

In 1975 Jean Renoir was awarded an honorary Academy Award for his lifetime contribution to film. He is considered one of the first great *auteurs*, a cinematic master whose distinctive style always contained a concern for human issues and a reverence for natural beauty.

As the son of the great impressionist painter, Auguste Renoir, the filmmaker as a young man was encouraged to freely explore artistic and intellectual pursuits. He eventually chose ceramics, but during a long convalescence, developed a passion for film. He started his own production company in 1924, largely in order to launch the acting career of his wife, Catherine Hessling. His first film, *LA FILLE DE L'EAU* (1925) *THE WHIRLPOOL OF FATE*, and other silent films display early signs of what was to become characteristic of Renoir's work-- a sense of visual realism, the love of nature and the poetic representation of the physical environment. Film theorist Andre Bazin praised Renoir's early works for their modest use of camera movement and editing and emphasis on deep focus photography. Bazin argued that these techniques could lead the spectator to a more direct relationship with the landscapes and characters.

It was Renoir's "Popular Front" films of the late 1930s which brought him international acclaim. These films include such incontrovertible cinematic classics as *LE CRIME DE M. LANGE* (1936) *THE CRIME OF*



Erich von Stroheim plays Captain von Rauffenstein in Jean Renoir's anti-war masterpiece *La Grande Illusion* (1937).

MR. LANGE, *LA BETE HUMAINE* (1938) *THE HUMAN BEAST*, *LA REGLE DU JEU* (1939) *THE RULES OF THE GAME* and *LA GRANDE ILLUSION* (1937) *THE GRAND ILLUSION*. Renoir lived in the United States in the 1940s and continued his career under 20th-Century Fox. His films from the time period include *THIS LAND IS MINE* (1943), *DIARY OF A CHAMBERMAID* (1946), and *THE WOMAN ON THE BEACH* (1947). UCLA Film and Television Archive has preserved the 1945 film, *THE SOUTHERNER*. Although Renoir considered his tenure in

Hollywood a period of "unrealized works and unrealized hopes," this film is a beautifully crafted story of a migrant worker who tries to start his own farm and who faces enormous hardship. Before Renoir returned to France, he traveled to India to make *THE RIVER* (1951). The film was made in Technicolor, and Renoir used this to explore the texture of the Indian landscape and culture.

FILMS

(this is only a partial list – consult the Archive Research and Study Center for further listings)

La Petite Marchande d'Allumettes (The Little Matchgirl) (1928). Producers, Jean Renoir, Jean Tedesco. Director, Writer, Jean Renoir. Cast, Catherine Hessling, Jean Storm, Manuel Raaby, Amy Wells. *La Petite Marchande d'Allumettes* tells Hans Christian Andersen's poignant tale of a destitute little matchgirl for whom the fantasy world offers the only respite from harsh reality. [French intertitles]. Study Copy: VA2999 M

La Chienne (1931). Producer, Braunberger-Richebé. Director, Jean Renoir. Writers, Jean Renoir, André Girard. Cast, Michel Simon, Janie Marèze, Georges Flamant, Jean Gehret. An ironic, tragicomic account of a déclassé romantic triangle that leads to murder. Study Copy: VD322 M

Boudu Sauvé des Eaux (Boudu Saved From Drowning) (1932). Les Films Sirius/ Pathé Renn Production. Producers, Michel Simon, Jean Gehret. Director, Writer, Jean Renoir. Cast, Michel Simon, Charles Grandval, Marcelle Hainia, Séverine Lerczinska. Boudu [is] a Parisian tramp who takes a suicidal plunge into the Seine and is rescued by a well-to-do bookseller, Edouard Lestingois. The Lestingois family decides to take in the irrepressible bum, and he shows his gratitude by shaking the household to its foundations. Study Copy: DVD2766 M

Toni (1935). Films d'Aujourd'hui. Producer, Pierre Gault. Director, Jean Renoir. Writers, Jean Renoir, Carl Einstein. Cast, Charles Blavette, Jenny Hélià, Célia Montalvan, Édouard Delmont. Set in the Midi region of southern France, *Toni* follows the everyday lives of Corsican migrant workers. [In French with no English subtitles]. Study Copy: VA5831 M.

Le Crime de Monsieur Lange (The Crime of Mister Lange) (1936). Oberon. Producer, Geneviève Blondeau. Director, Jean Renoir. Writers, Jacques Prévert, Jean Renoir. Cast, Jules Berry, René Lefèvre, Florelle, Nadia Sibirskaïa. It is the story of a community of print shopworkers and laundresses who form a collective to resist exploitation by the publisher Batala. Study Copy: VD537 M

La Grande Illusion (The Grand Illusion) (1937). Cinedis. Producer, Raymond Blondy. Director, Jean Renoir. Writers, Charles Spaak, Jean Renoir. Cast, Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, Erich von Stroheim, Dita Parlo. Renoir's best-known film stars Jean Gabin as a working-class lieutenant and Pierre Fresnay as an aristocratic captain, shot down behind German lines in World War I. Eric von Stroheim's Captain von Rauffenstein invites the men to dine with him before being escorted to a prisoner-of-war camp, where they form a diverse community with fellow prisoners. Fraternal relationships among the officers and soldiers of both sides complicate class and national boundaries in Renoir's poignant plea for an end to the hostilities of war. Study Copy: DVD2643 M

La Bête Humaine (The Human Beast) (1938). Paris Films. Producer, Roland Tual. Director, Writer, Jean Renoir. Cast, Jean Gabin, Simone Simon, Julien Carette, Fernand Ledoux. The story of a train engineer, Lantier, who is unable to resist his murderous compulsions. Study Copy: DVD2580 M

La Règle Du Jeu (The Rules of the Game) (1939). La Nouvelle Edition Française. Producer, Claude Renoir. Director, Jean Renoir. Writers, Jean Renoir, Karl Kock. Cast, Marcel Dalio, Nora Grégor, Jean Renoir, Roland Toutain. Renoir chose the form of a classical eighteenth-century French comedy for this story of a society on the brink of collapse on the eve of World War II. Study Copy: DVD434 – DVD435 M

This Land is Mine (1943). RKO. Director, Jean Renoir. Writer, Dudley Nichols. Cast, Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Hara, George Sanders, Walter Slezak. A mild-mannered schoolteacher in a Nazi occupied town during WWII finds himself being torn between collaboration and resistance. Study Copy: DVD10734 M

The Southerner (1945). United Artists. Producers, David L. Loew, Robert Hakim. Director, Jean Renoir. Writers, Jean Renoir, Hugo Butler. Cast, Zachary Scott, Betty Field, Beulah Bondi, Bunny Sunshine. The story of one year in the life of a farmhand who is tired of working for others and who decides to go it alone with his wife, his old mother, and his small son. He finds a patch of wasteland and builds a shack on it, and then has to fight off a malicious neighbor, the elements, and malnutrition. Study Copy: VA5745 M

The Woman on the Beach (1947). RKO. Executive Producer, Jack J. Gross. Director, Jean Renoir. Writers, Jean Renoir, Frank Davis. Cast, Joan Bennett, Robert Ryan, Charles Bickford, Nan Leslie. A Coast Guardsman suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress becomes involved with a beautiful and enigmatic seductress married to a blind painter. Study Copy: DVD9680 M

The River (1951). Producer, Kenneth McEldowny. Director, Jean Renoir. Writers, Rumer Godden, Jean Renoir. Cast, Nora Swinburne, Esmond Knight, Arthur Shields, Thomas E. Breen. Three adolescent girls growing up in Bengal, India, learn their lessons in life after falling for an older American soldier. Study Copy: VD428 M

INTERVIEWS AND PROFILES

Clete Roberts World Report. Unidentified Issue. Jean Renoir Interview (195-?). MOS footage of Renoir in his home, possibly filmed for use alongside an interview with the director. Study Copy: VA18940 T

Tournage du Déjeuner sur l'Herbe (1959?). Behind the scenes footage of Renoir and others during filming of *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*. Study Copy: VA5644 M

The Women in Their Lives. Show No. 3 (1961). With Mrs. Jean Renoir and Mrs. John Gavin. Study Copy: VA6510 T

Accent. An Artist's Montmartre (1961-07-23). CBS. Producers, Don Kellerman, Bill Kobin. Director, James MacAllen. Host, Winston Burdett. "Film director Jean Renoir discusses his father, painter Auguste Renoir, and reminisces about his childhood in the Montmartre section of Paris, and his father's friends, among them Paul Cezanne and Vincent Van Gogh." Study Copy: VA5829 T

Interview. Jean Renoir (ca. 1962 to 1965). BBC-TV. Film director Jean Renoir is interviewed at his boyhood home in the south of France near Nice. The discussion centers on his father, painter Pierre Auguste Renoir. Study Copy: VA5940 T

Sum and Substance. A Conversation with Jean Renoir (1963-03-31). KNXT. Producer, Joseph Sands. Study Copy: VA5950 T

Auskunft über Jean Renoir (Information About Jean Renoir) (1964 or 1965). Documentary on Jean Renoir and René Clair. Study Copy: VA6509 T

L'Album de Famille de Jean Renoir (1965). Director, Roland Gritti. Interviewer, Pierre Desgraupes. Director Jean Renoir is interviewed by Pierre Desgraupes. [In French]. Study Copy: VA6348 T

Interview. Jean Renoir at Montmartre (1966). BBC-TV. Seventy-two year-old film director Jean Renoir is interviewed on the occasion of the publication of his first novel, *Les Cahiers du Capitaine Georges*. Study Copy: VA5940 T

Speculation. A Conversation with Jean Renoir (1966-12-01 and 12-03). KCET. Producer, Director, Tom Burrows. Host, Keith Berwick. Study Copy: VA11017 T

Cinéastes de Notre Temps. Jean Renoir--Le Patron. [No. 1], La Recherche du Relatif (1967-01-18). Director, Jacques Rivette. Writer, Marinette Pasquet. Documentary on the films of Jean Renoir. [In French?]. Study Copy: VA6511 -12 T

Le Direction d'Acteur par Jean Renoir (1968). Films de la Pléide/ Pierre Braunberger Présente. Director, Gisele Braunberger. [In French with no English subtitles]. Study Copy: VA5709 M

Interview. Alexander Sesonske Interviews Jean Renoir (1969-04-12). Interview conducted with Jean Renoir at his Beverly Hills home for a documentary about Renoir which was never completed. Partially edited version. Study Copy: VA18935 M

Interview. Jean Renoir (1974?). May have been on the occasion of the awarding of Art Center College of Design degree doctor of [?] letters, January 25, 1974. Study Copy: VA5805 M

The Director. Norman Lloyd (1977-02-01). Actor/director Norman Lloyd is interviewed on his career, working with Charlie Chaplin, Alfred Hitchcock, Jean Renoir, Orson Welles and others. Inventory Number: T22971

Omnibus. Jean Renoir [Part 1] From La Belle Epoque to World War II (1993). BBC-TV. Executive Producers, Roger Thompson, David Thompson. Narrator, Harriet Walter. Study Copy: VA11208 T

Omnibus. Jean Renoir [Part 2] Hollywood and Beyond (1993). BBC-TV. Executive Producers, Roger Thompson, David Thompson. Narrator, Harriet Walter. Study Copy: VA11208 T

Henri Langlois: Phantom of the Cinematheque (2004). Les Films Élémentaires. Organized mostly chronologically, the film presents the 40-year career of Henri Langlois (1914-1977), film's first archivist, and the creator of the Cinémathèque Française and Musée du Cinéma. Includes archive footage of Jean Renoir. Study Copy: DVD4043 M

PRINT RESOURCES

(for more information consult the **UCLA Arts Library**)

Bazin, André. *Jean Renoir*. New York: DaCapo Press, 1992.

Bertin, Célia. *Jean Renoir: A Life in Pictures*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.

Renoir, Jean. *My Life and My Films*. New York: DaCapo Press, 1991.

Sesonske, Alexander. *Jean Renoir: The French Films, 1924-1939*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980.

RELATED RESOURCES

The Performing Arts Library Special Collections unit of the UCLA Libraries Special Collection holds various materials related to Jean Renoir in the Jean Renoir Papers collection. For more information, please contact Performing Arts Library Special Collections: (310) 825-7253; or visit their finding aid online at:

<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf796nb4fk/>