

## LE CINEMA D'AUTEUR : 4 CINEASTES, 4 UNIVERS



In an article entitled “*Notes on Auteur Theory in 1962*” the American critic Andrew Sarris set forth some basic criteria that a film/filmmaker must meet to be considered an “auteur”, such as having control over the “final cut”.

Sarris considered that over a group of films, a director should exhibit certain characteristics of style, which serve as his signature. What we are looking for here are stylistic tendencies over a body of work.

Auteur theory persists to the modern day and remains a favorite among film aficionados. It has proven adaptable to changing patterns in critical thinking and sexual politics, and continues to be applied to modern day filmmakers like **Quentin Tarantino**, **Paul Thomas Anderson** and **François Ozon**.

When we study a « **film d’auteur** », we consider the work as a continuation of the aesthetic choices of a filmmaker, and not as a work entirely apart.

The « auteur’s » signature is detected in the type of story or characters favored, the choice of recurring actors, and the aesthetic options repeated from one film to another.

In our film series, we will be presenting four filmmakers of French cinema, who have placed their characters in four very different universes. Each of our films exist within a specific historical reality, whether it be due to the French political and social context of the time, or the evolution of the art of filmmaking itself.

We invite you to join us on our journey, as we explore the unique visions of these illustrious “auteur” filmmakers.

## HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR – ALAIN RESNAIS (1959)

While **Alain Resnais** left behind many exquisite reminders of his considerable filmmaking gifts., *Hiroshima Mon Amour* remains a highlight.

The deep conversation between a Japanese architect and a French actress forms the basis of this celebrated French film, considered one of the vanguard productions of the French New Wave. Set in Hiroshima after the end of World War II, the couple -- lovers turned friends -- recount, over many hours, previous romances and life experiences. The two intertwine their stories about the past with pondering the devastation wrought by the atomic bomb dropped on the city.

The strength of the movie's impact lies primarily in the juxtaposition of horrific imagery with rhythmic, poetic dialogue (written by **Marguerite Duras**).

A film of tremendous beauty and gravity, the experience of *Hiroshima Mon Amour* lasts long after the screen fades to black.



## PIERROT LE FOU – JEAN LUC GODARD – (1965)

*Pierrot Le Fou* is a sparkling, anarchic 1965 thriller from that great seven-year period from *Breathless* to *Week-End*, when **Jean-Luc Godard** set out both to reinvent the language of film and to entertain.

It is a dizzyingly romantic road picture featuring **Anna Karina**, the filmmaker's beautiful and beloved muse, who in fact made this film after she had broken up with Godard, and in the title role, **Jean-Paul Belmondo**. There is cool and then there's Jean-Paul Belmondo. No one ever made being bored look so exciting.

Godard abandoned the conventions of narrative cinema and adopted a loose format around which he could arrange poetic digressions and comic-book escapades, while taking pot shots at consumerism, cultural imperialism and the Vietnam and Algerian wars.

This effervescent, self-mocking, masterpiece may be the filmmaker's quintessential work.



### CESAR ET ROSALIE – CLAUDE SAUTET (1972)

It has been said that in the films of Claude Sautet, “nothing happens and everything happens” as he manages to explore very subtle nuances of human emotion. His 1972 film, *César et Rosalie*, is a riveting account of a three-way affair, starring the famous actors **Romy Schneider** as Rosalie, **Yves Montand** as Cesar, and **Sami Frey** as David.

Cesar and Rosalie live a comfortable life together until David, Rosalie’s old flame, returns and ignites Cesar’s jealousy and Rosalie’s indecision.

“My goal is to choose subjects or anecdotes, if you will, that are quite simple,” Sautet told The Times in 1996, “to develop them simply, to film them simply, and to find multiple levels in relationships...so that the progress of the relationship between two people follows a journey you do not even realize is taking place.”

The film’s lavish sets, glorious Yves St. Laurent wardrobe and big star power made it an instant commercial hit, while art-house critics praised Sautet for delivering an observant, romantic drama, and an interesting snapshot of shifting sands in the Seventies sexual revolution.



### LE SAMOURAI – JEAN-PIERRE MELVILLE (1967)

**Jean-Pierre Melville** raised the film noir to an art form, and we end our “auteur” series with his unforgettable 1967 film *Le Samourai*.

In a career-defining role, **Alain Delon** plays a contract killer with samurai instincts. His restrained yet powerful performance as Jef Costello gives the audience both a hero and a villain. Jef lives and dies by the code of the samurai.

A razor-sharp cocktail of 1940s American gangster cinema and 1960s French pop culture -- with a liberal dose of Japanese lone-warrior mythology -- maverick director Jean-Pierre Melville's masterpiece defines cool.

According to film critic Brendan Hodges, “Jean-Pierre Melville treats the crime genre with ceremony and reverence. It’s a celebration, an ode, a tribute to men wearing trench coats and razor-sharp fedoras who carry deadly weapons just out of view.”

Come join us beginning Monday, October 28th, as we discuss our 4 films in the following order:

- *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, Alain Resnais (1959) ;
- *Pierrot le Fou*, Jean-Luc Godard (1965) ;
- *César et Rosalie*, Claude Sautet (1972)
- *Le Samourai*, Jean-Pierre Melville (1967)

You will be expected to see the four films on your own before each discussion. All four films are available with English subtitles for a nominal rental fee on Amazon Prime or other free platforms (see links below). 1 week in advance of each showing, we will provide vocabulary lists, and suggest possible discussion topics prior to the session, all designed to inspire a lively debate.

We look forward to seeing you at our 4-week ZOOM session, beginning **Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm** as we explore the unique perspectives of 4 French filmmakers.

## LINKS TO STREAMING ON AMAZON PRIME

**HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR, ALAIN RESNAIS (1959)**

[https://www.amazon.com/Hiroshima-mon-amour-English-Subtitled/dp/B00ZRCAG3M/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=2S05PHEDL6AJ6&keywords=hiroshima+mon+amour+1959&qid=1692203900&s=instant-video&srefix=Hiroshima+mon+amour%2Cinstant-video%2C143&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Hiroshima-mon-amour-English-Subtitled/dp/B00ZRCAG3M/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2S05PHEDL6AJ6&keywords=hiroshima+mon+amour+1959&qid=1692203900&s=instant-video&srefix=Hiroshima+mon+amour%2Cinstant-video%2C143&sr=1-1)

**PIERROT LE FOU, JEAN-LUC GODARD (1965)**

<HTTPS://OK.RU/VIDEO/1659088538222>

The film was recently taken off Amazon Prime.

**CESAR ET ROSALIE, CLAUDE SAUTET (1972)**

[https://www.amazon.com/C%C3%A9sar-Rosalie-Yves-Montand/dp/B088P885RL/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=111CK3DTRRG0S&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.suyGQnc\\_6IRhjASqsz3i4elbif\\_GexpPGGc3\\_uHJgHdcW7myMWWdAnvWFebZiOxscNiO8PF\\_nLH9sp-RBt6m2mylQGSvKsh442gnYt9e-puMFMKh6LvcBRRpnJVKTlnrfWMoXulM5CiexH7myrutzTwTjQHNvjdI42MUYhS-NBfUBw7P\\_5BWtKwNpSrYFXXrJ9PQfUcXsFUYXfCNn1HbVo-8A8fH5ICRvZUmgXFR0Sg.dbEMfkWod2HZ4mjb2TVhCfowIu-GmNgqjIb2DFkQd0E&dib\\_tag=se&keywords=Cesar+et+Rosalie&qid=1724941102&s=instant-video&srefix=cesar+et+rosalie%2Cinstant-video%2C145&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/C%C3%A9sar-Rosalie-Yves-Montand/dp/B088P885RL/ref=sr_1_1?crid=111CK3DTRRG0S&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.suyGQnc_6IRhjASqsz3i4elbif_GexpPGGc3_uHJgHdcW7myMWWdAnvWFebZiOxscNiO8PF_nLH9sp-RBt6m2mylQGSvKsh442gnYt9e-puMFMKh6LvcBRRpnJVKTlnrfWMoXulM5CiexH7myrutzTwTjQHNvjdI42MUYhS-NBfUBw7P_5BWtKwNpSrYFXXrJ9PQfUcXsFUYXfCNn1HbVo-8A8fH5ICRvZUmgXFR0Sg.dbEMfkWod2HZ4mjb2TVhCfowIu-GmNgqjIb2DFkQd0E&dib_tag=se&keywords=Cesar+et+Rosalie&qid=1724941102&s=instant-video&srefix=cesar+et+rosalie%2Cinstant-video%2C145&sr=1-1)

**LE SAMOURAÏ, JEAN-PIERRE MELVILLE (1967)**

<https://www.amazon.com/Samurai-English-Subtitled-Alain-Delon/dp/B010NDW4H0>