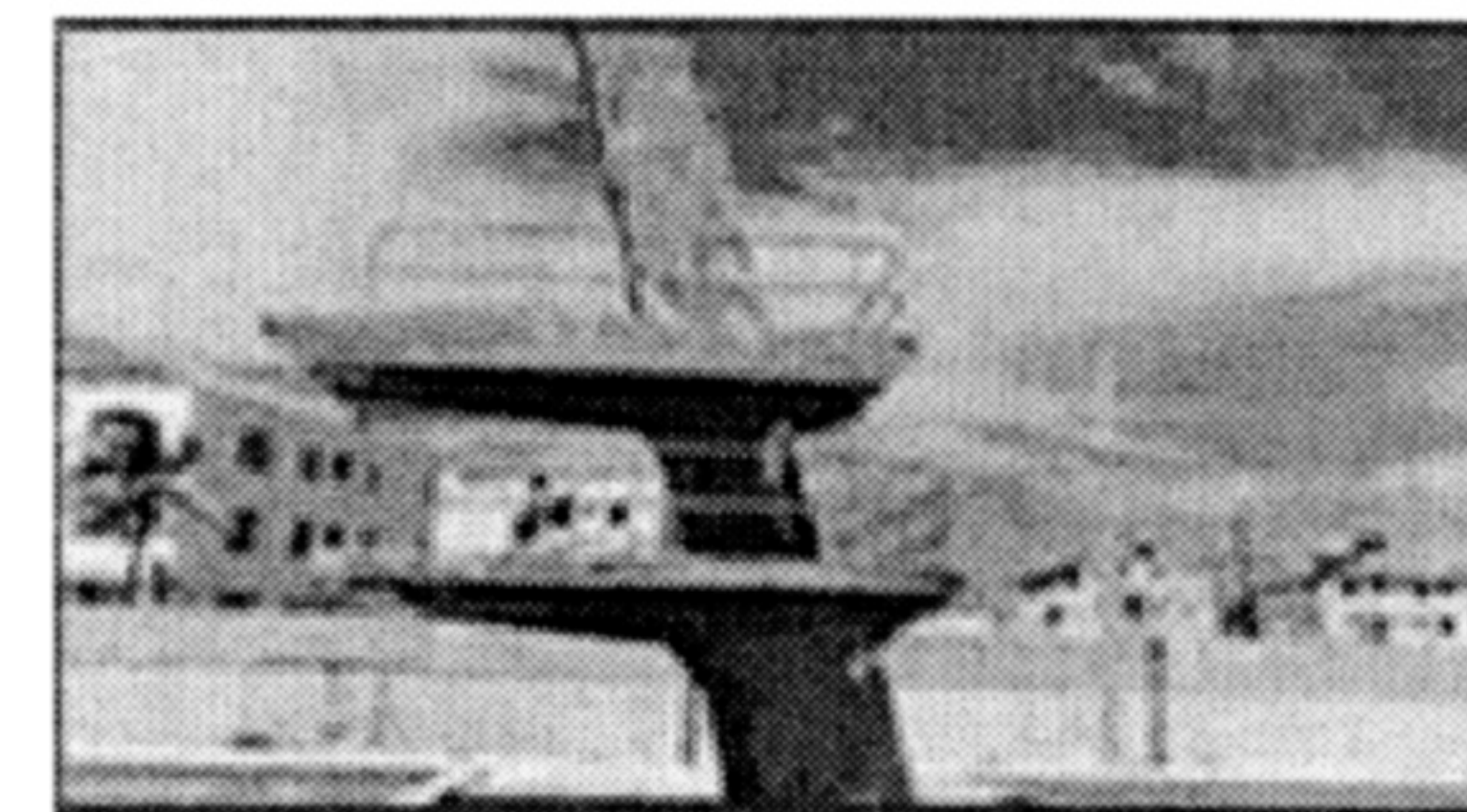


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The Man Without a Past [*Mies vailla menneisyyttä*]



Finland, 2002, 97 min

Director Aki Kaurismäki

Producer/Screenwriter Aki Kaurismäki

Cinematographer Timo Salminen

Editor Timo Linnasalo

Cast Markku Peltola, Kati Outinen, Annikki Tähti, Juhani Niemelä, Kaija Pakarinen

Sales Agent: Bavaria Film International GmbH

A man disembarks from a train in Helsinki and immediately gets beaten up by three thugs. On a hospital table, he dies, and is miraculously revived, bandages shielding his weathered face: he has forgotten his name and his identity. This tantalizing scenario begins *The Man Without a Past*, Aki Kaurismäki's wonderful new B-movie musical melodrama, the second in his planned trilogy on unemployment, and unquestionably the feel-good film of the year. With his trademarked riotous miserablism, Kaurismäki throws his deadpan hero (Markku Peltola, Finland's answer to Robert Mitchum) among the unemployed denizens of Helsinki's docks, who all seem to possess a laconic yet charming world-weariness.

For though the characters remain delightfully dour, we have been transported outside of Scandinavia proper, into a Finnish fairytale version of a John Ford-like community. Our hero, known only as M (one of many sly film references), finds love with a repressed Christian soldier (Kaurismäki stalwart Kati Outinen), and a new business, transforming a lifeless Salvation Army band into a rockabilly-tango combo. But with each improvement comes a temporary, hilarious setback, attesting to the problems involved in flying beneath society's official radar: when attempting to open a bank account, M is unwittingly involved in a robbery and arrested for being unable to give his own name. Influenced in equal parts by Bresson, Renoir, Vigo and Keaton, few contemporary filmmakers are as successful as Kaurismäki in ennobling the luckless proletariat--and their "attack dogs"--with such rich humanity, warmth, humour and morality. Winner of the Grand Prix and Best Actress, Cannes Film Festival.

Programme Code: MANWI

Sat Sep 28, 9:30pm
Visa Screening Room @the Vogue
\$8.50

Tue Oct 1, 2:00pm
Granville 7 Cinema 1
\$6.50

Selected Filmography

Crime and Punishment (83), Calamari Union (85), Shadows in Paradise (86), Hamlet Goes Business (87), Ariel (88), Leningrad Cowboys Go America (89), The Match Factory Girl (90), I Hired a Contract Killer (90), La Vie de Bohème (92)

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