

## Document Citation

Title	<b>[Bob le flambeur]</b>
Author(s)	Andrew Sarris Andrew Sarris
Source	<i>Village Voice</i>
Date	1985 Jun 11
Type	review
Language	English English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Bob le flambeur (Bob the gambler), Melville, Jean-Pierre, 1956

Jean-Pierre Melville's **Bob le Flambeur** (1955), from a screenplay by Melville and Auguste LeBreton, with Roger Duchesne, Isabelle Corey, Daniel Cauchy, and Guy Decombe, was a "love letter to a Paris that no longer exists," but a city that Melville nevertheless knew and felt in every bone of his body. Made in the days when the *nouvelle vague* was only a gleam in the eyes of a few young French critics, *Bob le Flambeur* is an ideal

film (both chronologically and aesthetically) with which to begin one's appreciation of Melville as an erratic giant of the *policier* genre. The story of a gallant, small-time gambler dreaming of one last big score is essentially the same downbeat type of caper plot as John Huston's *The Asphalt Jungle*, which the director was known to admire, but the treatment is more romantic, and where the quirks of character function as traps in Huston's movie, Melville's quirks become transcendent figures of style. From the first moments of the narration that describe Montmartre as descending from the heaven of Sacré Coeur to the hell of Pigalle, we are caught in the grip of a wistful dream with the look of urgent reality. Henri Dec  e's dawn's-ugly-light cinematography captures a grayish gutter life that no studio trickery could ever have been capable of recording. (Co-feature: Melville's *Les Enfants Terribles*) **Metro: 12:15, 4:10, 8:05.**

Village  
Voice  
6/11/85  
Sarris  
Athen