

Document Citation

Title	L'amour fou
Author(s)	Jonathan Rosenbaum
Source	<i>Reader (Chicago, Ill.)</i>
Date	1994 Dec 09
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	L'amour fou (Mad love), Rivette, Jacques, 1968

CRITIC'S
CHOICE**L'amour fou**

and his actress wife (Bulle Ogier), who leaves the production at the beginning of the film and then festers in paranoid isolation. The rehearsals, filmed by Rivette (in 35 millimeter) and by TV documentarist Andre S. Labarthe (in 16), are real, and the relationship between Kalfon and Ogier is fictional, but this only begins to describe the powerful interfacing of life and art that takes place over the film's hypnotic, epic unfolding. In the rehearsal space Rivette cuts frequently between the 35- and 16-millimeter footage, juxtaposing two kinds of documentary reality; in the couple's apartment, filmed only in 35, the oscillation between love and madness, passion and mistrust, builds to several terrifying and awesome climaxes in which the distinctions between life and theater, reality and fiction, become virtually irrelevant. In many ways this is Ogier's richest, finest performance, and Kalfon keeps pace with her every step of the way. This film captures the dreams and desperation of the 60s like few others, and you emerge from it changed; it's a life experience as much as a film experience. Rivette's obsessional uses of real time and natural duration take some getting used to, but the experience becomes both mesmerizing and all-enveloping. Facets Multimedia Center, 1517 W. Fullerton, Friday, December 9, 6:30; Saturday and Sunday, December 10 and 11, 1:30 and 6:30; and Monday through Thursday, December 12 through 15, 6:30; 281-4114.

—Jonathan Rosenbaum

Rightly described by Dave Kehr as Jacques Rivette's "breakthrough film, the first of his features to employ extreme length (252 minutes), a high degree of improvisation, and a formal contrast between film and theater," this rarely screened 1968 masterpiece is one of the great French films of the 60s. It centers on rehearsals for a production of Racine's *Andromaque* and the doomed yet passionate relationship between the director (Jean-Pierre Kalfon)