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Warnung vor einer heiligen nutte (Beware of a holy whore),
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Katzelmacher, Fassbinder, Rainer Werner, 1969

Lola, Fassbinder, Rainer Werner, 1981

Der händler der vier jahreszeiten (The merchant of four seasons),
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In einem jahr mit 13 monden (In a year of 13 moons), Fassbinder,
Rainer Werner, 1979

Satansbraten (Satan's brew), Fassbinder, Rainer Werner, 1976

Despair, Fassbinder, Rainer Werner, 1977

Mutter Küsters fährt zum himmel (Mother Küsters goes to heaven),
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Martha, Fassbinder, Rainer Werner, 1973

Faustrecht der freiheit (Fox and his friends), Fassbinder, Rainer
Werner, 1975

Die bitteren tränen der Petra von Kant (the bitter tears of Petra
von Kant), Fassbinder, Rainer Werner, 1972

BIOGRAPHY/RAINER WERNER FASSBINDER

"Wenn ich nicht arbeite -- ich weiß gar nicht, wie das so richtig ist" -- RWF

Rainer Werner Fassbinder -- irrefutably one of the most influential directors of post-war European cinema, and the driving force behind the New German cinema -- made forty-three films and television works as well as dozens of essays, plays, and screenplays during the course of his prolific and obsessive career. A brilliant artist with a deserved "bad boy" reputation, Fassbinder lived a life larger than any of his films, possessing the capacity to create and manipulate his reality both on screen and off.

Fassbinder was born to Dr. Helmut Fassbinder and his wife Liselotte on May 31, 1945 in the southern German town of Bad Wörishofen. The profound sense of loneliness so often explored in his later work was surely the result of growing up with a father who barely acknowledged his existence and a mother who alternately smothered him with attention and neglected his needs. Five years old at the time of his parents' divorce, the young Fassbinder escaped by spending most of his childhood years in the theater or cinema, setting the stage for his future career.

Fassbinder quit school without graduating in 1964, and began studying at the Fridl Leonhard drama school in Munich. It was there he met Hanna Schygulla and Irm Hermann, two women who would later appear in a many of his films. Fassbinder began making films on his own after having twice been rejected by the admissions board of the German Film and Television Academy in Berlin. His first shorts included *This Night* (now lost), *Der Stadstreicher* (The City Tramp) and *Das Kleine Chaos* (The Little Chaos), all produced in 1966. In 1967, he joined the Munich acting group "Action Theater" first as an actor, then as director, and then with "Katzelmacher" as a playwright. After the troupe disbanded in May 1968, ten of its members -- including Schygulla, Peer Raben and Rudolf Waldemar Brem -- went on to establish an "antiteater" group, which diverted its efforts from the stage to innovative film work.

In April of 1969, Fassbinder's first feature film, *Liebe ist kälter als der Tod* (Love is Colder than Death) was released, and in August of the same year, the film version of *Katzelmacher* was a hit with audiences, critics and juries alike. The film was awarded with seven different prizes. In 1969 alone, Fassbinder produced and directed four films and acted in seven others, including Volker Schlöndorff's *Baal*. In addition to making as many as four films a year, Fassbinder cofounded the "Filmverlag der Autoren" production company as well as his own company "Tango Film" in 1971. He also briefly returned to his stage work as director of "Theater am Turm" in Frankfurt am Main during the 1974-1975 season.

The filmmaker's oeuvre covers an impressive array of genres, including contemporary melodramas (*The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*, 1972), historical spectacles (*Lili Marleen*, 1980), intimate dramas (*The Merchant of Four Seasons*, 1971), anarchic comedies (*Satan's Brew*, 1976), science fiction (*World on a Wire*, 1973), westerns (*Whity*, 1970) and adaptations of classic novels (*Effi Briest*, 1974). Exploring the most universal of human emotions, his most critically-acclaimed works concentrate on key periods in the history of modern Germany. 1978's *The Marriage of Maria Braun*, set in the post-war years of Fassbinder's childhood, was the first of a trilogy which continued with *Lola* (1981) and *Veronica Voss*

(1982). The 12-part made-for-television epic *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1980) represents a monumental adaptation of Alfred Döblin's 1929 novel painting an intimate picture of the Germany of the Weimar Republic.

Fassbinder the filmmaker was known to be a difficult genius. Fassbinder the man carried the image of a rebel. His unkempt appearance and his aggressive manner flew in the face of convention, which at times, made him difficult to accept. Although married for two years (1970-1972) to actress Ingrid Caven, he was one of the first internationally celebrated filmmakers who was not embarrassed by being thought of as homosexual. His compulsive work habits were accompanied by excessive smoking, drinking and eating. Fassbinder, however, typically shrugged off his own self-destructive behavior and often alluded to the fact that he had a "limited amount of time left." Shortly after his last film *Querelle* was released, Fassbinder died in his Munich apartment on June 10, 1982. He was 37 years old. His sudden death only exaggerated the media's and his fans' fascination with his bad-boy image. Hanna Schygulla dared to pose the question that had come into the minds of many: "Did he die so young because he was in such a rush, or did he rush because he was destined to die so young?"

The death of the idiosyncratic director, author, actor and playwright marked not only the end of an era, but also the end of a fascinating life. Rainer Werner Fassbinder's turned his inner pathologies into a body of work that could be universally understood. His restless mind, his ability to transform convention into something original and his passion for honesty and beauty remain in his films for the public to see and feel.

Rainer Werner Fassbinder

ALI: FEAR EATS THE SOUL

Angst essen Seele auf

1973, color, 93 min., in German with English subtitles

new

Emmi, a widow in her sixties, meets Ali, who is twenty years her junior and invites him to move in. Her decision to marry the young Moroccan provokes unanimous condemnation among her family and friends. "This is the first film where I bothered to film 10, 15, even 20 takes of a shot. I really wanted to get the maximum from each moment." R.W.F.

THE AMERICAN SOLDIER

Der Amerikanische Soldat

1970, b&w, 80 min., in German with English subtitles

Three Munich policemen hire a Vietnam war vet as a professional killer. He calmly goes about fulfilling his contracts, until the day when, because he knows too much, his employers set a trap for him. "Of all the detective films, *The American Soldier* is the one whose model is most recognizable: the white costumes of the detective films of the 30s." Wilhelm Roth

16 BERLIN ALEXANDERPLATZ

Berlin Alexanderplatz

1979/80, color, in German with English subtitles

Part one: 81 minutes

Parts two-five: 59 minutes

Parts six - nine: 58 minutes

Parts ten - thirteen: 59 minutes

Epilogue: 111 minutes

The screenplay was adapted by Fassbinder from Alfred Döblin's classic novel of the underclass in Berlin during the twilight of the Weimar Republic. The seamy, decadent society in which Nazism was already spreading is brilliantly evoked in dark, claustrophobic settings and with the help of over a hundred actors and thousands of extras. Yet *Berlin Alexanderplatz* is not merely Fassbinder's longest and most ambitious film: It represents the crowning of the director's lifelong obsession with Döblin's novel. Fassbinder identified closely with his protagonist, released murderer Franz Biberkopf, and of central importance to the plot is Biberkopf's intense friendship with another man. In fact, many of Fassbinder's familiar preoccupations are here explored in depth: the destructive pressures of society and the inevitability with which people exploit and hurt those they love. "In *Berlin Alexanderplatz* Fassbinder has made all of his films over anew, reworked and transformed through the greatness of his subject." (Ulrich Greiner)

BEWARE OF A HOLY WHORE

Warnung vor einer heiligen Nutte

1970, color, 103 min., in German with English subtitles

In a seaside hotel somewhere in Spain, a film crew awaits the director, star, and production funds. The group is torn by jealousy and deceit. "With this film we have definitively buried our first hope, the antitheater. It was the dream of our group - both the group in the film and in real life - to share responsibilities and work. *Warnung...* tells the story of the making of the film *Whity*, when everything fell apart." R.W.F.

THE BITTER TEARS OF PETRA VON KANT *new*

Die bitteren Tränen der Petra von Kant

1972, color, 124 min. in German with English subtitles

Petra von Kant, a highly successful fashion designer, falls in love with Karin, whom she chooses as her official model. But her passion for Karin rapidly degenerates into jealousy and possessiveness. Marlene - who is Petra's secretary, stylist, and handywoman all in one - cannot bear to see her mistress also become a slave. "If, at the end, Marlene leaves Petra, it is not in my opinion because she is seeking her freedom, but because she is looking for a new position as a slave. It would be far too optimistic and utopian to believe, as many do, that someone who has docilely obeyed others for thirty years can suddenly choose to be free." R.W.F.

BREMEN FREEDOM

Bremer Freiheit

1972, color, 87 min., in German with English subtitles

Bremen at the turn of the century. A young woman poisons first her tyrannical husband, then her mother, two children, neighbor, and... "Incidentally, liberation isn't only a women's problem; it concerns everyone. This rubbish about women's liberation doesn't interest me. The main question isn't one of women against men but of the poor against the rich, the oppressed against their oppressors." R.W.F.

BOLWIESER *STATIONMASTER'S WIFE (16 min)*

Bolwieser

1977/83, color, (television) part one: 104 min., part two: 96 min.

Based on the novel by Oskar Maria Graf. Bolwieser is stationmaster in the Bavarian town of Werburg in the late 1920s. His slavish passion for his wife Hanni, daughter of a wealthy brewer, does not satisfy her. She begins a liaison with Franz, the butcher to whom she loans money to buy a pub. The town gossips, but Bolwieser remains oblivious to Hanni's philandering. When Hanni and Franz sue the gossips, Bolwieser is the principal witness. When Hanni switches her affections to the hairdresser, Franz seeks revenge by having Bolwieser indicted for perjury. Note: The stationmaster (Bolwieser) was the focus of the original television production; in the theatrical release, edited from the television film, the stationmaster's wife has become the principal character.

CHINESE ROULETTE *new*

Chinesisches Roulette

1976, color, 86 min., in German with English subtitles

An industrialist and his wife find themselves together at their country house for the weekend, she with her lover, he with his mistress. Their handicapped daughter suggests a game of Chinese roulette. "The film shows how people are so alienated that they continue their relationships even

when they've long been finished. I want to show that all human relationships are nothing but repetition and ritual." R.W.F.

CITY TRAMP

JS **Der Stadstreicher**

1966, b&w, 10 min., in German

A tramp finds a pistol in an alley and tries to get rid of it.

new

THE COFFEE HOUSE

Das Kaffeehaus

1970, b&w, 105 min., in German

In Ridolfo's coffeehouse, citizens meet to talk about money, love, and honor. This is a modernistic staging for television of a play by Carlo Goldoni (1701-1793), the Venetian playwright whose many works preserve in scripted form the improvisational productions of the Italian commedia dell'arte.

DESPAIR

16 **Despair - eine Reise ins Licht**

1977, color, 119 min., original English version

(dubbed)

Based on the novel by Vladimir Nabokov. Tired of his wife, the Russian emigré owner of a chocolate factory switches identities with a stranger whom he believes to be his lookalike and whom he ultimately murders. "In my opinion this is the story of someone who resolutely tells himself: A life that consists solely of repeating yourself is not a life." R.W.F.

EFFI BRIEST

Fontane - Effi Briest

1972/1974, b&w, 141 min., in German with English subtitles

Adapted from the novel by Theodor Fontane. At age 17, Effi Briest is forced by her family to marry a baron twenty years her senior. Her life wastes away in loneliness and tragedy. "What fascinates me about Fontane: he knows precisely what is wrong in society, even though society recognizes him as a poet. But even if he has identified its flaws, he can't help but accept them. You and I all do the same thing today, more or less consciously." R.W.F.

EIGHT HOURS DON'T MAKE A DAY

Acht Stunden sind kein Tag

1972, color, in German

Episode one: "Jochen und Marion" 101 min.

Episode two: "Oma und Gregor" 99 min.

Episode three: "Franz und Ernst" 92 min.

Episode four: "Harald und Monika" 89 min.

Episode five: "Irmgard und Rolf" 89 min.

This popular television series is about a working-class family, the Krugers in Cologne, headed by a sixty-year-old widow, Oma. Alternating between domestic drama and personal romance on one hand and issues of the workplace and housing on the other, the series takes the position that most

problems are surmountable through solidarity. It was conceived as an eight-part television series but only five of the scripts for the program were shot.

FEAR OF FEAR

Angst vor der Angst

1975, color, 88 min., in German with English subtitles

new

Margot Staudte, a housewife living comfortably, loves her husband Kurt and daughter Bibi. Her in-laws are interfering but tolerable. Toward the end of her second pregnancy, undirected fear begins to permeate her. Her anxiety grows. After she gives birth to a son, alcohol and drugs temporarily calm but do not diminish her terror.

FOX AND HIS FRIENDS

Faustrecht der Freiheit

1974, color, 123 min., in German with English subtitles

Franz Biberkopf, whose carnival sideshow has been closed by police, is introduced into a distinguished circle of homosexuals. After winning the lottery, his lover exploits him. His climb up the social ladder has been a sham. He seeks solace from the contempt of his former friends in tranquilizers. "I try to attain perfection, which is why I'm giving increasing emphasis to stories. I think that, in terms of the quality of the narrative, *Fox and His Friends* is my first commercial story." R.W.F.

GERMANY IN AUTUMN

Deutschland im Herbst

1978, color, 26 min., in German with English subtitles

This collective work attempts to portray the political climate in Germany in 1977 - after the kidnapping and assassination of a leading public figure by the RAF, and the deaths in Stammheim prison of two members of the Baader-Meinhof group. Exposing himself with frankness and brutality, Fassbinder transmits the impression of helplessness felt by an intellectual who is faced with left-wing terrorism and state repression. "Dear Sirs, I hereby inform you that I refuse the Film Prize awarded by the Federal Republic of Germany for *Germany in Autumn* (or for its conception or whatever) on moral grounds - morality being of course, as I well know, a luxury, a luxury one has to be in a position to afford and which I am still willing to pay." R.W.F.

GODS OF THE PLAGUE

Götter der Pest

1969, b&w, 91 min., in German with English subtitles

Taciturn Franz Walsch, fresh out of prison, visits Joanna, his girlfriend. He is implicated in his brother's murder and has affairs with other women. He resumes his relationship with his buddy, the hoodlum Günther, known as "Gorilla," and together they plan a supermarket robbery. They are betrayed, and the police lie in wait.

I ONLY WANT YOU TO LOVE ME

Ich will doch nur, dass Ihr mich liebt

1975, color, 104 min., in German with English subtitles

16 min

Attentive, obliging but somewhat timid, Peter, in his relationships with others, keeps trying to buy the love he was refused as a child. Married and up to his neck in debt, he eventually murders the manager of a brewery and later his own wife. "Naturally, those who love, or who love more, are always more dependent on their beloved or on their love relationship, and are always the weaker." R.W.F.

IN A YEAR OF 13 MOONS

In einem Jahr mit 13 Monden

1978, color, 124 min., in German with English subtitles

new

A transsexual reviews his life, which he has devoted to the search for love, through the people he meets. "This film will describe the encounters of someone during the last five days of his life and attempt to discover, through these encounters, if his decision to end his life on this fifth and last day is inadmissible, at least understandable, or perhaps even acceptable." R.W.F.

JAIL BAIT

Wildwechsel

1972, color, 102 min., in German with English subtitles

Sexually precocious and spoiled, fourteen-year-old Hanni, the only child of a pious couple, allows herself to be seduced by the nineteen-year-old Franz. When their affair becomes known, he is imprisoned on a morals charge. They resume their relationship when he is released, and she becomes pregnant. To avoid getting her father's permission for an abortion, she suggests that Franz murder him at a game pass (*Wildwechsel*), a tower in the woods from which wild animals may be watched.

KATZELMACHER

Katzelmacher

1969, b&w, 88 min., in German with English subtitles

new

Jorgos is a young Greek guest worker in Germany, known pejoratively as a "Katzelmacher", Bavarian slang for "cat screwer," referring to the supposed sexual habits of foreigners. He rents a room in Elisabeth's house in the Munich suburbs. She and Peter hang around with a group of dissaffected and bored young people who resents Jorgos and beat him up when he dates a German girl.

LIKE A BIRD ON A WIRE

Wie ein Vogel auf dem Draht

1974, color, 44 min., in German

A pseudo variety show about the Aufbau-Ära, the time of the German "economic miracle," when Konrad Adenauer was Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany (1949-1963). Songs are sung and Brigitte Mira tells a few jokes in this film that reveals the utter repulsiveness and sentimentality of that time.

LILI MARLEEN

Lili Marleen

1980, color, 120 min., original English version

(dubbed)

Based on Lale Andersen's autobiography. In 1938, Willie, a young and as yet undiscovered female singer, is in love with Robert, a talented Jewish musician who works for a clandestine organization. The war separates them. "I'm trying to show what it was in the Third Reich that fascinated her: the symbols, applause, fame. And from this perspective I am able to understand why she chose celebrity." R.W.F.

LITTLE CHAOS

16 min
Das kleine Chaos

1967, b&w, 9 min., in German

Three young people who sell subscriptions door-to-door break into a woman's apartment.

new **LOLA**

new
Lola

1981, color, 113 min., in German with English subtitles

In the Germany of the economic miracle, the new head of a municipal department confronts the greed of real estate speculators. He falls in love with Lola, a singer in a bordello, who gradually leads him to abandon his original principles. "I am incapable of shooting anything - even the lightest comedy - apolitically. I totally reject this approach. And especially for the period in which *Lola* takes place. The Adenauer era was an incredible period, politically." R.W.F.

new **LOVE IS COLDER THAN DEATH**

new
Liebe ist kälter als der Tod

1969, b&w, 88 min., in German with English subtitles

A small-time pimp in love with a prostitute takes on the crime syndicate when he tries to plan a major heist. "What is important to me is that those who see this film call into question their most deeply private feelings. That is more political, or more politically aggressive, I find, than showing the police as the prime oppressor." R.W.F.

new **THE MARRIAGE OF MARIA BRAUN**

new
Die Ehe der Maria Braun

1978, color, 120 min., in German with English subtitles

1943: Maria and Hermann are married under a barrage of bombs on the eve of Hermann's departure for the Russian front. After the war, Maria, now a barmaid, waits for her husband to come back, but a friend tells her he is dead. When Hermann is released from captivity and returns home, he surprises Maria in bed with an American G.I. "This film I've made, which seems to speak in favor of the institution of marriage, in fact deals with how odious, hypocritical and destructive marriage really is. I want the audience to break with these rituals - the terminal point of a bourgeois lifestyle." R.W.F.

MARTHA

Martha

1973, color, 112 min., in German with English subtitles

Thirty-three-year old Martha Hyer, self-absorbed and single, lives with her parents and works in a library. Her father dies while vacationing with her in Rome, and at the German embassy she

encounters Helmut Salomon, whom she meets again in Germany. She decides to marry him, and although he is not particularly attracted to her, he agrees. After a peculiar honeymoon, he moves Martha to a house he has bought outside of town, and there he slowly instills fear in her and comes to dominate her.

THE MERCHANT OF FOUR SEASONS

Händler der vier Jahreszeiten

1971, color, 89 min., in German with English subtitles

Hans Epp is a door-to-door fruit salesman. Rejected by his family, and married to a woman who doesn't love him, he flees humiliation and household crises in alcohol and bar-life. "This is a melodrama. That always sounds like a dirty word, but I don't think it is. It's a socially critical melodrama, to put it simply." R.W.F.

MOTHER KÜSTERS GOES TO HEAVEN

Mutter Küsters' Fahrt zum Himmel

1975, color, 120 min., in German with English subtitles

includes both the "happy" (American) and "radical" (German) endings

After working for twenty years in the same factory, Hermann Küsters murders his boss and takes his own life. His widow turns to the Communist Party in an attempt to rehabilitate his memory. But her comrades exploit the incident for their own ends. "The theme of this and all my other films: the abuse and exploitation of feelings within the system we live in." R.W.F. Note: Two versions of this film were distributed, one in the United States (The "happy" ending, as originally written by Fassbinder), the other in Germany (the "radical" ending, as originally shot by Fassbinder).

THE NIKLASHAUSEN JOURNEY

Die Niklashauser Fart

1970, color, 86 min., in German with English subtitles

On March 3, 1476, a shepherd, Hans Böhm, claimed in Niklashausen to have seen the Mother of God. He gathered around him thirty thousand peasants who believed him to be the New Messiah, and preached a revolutionary doctrine against vested privilege. Böhm was arrested by the bishop and burned at the stake in Würzburg on July 15, five months after his vision. This film is not a historical reenactment but Fassbinder's essay on the application of the past to the present.

NORA HELMER

Nora Helmer

1973, color, 101 min., in German with English subtitles

Based on the play *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen. From the moment Nora saves her family from financial ruin, her real problems begin. This is a story of lies, envy, and blackmail in the petty bourgeois world of bankers. "Nora isn't a pioneer of the women's liberation movement. She simply tries to impose herself in certain, to my way of thinking, mediocre but rather realistic, areas." R.W.F.

RECRUITS IN INGOLSTADT

Pioniere in Ingolstadt

1970, color, 84 min., in German with English subtitles

Adapted from Marieluise Fleisser's 1929 play, which Brecht admired and set in the present, *Recruits in Ingolstadt* concerns relationships between young military conscripts and the citizens, mainly young women, of Ingolstadt, a provincial town where the recruits have been sent to construct a wooden bridge. The disaffected soldiers have sex, drink, brutalize the mayor's effeminate son, and drown their field officer.

QUERELLE

Querelle

1982, color, 106 min., original English version

? French w. Eng. titles

Adapted from Jean Genêt's novel *Querelle de Brest*. *Querelle* is the story of a seaman to whose fascinating beauty all succumb, including navy lieutenant Seblon and the whorehouse madame Lysianne. An angel of death, Querelle loves only himself, and seeking out his company can be fatal. "Films must eventually stop being films, stop being stories, and begin to come to life, so we question ourselves and our lives." R.W.F.

RIO DAS MORTES

Rio das Mortes

1970, color, 84 min., in German with English subtitles

Two young friends, Michel, a tile layer, and Günther, fresh from military duty, decide to leave Germany in search of a treasure they believe to be hidden in the Rio das Mortes area of Peru. Hanna, Michel's fiancée, opposes this plan and threatens to shoot them both if they embark of this childish adventure.

SATAN'S BREW

Satansbraten

1976, color, 113 min., in German with English subtitles

A former poet of the revolution, Kranz has nothing left but debts and a nagging wife. Suffering from writer's block, he begins to take himself for symbolist poet Stefan Georg, gradually adopting both Georg's lifestyle and homosexual orientation. "This may be the director's most profound and painful work. The nostalgia running through it nourishes no illusion, but rather a sort of nihilistic lucidity." Michel Marmin

THE STATIONMASTER'S WIFE

1977/83, color, (theatrical) 112 min., in German with English subtitles

(See BOLWIESER for description)

THEATER IN TRANCE

Theater in Trance

1981, color, 91 min., in German

A documentary in fourteen parts made during the 1981 World Theater Festival in Cologne. The sound track includes Fassbinder reading from Antonin Artaud's *The Theater and Its Double*.

THE THIRD GENERATION

Die dritte Generation

1978/79, color, 110 min., in German with English subtitles

A group of young people, who are united less by political conviction than by a thirst for action, opt for the path of terrorism and the underground. But in the end they are manipulated by a shady industrialist. "The main problem is that especially people who have no reason, no motivation, no despair, no utopia easily allow themselves to be used by others. [...] Terrorism is an invention of capitalism to better protect its capital." R.W.F.



VERONIKA VOSS

Die Sehnsucht der Veronika Voss

1982, b&w, 104 min., in German with English subtitles

new

Robert Krohn, a sportswriter, meets a former movie star, Veronika Voss. Fascinated by this woman, whose behavior is so odd, he allows himself to be drawn into a strange relationship. He discovers that Veronika is a morphine addict and a patient at the clinic of a certain Dr Katz. "I am as critical of women as I am of men. But I find women more interesting: on the one hand, they are oppressed, but on the other hand, they aren't; rather, they use their oppression as a means of terrorism." R.W.F.

WHITY

Whity

1970, color, 95 min., in German with English subtitles

new

Somewhere in the American West in 1878, in a large house that is more like a mausoleum than a home, lives the Nicholson family. It includes Ben, the domineering patriarch; Katherine, his second wife, a nymphomaniac; and his two sons by his first wife, Frank, a homosexual, and Davy, who is mentally retarded. Serving and being abused by the family is a young black man, Whity, Ben's illegitimate son who wants to belong.

WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Frauen in New York

1977, color, 111 min., in German

In 1930s Manhattan, a circle of wives with the leisure to lunch is threatened when one of them, Mary, learns that her husband has a mistress, Miss Chrystal Allen. The film is a staging for television of the Rainer Werner Fassbinder production of Clare Booth Luce's 1936 play at the Deutsches Schauspielhaus in Hamburg.



WHY DOES HERR R. RUN AMOK?

Warum läuft Herr R. Amok?

1969, color, 88 min., in German with English subtitles

new

Herr R., an employee in an architectural firm, leads an uneventful but comfortable life till the day when, for no apparent reason, he coldly murders his neighbor, his wife, and his sleeping son. "I have nothing to say against individuals, but rather against the environment in which they're forced to live. In short, if my characters act badly, it's because they have no choice, and not because they are bad." R.W.F.



WORLD ON A WIRE

Welt am Draht

1973, color, in German with English subtitles

Part one: 99 min.

new

Part two: 106 min.

World on a Wire, based on a novel by Daniel F. Galouyé, "depicts a world where one is able to make projections of people with a computer. And of course that leads to the uncertainty of whether someone himself is a projection, since in this virtual world the projections resemble reality. Perhaps another larger world made us as a virtual one? In this sense it deals iwth an old philosophical model, which here takes on a certain horror." R.W.F.

Rainer Werner Fassbinder (1945-1982)

"In Fassbinder's universe, the weak always lose, the humiliated are never consoled, victims receive no compensation for their tears. The cruelty of his films, so often criticized, is the reflection of an unreconciled world. In his own way, Fassbinder took up Walter Benjamin's challenge: 'One must write history from the point of view of the defeated.'

Defeated: the word describes Fassbinder himself. And it is to his despair and his ineptitude for leading the life others lead that we owe the renaissance of German cinema.

But, beyond his works, the most poignant thing we remember about him, in the solitude left by his death, is his frenetic need to love and be loved. Few individuals as wounded as was Fassbinder have been able - through their disgust, their frenzied lives and their revolt - to offer others this timid, almost awkward, tenderness. It is the ultimate vestige of an impossible humanity." (Jean-Michel Palmier)