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Author(s)	Gene Moskowitz
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La Decade Prodigieuse

(Ten Days' Wonder)

(FRENCH-COLOR)

Paris, Dec. 14.

Parafrance release of Films La Boetie production. Stars Orson Welles, Marlene Jobert, Anthony Perkins, Michel Piccoli; features Sylvani Blasi, Guido Alberti. Directed by Claude Chabrol. Screenplay, Paul Gegauff, Paul Gardner, Eugene Archer from book by Ellery Queen; camera (Eastmancolor), Jean Rabier; editor, Jacques Gaillard; art director, Guy Litye. Reviewed at George V, Paris, Dec. 3, '71., Running Time: 105 MINS.

Theo	Orson Welles
Helene	Marlene Jobert
Charles	Anthony Perkins
Paul	Michel Piccoli
Ludovic	Guido Alberti
Woman	Sylvana Blasi

Claude Chabrol remains one of the more prolific filmmakers on the local scene. He likes to adapt American detective tales or whodunits for his own purposes in looking at upper-class family dramas that usually are concerned with a crime that might weld its protagonists together. But this opts for more highflown symbolism of God figures and religioso and psychological underpinning that somewhat too obvious and underlined to get much characterization into it.

It has some okay names in Orson Welles and Anthony Perkins for Stateside possibilities and an English version has also been made. But it does not quite have the caustic wit, cynical good humor and solid suspense that his other films have had of late. Chabrol has found a specialized, if not general, following in U.S. arties. This one might have some payoff inherent in it but will need canny sell and placement. Art chances are problematical.

Perkins is again a hypersensitive, almost psychotic, young man who finds himself with bloodstained hands in a Paris hotel as pic opens. He calls an old professor to help him, who then goes to visit him at his home. He is the adopted son of a rich man married to a woman of Perkin's age.

Welles, sporting a gray streaked beard and his usual false aquiline nose, is the father, an immense, very rich man who supposedly has the love and affection of his wife and son. But the son has made many God-like statues of Welles when he tried sculpting and both he and the wife dress in 20s style in deference to Welles who felt this was the great epoch in his life.

But this is a side issue and only used for the becoming dress of Marlene Jobert as the wife. There is also the sequestered, mad, religiously fanatic mother of Welles. A blackmailer drives Perkins to rob his father's safe. It appears he had made love to his stepmother and written love letters which had been stolen by the blackmailer.

The professor acts as go-between with the blackmailer but it finally ends with Miss Jobert being killed, presumably by Perkins, who then smashes the God statues and leaps from the window to be impaled and crucified on an iron gate.

There is a final switch to show it was all a whim of Welles and films end with a bow to "Citizen Kane" as he shoots himself and lights go on in his big home rather go out as they did in "Kane."

Michel Piccoli is restrained as the professor and Miss Jobert is pretty and hapless as the wife. Film is well decorated and shot but somewhat obvious, forced and not up to Chabrol's usually more perceptive insights into class hangups. Local chances appear good.

Mosk.