

Document Citation

Title	[The Devil probably]
Author(s)	Andrew Sarris Andrew Sarris
Source	<i>Village Voice</i>
Date	1977 Oct 24
Type	review
Language	English English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Le Diable probablement (The Devil, probably), Bresson, Robert, 1977

The Devil Probably is Bresson's twelfth feature film in a quarter of a century of quixotic individuality in the midst of an overwhelmingly conformist motion picture industry. Some people around him fear that at 67 he is unlikely ever to make another film. The cinema would be much the poorer for his absence, but we could console ourselves with the knowledge that *The Devil Probably* leaves us with a testament of moral and artistic elegance that is extremely rare in any age. Though much of the film may seem exasperating even to his erstwhile admirers, its privileged moments are so rigorously and exquisitely fashioned that the ultimate effect is one of an abrupt awakening to the longings of the spirit. Bresson's story of a young student's suicide may be journalistically questionable. His young people seem hung over from the '60s, and their rituals of disillusion seem unduly contrived. Bresson has always tended to denote rather than depict earthly sins and pleasures, thus dealing more in sign than in substance. Yet in rigidly controlling the visible feelings of his players he has often succumbed in his own style to giddiness and feverishness brought on by an excess of spiritual consecration. One can walk away from Bresson as from any bothersome eccentric, but if one chooses to stay one may well decide that *The Devil Probably* expresses the malaise of our time more profoundly and more magnificently than any work of art in any medium.