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Beware of a Holy Whore

Directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder

Cast: Lou Castel, Eddie Constantine
Hanna Schygulla, R. W. Fassbinder.

1970. German. In German with
English subtitles.

103 minutes. Color.

Rainer Werner Fassbinder's **Beware of a Holy Whore** is an autobiographical meditation on film-making in a class with **8½**, **Contempt**, and **Day for Night**. The action is set at a seaside luxury hotel where a movie cast and crew spend their spare time assaulting each other verbally, emotionally, and sexually. The cannibalistic, sado-masochistic warfare of the characters becomes so lacerating that one critic thought **Beware of a Holy Whore** to be more violent than **The American Soldier**, Fassbinder's most brutal gangster film. These mangled people all hope to be made complete by contact with the "holy whore": the cinema. Lou Castel plays the fictional film director as a leather-jacketed cross between Marlon Brando and Fassbinder himself.

"Fascinating . . . it leaves the kind of wounds one receives in a knife fight."—Vincent Canby, *The New York Times*.

"A brilliant one-act dance of spiritual and artistic death."—David Ansen, *The Real Paper*, Boston.