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“THE GLEANERS & I”

Shot on digital video, and ostensibly a documentary about France's rural poor who scavenge for unpicked food to earn a bit of cash, “**GLEANERS**” is a unique potpourri of personal and cultural observations by Agnes Varda, one of that country's eminent chroniclers of an underclass rarely seen on film. And the use of a small digital camera and absence of a large crew elicited a rare sense of intimacy and lack of self-consciousness from those Varda captured on film.

Though gleaners is traditionally used for those Van Gogh-like rural folk stooped in the field in search of leftovers, Varda's gaze expands to anyone in society who scavenges—from urban artists looking for materials to a big-kitchen chef. In her poignant, clear-eyed voiceover narration, Varda even recognizes her own scavenging, the intrinsic nature of her own art, using the energy, lives and materials of others.

As film journalist Andrew O'Hagan says: “A work of the heart, guided and organized by a rare emotional intelligence.”



Agnes Varda in “**THE GLEANERS & I**”

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