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**"ALTOGETHER TRIUMPHANT! THE MOST EXHILARATING
MOVIE-MOVIE OF THE YEAR!"**

- J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*

"ONE OF THE TEN BEST FILMS OF 2000"

- *The Village Voice* Critics' Poll; *Film Comment* Critics' Poll

"AN ACT OF GENIUS - FAULTLESSLY CAST AND REALIZED"

- Stuart Klawans, *The Nation*

CINEMATHEQUE ONTARIO SPRING 2001

Pg. 9

TORONTO PREMIERE! EXCLUSIVE LIMITED RUN!

TIME REGAINED (LE TEMPS RETROUVÉ) • Director: Raul Ruiz

France/Italy 1999 158 minutes • Cast: Marcello Mazzarella, Catherine Deneuve, John Malkovich

We have had to wait two years for the chance to see this triumphant version of *À la recherche du temps perdu*. An "event" in Paris, where line-ups snaked down the block, and in London, where the film put the novel back on the bestsellers list, Raul Ruiz's rendering of Proust is a miracle - fidelity achieved through audacity. "The daring of the conception," J. Hoberman writes, "is matched only by the brilliance of the execution." Even those who balk at the possibility of ever properly adapting Proust have been astonished by this teeming, inventive, and "faithful" version, which manages to encompass the novel, even while focussing only on its final book. Marshalling a cast of France's finest actors, and knowing that translation works best when it is freest, Ruiz conjures the Proust one encounters in the novel: by turns magical, shocking, immensely sad, woundingly cruel, delectably funny. And as ornate in its trappings as the swank *SWANN IN LOVE*, it never imprisons itself in period detail; it manages to be opulent and bracing, *luxe* and *léger* at the same time.

As Adam Gopnik raved in *The New Yorker* when the film opened in Paris, *TIME REGAINED* is considered by most a triumph of style, but "its real triumph may lie in the roster of performances that Ruiz has coaxed out of his actors." A dream cast incarnates Proust's most memorable characters without a hint of irony or italics. A bevy of French divas - Catherine Deneuve, Marie-France Pisier, Emmanuelle Béart, Edith Scob, Arielle Dombasle - bring Proust's women to prodigious life. (Deneuve sails through, full of majestic *froidueur*, as Odette.) But they are almost eclipsed by the men: the morose and witty Marcello Mazzarella as Proust, "a scarily perfect look-alike" (Gopnik); Pascal Greggory as the tortured Saint-Loup; and, most astonishing because least expected, John Malkovich as Baron de Charlus. In his mad, mannered performance, for which he had to learn "torrential French," Malkovich impersonates the witty, lascivious Baron, malicious ringmaster of social stratagems and sadomasochistic fantasy, with exemplary artifice. (His visit to a male brothel, with a quip about Canadian "trade," is one of the film's best set pieces.)

A classic case of the cultural outsider unconfined by reverence, of distance begetting lucidity, Raul Ruiz initially seems an unlikely candidate to adapt Proust, his love of lurid exotica and fabulism, of the Wellesian tall tale and visual jape, distinctly at odds with the melancholy *tendresse* of Proust's world. But other of Ruiz's gifts prevail: his genius for juggling time and appearances, his deadpan sense of social comedy, his surrealist engagement with dream worlds. ("The more closely you follow Proust," Ruiz says, "the more surreal the film becomes.") One is dazzled from first image to last by Ruiz's "inventive fidelity": the imagery from Cocteau and Visconti, Magritte and Méliès, the reminders of the vicious comedy of Balzac and Molière, and - recognizing that the novel is musical in form and effect - a score that hints at Ravel, Franck, and Fauré in its evocation of the famous, nonextant Vinteuil violin sonata. "Music is as important to me as the cinema," Ruiz said about the film. "I'm a frustrated composer - and I'm more precise as a musician than as a director." Watching his exquisite, symphonic deluge of Proust, it is hard to tell the difference.

- James Quandt

Friday, March 23 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 27 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 24 8:15 p.m.

Thursday, March 29 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 25 1:00 p.m.