

Document Citation

Title	Fassbinder -- excerpt
Author(s)	Peter Iden Ruth McCormick
Source	<i>Tanam Press</i>
Date	1981
Type	book excerpt
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Chinesisches roulett (Chinese roulette), Fassbinder, Rainer Werner, 1976

The Coffee House (1970) (*Das Kaffeehaus*)

Adaption by R. W. Fassbinder and the Munich anti-teater under the direction of Peer Raben and R. W. Fassbinder, developed for and played by the Bremer Ensemble.

Screenplay	Rainer Werner Fassbinder (from Carlo Goldoni's play)
Camera Operator	Dietbert Schmidt, Manfred Forster
Music	Peer Raben
Set Design	Wilfried Minks
Production	Westdeutscher Rundfunk

Cast: Margit Carstensen (Vittoria), Ingrid Caven (Placida), Hanna Schygulla (Lisaura), Kurt Raab (Don Marzio), Harry Baer (Eugenio), Hans Hirschmuller (Trappolo), Gunther Kaufmann (Leander), Peter Moland (Pandolfo), Wil Rabenbauer (Ridolfo).

Filmed in 10 days in Cologne (Studio) in February, 1970.
Running time, 105 mins.; B&W.

Video Productions

The Coffee House. 1970

Fassbinder's first studio production cannot be seen today. It is based on Fassbinder's and Peer Raben's Bremen production, but also contains elements of a later staging by the Munich anti-teater. Even the casting is a combination of the two productions. Botho Strauss wrote about the Bremen premiere in *Theater heute*, October, 1969, p. 16ff:

“Fassbinder has completely altered the dramatic style of Goldoni's *The Coffee House*, which pictures a concrete social locale in which a useless clique of early Italian bourgeois types alternate between games of love and money and are perceived as totally identical with the mechanics of comedy, intrigue, skulduggery and usury; that is, he has not interpreted or shown, has not followed, in this ‘modernized’ version, what was written in the original. This style is, compared to expectations one might have about a Goldoni comedy, actually a counter-style; lively verbal duels, all kinds of odd witticisms, and plays on words are sacrificed here to a more restrained and serenely spoken dialogue, and when it becomes insidious, it sounds especially elegiac. It is not even a comedy any more, but becomes a really very sad play.

Fassbinder read the original play thoroughly once, in order to commit the most important plot connections and characters to memory, but then wrote down what inspired him in the speeches in a freer form. So, this has become a totally new play, which can't be fruitfully compared with the older one.”