

## Document Citation

Title	<b>Filmfacts -- excerpt</b>
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Filmfacts</i>
Date	1980
Type	article
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	3
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Bande à part (Band of outsiders), Godard, Jean Luc, 1964

## BAND OF OUTSIDERS

FRENCH (1964). Original Title: "BANDE A PART." A Co-Production of ANOUCHKA FILMS and ORSAY FILMS. Released in the U.S. by ROYAL FILMS. Directed and Written by JEAN-LUC GODARD; Based on the Novel "FOOL'S GOLD" ("PIGEON VOLE") by DOLORES and B. HITCHENS. Photography: RAOUL COUTARD. Music: MICHEL LEGRAND. Editor: AGNES GUILLEMOT. Production Manager: PHILIPPE DUSSART. English Subtitles. 95 Mins.

Odile..... ANNA KARINA  
 Arthur..... CLAUDE BRASSEUR  
 Franz..... SAMI FREY  
 Mme. Victoria..... LOUISA COLPEYN  
 English Teacher..... CHANTAL DARGET  
 and  
 ERNEST MENZER, DANIELE SEGHERS,  
 GEORGES STAQUET

### Synopsis

Odile tells her boyfriend Franz about a large amount of money her Aunt Victoria keeps in a cupboard for her friend Mr. Stolz. Franz tells his friend Arthur who, sensing easy money, wrangles an introduction to Odile and manages to infatuate her and get her to agree to robbing the money. But while checking on the amount, Odile forgets to cover it with the coat her Aunt hides it beneath and, when the trio arrives to get the money, it is gone. Arthur hits Odile, she becomes disillusioned, and Franz disapproves. Arthur's family hears of the affair and, to prevent Arthur's uncle from stealing the money, the trio returns to the house the next day. Mme. Victoria interrupts them and she is

locked in a closet. They fail to find the money and Arthur frees Mme. Victoria to question her, but she has apparently suffocated. They flee, but Arthur, realizing that the money must be in the dog kennel, returns on the pretext of checking whether Mme. Victoria is really dead. He finds the money, but his uncle arrives and they shoot each other dead. Mr. Stolz drives up and finds the money just as Mme. Victoria, who had only fainted, comes out to meet him. Franz and Odile escape to South America.



COLPEYN, KARINA and BRASSEUR

### Critique

THE N.Y. HERALD TRIBUNE. "Jean-Luc Godard's *Band of Outsiders* is little more than warmed-over *Breathless* [FF, Vol. IV, 1961, p. 35], flat and insipid. We have the Godard preoccupation with impetuous, restless French youth, pining away for the life of action, the high crime and the mighty adventure, deeds of derring-do racing 'round their fevered brains as they sip an aperitif in a grimy bistro... In short, they're not very interesting types, with very little of the sympathetic charm that hyped Jean-Paul Belmondo's characterization in *Breathless*... There's the inevitable goof-up at the end, capped by a ridiculous Bogartian pistol fight... Most of the Godard trademarks are there: the running narration, sometimes cynical, sometimes wry, and sometimes overblown and florid in its descriptive passages... To be sure, there are a few bright spots—the girl and the two boys suddenly uncork a cute shuffle dance, for one, and the English-lesson sequence is a sassy bit—but on the whole, the pace is laggard, and groping, with little of the Godard jauntiness. The three leads work valiantly—Miss Karina is especially effective—but they are bogged down in a vapid storyline. Godard must have made this one on his lunch-hour." Robert Salmaggi (3/16/66).

THE N.Y. TIMES. "As one of the big wheels churning up France's New Wave, the writer-director Jean-Luc Godard has created a ripple

with *Band of Outsiders*. The serio-comic adventure is guaranteed to enchant the avant-garde coterie that first took him to its mysterious heart in 1961 with the appearance of *Breathless*. But to the obviously larger body of moviegoers not sensitively attuned to personal jokes and personal statements, *Band of Outsiders* is decidedly outside their ken, and needs fuller explanations and infinitely more credible people. As was the case in *Breathless*, Mr. Godard is concerned with young, footloose types involved in crime. He also is intent on intruding himself on the action via explanations he delivers in off-screen narration that explain both the action and his principal characters. The director has described his film as 'Alice in Wonderland Meets Franz Kafka.' The description could not be more apt. But his dissections of character and motivation definitely need amplification... As a director, Mr. Godard is well aware of the idea that motion pictures mean motion. His *Outsiders* are constantly on the move, as one vignette swiftly merges with another. And his views of a misty Paris are truly, as one of the players notes, 'Comet-like.' His three principals, on the other hand, are constantly philosophising about love and loneliness, but show little of either. Mr. Godard, it should be added, is effective in kidding moviemaking styles. This is exemplified in his climactic shooting scene, in which one criminal takes enough bullets to demolish an elephant before expiring. His sense of humor also is apparent when one of the robbers casually snatches a book before proceeding to search for the loot. Anna Karina looks amazingly like a youthful Sylvia Sydney. But as a teen-ager she more often projects callow naivete than charm. Claude Brasseur is a vague type despite all of his sardonic, terse talk. He may horse around with his dreamer pal, but one longs for some indications of his background. In a lesser degree this is also true of Sami Frey. Dark-haired and with a sense of humor, he is more mysterious than real, a grown-up gamin gone gamy. Miss Karina and Mr. Frey escape to South America, whence, the English subtitles gaily promise, will come a sequel in 'CinemaScope and Technicolor.' Mr. Godard obviously is kidding, but the *Batman* TV series, for example, does it infinitely better. Let's just leave them in South America." A. H. Weiler (3/16/66).

VARIETY. "Ex-Waver Jean-Luc Godard still looms one of the most inventive and personal among the younger filmmakers in France today. So his pix are filled with personal gags, homages to past and present masters, and his own angles. If it sometimes makes them restricted to art and buff releases, they always have a sweep, and humor that have them also capable of more direct adhesion by art and selective, and even regular audiences. This one seems his most accessible pic since his first one *Breathless* and his recent Brigitte Bardot starrer, *Contempt*. Careful handling could have this a solid specialized item abroad on its general gusto. If unorthodox, Godard here avoids his usual jump cuts, free ellipses and prowling camera. It is made completely in exterior and real interiors. And the pic benefits



from this in giving its rambling tale a cogency and realistic basis to its breezy carryings-on... There is neat observation about the antics of this strange trio. If seemingly outside of life, they do give an impression of yearning and wanting something that is unattainable. Anna Karina has a fragile, wide-eyed appearance which fits the part. Besides this, she brings a dramatic intensity that keeps her from slipping into sentimentality. She can even sing a song on a subway, comment on the sadness around her and her deep compassion, without having it seem wrong. Sami Frey is intense and brooding while Claude Brasseur has an animal aggressiveness... Godard obviously admires the silent and 1930s Yank action pix and comedies. Hence, he manages to capture the freewheeling human simplicity of those days and still seem modern and fresh. Excellent lensing is also an asset. Godard shows he is a complete filmic creator in being able to mark each scene with visual authority, movement and interest. However, this penchant also sometimes makes his films too private and repetitious for general public acceptance. Thus, it calls for tactful handling. Made for \$100,000, Columbia should have an okay value out of it with the right placement. Its telling points are its inventive pace and observation and its refusal to make concessions. Accepted on its own terms by more discerning audiences, this has comedic and dramatic potency. It could also conceivably pay off if patrons are primed for it." 'Mosk' (Paris - 4/29/64).

TIME. "Another backward-looking venture into crime, a prank by France's prolific Jean-Luc Godard, a wayward but talented wonder who fills the gap between his more inspired movies by sketching out such trifles as *Outsiders*... A couple of amusing Godardian escapades... The rest is pretty random stuff, discomfiting evidence that Godard's blazing love affair with the art of film sometimes resembles nothing so much as a schoolboy's crush." (4/1/66).