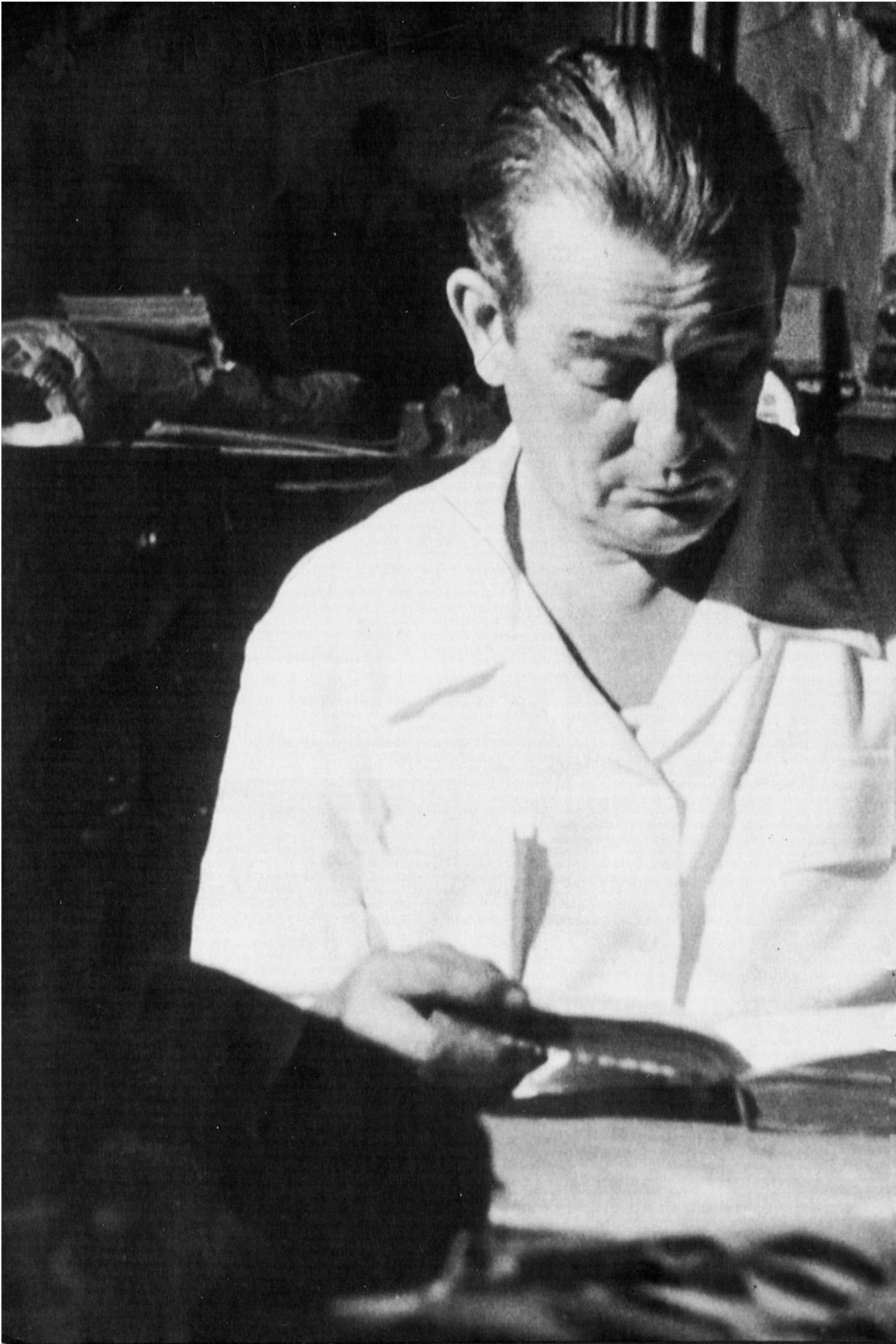


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The Centennial Year of

Marcel Pagnol

Marcel Pagnol was born at Aubange on 28 February, 1895. At the same time, a few miles away, Auguste and Louis Lumière were immortalising the arrival of a train in the Ciotat Station... Said Pagnol: 'The cinema and I were born on the same day at the same place.'

Pagnol began his working career as a playwright, earning enthusiastic acclaim for his dialogue and situations in plays like *Topaze*, *Marius* and *Fanny*. But when sound came to the cinema he turned his back on a successful literary and stage career and began working in film. He began to learn his craft with Alexander Korda, who directed *Marius*, and perfected it with Marc Allegret (who made *Fanny*), allowing Pagnol to direct *Cesar*, the final film in his *Fanny* trilogy.

In his native Provence he created his own studio and laboratories, where he was owner, producer, screenwriter and director. He virtually ignored Paris, and ensured his films were steeped in Provençal customs and manners, building a locally-based production and acting team.

His greatest cinematic triumphs came in the 1930s, with films such as *Marius*, *Fanny*, *Cesar*, *Angele*, *Harvest* and *The Baker's Wife*, when audiences relished the honest warmth and humanity of his films.

Other directors have re-made his films or produced versions of his stories – for example Claude Berri's *Jean de Florette* and *Manon des Sources*, and Yves Robert's *La Gloire de mon père* and *Le Château de ma mère* – but it is still Pagnol's original versions that carry the greatest reflection of Provençal life. This selection of Pagnol's films – a series of new prints – allows a chance to dip into the locations and personalities of Pagnol's Provence. ◀

MARK ADAMS

The Fanny Trilogy



Marius

Mon 20 Nov 6.20 NFT1

Pagnol's entry into cinema was as producer and screenwriter on the film of his hit play. The action takes place mainly in the Marseilles waterfront's Bar de la Marine, owned by the crabby Cesar, whose son Marius (Pierre Fresnay) finds the lure of the sea stronger than his love for Fanny (Orane Demazis, then off-screen married to Pagnol). With charming characters and wonderfully performed comic set-pieces, it establishes the warm atmosphere of the trilogy. *France 1931/Dir Alexander Korda. With Raimu. 125 mins.*



Fanny

Thu 23 Nov 6.20 NFT1

Picking up exactly where *Marius* ends, *Fanny* retains the first part's humour, vitality and depth of character. To give the storyline away would marr the enjoyment of the trilogy, but the performances – especially Raimu and Orane Demazis as Fanny – are charming, and screenwriter Pagnol displays a wonderful skill with comic dialogue. *France 1932/Dir Marc Allegret. With Charpin. 125 mins.*



Cesar

Tue 5 Dec 6.00 NFT1

Taking place 20 years after the events of *Marius*, Pagnol – now also director – opened up the final part of the trilogy with extra location filming. Without giving the plot away, it is full of fine reflections on age and family and rich with emotion. Again, the original cast reprise their roles, and are joined by Fouche as Fanny's now adult son who determines to reunite his family. *France 1938/Dir Marcel Pagnol. 123 mins.*



The Baker's Wife (La Femme du boulanger)

Mon 11 Dec 8.30 NFT2

When his young wife runs off with a handsome shepherd, the baker of a tiny Provençal village refuses to produce another loaf until her return. The excellent Raimu (who played the father Cesar in the *Fanny* trilogy) is excellent as the cuckold who warmly welcomes back his errant wife... but then reviles the cat for having been away! Much praised on its release, this is perfect Pagnol. *France 1938/Dir Marcel Pagnol. 127 mins.*

Harvest (aka Regain)

Wed 13 Dec 6.10 NFT2

A young poacher and a down-on-her-luck cabaret singer (Orane Demazis) give life to a deserted village in the French Alps when they set up home there, in Pagnol's powerful story of regeneration. The director had an entire town constructed to represent the hamlet of Jean Giono's novel. Banned in its original release on moral grounds, *Harvest* is a pastoral poem filmed in a romantic and elegant manner. *France 1937/Dir Marcel Pagnol. With Fernandel, Gabriel Gabrio, E Delmont. 127 mins.*



Angele + Jofroi

Sun 17 Dec 5.30 NFT2

Realistic Provençal settings transcend the melodramatic plot of a peasant girl (Orane Demazis) who, seduced and abandoned, heads off to Marseilles to walk the streets. As Satumin, the simple-minded farm hand who rescues her, Fernandel (in his first great Pagnol role) emerged as a great tragicomic actor. One of the first French films shot on location, it was also acknowledged (by Rossellini, DeSica and others) as one of the first neo-realist pictures. *France 1934/Dir Marcel Pagnol. With Jean Servais. Jofroi* was the first of four works by Provençal writer Jean Giono to be adapted by Pagnol. A comic, ecological 'morality' tale of an old peasant (the impressive Vincent Scotto) who sells his orchard and then objects to the new owner cutting down his beloved trees. *France 1933/Dir Marcel Pagnol. With Henri Poupon. 187 mins total.*



Angele



Jofroi

Letters From My Windmill (Les Lettres de mon moulin)

Wed 20 Dec 6.00 NFT2

Omnibus of three stories by nineteenth century Provençal writer Alphonse Daudet: *The Three Low Masses*, about a priest's mass stolen by the devil; *The Elixer of Father Gauchet*, in which monks keep their monastery going by selling home-made liquor, and *The Secret of Master Comille*, in which a miller grinds flour for 18 years, for a fictional client. *France 1955/Dir Marcel Pagnol. With Henri Vilbert, Daxely, Rellys. 142 mins.*



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Le Schpountz

Fri 22 Dec 8.20 NFT2

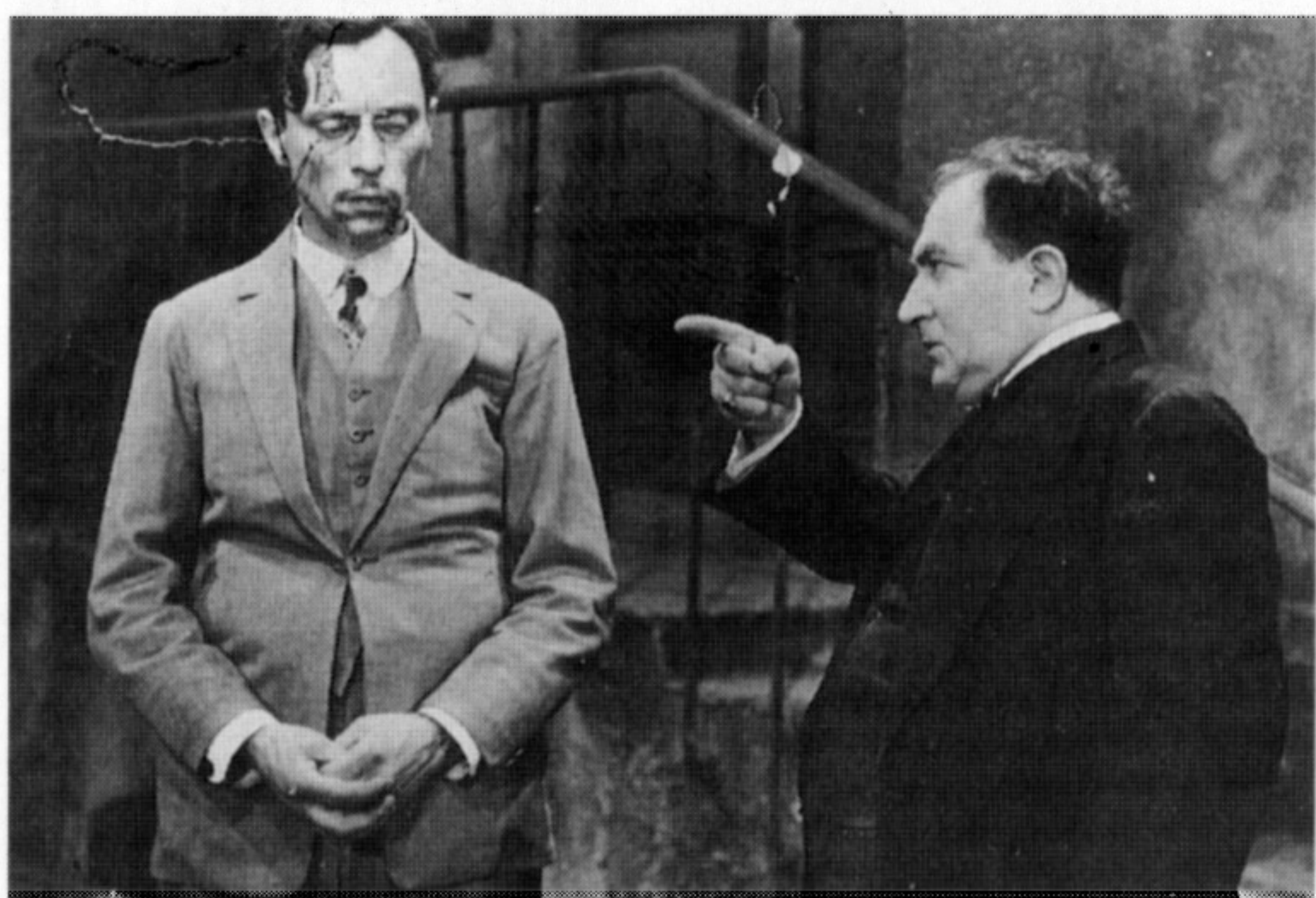
A movie-fan grocer from Provence is the victim of a practical joke played on him by a film crew on location, but – to the surprise of everyone but himself – he becomes a star. Pagnol's amusing, touching, self-mocking satire contains an eloquent eulogy to laughter. Fernandel is a wonderful 'schpountz' (Slav argot for a screwy person), surrounded by a wonderful gallery of supporting characters. Vincent Canby in the *New York Times* described Fernandel as 'an admirable French jewel'. *France 1938/Dir Marcel Pagnol. With Orane Demazis, Charpin. 135 mins.*



The Well-Digger's Daughter (La Fille du puisatier)

Fri 29 Dec 8.20 NFT2

Laced throughout with superb settings and piquant performances, *The Well-Digger's Daughter* stars Pagnol's two favourite actors in characteristic Pagnol roles: Raimu as the father of the seduced and abandoned schoolgirl (Josette Day) and Fernandel as his maladroit assistant, willing to make an honest woman of her. *France 1940/Dir Marcel Pagnol. With Raimu, Charpin. 142 mins.*



Topaze (Jouvet version)

Sat 30 Dec 6.00 NFT2

Louis Jouvet recreates his magisterial performance from the 1928 stage play that made Pagnol famous. The story of a simple schoolmaster who allows himself to be exploited but then recreates himself to turn the tables on his corrupters. Interestingly in the same year a US version was made using the same title, directed by Harry d'Abbadie d'Arrast and starring John Barrymore and Myrna Loy. *France 1933/Dir Louis Gasnier. With Edwige Feuillere. 133 mins. Joint ticket available with Topaze (1951) £6.75, concs £4.65*



Topaze (Fernandel version)

Sat 30 Dec 8.40 NFT2

The second French version of the popular satire has Fernandel following in the footsteps of Jouvet, bringing great affection to the role of the schoolmaster who finds more profitable ways of earning a living. The French critic of the time Jean Jacques Gautier wrote: 'Topaze has become in a way a classic. Monsieur Marcel Pagnol was very right to redo it with Fernandel... Monsieur Fernandel is an amazing artist.' *France 1951/Dir Marcel Pagnol. With Marcel Vallee. 98 mins. Joint ticket available with Topaze (1933) £6.75, concs £4.65*