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to find a producer. Instead she went to Cuba and on her return contrived a short documentary, *Salut les Cubains* (1963), from some fifteen hundred of the four thousand still photographs she had brought back, editing them to Cuban dance rhythms so that they constitute a "homage to Cuba."

Varda's next feature, *Le Bonheur* (1965), is a strange and in many ways disturbing work. For this investigation into the nature of happiness, the director has left aside as irrelevant all considerations of psychology and morality and chosen to make her hero an artisan simply to avoid social issues. We are left with something that is more of a symmetrical pattern than a plot in the conventional sense: François loves his wife and children dearly and enjoys a serenely contented home life, but this does not prevent him from falling in love with a pretty post-office clerk. When he tells his wife about this state of affairs, she commits suicide, but his happiness is preserved: after a decent interval his mistress moves in to look after him and his children and life goes on as before. The tone of *Le Bonheur* is uniformly idyllic, reinforced by the accompanying music of Mozart, and nothing could be further from realism than this make-believe world where children never cry and nobody utters an angry word. Though the characters are viewed with detachment and the whole film examines a philosophic notion, *Le Bonheur* is Varda's most decoratively resplendent work, showing perhaps the influence of her husband, Jacques Demy. There is an echo too of Renoir's use of landscape in *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* (a quote from which is included) in the importance accorded to Nature: the film begins with a summer picnic which is the perfect picture of happiness and ends with an autumnal one in which the replacement of wife by mistress is the only alteration. Throughout colours are used symbolically and *Le Bonheur* remains in the memory as a film full of flowers and sunlight.

With *Les Créatures* (1966) Varda examined the inter-relationship of reality and fiction. A writer (Michel Piccoli) and his pregnant wife (Catherine Deneuve) come to live by the sea at Noirmoutiers to recover from a car accident which has left him scarred and her dumb. As he wanders around, the writer talks to the animals and transforms into characters of the novel he is writing all the peo-