

## Document Citation

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# La Course Du Lievre A Travers Les Champs

(And Hope To Die)  
(FRENCH-U.S.—COLOR)

Caper pic that mixes nostalgia, games people play and gangsterism with children's play. Gripping, ably played and solidly directed.

Paris, Sept. 19.

20th-Fox release of Greenwich Films (Serge Silberman) production. Stars Robert Ryan, Aldo Ray, Tisa Farrow, Jean-Louis Trintignant, Lea Massari. Directed by Rene Clement. Screenplay, Sebastien Japrisot; camera (Eastmancolor), Edmond Richard; editor, Roger Dwyre; music, Francis Lai. Reviewed at Normandie, Paris, Sept. 7, '72. Running Time: 140 MINS.

Charley	Robert Ryan
Mattone	Aldo Ray
Pepper	Tisa Farrow
Tony	Jean-Louis Trintignant
Sugar	Lea Massari
Rizzio	Jean Gaven
Majorette	Nadine Nabokov
Gypsy	Andre Lawrence
Paul	Daniel Breton

Noted French filmmaker Rene Clement has made films in English before and copped a couple of Oscars for his French and Italo pix. Here he has brought off a crafty caper pic, made in Canada, which amply spans two cultures, European and U.S., plus two lingos, English and French.

For once, French logic is eschewed and in its place is a gangster film that evokes nostalgia for the earlier lack of complication and crime-does-not-pay attitudes without any forced social or moral aspects. But it also adds another dimension by comparing it to children's games and giving it a sort of poetic envelope.

One that is accepted, this long, over-two-hour pic grips and spins out its yarn of a group of people planning a last way-out caper, undone by unforeseen quirks of the principles and chance, plus a man on-the-run who barges in on the pre-caper hideout to first divided, then cement and become a part of the event.

A Frenchman, Jean-Louis Trintignant, is on the run and has made it to Canada where, on leaving a train, he is set upon by gypsies but manages to elude them. Hiding out in Montreal, he sees a man shot down and is handed the man's money and hides it before he is taken by the killers.

They had rubbed out a crooked cop who tried to run out on the planned job, to kidnap a state witness from police headquarters in a Montreal skyscraper for \$1,000,000 from a threatened top gangster. The man on the run manages to throw one of his kidnapers from the car and almost overpower the other.

Brought in, he will not divulge where the money is, which keeps him alive. The money is finally recovered and he is brought into the gang though the dead boy's sister and a punchy ex-pug are against him and almost knock him off, while the leader's moll has an affair with him.

This is intercut with children playing games in France which sometimes counterpoint the gang's plans and actions. There is also a poetic overtone of a search for a father figure by the canny Frenchman and the final exciting break into the police hospital, high over the city, the getting of the money and the final capture of the gang, except for the young girl who goes off to the U.S. with a part of the swag.

Violence is sharply done, not for its own sake, but as the child-like consequences of this deadly game. Robert Ryan has stature and authority as the aging chief who accepts death, with Trintignant mixing innocence and shrewdness as the fugitive with a solid will for survival.

Aldo Ray has the burly drive and presence as the strong arm man with a weakness for girls with Lea Massari effective as the middle-aged moll and Tisa Farrow having the right girlish headstrong qualities in the body of a mature woman.

The adroit script, excellent production dress of producer Serge Silberman, fine utilization of the rugged Canadian countryside and Montreal bustle, a catchy musical score by Francis Lai and topflight color lensing by Edmond Richard all help give this a solid gloss which should insure this good commensurate business around the world.

The French title is "La Course Du Lievre A Travers Les Champs" (The Race of the Hare Across the Fields) which Trintignant amply fulfills in his solid broken-field running until his end. It seems he had killed some gypsy children while trying to photograph them from a little plane and crashing among them which explains his running and eventual demise at the big scale gangster game he gets involved with. Mosk.