillet.

Production: Straub and Huillet; Martine Marignac, Pierre Grise Productions; in co-production with Hesse Radio: Dietmar Schings, Leo Karl Gerhartz, Hans-Peter Baden. Production location: Hessischer Rundfunk Studio, Frankfurt.

Dedicated to Helga Gielen, Dieter Reifarth, André and Dominique Warynski. [In closing credits.]

Subtitled in English by Danièle Huillet and Barton Byg, in French by Huillet.

First screening: 1997 New York Film Festival; released in France (February).



SICILIA!

1999, Italy, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 66 min.

Film by

JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Conversations in Sicily* by Elio Vittorini. With Gianni Buscarino, Vittorio Vigneri, Angela Nugara, Giovanni Interlandi.

Something as simple as a herring roasting on a hearth, or a meal of bread, wine and winter melon, takes on the humble aura of a Caravaggio painting in this masterful film. That is to say, Straub and Huillet extol ordinary Sicilians who are poor of means but rich in spirit. Filmed in Syracuse and Messina, *Sicilia!* is a tragicomedy involving an orange peddler, an Italian recently returned from America, two “stinky” police officers, a guilt-stricken landowner, a traveling knife sharpener and, perhaps most unforgettably, an indomitable peasant mother who reminisces about meals of snails and wild chicory, her husband’s philandering and cowardice, and her own father’s belief in an honest day’s labor, socialism, and St. Joseph. She reveals to her son stories about his childhood and her sentimental life.

CREDITS

*For the marmoset and in memory of Barnabé the cat. —J-M.S. [In opening credits.]

Text: Constellations, dialogues from the novel by Elio Vittorini, *Conversazione in Sicilia* (Conversations in Sicily), 1937–38.

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Gianni Buscarino (Silvestro), Vittorio Vigneri (Knife Sharpener), Angela Nugara (Mother), Carmelo Maddio (Man), Angela Durantini (his Wife), Simone Nucatola, Ignazio Trombello, Giovanni Interlandi (The Great Lombardo), Giuseppe Bontà (Man from Catania), Mario Baschieri (Little Old Man).

Photography: William Lubtchansky, Irina Lubtchansky, Marion Befve; Lighting: Jim Howe, Olivier Cazzitti; Film Processing and Prints: LTC, Saint-Cloud.

Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret, Jacques Balley; Sound mix: Louis Hochet, Sonodi, Épinay-sur-Seine.

Music: Ludwig van Beethoven, *String Quartet in A Minor*, op. 132, 1825.

Assistants: Arnaud Maillet, Jean-Charles Fitoussi, Romano Guelfi, Andreas Teuchert.

Production: Straub-Huillet; Martine Marignac, Pierre Grise Productions; Centre National de La Cinématographe; Enzo Porcelli, Alia Film; Istituto Luce; Presales: ARD Degeto; Dietmar Schings, Hessischer Rundfunk; Saarländischer Rundfunk; Westdeutscher Rundfunk.
Production locations: Buti, Messina, Syracuse, Grammichele.

Thank you, thank you Salvatore Scollo, Barbara Ulrich, Dominique and André; Gabriella Taddeo, Anna Barzacchini, Paolo Bernardini, Dario Marconcini, Marcello Landi and his wife; Piero Spila, Francesco Grillini, and the rail workers of Messina and Syracuse. [In closing credits.]

There are three version of this film.

Subtitled in English by Danièle Huillet and Barton Byg, in French by Huillet.

1998 Theatrical performance at the Teatro Francesco Bartolo, Buti, Italy (April);

First screenings: 1999 Cannes Film Festival, “Un Certain Regard” (May 20); New York Film Festival (October); released in France (September 15).



L'ARROTINO
(THE KNIFE SHARPENER)

2001, Italy/France, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 7 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Conversations in Sicily* by Elio Vittorini, this film is a re-edited sequence from *Sicilia!*

CREDITS

Re-edited sequence from *Sicilia!*

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Gianni Buscarino, Vittorio Vigneri.

First screening: 2001 Torino Film Festival (November 21); released in France with *The Wayfarer*.



IL VIANDANTE
(THE WAYFARER)

2001, Italy/France, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, 5 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Conversations in Sicily* by Elio Vittorini, this film is a re-edited sequence from *Sicilia!*

CREDITS

Re-edited sequence from *Sicilia!*

*for Danièle! [Handwritten in opening title card.]

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Angela Nugara, Gianni Buscarino.

First screening: 2001 Torino Film Festival (November 21); released in France with *The Knife Sharpener*.



OPERAI, CONTADINI
(WORKERS, PEASANTS)

2001, Italy/France, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, 123 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Women of Messina* by Elio Vittorini. With Angela Nugara, Giacinto Di Pascoli, Giampaolo Cassarino, Enrico Achilli, Angela Durantini, Martina Gionfriddo, Andrea Balducci, Gabriella Taddei, Vittorio Vigneri, Aldo Fruttuosi, Rosalba Curatola, Enrico Pelosini.

A peasant tradition of making homemade ricotta cheese on a wood-burning fire becomes an act of resistance in this unforgettable film. Amateur actors from the regional Buti theater, many of them ordinary laborers and farmers, recite or read passages from Elio Vittorini's Marxist novella *Women of Messina*, their singularly musical voices ringing out as one in the verdant forest. The story, which Italo Calvino called a "choral narrative," centers on a group of workers and peasants who rebuild their lives in the aftermath of the Second World War by rebuilding a destroyed village and forming a utopian community.

CREDITS

Operai contadini | Ouvriers, payans | Arbeiter, Bauern [Opening title in Italian, French and German.]

Text: Elio Vittorini, *Le donne di Messina* (Women of Messina), 1949, second edition, partially rewritten in 1964. Adaptation of chapters XLIV to XLVII.

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Angela Nugara (Widow Biliotti), Giacinto Di Pascoli (Cattarin), Giampaolo Cassarino (Pompeo Manera), Enrico Achilli (Cataldo Chiesa), Angela Durantini (Elvira La Farina), Martina Gionfriddo (Carmela Graziadei), Andrea Balducci (Fischio), Gabriella Taddei (Giralda Adorno), Vittorio Vigneri (Spine); Aldo Fruttuosi (Ventura, "Faccia Cattiva"), Rosalba Curatola (Siracusa), Enrico Pelosini (Toma), Marcello Landi ("Il Seracino").

Photography: Renato Berta, Jean-Paul Toraille, Marion Befve; Color timing: Marcel Mazoyer, LTC Saint Cloud.

Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret, Dimitri Haullet; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce, Jackson, DTS Stereo.

Music: J. S. Bach, *Aria Duetto from the Cantata BWV 125, 1725*.

Assistants: Romano Guelfi, Jean-Charles Fitoussi, Arnaud Maillet.

Production: Straub and Huillet; Martine Marignac, Pierre Grise Productions; Charlotte Vincent, Capricci Films; Teatro Comunale Francesco di Bartolo, Buti; Le Fresnoy – Studio National des Arts Contemporains; Saarländischer Rundfunk; Südwestrundfunk; Werner Dütsch, Westdeutscher Rundfunk. Production dates and location: Summer 2000, Buti, Italy.

Translation and subtitles by Danièle Huillet. Subtitling: LVT.

2000 Theatrical performance at the Teatro Francesco Bartolo, Buti (June); First screening: 2001 Cannes Film Festival, "Director's Fortnight"; released in France (September).



IL RITORNO DEL FIGLIO PRODIGO
(THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL SON)

2003, Italy/France/Germany, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, Dolby mono, 29 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Women of Messina*, by Elio Vittorini. With Rosalba Curatola, Aldo Fruttuosi, Romano Guelfi.

Straub and Huillet take as their inspiration the 1949 novel *Women of Messina* by the Sicilian writer Elio Vittorini, whose courageous wartime work in the underground Communist resistance press led to his imprisonment by the Fascists. These twinned films are a companion piece to *Sicilia!* They center on a community of peasants and workers, adrift in liberated Italy, who establish a cooperative in a battle-ravaged mountain village. The community then must stand its ground against the coercions of the capitalist state, which takes the form of three argumentative—and armed—hunters. The utopian ideal of a Popular Front—myriad individual voices ringing out as one—seems to be no match for an idea of progress measured in profiteering and private property, as if one can own the songs of birds and the rustling wind.

CREDITS

New version of shots 40 to 46 and 63 to 66 of *Workers, Peasants*, focusing on the character Spine.

Text: Elio Vittorini, *Women of Messina*, 1949–1964, excerpts.
Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Martina Gionfriddo (Carmela Graziadei), Andrea Balducci (Fischio), Gabriella Taddei (Giralda Adorno), Vittorio Vigneri (Spine), Aldo Fruttuosi (Ventura, “Faccia Cattiva”).
Photography: Renato Berta, Jean-Paul Toraille, Marion Befve.
Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret, Dimitri Haulet, Jean-Pierre Laforce.
Assistants: Giulio Bursi, Maurizio Buquicchio, Arnaud Maillet, Jean-Charles Fitoussi.
Production: Straub and Huillet; Associazione Teatro Buti, Fondazione Pontedera Teatro, Regione Toscana, Provincia di Pisa, Comune di Buti; Martine Marignac, Pierre Grise Productions; Centre National de la Cinématographie; Werner Dütsch, Westdeutscher Rundfunk; Le Fresnoy – Studio National des Arts Contemporains.
Music: Edgar Varèse, *Arcana*, 1925–27, excerpt.

2002 Theatrical performance at the Teatro Francesco di Bartolo, Buti (May 31–June 2); First screenings: 2003 Cinémathèque Française, Palais de Chaillot (March 24); released in Paris (April 23); 2004 second version screened at the Cinémathèque Française (March 9).



UMILIATI: CHE NIENTE DI FATTO O TOCCATA DA LORO, I USCITO DALLE MANI
LORO, RISULTASSE ESENTE DAL DIRITTO DI QUALCHE ESTRANEO
(OPERAI, CONTADINI — SEGUITO E FINE)
(HUMILIATED: ...THAT NOTHING PRODUCED OR TOUCHED BY THEM, COMING
FROM THEIR HANDS, PROVES FREE FROM THE CLAIM OF SOME STRANGER
[WORKERS, PEASANTS — CONTINUATION AND END])

2003, Italy/France/Germany, 35 mm, 1.37:1, color, Dolby, 35 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Women of Messina*, by Elio Vittorini. With Rosalba Curatola, Aldo Fruttuosi, Romano Guelfi.

Straub and Huillet take as their inspiration the 1949 novel *Women of Messina* by the Sicilian writer Elio Vittorini, whose courageous wartime work in the underground Communist resistance press led to his imprisonment by the Fascists. These twinned films are a companion piece to *Sicilia!* They center on a community of peasants and workers, adrift in liberated Italy, who establish a cooperative in a battle-ravaged mountain village. The community then must stand its ground against the coercions of the capitalist state, which takes the form of three argumentative—and armed—hunters. The utopian ideal of a Popular Front—myriad individual voices ringing out as one—seems to be no match for an idea of progress measured in profiteering and private property, as if one can own the songs of birds and the rustling wind.

CREDITS

Text: Elio Vittorini, *Women of Messina*, 1949–64, excerpts.
Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Rosalba Curatola (Siracusa), Aldo Fruttuosi (Ventura, “Faccia Cattiva”), Enrico Achilli (Cataldo Chiesa), Martina Gionfriddo (Carmela Graziadei), Enrico Pelosini (Toma), Angela Durantini (Elvira La Farina), Andrea Balducci (Fischio), Giampaolo Cassarino (Pompeo Manera), Giacinto Di Pascoli (Cattarin), Gabriella Taddei (Giralda Adorno), Vittorio Vigneri (Spine), Marcello Landi (“Il Seracino”), Romano Guelfi, Paolo Spaziani, Federico Ciaramella, Daniel Vannucci, Dolando Bernardini.

[See credit information for *The Return of the Prodigal Son*.]

For French distribution, the film was released with *The Return of the Prodigal Son*.



INCANTATI

2003, Italy/France/Germany, 35 mm, 1.37:1, color, Dolby, 6 min.

Film by

JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIELÈ HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Women of Messina* by Elio Vittorini.

CREDITS

Re-edited sequence from the end of *Umiliati*.

[See credit information for *Umiliati*.]



DOLANDO

2003, Italy/France/Germany, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, Dolby, 7 min.

Film by

JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

At the end of filming *Umiliati*, Straub and Huillet gave thanks to the cast and crew in a graceful way: by inviting Dolando Bernardini to sing several stanzas from Torquato Tasso's 16th-century epic poem *Jerusalem Delivered*.

Film made during the production of *Umiliati*.

CREDITS

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
Actor: Dolando Bernardini.
Photography: Renato Berta, Jean-Paul Toraille, Marion Befve.
Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret, Dimitri Haulet, Jean-Pierre Laforce.
Music: Torquato Tasso, verses of *La Gerusalemme liberate*, 1581, sung by Dolando Bernardini.
Production: Film made during the production of *Humiliated*. Three shots of Dolando Bernardini, an actor in the film, singing a capella, followed by a new take of the last shot of *Workers, Peasants*.



UNE VISITE AU LOUVRE (A VISIT TO THE LOUVRE)

2004, France, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, Dolby SR mono, 48 min. (1st version), 47 min. (2nd version).

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Straub and Huillet had fierce opinions about the presentation and preservation of art in museums, from the use of protective glass to the way paintings are hung, lit, and conserved. Their visit to the Louvre is a reflection of these strong sentiments, as well as a richly revealing look at their way of looking. They use words attributed to Paul Cézanne (as quoted by Joaquim Gasquet) to critique images, venomous about some artists (David, Ingres) while honey-tongued about others (Murillo, Tintoretto, Veronese, Delacroix, Courbet).

Includes an unused take of the first shot of *Workers, Peasants*. Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Straub. Both versions of the film are shown one after the other.

CREDITS

Dominique Païni provoked this film in 1990; Thank you François Albera, François Hers, Catia Riccaboni.
[Handwritten text in opening credits of first version.]

Text: Joachim Gasquet, “Ce qu’il m’a dit” in *Cézanne*, 1921; includes an unused take of the first shot of *Workers, Peasants*. The two versions of the film are shown one after the other.

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Narration: Julie Koltai.

Photography: William Lubtchansky, Irina Lubtchansky, Jean-Paul Toraille, Renato Berta, Marion Befve;
Lighting: André Atellian, Jim Howe, Marc Romani.

Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret, Dimitri Haulet, Gérard Delagarde, Jean-Pierre Laforce.

Production: Straub and Huillet; Christophe Gougeon, ATOPIC; Centre National de la Cinématographie, thank you Frédéric Mitterrand and Hugues Quattrone; Le Fresnoy – Studio National des Arts Contemporains, thank you Alain Fleischer, Frédéric Papon, Christian Châtel; Fondation de France, initiatives d’artistes; Ministère de La Culture, Délégation aux Arts Plastiques, thank you Bernard Blistène, Chantal Soyer, Pascale Cassagneau, Jean-Claude Conesa; Dieter Reifarth, Strandfilm; Inge Classen, Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen; Enrico Ghezzi, RAI Tre; thank you, thank you André Goeminne and Anne Pontégnie, Bertrand Brouder, Cornelia Geiser Régis Michel, Catherine Bélanger, Patricia Oranin-Godin, Claire Herlic, Jeanne Latrobe; thank you Nathalie Cikalovski, Fabrice Dequeant, LTC, Daniel Dehayes, Studio, Jackson: Dolby SR mono, Guy Daleidan, Fondspa, Luxembourg; thank you Marie-Claude Beaud, Fonds Images de France du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.

Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

First screenings: 2004 Released in Paris (March 17); 2005 New York Film Festival, “Views from the Avant-Garde” (October); London Film Festival (October).



QUEI LORO INCONTRI
(THESE ENCOUNTERS OF THEIRS)

2006, Italy/France, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, Dolby SRD, 68 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Dialogues with Leucò*, by Cesare Pavese. With Angela Nugara, Vittorio Vigneri, Grazi Orsi, Romano Guelfi, Angela Durantini, Enrico Achilli, Giovanna Daddi, Dario Marconcini, Andrea Bacci, Andrea Balducci.

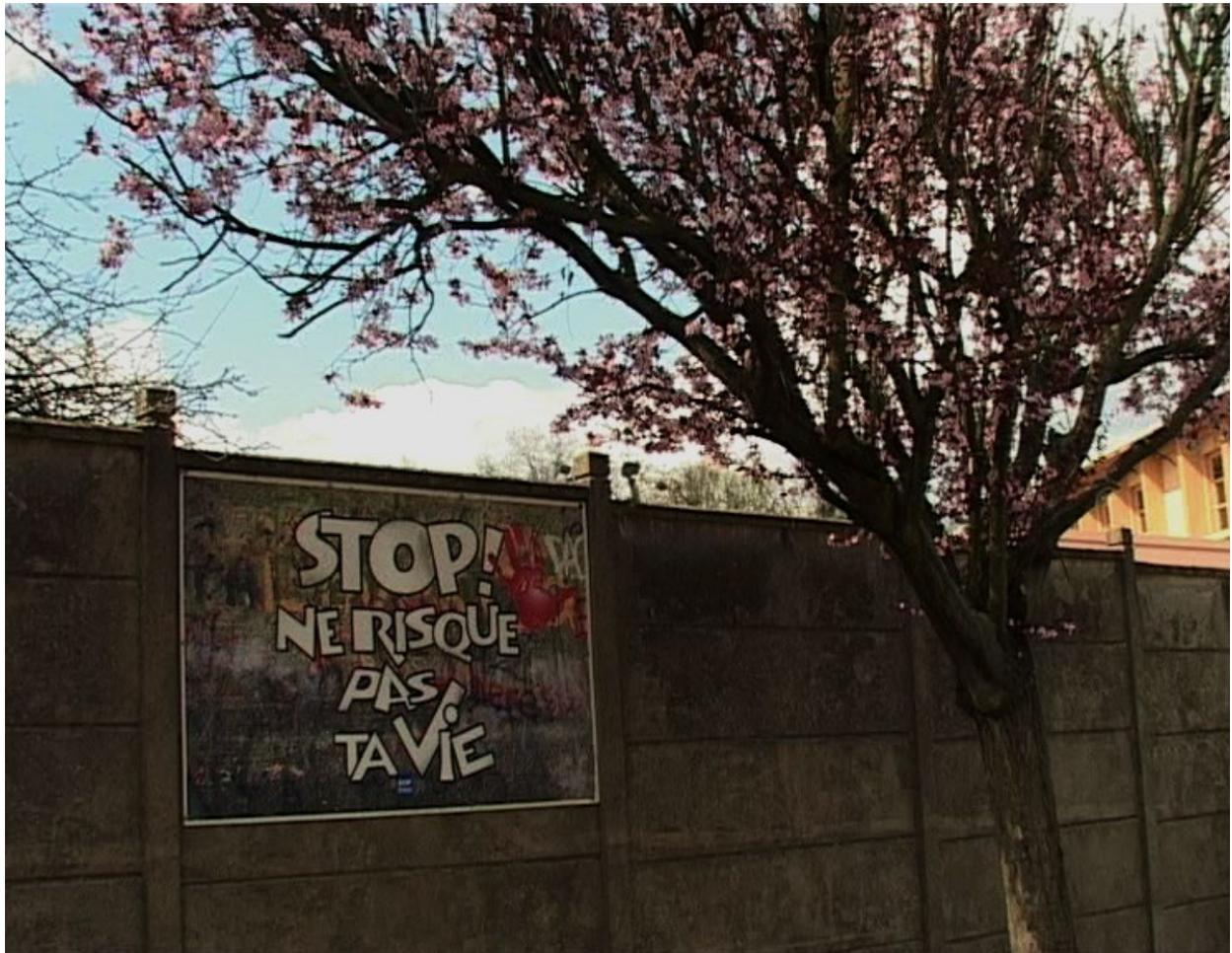
In the last feature-length collaboration between Straub and Huillet before Huillet's death in 2006, villagers from across the length of Italy—a peasant, a postmaster, a theater director, a mayor, a rope maker—gather in the Tuscan countryside to recite the five final scenes of Cesare Pavese's *Dialogues with Leucò*. Published in 1947, just two years after the Holocaust and the Second World War and two years before Pavese's suicide, the *Dialogues* offer a series of meditations on human destiny, both comical and tragic, between ancient Greek mythological figures. Desperate in their hunger for immortality, mortals are blind to the gift of being human—of their ability to experience joy and suffering; to feel a passing breeze or the touch of another body; to name, remember, and act.

CREDITS

Text: Cesare Pavese, *Dialogues with Leucò*, 1947, the last five dialogues.
Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: 1. Angela Nugara – Vittorio Vigneri; 2. Grazia Orsi – Romano Guelfi; 3. Angela Durantini – Enrico Achilli; 4. Giovanna Daddi – Dario Marconcini; 5. Andrea Bacci – Andrea Balducci.
Photography: Renato Berta, Jean-Paul Toraille, Marion Befve.
Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret, Dimitri Haulet, Jean-Pierre Laforce.
Music: Ludwig van Beethoven, Quartet no. 11, op. 59.
Assistant: Kamel Belaïd, Arnaud Maillet, Giulio Bursi, Maurizio Buquicchio.
Production: Straub and Huillet; Teatro Comunale di Buti; Marcello Landi (“Il Seracino”); Martine Maignac, Pierre Grise Productions; Centre National de La Cinématographie; Frédéric Papon, Christian Châtel, Jean-René Lorand, Blandine Tourneux, Le Fresnoy – Studio National des Arts Contemporains; Archipel; LTC, Saint-Cloud; Pierre Grise Distribution.

Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

2005 Theatrical performance at the Teatro Francesco Bartolo, Buti (May 20–23); First screenings: 2006 Venice Film Festival; released in France (October); 2007 Film Comment Selects, New York; Marguerite Duras Prize.



EUROPA 2005, 27 OCTOBRE
(EUROPA 2005, 27 OCTOBER)

2006, France, MiniDV, color, 4:3, 10 min. 30 sec.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

On October 27, 2005, in the Parisian suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois, two teenage boys of Mauritanian and Tunisian origin, Bouna Traoré and Zyed Benna, were electrocuted as they fled the police. Their deaths sparked nearly three weeks of riots across France. In five camera pans, amid birdsong and a dog's menacing bark, Straub and Huillet document the dead-end location of this tragedy. Commissioned for Italian television on the centenary of Roberto Rossellini's birth, the couple's final collaboration is their imaginative response to the neorealist filmmaker's *Europa '51* (1952).

CREDITS

Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.

Image: Jean-Claude Rousseau.

Editing: Jean-Claude Rousseau.

Assistant: Christophe Clavert.

Production: Production location: Shot near the Clichy-sous-Bois power transformer where Zyed Benna and Bouna Traoré died from electrocution on October 27, 2005.

First screenings: 2007 Toronto International Film Festival; 2012 Anthology Film Archives; 2015 Goethe-Institute, London.



LE GENOU D'ARTEMIDE
(ARTEMIDE'S KNEE)

2008, Italy/France, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, Dolby SRD, 26 min. (1st version); 27 min. (2nd version).

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Dialogues with Leucò*, by Cesare Pavese. With Andrea Bacci, Dario Marconcini.

Mourning the death of his partner and collaborator Danièle Huillet, Straub finds tender mercy in music and nature. Out of the abyss, Kathleen Ferrier sings Gustav Mahler's *Songs of the Earth: The Farewell* (which the composer wrote in 1909 after the death of his daughter) and Heinrich Schütz's *Lament on the Death of His Wife* (1625). The landscape also provides solace: the mountain grove where Endymion pines for his beloved Artemis, "a wild thing, untouchable, mortal," appears to embody the Japanese concept of *mono no aware*—a wistful acceptance of the fleeting beauty of things.

CREDITS

*for Barbara [handwritten text in opening credits].

Text: Cesare Pavese, "La Belva" (The Beast) in *Dialogues with Leucò*, 1947.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Andrea Bacci, Dario Marconcini, Teatro Comunale di Buti.
Photography: Renato Berta, Jean-Paul Toraille, Marion Befve.
Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret, Dimitri Haulet, Jean-Pierre Laforce.
Music: Heinrich Schütz; Gustav Mahler, "Der Abschied," from *Das Lied von der Erde*, conducted by Bruno Walter, soprano: Kathleen Ferrier.
Editing: Nicole Lubtchansky.
Assistants: Arnaud Dommerc, Jean-Charles Fitoussi, Romano Guelfi, Giulio Bursi, Maurizio Buquicchio.
Production: Martine Marignac, Pierre Grise Productions; Blandine Tourneux, Frédéric Papon, Le Fresnoy – Studio National des Arts Contemporains; Cine-Stereo / LTC, Saint-Cloud.

Subtitled in French by Jean-Marie Straub, Jacques Bontemps and Bernard Eisenschitz, in English by Misha Donat.

2007 Theatrical performance as *Il Ginocchio di Artemide* at the Teatro Francesco di Bartolo, Buti (May 24–25);
First screenings: 2008 Cannes Film Festival; Cinémathèque française; London Film Festival; 2010 Migrating Forms, New York.



ITINÉRAIRE DE JEAN BRICARD
(ITINERARY OF JEAN BRICARD)

2008, France, 35 mm, B&W, 1.37:1, Dolby SRD, 40 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB AND DANIÈLE HUILLET

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on “Itinéraire de Jean Bricard” in *Interlope la curieuse* by Jean-Yves Petiteau.

Scarred by wartime occupation and postwar pollution, Coton Island is a palimpsest of history brought vividly to life in Jean Bricard’s childhood memories. The island, strategically located on the Loire, was once a lively port town with ash trees, vineyards, and tributaries alive with salmon and shad. But in 1944 Coton Island was occupied by the Germans and became the setting for brutal roundups and executions (including that of Bricard’s uncle) and for small acts of heroic resistance. After collaborating with Huillet on the script, Straub completed Itinerary after her death in 2006. He filmed Coton Island against a stark and leaden winter light; he used deliberately long tracking shots and nearly still compositions to evoke a kind of enduring resilience.

Jean-Marie Straub considers this film and *Artemide’s Knee* inseparable.

CREDITS

For Peter Nestler [handwritten text in opening credits].

Text: Jean-Yves Petiteau, "Itinéraire de Jean Bricard" in *Interlope la curieuse* (Nantes), no. 9/10, June 1994.

Direction: Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub.

Image: Irina Lubtchansky, William Lubtchansky, Jean-Paul Toraille.

Editing: Nicole Lubtchansky.

Sound: Dimitri Haulet, Jean-Pierre Laforce, Jean-Pierre Duret, Zaki Allal.

Assistants: André Atellian, Arnaud Dommerc, Jean Vivier, Jean-Charles Fitoussi.

Production: Frédéric Papon, Blandine Tourneux, Cyril Lauwerier, Christian Châtel, Jean-René Lorand, Le Fresnoy – Studio National des Arts Contemporains; Martine Marignac, Pierre Grise Productions, Centre National de la Cinématographie. Production dates and locations: December 2007, filmed on and around Coton Island on the Loire river.

There exist two versions of this film.

Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

First screenings: 2008 Cannes Film Festival; London Film Festival; 2010 Migrating Forms, New York.



LE STREGHE

FEMMES ENTRE ELLES

(LE STREGHE

WOMEN AMONGST THEMSELVES)

2009, France/Italy, 35 mm, color, 1.37:1, Dolby SRD, 21 min.

Film by

JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on the first dialogue of *Dialogues with Leucò* by Cesare Pavese. With Giovanna Giuliani, Giovanna Daddi.

The enchantress Circe recounts to Leucò her attempts to bewitch and bed Odysseus. She talks about men and women, the human and the divine, and the brave hero who chooses to become neither a pig nor a God. In her adamantine repose, Circe also hints at the monotony of her own immortal fate, and contrasts it with the vibrating currents of life she so dearly craves and envies in Odysseus, with his longing for home, childhood, and love. Shot in Buti, Tuscany.

CREDITS

Text: Cesare Pavese “Le streghe” (The Witches) in *Dialogues with Leucò*, 1947.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Giovanna Daddi, Giovanna Giuliani.
Photography: Renato Berta, Jean-Paul Toraille, Irina Lubtchansky.
Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret, Jean-Pierre Laforce, Julien Sicart, Zaki Allal.
Editing: Catherine Quesemand.
Assistants: Arnaud Dommerc, Mehdi Benallal, Romano Guelfi, Giulio Bursi, Maurizio Buquicchio.
Production: Straub and Huillet; Teatro Comunale di Buti; Martine Marignac, Pierre Grise Productions; Frédéric Papon, Blandine Tourneux, Jean-René Lorand, Le Fresnoy – Studio National des Arts Contemporains; LTC, Saint-Cloud; Archipel, Dolby SRD. Production dates and location: June 16–20, 2008, Buti, Italy.

Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub, in French by Jacques Bontemps, Bernard Eisenschitz, Barbara Ulrich and Straub.

2008 Theatrical performance at the Teatro Francesco Bartolo, Buti (June 5); First screening: 2009 Cinémathèque Française; Toronto International Film Festival; 2010 Migrating Forms, New York.



CORNEILLE-BRECHT OU ROME, L'UNIQUE OBJET DE MON RESSENTIMENT
(CORNEILLE-BRECHT, OR ROME, UNIQUE OBJECT OF MY RESENTMENT)

2009, France, MiniDV, color, 4:3, 26 min. 43 sec. (1st version),
26 min. 27 sec. (2nd version), 26 min. 55 sec. (3rd version).

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Othon* and *Horace* by Pierre Corneille, and *The Trial of Lucullus* by Bertolt Brecht. With Cornelia Geiser.

In various guises and in melodic fashion, Cornelia Geiser recites verses from Pierre Corneille's *Horace* (1640) and *Othon* (1664), and extended excerpts from Bertolt Brecht's radio play *The Trial of Lucullus* (1939) in which the Roman General is summoned to the underworld to stand trial for the sufferings he inflicted on commoners and slaves. Across centuries of Western civilization, Straub draws echoes between the "monstrous" rulers of ancient Rome, the kings of 17th-century France, the fascists of Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, and, by implication, those in power today who continue to inflict suffering on those without power.

CREDITS

Text: Pierre Corneille, *Horace* (1640) and *Othon* (1664); Bertolt Brecht, *Das Verhör des Lucullus* (*The Trial of Lucullus*), 1939.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actor: Cornelia Geiser.
Image: Christophe Clavert, Jean-Claude Rousseau.
Production: Barbara Ulrich. Production dates and location: July 2009, Jean-Marie Straub's apartment, Paris.

English subtitles by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

First screenings: 2009 Viennale; 2010 New York Film Festival.



O SOMMA LUCE
(OH SUPREME LIGHT)

2010, Italy/France, HD, color, 16:9, 18 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *The Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri. With Giorgio Passerone.

In darkness, we hear a recording of the scandalous 1954 debut performance of Edgar Varèse's revolutionary *Déserts* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. Then, in a different sort of Elysian Field, we hear a recitation of Canto XXXIII from *The Inferno*, a final vision of the Divine Light, in which Dante apprehends the will and desire of man in perfect harmony with the love of God.

CREDITS

Text: Dante Alighieri, *Paradiso, Divina Commedia* (*Paradise, Divine Comedy*) "Canto XXXIII," 1472.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actor: Giorgio Passerone.
Image: Renato Berta, Jean-Paul Toraille, Arnaud Dommerc, Franck Ciochetti.
Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce.
Music: Edgar Varèse, "Déserts," Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, December 2, 1954.
Editing: Catherine Quesemand.
Assistants: Romano Guelfi, Maurizio Buquicchio, Giulio Bursi.
Production: Barbara Ulrich; Florent Le Duc, Baptiste Evrand, Blandine Tourneux, Cyrille Lauwerier, Frédéric Papon, Le Fresnoy – Studio National des Arts Contemporains. Production dates and location: September 7–10, 2009, Buti, Italy.

There exist two versions of this film.

Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub, based on Longfellow's translation.

First screening: 2010 Locarno Film Festival; New York Film Festival.



L' INCONSOLABLE
(THE INCONSOLABLE ONE)

2011, Italy, MiniDV, color, 4:3, 15 min. (1st version), 15 min. 17 sec. (2nd version).

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Dialogues with Leucò* by Cesare Pavese. With Andrea Bacci, Giovanna Daddi.

Returning from the forest of shades, a quietly defiant Orpheus tells a Bacchante it was free will, not destiny, which compelled him to cast the fatal gaze on his wife Eurydice, recognizing their love as a thing of the past and his own proper place in the world of living souls. A masterful series of camera shots reveals the Bacchante looking away in incredulity, horror, and betrayal.

CREDITS

Text: Cesare Pavese, "L'inconsolabile" (The Inconsolable One) in *Dialogues with Leucò*, 1947.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Giovanna Daddi, Andrea Bacci.
Image: Renato Berta, Christophe Clavert.
Sound: Dimitri Haulet, Julien Gonzalez; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce.
Music: Robert Schumann.
Editing: Catherine Quesemand.
Assistants: Barbara Ulrich, Arnaud Dommerc, Giulio Bursi, Maurizio Buquicchio, Romano Guelfi.
Production: Straub and Huillet, Belva Film; Sandrine Pillon, Lucie Portehaut, Florence Hugues, Les Fées Productions 2011; Teatro Comunale di Buti; Marc Nicolas, Frédéric Papon, Delphine Dumon, Gaël Blondet, La Fémis. Production dates and location: September 6–9, 2010, Buti, Italy.

Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

2010 Theatrical performance at the Teatro comunale di Buti (September 3); First screenings: 2011 Locarno Film Festival; New York Film Festival.



UN HÉRITIER (AN HEIR)

2011, France, MiniDV, color, 4:3, 20 min. 23 sec. (1st Version), 21 min. 5 sec. (2nd Version).

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *In the Service of Germany* by Maurice Barrès. With Joseph Rottner, Jubarite Semaran.

Another film based on Straub's memories of growing up in Metz and a work by Maurice Barrès (a story called *In the Service of Germany*). In 1903 a young country doctor, the son of a French Alsatian bourgeois, is forced to choose between "the French soul and the German deed" by defending or betraying the foresters, mothers, war veterans, and factory workers of the northern Rhine.

CREDITS

Text: Maurice Barrès, *Au service de l'Allemagne (In the Service of Germany)*, Chapter 8, 1905.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Barbara Ulrich, Josph Rottner, Jubarite Semaran.
Image: Renato Berta, Christophe Clavert.
Sound: Dimitri Haulet, Julien Gonzalez; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce.
Editing: Catherine Quesemand.
Assistants: Arnaud Dommerc, Maurizio Buquicchio, Grégoire Letouvet.
Production: Straub and Huillet, Belva Film; Sandrine Pillon, Lucie Portehaut, Florence Hugues, Les Fées Productions 2011; with the participation of the Centre National de la Cinématographie, and the Region Alsace; commissioned by the Jeonju Digital Project 2011; Marc Nicolas, Frédéric Papon, Delphine Dumont, Gaël Blondet, La Fémis. Production dates and location: September 14–22, 2010, Ottrott, France.

Thank you, thank you Sylvie and Hubert Bangraz, Maison Forestiere de Ratsamhausen, The Schreiber Family, and the employees of the Domaine du Moulin d'Ottrott. [In closing credits.]

Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

First screening: 2011 Jeonju Film Festival; New York Film Festival.



SCHAKALE UND ARABER
(JACKALS AND ARABS)

2011, France, MiniDV, color, 4:3, 10 min. 43 sec. (1st version), 10 min. 35 sec. (2nd version).

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on a short story by Franz Kafka. With Barbara Ulrich, Giorgio Passerone, Jubarite Semaran.

Franz Kafka's enigmatic animal story, written in 1917 on the eve of the Balfour Declaration, has been interpreted in myriad ways and embraced and rejected in equal measure by Arabs and Jews of divergent persuasions. Straub's abridged (but no less elusive) retelling has fascinating affinities with his and Danièle Huillet's interpretation of Kafka's *Amerika* in *Class Relations*.

CREDITS

Text: Franz Kafka, "Jackals and Arabs," 1917.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Barbara Ulrich, Giorgione Passerone, Jubarite Semaran.
Image: Christophe Clavert, Jean-Marc Degardin, Arnaud Dommerc.
Sound: Jérôme Ayasse; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce, Gaël Blondet.
Music: György Kurtag, *Kafka-Fragmente*, 1987, op. 24, Part IV, No. 7: "Wiederum, wiederum."
Production: Dates and location: April 22–29 and May 1, 2011, Jean-Marie Straub's apartment, Paris.

French translation by Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub, English translation by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

First screenings: 2011 Locarno Film Festival; New York Film Festival; 2015 Goethe-Institute, London.



LA MADRE
(THE MOTHER)

2012, Italy, HD, color, 4:3, 20 min. 9 sec. (1st version),
20 min. 9 sec. (2nd version), 19 min. 38 sec. (3rd version).

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Dialogues with Leucò* by Cesare Pavese. With Giovanna Daddi, Dario Marconcini.

“I am lost to the world...” (from Mahler’s 1901 *Rückert-Lieder*): In the sun-dappled Tuscan countryside, the boar hunter Meleagros, having been murdered by his own mother to avenge the tragic accidental killing of his brother and uncle, engages in a melancholy conversation about fragility, resistance, and love with the Arcadian huntress maid Atalanta.

CREDITS

Text: Cesare Pavese, “La madre” (The Mother) in *Dialogues with Leucò*, 1947.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Giovanna Daddi, Dario Marconcini, Teatro Comunale di Buti.
Image: Christophe Clavert.
Sound: Jérôme Ayasse; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce, Gaël Blondet.
Music: Gustav Mahler, “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen”; Daniel Barenboim (piano), Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (voice).
Editing: Christophe Clavert; Color Timing: Jean-Marc Degardin.
Assistants: Arnaud Dommerc, Barbara Ulrich.
Production: Straub and Huillet, Belva Film; Production dates and location: September 4–8, 2011, Acciaio, Italy.

Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

2011 Theatrical performance at the Teatro comunale di Buti (September 13); First screening: 2012 Viennale.



UN CONTE DE MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE
(A TALE BY MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE)

2013, France, HD, color, 4:3, 34 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on "De l'exercitation," Book II, Chapter 6, *Essais* by Michel de Montaigne. With Barbara Ulrich.

Left for dead in a freak horse accident, Montaigne reflects on many things, among them the nature of consciousness and the soul, reason and automatism, waking and dreaming, the self and the other.

CREDITS

Text: Michel de Montaigne, "De l'exercitation," Book II, Chapter 6 in *Essais (Essays)*, 1580.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Barbara Ulrich.
Image: Christophe Clavert; Color timing: Jean-Marc Degardin.
Sound: Jérôme Ayasse; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce, Gaël Blondet.
Music: Ludwig van Beethoven, String Quartet No. 15 in A Minor, op. 132.
Editing: Christophe Clavert.
Production: Arnaud Dommerc, Andolfi; Straub and Huillet, Belva Film; with the help of CNC and participation of La Fémis.

Subtitled in English by Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

First screening: 2013 Locarno Film Festival; Toronto International Film Festival.



DIALOGUE D'OMBRES
(DIALOGUE OF SHADOWS)

2014, France, HD, color, 4:3, 28 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on the book by Georges Bernanos. With Cornelia Geiser, Bertrand Brouder.

Straub's testament of love was made seven years after the 2006 death of his partner and collaborator Danièle Huillet, and nearly sixty years after they met in Paris and planned to adapt this short story by Georges Bernanos (the author of *Diary of a Country Priest* and *Mouchette*). In the film, two lovers are separated by physical distance but intimately bound by Bach's Cantata 140 ("Sleepers Wake"), a conspiring of their own voices, and a mutual sense of wounded pride and yearning for "the supreme grace...to love ourselves in all simplicity."

CREDITS

A The film and video works of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet (1954–2013) [in opening credits].

Text: Georges Bernanos, *Dialogue d'ombres (Dialogue of Shadows)*, 1928, excerpts.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub, Assistance: Barbara Ulrich.
Actors: Cornelia Geiser (Françoise), Bertrand Brouder (Jacques).
Image: Renato Berta, Christophe Clavert; Color Timing: Jean-Marc Degardin, Olivier Boischot, Studio Orlando.
Sound: Dimitri Haullet; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce, Gaël Blondet.
Editing: Christophe Clavert.
Assistant: Emilie Richard.
Production: Arnaud Dommerc, Andolfi; supported by the participation of CNAP – Centre National des Arts Plastiques (Image/Movement), Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication; La Ruche Studio, Paris. Production dates and locations: June 15–20, 2013, La Boderie, Athis-de-l'Orne, France.

Thank you, thank you to Marie Guyonnet and Daniel Martin for welcoming us at La Boderie, Athis-de-l'Orne; Thank you too to Marc Nicolas and Frédéric Papon for their welcome at La Fémis. [In closing credits.]

Subtitled in English by Ted Fendt, Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

First screenings: 2014 Locarno Film Festival; 2015 Goethe-Institute, London.



À PROPOS DE VENISE
(GESCHICHTSUNTERRICHT)
(CONCERNING VENICE
[HISTORY LESSONS])

2014, Switzerland, HD, color, 4:3, 22 min. 39 sec.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *The Death of Venice* by Maurice Barrès. With Barbara Ulrich.

Waters lap gently against the shore as Barbara Ulrich recites Maurice Barrès's essay about the past glories and tenuous fate of the Most Serene Republic, its once faithful and cosmopolitan but now indolent citizens, its visitors both famous (Chateaubriand, Goethe, Napoleon) and ordinary, its courtesans and pigeons, its solidity and dazzling immateriality.

CREDITS

For Jacques-Henri Michot and Giorgio Passerone. [In opening credits].

Text: Maurice Barrès, “La mort de Venise” in *Amori et dolori*, 1916. Opens with a scene from *Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach*, 1968.

Direction: Jean-Marie Straub, with Barbara Ulrich.

Image: Christophe Clavert.

Sound: Dimitri Haulet; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce, Gaël Blondet, La Fémis.

Music: J. S. Bach, conducted by Gustav Leonhardt.

Editing: Christophe Clavert.

Assistants: Arnaud Dommerc, Gilles Pandel.

Production: Andolfi; Belva Film; Labs: Studio Orlando, Olivier Boisshot; La Ruche Studio. Production dates and location: October 12–14, 2013, Rolle, Switzerland.

Subtitled in English by Ted Fendt, Misha Donat and Jean-Marie Straub.

First screenings: 2014 Locarno Film Festival; 2015 Goethe-Institute, London.



KOMMUNISTEN (COMMUNISTS)

2014, Switzerland/France, HD, color, 4:3, 70 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Communists comprises six scenes concerning resistance to “forms of domination and violence of man on man,” including Communist prisoners who face down their Fascist interrogators during World War II; Egyptian workers and peasants who revolt against their colonial exploiters in 1919; and Italian Alpine communities who in 1967 refuse to show mercy on the Nazis who butchered their families during the war. Straub focuses on the precipitous moment when men and women must choose between self-sacrifice and annihilation. He suggests that survival from oppression, and faith in the fantastical dream of a “new Earth”—the nascence of popular resistance—can perhaps come through music, the joy of a child’s touch, a walk in the country, a will of the imagination.

Of the six sections, one was shot recently and five were selected from earlier Straub-Huillet films. It is a matter here not of Kommunismus (Communism), of something abstract, of an—ism—it is never so in S-H’s work as Tag Gallagher has argued. Kommunisten, then—the word translates as communists—which is to say, living and breathing men and women. Even in the most cinetract-like of their films, it is always a question of men and women doing specific things, acting in concrete, material circumstances.

The Communists of the Kommunisten’s title are not political philosophers but characters, wonderfully brought to life by Straub-Huillet’s brilliant cast of actors, who work day by day to try to realize or reach “the enormous dream of men” even if it kills them (Empedocles, Antigone). No theoretical, waxing poetic, no prescriptive politics, but tangible discussions of imprisonment, survival, sex, work and relationships.

— Ted Fendt

CREDITS

For Jacques-Henri Michot and Giorgio Passerone. [In opening credits].

Text: André Malraux, *Le Temps du mépris*, 1936, excerpts; with film excerpts from *Workers, Peasants*, 2001, *Too Early/Too Late*, 1981, *Fortini/Cani*, 1976, *The Death of Empedocles*, 1987, and *Black Sin*, 1989.

Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.

Actors: Arnaud Dommerc, Jubarite Semaran [Jean-Marie Straub], Gilles Pandel, Barbara Ulrich; *Workers, Peasants*: Aldo Fruttuosi, Rosalba Curatola, Enrico Pelosini; *Too Early/Too Late*: Bahgat el Nadi (commentary); *Fortini/Cani*: Franco Fortini (commentary); *The Death of Empedocles*: Andreas von Rauch, Vladimir Baratta; *Black Sin*: Danièle Huillet.

Image: Christophe Clavert.

Sound: Dimitri Haullet; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce.

Music: Hanns Eisler, "Auferstanden aus Ruinen" (German Democratic Republic national anthem), lyrics by Johannes R. Becher.

Editing: Christophe Clavert; Color timing: Richard Deusy.

Production: Arnaud Dommerc, Jean-Baptiste Legard, Andolfi; Barbara Ulrich, Belva Film; with the participation of the Centre National de la Cinématographie; Post-production: Olivier Boischot, Studio Orlando; Labs: Olaf Legenbauer, Omnimago; La Ruche Studio. Production dates and location: February 2014, Rolle, Switzerland.

Thank you, thank you Florence Malraux. [In closing credits.]

Subtitled in English by Barton Byg, Misha Donat, Ted Fendt, Danièle Huillet, Jean-Marie Straub, Gregory Woods.

First screenings: 2014 Viennale; 2015 Goethe-Institute, London; Festival du nouveau cinéma, Montreal.



LA GUERRE D'ALGÉRIE! (THE ALGERIAN WAR!)

2014, France, HD, color, 4:3, 2 min.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on a story by Jean Sandretto (*Inexploré*, no. 23).

As a young man Straub fled to West Germany after refusing to fight for France in the Algerian War. Later in his life, he returned to this bitter historical experience with a terse noir about “the instinct to heal” and to murder.

CREDITS

Text: Jean Sandretto, *Inexploré*, no. 23.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Christophe Clavert, Dimitri Haulet.
Image: Christophe Clavert.
Sound: Dimitri Haulet; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce.
Music: Franz Schubert, "Der Erlkönig," 1815.
Editing: Christophe Clavert.
Assistants: Arnaud Dommerc, Barbara Ulrich, Giorgio Passerone.
Production: Andolfi; Barbara Ulrich, Belva Film. Production dates and location: October 3–4, 2014, Jean-Marie Straub's apartment, Paris.

Thank you Paul Denizot. [In opening credits.]

Subtitled in English by Ted Fendt and Jean-Marie Straub.

First screenings: 2014 Viennale; 2015 Goethe-Institute, London; Festival du Nouveau Cinéma, Montreal.



L'AQUARIUM ET LA NATION
(THE AQUARIUM AND THE NATION)

2015, France, HD, color, 4:3, 31 min. 18 sec.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *The Walnut Trees of Altenburg* by André Malraux. With Aimé Agnel, Christiane Veschambre.

André Malraux once wrote, “The greatest mystery is not that we have been flung at random between this profusion of matter and the stars, but that within this prison we can draw from ourselves images powerful enough to deny our nothingness.” Straub considers this in his latest film, creating a cosmic interplay of Haydn’s symphonic *Seven Last Words of Our Savior on the Cross*, a fish tank at a Parisian Chinese restaurant, the birth of a nation in Jean Renoir’s 1938 film *La Marseillaise*, the Jung Institute of Paris, and Malraux’s wartime novel *The Walnut Trees of Altenburg*.

CREDITS

Thank you Florence Malraux [in opening credits].

Text: André Malraux, *Les Noyers De L'Altenburg* (*The Walnut Trees of Altenburg*), 1948, excerpt; Jean Renoir, *La Marseillaise*, 1938, film excerpt.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Aimé Agnel, Christiane Veschambre.
Image: Christophe Clavert.
Sound: Dimitri Haulet; Sound Mix: Jean-Pierre Laforce, Gaël Blondet, La Fémis.
Editing: Christophe Clavert.
Production: Barbara Ulrich, Belva Film; Arnaud Dommerc, Andolfi; Post-production: Olivier Boisshot, Studio Orlando; La Ruche Studio. Production location: "Chez Meng," rue Forest, Paris 18ème.

And thank you L'Institut C. G. Jung, Paris. [In closing credits.]

Subtitled in English by Ted Fendt and Jean-Marie Straub; in German by Johannes Beringer and Straub.

First screenings: 2015 Viennale; Hiroshima International Film Festival.



GENS DU LAC
(PEOPLE OF THE LAKE)

2018, Switzerland, HD, color, 4:3, 18 min. 38 sec.

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *Gens du lac* by Janine Massard.

It is the discovery of a document recognising the services rendered by two fishermen from Lake Geneva during the Occupation that triggered the investigation undertaken by Swiss author Janine Massard in her novel *Gens du lac*, published in 2013. Jean-Marie Straub retraces the itinerary of the son, Paulus – just as he and Danièle Huillet had followed that of Jean Bricard just over ten years ago in the last film they made together. *Gens du lac* does not depart from the rule that sets each Straubfilm as an account of a historical situation in which men have resisted (Daney). Shot aboard a boat and hardly ever leaving the lake's waters, the film depicts the life of this only son who has found brothers over the course of his fishing – be it his first steps in the trade, the help given to fugitives and deliveries of provisions to the Resistance, or his contribution to the emergence of a new Left in post-war Francophone Switzerland. Finding the seeds of a political act in this unconditional hospitality, Straub gradually dissipates the peaceful impression and conservative spirit of this “friendly, even emollient” landscape, and distinguishes between the silence “recommended during the hostilities” from the silence that subsequently enjoined people not to disturb the political order. While the people of the lake do not guard a frontier, they do, on the other hand, belong to a front.

CREDITS

Text: Janine Massard, *Gens du lac*, 2013, excerpt.
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actors: Christophe Clavert, Giorgio Passerone.
Image: Renato Berta.
Sound: Jean-Pierre Duret, Jean-Pierre Laforce.
Editing: Christophe Clavert; Color timing: Pierre Sudre.
Production: Barbara Ulrich, Belva Film; Post-production: Olivier Boischot.

Thank you Christian Grosjean, Huguette Pittier, Natacha Salagnac, Janine Massard, Bernard Campiche. [In closing credits.]

First screenings: 2018 Cinéma du réel; 2018 Viennale; 2018 Festival Internacional de Cine de Mar del Plata.



LA FRANCE CONTRE LES ROBOTS
(FRANCE AGAINST ROBOTS)

2020, Switzerland, HD, color, 4:3, 9 min. 53 sec. (1st and 2nd version)

Film by
JEAN-MARIE STRAUB

ABOUT THE FILM

Based on *La France contre les robots* by Georges Bernanos.

At dusk, a man (Christophe Clavert) walks alone along the bank of a lake, and the camera (by Renato Berta) follows him. He then breaks his silence and pronounces, as announced in the opening credits, the diagnosis that, as early as 1945, Georges Bernanos carried on the current world and the “system” which governs it. Will the camera, slightly behind the soliloquent walker, catch up to him? Will it overtake him to reveal his face, as he demands that we see the truth – up front? Or on the contrary, will he maintain the lead particular to clairvoyance? We will find out when the tracking shot and the monologue have ended. A final assertion (“A world won for Technology is lost for Freedom”) uttered from across the French shore of Lake Geneva, as Bernanos addressed to France, from Brazil, his premonitory essay, *France Against Robots*. The page extracted from it (the second) is then heard again. Another take makes it possible to listen to the walking man again and to follow him not again, but *anew*. Because the light is no longer that of twilight and, for those who can see, one never walks twice along the bank of the same lake.

Georges Bernanos had already inspired *Dialogue d'ombres* (*Dialogue of Shadows*) that Jean-Marie Straub filmed in 2015, revisiting and modifying a project developed with Danièle Huillet in 1954. As for Lake Geneva, in Rolle, it is a place, as he says, he has managed to “tame” in recent years (see *Where Are You, Jean-Marie Straub?*, Pompidou Center, 2016). Hence *Gens du Lac* (*People of the Lake*), 2017 and, even shorter, this film dedicated to Jean-Luc Godard by the hand of the author.

– Jacques Bontemps

CREDITS

Text: Georges Bernanos, *La France contre les robots*, 1945 (excerpt from Chapter 1).
Direction: Jean-Marie Straub.
Actor: Christophe Clavert.
Image: Renato Berta, Patrick Tresch; Grip: Blaise Bauquis.
Sound: Dimitri Haulet, Renaud Musy; Mix: François Musy.
Editing: Christophe Clavert; Color timing: Rodney Musso, Jean-Baptiste Perrin.
Production: Barbara Ulrich, Belva Film; Post-production: Olivier Boischot.

Thank you Gilles Bernanos; “pour Jean-Luc Gordard” [In opening credits.]

English subtitles by Ted Fendt.