

Document Citation

Title The middle of the world

Author(s)

Source Pacific Film Archive

Date 1975 Feb 22

Type program note

Language English

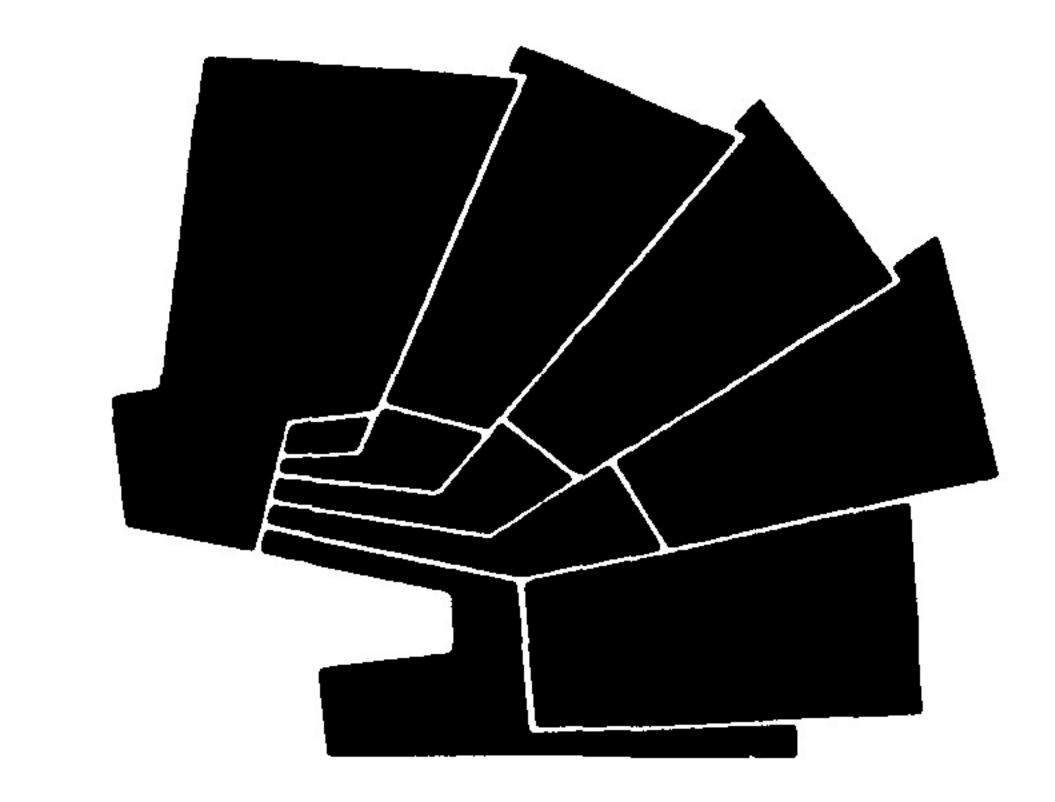
Pagination

No. of Pages 2

Subjects

Film Subjects Le milieu du monde (The middle of the world), Tanner, Alain, 1974

NEWS RELEASE/UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM BERKELEY, CALIF. 9472C



I LE MILIEU DU DE

PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE 2625 Durant Avenue Berkeley, Ca. 94720 642-1412

NEW SWISS FILMS

February 5 -- February 28, 1975

Saturday, February 22 (8:40)

THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD (LE MILIEU DU MONDE). 1974. Alain Tanner. Produced by Yves Gasser and Yves Peyrot for Citel Films (Geneva), SSR (Geneva), Action Films (Paris). Scenario by Tanner and John Berger. Adaptation and dialogue by Tanner. Photography by Renato Berta. Edited by Brigitte Sousselier. Sound by Pierre Gamet. Music by Patrick Moraz. Set design by Serge Etter. With: Olimpia Carlisi (Adriana), Philippe Léotard (Paul), Juliet Berto (Juliette), Denise Perron (The Widow Schmidt), Jacques Denis (Marcel), Roger Jendly (Roger), Gilbert Bahon (Albert), Pierre Walker (President of the ADP), Paul Pasquier (Gavault), Adrien Nicati (Paul's Father). Color. In French; English subtitles. A New Yorker Films release. 115 minutes.

"Alain Tanner's films have always been on the cutting edge between social problems and sexual ones, and his new film - his first in color - is no exception. An extra-marital affair between a young Swiss engineer and an Italian emigrant waitress founders because physical obsessions are powerless against social differences.

Neither a political tract nor a Women's Liberation essay, it sheds much light on both subjects. The title refers to the continental divide between north and south Europe; it is also a metaphor for sex." -- from the program note of the 12th New York Film Festival

"While most American movies continue to dodge the relations between the sexes, some of the European directors are surging ahead in that area. Such totally dissimilar films as Ingmar Bergman's SCENES FROM A MARRIAGE, Lina Wertmuller's THE SEDUCTION OF MIMI and now, Alain Tanner's THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD - are exploring emotional territory in ways that we have rarely seen. (Even the best of the recent American movies have only shown couples throbbing or fighting - there's little sense of what happens after a seething scene.) Mr. Tanner, who made LA SALAMANDRE and LE RETOUR D'AFRIQUE, brings an extraordinary sensitivity to one pair's experiences in THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD...

Through, the movie stresses the concept of 'normalization' - whereby contact between the economic classes, or countries such as the United States and the Soviet Union, or the sexes, is acceptable 'as long as nothing changes' in the power structure. The movie takes a profound, though subtle, stand against treating women as objects; it really is a feminist statement... In its pensive way, this is a very radical movie. By portraying inequality so quietly, the theme has all the more impact - and the film goes on echoing in your mind well after you have seen it." -- Nora Sayre,

The New York Times, October 7, 1974

Alain Tanner was born in Geneva in 1929. In 1951, he founded the University Film Society. After navigating in many parts of the world, he returned to Geneva and wrote, but he departed for London in 1955. In London, the new climate of the "free-cinema" movement stimulated him; it also represented a different way of thinking. His encounter with Lindsay Anderson was essential to his life. Thanks to Anderson, he worked for two years at the British Film Institute. Claude Goretta, another

WARNING: This material may be protected by copyright law (Title 17 U.S. Code)

young Swiss, joined him in London and together they made for the British Film Institute NICE TIME (20 minutes, 1956-57). In 1958, Tanner worked on six documentaries for the BBC "Living With Dangers" series. In 1959-60, he worked as an assistant on some commercial films in Paris, learned nothing, and returned to Switzerland where he made a 27-minute short, RAMUZ, PASSAGE D'UN POETE in 1961, and a sponsored film in polyvision, L'ECOLE, in 1962. Before CHARLES MORT OU VIF? (1969), Tanner made an 80-minute documentary, LES APPRENTIS (1963-64), a 50-minute commissioned film on the city in India conceived by Le Corbusier, titled UNE VILLE A CHANDIGARH (1966), and numerous documentaries for Swiss Television (often coproduced with French TV). His recent films include LA SALAMANDRE (1971), LE RETOUR D'AFRIQUE (1973), and LE MILIEU DU MONDE (1974). Tanner has written for many film magazines since 1958, and in 1962, with four friends, he founded the Association of Swiss Filmmakers.