

## Document Citation

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**\*TRUFFAUT, François** DIR France. (Paris Feb 6, 1932- ) With Godard, Resnais, and Franju (all q.v.), he is the most important figure to emerge from the French *nouvelle vague*, a film maker who has maintained his independence (through his own production company) throughout his career. He has a profound concern for satisfying an audience: "If you like, you could call my cinema one of compromise in that I think constantly about the public, but not one of concessions, since I never put in a comic effect that I haven't laughed at, nor a sad one that hasn't moved me." Apart from his first feature, the autobiographical *Les 400 coups*, with its sympathetic insight into adolescence, he has never been at ease with intellectualism and his weakest film, *Fahrenheit 451*, is his only film of direct social comment. What is evident is a disarming gentleness, a sympathetic handling of characters (usually focusing on a diffident hero who is a born loser), a belief in the value of friendship and the impossibility of abiding love, and a lyrical nostalgia for a world where these might have been possible. These elements are present in his best work: the brilliant (and underestimated) tragicomedy, *Tirez sur le pianiste*, the nostalgic exploration of the impossibility of a *ménage à trois*, *Jules et Jim*, the compelling and sympathetic study of adultery, *La Peau douce*, and the poetic evocations of lost (though different) innocences, *Baisers volés* and *L'Enfant sauvage*. Even the less interesting *The Bride Wore Black* and *Mississippi Mermaid* are captivating and full of vivid characterizations. He has said of his work: "I don't tackle the 'problems of our time' in my films and if I did try to tackle them I would be incapable of adopting an attitude . . . The characters in a film interest me more than the story, so I can't make a film of ideas . . . (fiction) doesn't exclude ideas about life, about the world, about our society. But I like everything that muddles the trail, everything that sows doubts . . . I enjoy unexpected details, things that prove nothing, things that show how vulnerable men are." He began his career

as a critic for *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Arts*.

DIR: *Une visite* (54) (16mm short), *Les Mistons* (57) (short), *Histoire d'eau* (58) (short, completed by Godard), *Les 400 Coups\** (59), *Tirez sur le pianiste\** (60), *Jules et Jim\** (61), *L'Amour à vingt ans* (62) (episode), *La Peau douce* (64), *Fahrenheit 451* (Brit66), *La Mariée était en noir* (67), *Baisers volés* (68), *La Sirène de Mississippi/Mississippi Mermaid* (69), *L'Enfant sauvage* (69), *Domicile conjugal* (70).

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