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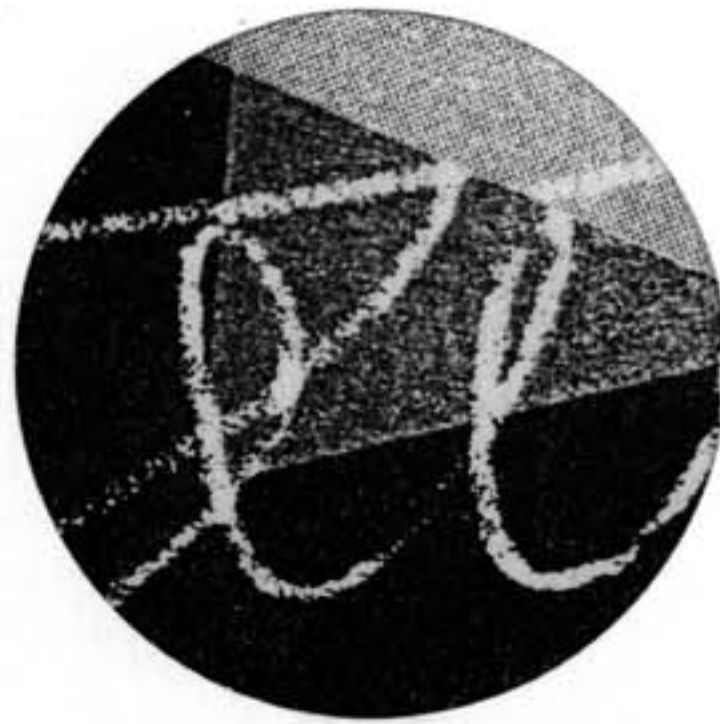
Dans la ville blanche (In the white city), Tanner, Alain, 1983

Une flamme dans mon coeur (A flame in my heart), Tanner, Alain,
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"I make films
because it is a form
of rearguard combat,
and that is the most
attractive kind today."

(Alain Tanner)



A

film

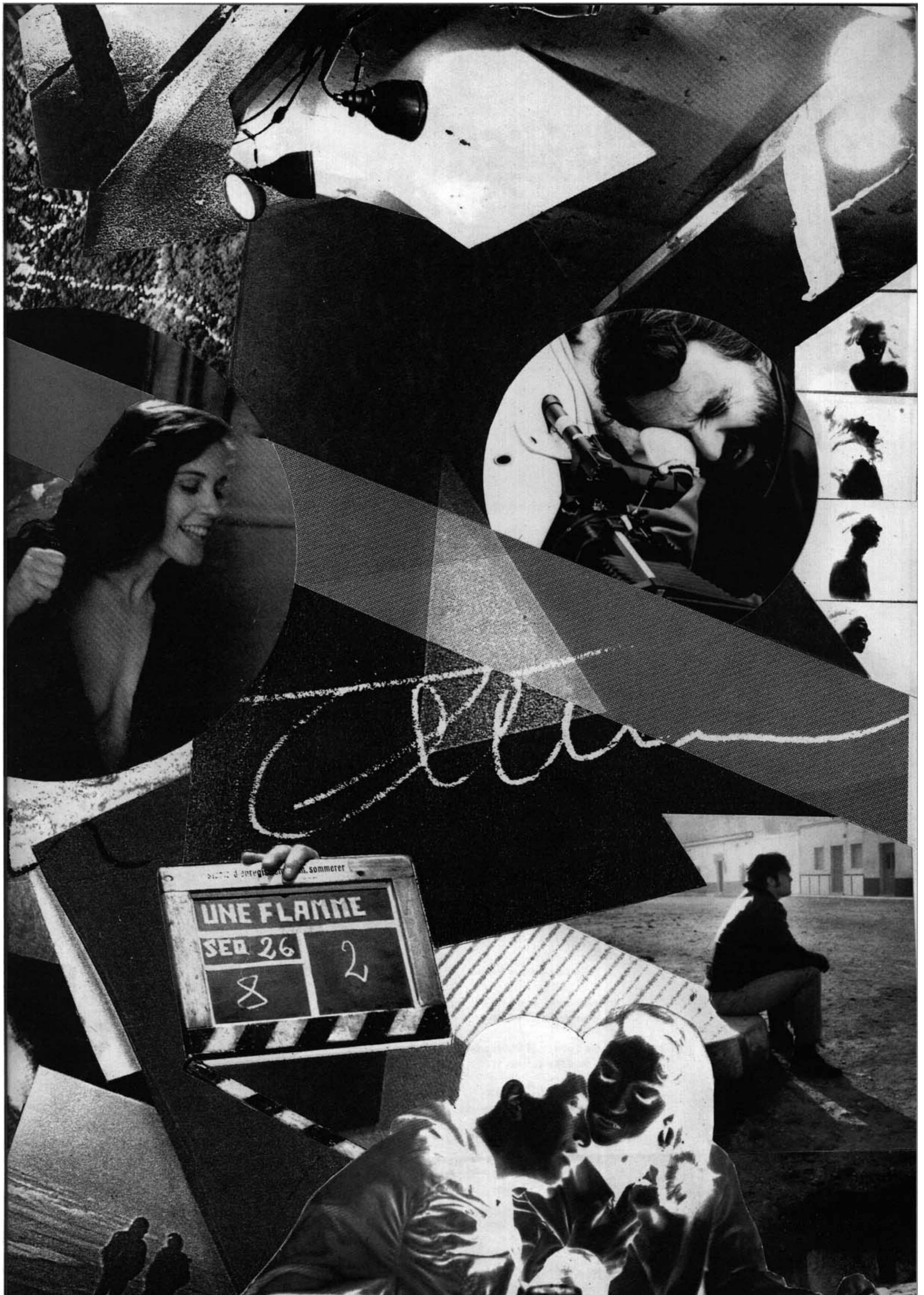
poet

between

utopia and

realism

by Christian Dimitriu



CHRISTIAN DIMITRIU

1945

In spite of the diversity of his origins, Christian Dimitriu considers himself a *Lausanner* from Buenos Aires. He spent his childhood and school years in Argentina. From 1964, he studied at the University of Lausanne, taking licentiate degrees in political economics and social science. In 1981 he was appointed assistant to Freddy Buache at the Cinémathèque Suisse. Since 1983 he has represented this institution at the Fédération internationale des archives du film (FIAF). He has performed a number of missions for UNESCO, notably in the Cape Verde Islands, the Congo Republic, Zaire and in Latin America. He is the author of *Alain Tanner* (Henri Veyrier, Paris, 1985) and *L'Argentine et son cinéma* (Editions du Festival de films du Tiers-Monde, Fribourg-Switzerland, 1987). Since 1983, deputy-director of the Cinémathèque Suisse. In 1991, vice-president of the FIAF.

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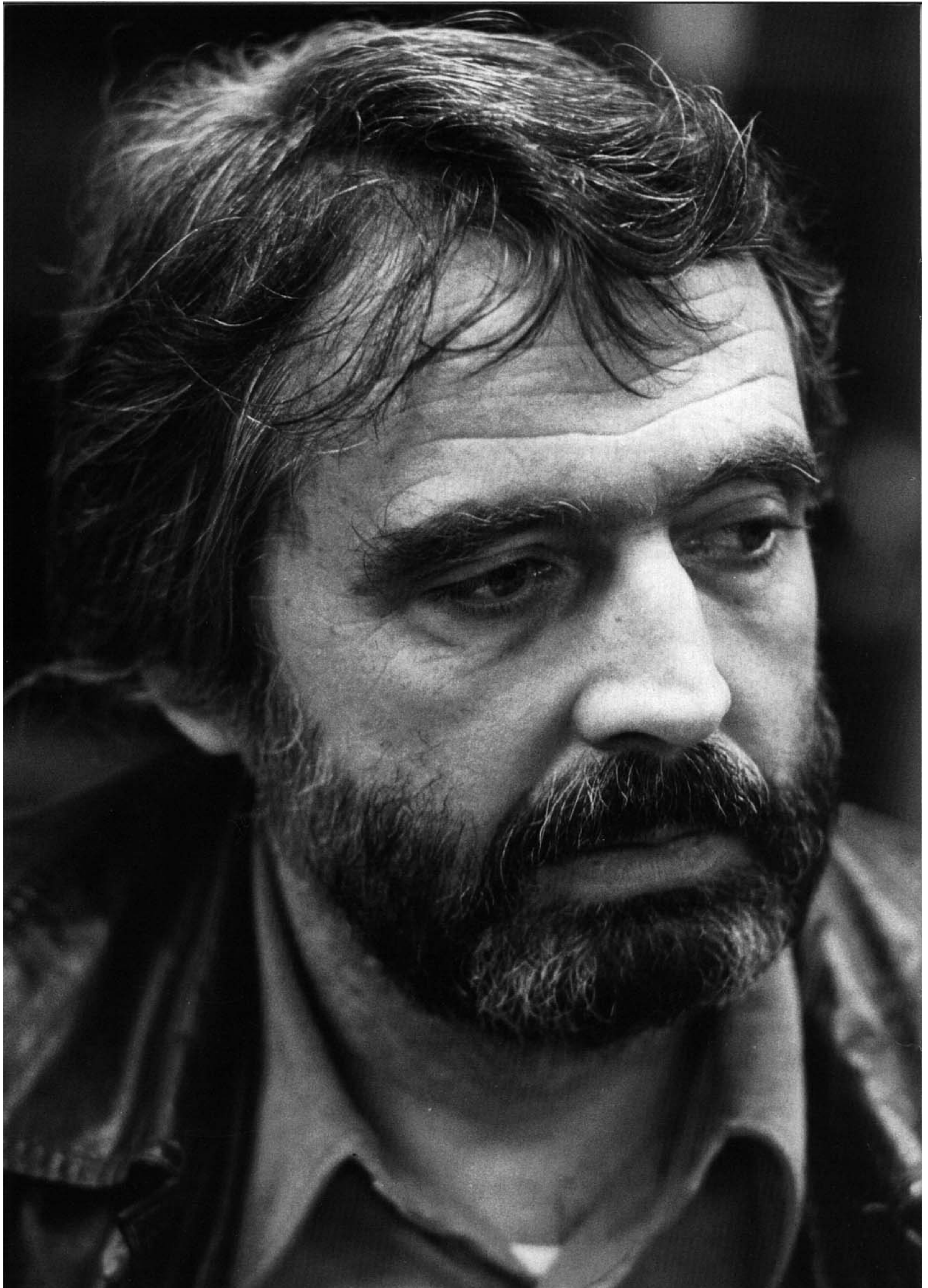
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CONTENTS

ALAIN TANNER A thumbnail biography	7
TANNER IN LONDON	9
BACK TO SWITZERLAND after an interlude in Paris	11
TANNER IN THE SIXTIES	13
TANNER AND TELEVISION	15
FROM DOCUMENTARY to feature film	17
CENTRIFUGAL TEMPTATIONS	23
CHARACTERS	29
FABLE, METAPHOR MORALE and poetry	31
TIME AND SPACE	33
OPTIMIST WITHOUT a cause	35
FILMOGRAPHY	37



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INTRODUCTION

For Tanner, the creation of a film is a total experience. He lives each film, not as the parcelling-out process usually involved in exercising a profession, but as an attempt at a palpable grasp of the real through the imaginary. Tanner arrives at reality through the feature film rather than the documentary. Every one of his films, in fact, is based on a theoretical reflection – as complete as the state of his ideas at the moment allows it to be – on society, on himself, and on cinematographic theory and film-making technique. Tanner's work is a permanent attempt to struggle against the obfuscation of the technique of film-making. With an approach that might be said to fall within the domain of epistemology as applied to the social sciences, Tanner utilizes and observes the film as the instrument of not just communication and entertainment but also knowledge. Although a dialectician by nature, Tanner has also been helped by circumstances: the non-existence of a cinematographic infrastructure in Switzerland has allowed him to remain on the sidelines of the film industry. He has been careful to avoid going elsewhere to seek his dependence.

It may be that a certain weariness accentuated by a feeling of helplessness provoked by the Gulf War and the world situation in 1991 has caused Tanner to put aside the combative spirit of his younger days, but he has lost nothing of the jovial, brotherly character of the artist who, using the expedient of the fable, that privileged vehicle of the sage and the moralist, continues to address a youthful public who sees in auteur films some keys to an understanding of a world in disarray and the main 'raison d'être' of the cinema.

Although Tanner's films have always been associated with what has been called the 'Swiss cinema', his films have generally gone beyond the borders of his country, even though many of them are set within a framework of Swiss places, people and situations. In fact it is by anchoring his films in a Swiss context, in his own immediate reality, that Tanner extends his analysis and projects to our entire post-industrial society and his work tends to universality.

■ Christian Dimitriu



1929

Born in Geneva on December 6, his mother, a Chicago-born daughter of a Hungarian adventurer and a French pacifist-painter-writer who had worked in the theatre in Paris in her youth. His father, despite his name, of German Swiss origin, was a Mediterranean who felt at home only in the Provence.

1945

After elementary school and the school-leaving certificate at the traditional Collège Calvin (1), Tanner half-heartedly pursues studies in economics at the University of Geneva. He meets Claude Goretta, who had just created the Ciné-Club Universitaire, and joins it as an animator.

1952-54

At the avant-garde film festival which takes place in Basle, he meets some important members of the intellectual avant-garde movement (2). Attracted by the open sea, he embarks at Genoa as an auditor on a Swiss cargo ship. His brief experience on the high seas was to leave a profound impression on the young Tanner (3).

1955-59

Lives in London, where a number of encounters will decisively affect Tanner's future career: Lindsay Anderson, Karel Reisz, John Berger, the British Film Institute and its productions, the British New Left, the comrades of the Free Cinema and the stimulating atmosphere created by the Angry Young Men of that time. Tanner makes his first film, *Nice Time*, with Claude Goretta who had just joined him in London. During this time he also works as Assistant Director on a BBC television series entitled *Living with Danger*. He makes his first contacts with the Nouvelle Vague and the French Cinémathèque, meets Frank Jotterand and then returns to Switzerland.



ALAIN TANNER

A thumbnail biography

1963

New Swiss Federal cinema law goes into effect, which Tanner had actively promoted since the previous year by founding, along with several friends, the Swiss Film Directors Association.

1964

Tanner marries Jeanine Giudici (4). This year sees the birth of his eldest daughter Nathalie as well as that of the Swiss National Exposition, for which he realises *Les apprentis* (The Apprentices). From 1965 to 1966 he makes several films and television reports. His youngest daughter Cécile is born in 1967. 1968 is a turning point for Tanner. He shoots newsreels in Paris, London and the Jura.

1969

Tanner begins to direct feature films which, paradoxically, permit him to discern reality more clearly (5). Apart from the texts having to do with his films (notes, screenplays, etc.), Tanner has by this time also published numerous essays and articles reflecting his preoccupations as a film director. Mention may be made of *Recording Africa in Sight and Sound* (Vol. 26, London, 1956), which already contains the key to the ethnological perspective Tanner will adopt in treating his own country; *La Politique, elle est cachée dedans* (Politics is mixed up with it), an essay on the relations between film-making and politics, which appeared in *Tout va bien*, and *les Télé-Aphorismes* (Television Aphorisms) in *Cinema 80/1* (Zurich, 1980), which give us Tanner's reflections on the phenomenon of television. Beginning with his very first film *Nice Time*, which received special mention in the category Experimental Short Films in Venice in 1957, Tanner's cinema work has been honoured by numerous prizes at international festivals.

1991

Giving the lie to the old saying that no one is a prophet in his own country, on March 6 Tanner is awarded the *Prix des arts du spectacle de la Ville de Genève* (Performing Arts Prize of the City of Geneva) as a sign of recognition of the artist's work by the City of Calvin.

7



A-Z

ACTOR'S DIRECTOR

I have never had an *a priori*, precise technique in my relations with the actors in my films. The term "actor's director" is a vague notion which can take a thousand different forms, depending on the people or projects involved. (1976)

AUTEUR CINEMA

Today there are two possible poles that can predominate in the creation of a film: it is either a labour of elaboration, carried out on the level of language, or else a purely subjective inspiration, involving fantasies, obsessions or dreams personal to an individual (...). In actual fact these two poles are never totally separable. (1980)

AUTEUR The cinema needs more painters and poets than story-tellers. (1985)

BIO-RHYTHM

I was very struck to discover that all my films have the same number of shots per reel and the same number of musical interludes. It's physiological: you make a film just like you breathe! (1985)

BLACK AND WHITE

There is generally more mystery, more tension in black and white, which plays uniquely with shadows and lights. The point of impact of the image sought by the eye is much more quickly discovered, thus leading to a sort of simplification of the dramatic reading of the shot being filmed. (1978)

BUDGET

At the beginning, filming with small budgets brought with it the advantage of forcing you to be efficient (...) at the level of meaning, because prestigious things like a "production film" with the corresponding action and scenery are simply not available to you. (1969)



TANNER IN LONDON

The arrival of the young Tanner in London in 1955 took place in the climate of cultural effervescence that marked the decline of the traditional British institutions of the postwar period. Its culminating point in the political and economic domains was the Suez crisis in 1956.

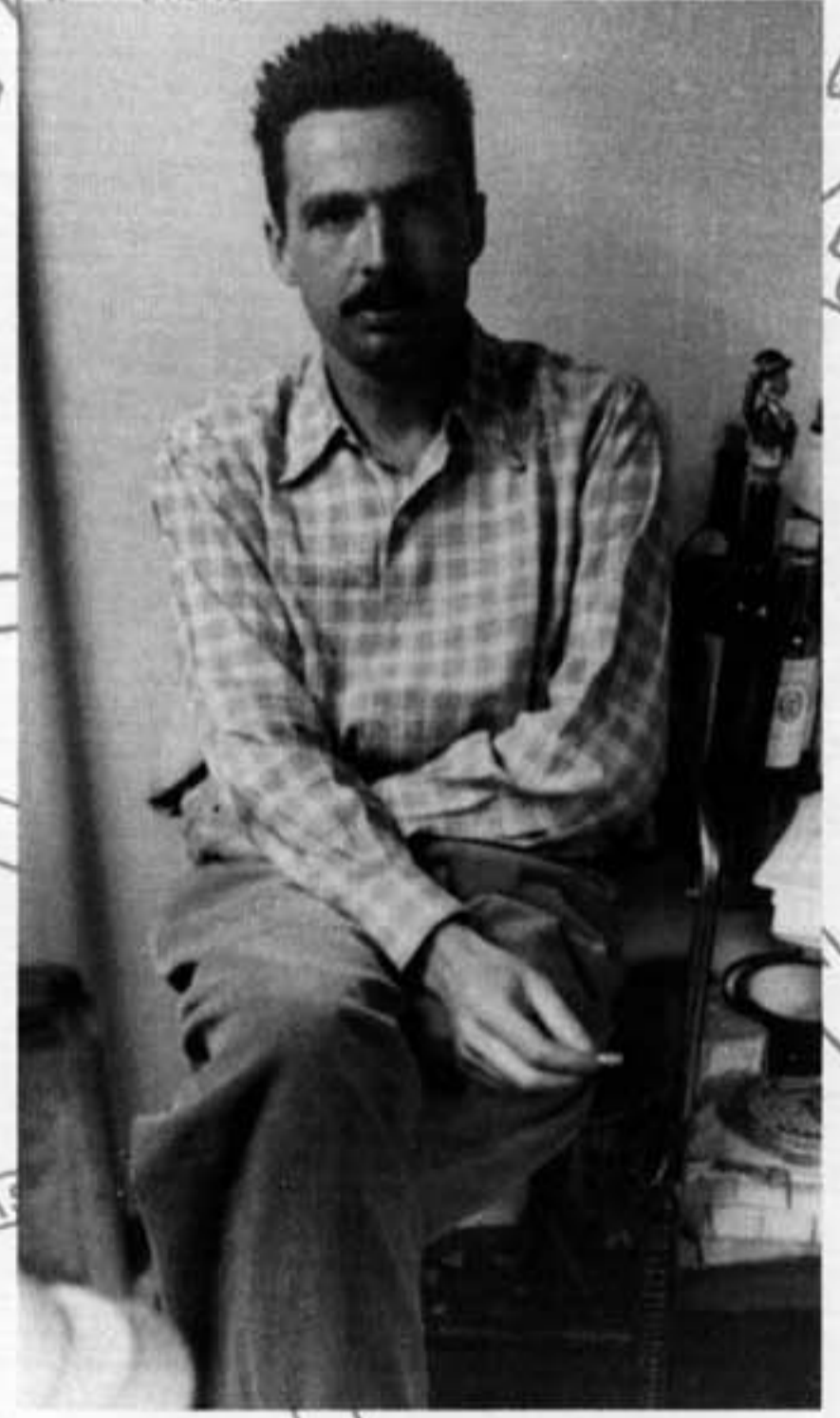
Financed by BFI funds for experimental productions, the film consists of about 190 shots organized in a rapid montage where the images are linked to the sound track in a novel way, giving the work a richer signification than that of the typical documentary of the time. It was shown for the first time in the Free Cinema III programme under the general title *Look at Britain with Anderson's Every Day Except Christmas*. The style of **Nice Time** is very close to that of the school of British documentaries begun some years before by John Grierson. This time, however, the intention is enriched by a new dimension: social commitment. **Nice Time** prefigured the manner that Tanner would later

That year was also an important one in the theatre: *Look Back in Anger* by John

Osborne represented a revolt against the conventional, petty bourgeois theatre of the time. The London theatre-going public also discovered *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett and the Berliner Ensemble of Bertolt Brecht. In 1956 numerous reviews were being published, the most important of which was the *University and Left Revue*, where the British New Left gave expression to very violent anti-Establishment sentiments. In the cinema, the humanistic British "New Left" school had gained in importance, in a reaction to the mediocrity then reigning at J. Arthur Rank. The Free Cinema Movement, offering a series of six programs between 1956 - 1959, together with Tanner's encounters with Lindsay Anderson, Karel Reisz and John Berger prepared the way for his future work. At the British Film Institute (BFI), Tanner discovered or else deepened his acquaintance with filmmakers who were to influence his work: Dovjenco and Donskoi, Ozu, Satyajit Ray, Vigo, Franju and Rouch, Truffaut and Chabrol. It was in this particularly stimulating London environment that Tanner co-directed together with Claude Goretta (who had come from Geneva to join him) his first film, **Nice Time**, the French title of which is **Piccadilly la nuit**.



Nice Time, 1956: twenty-five years before *Les années-lumière*, Trevor Howard appears in Tanner's first co-realization on a poster.



treat space and time: it deals with Piccadilly Circus on a Saturday night; a precise place and time.

CAMERA

For too long, film critics were always repeating that the camera is an eye, an idea that has been further reinforced by the cinéma direct. But in practice, everything you could imagine, look at or foresee falls apart when you have to make it happen via the lens of the camera. (1969)

CENTRE AND PERIPHERY

The wind of revolution always blows towards the exterior of the social circle. I have always wanted to reverse its direction so that the seeds it bears can fall back to earth inside the circle. (1976)

CHANGE

In the 1960s they said that the cinema was going to change the world. Today I say if you want to change the world, first change your cinema. (1969)

CHARACTERS

Characters are people who are always bits of myself, bits of dreams, of desire. In front of the camera they suddenly become actors, with desires, faces and a complexity of their own. (1985)

CINEMA

Cinema is about all the art of the shot. (1969)

COLOUR I

Colour is much too realistic; it "shows everything" and the eye must search harder for a point of reference. But this is not absolutely true, because for many people, through habits acquired over a long time and reinforced by the fact that many watch television in black and white, colour still means reality, the documentary film, the newsfilm, whereas the colour feature film takes on an aspect of fiction, of a "lie". (1968)



Les apprentis, 1964

On his way back to Switzerland in 1958, Tanner remained for a short period in France. He did not find there the same effervescence that was going on in London: "I was as discouraged by what was going on in France as I had been enthusiastic about what was happening in London. In Paris I found myself with people who were making films I didn't like at all at the time, whereas the atmosphere around Ealing seemed warm and friendly."



Ramuz, passage d'un poète, 1961

Even though Tanner was not fascinated by the French New Wave, he was still influenced by the theoretical debates in *Les cahiers du cinéma*, even if it were only by its opposition to the views expressed by the Free Cinema movement in *Sequence* and *Sight and Sound*. Now, after four years in London and Paris, the young Tanner directed his

sensitive eye, previously nourished by the urban atmosphere of the great capitals, to the countryside around the Lake of Geneva and one of its illustrious poets.

Ramuz, passage d'un poète (Ramuz, Passage of a Poet, 1961) was made with the encouragement of another Swiss whom Tanner had met in Paris in 1959,

BACK TO SWITZERLAND

after an interlude in Paris

Frank Jotterand, and the financing of the Pro Helvetia, the Arts Council of Switzerland.

Also in 1961, Tanner received a request from two Geneva architects, Georges Brera and Paul Waltenspuhl, who had built the Geisendorf School in Geneva, to make a film for projection on a triple screen, to be shown at the 12th Triennale of Milan. The theme was to be that of the modern school, approached under the double aspect of architecture and education. Tanner accordingly made **L'École** (The School, 1962) in polyvision. It was an opportunity to explore new formal and technical possi-

bilities. Thanks to the three screens, he was able to present children, materials (girders, bricks, wood, nuts and bolts) and architecture simultaneously.

In 1962 preparations were under way all over Switzerland for a National Exposition to be held in 1964 celebrating 400 years of history. Henry Brandt was given the assignment of making a series of films entitled **La Suisse s'interroge** (Switzerland Asks Itself Questions). Tanner presented a project inspired by Karel Reisz's *We are the Lambeth Boys*, but ran into problems owing to the subject, which was considered too controversial. Finally, Tanner received the sup-

port of an industrialist who took on the task of getting together the financial means necessary to carry out a revised project, and he made **Les Apprentis** (Apprentices, 1964) using the methods of direct cinema. So as not to displease his silent partners, in the film he lets the apprentices speak for themselves, without adding any commentary. Thanks to a very careful organization of the montage, a true observation of the social situation of apprentices emerges from what they say about their apprenticeship, their leisure time, their hopes and, last but not least, also from what they do not say.



Les apprentis, 1964

COLOUR II

With the almost total domination of colour, it is black and white which has again become the colour of fiction. The "stupid thing" about reality is colour, like the news on television. (1985)

COMMITMENT

I have never been militant about anything but the cinema. And that is already complicated enough. (1969)

CONTENT

The cinema doesn't prove anything or it proves everything. The only proof of the truth of its content that can be claimed is that there is an adequation between the film and its purpose. The content is entirely in the form. (1977)

CUT I

The utilization of the sequence shot also restores full importance to the cut, the primordial element in a film. The cut "says" an enormous amount of things if the film is not cut within its sequences. In the montage, I cut all the cuts in image and sound - contrary to what the film editors teach in the schools of film-making. I do all I can to make the cut still more sensitive. (1976)

CUT II

The cut is a moment I find absolutely fascinating. The end of one image, the beginning of another and how they speak to one another, respond to one another or collide with one another, revives the magic of filming. (1985)

CUTTING

The cutting operation has as its purpose to eliminate as far as possible the effects produced by the weakness of the camera and the lighting... (1974)

Already at the beginning of the 1960s a number of significant elements of Tanner's future films were in place: the city scene, the rural countryside, the lyricism of certain images against a background of social sensitivity, especially a profound feeling for the friendship between human beings that lies beyond the contradictions that disturb their relations.

In **Nice Time, Ramuz, L'Ecole** and **Les Apprentis** we already see the 'genetic programme' of Tanner's work. However, we cannot pursue the diachronic approach to Tanner's work taken at the beginning of this study without calling attention to the variety of aesthetic, theoretical and political currents that influenced this film-maker in the intervening years, culminating in his feature films.

We can attempt to identify and describe certain elements that marked Tanner's in the 1960s: his approach to Bertolt Brecht, the beginning of his collaboration with John Berger, certain results of May '68, notably the various currents of structuralism, television and finally the influence of the 'Group of Five'!

BRECHT AND TANNER

Tanner's work has doubtlessly been influenced in its entirety by an idea of theatrical or cinematographic montage that was dear to Bertolt Brecht. Up to **Jonah...** this influence operated systematically and since then has been an underlying reference in his work.

Tanner himself comments on this in the following manner: "During the 1960s my motivations were primarily of a political order and I wanted to put Brecht

into practice: to work on distancing, to put people into a story without really telling one, to break the linear aspect of the narrative, to get away from naturalism, to keep the story from fully starting to gain its own momentum by avoiding the classic identification between the spectator and the character. It was deliberate; it was a temperament thing." Like Brecht in the theatre, Tanner in his films adopted the procedure of obtaining distance and de-dramatizing in order to break out of the traditional process of identification. Fiction, however, nourishes itself on atemporal, eternal and universal concepts which mask social contradictions.

Distancing consists first in minimalizing intrigue: Tanner lets distance come into play in order to facilitate the spectator's criticism; he adopts Brecht's perspective, who considered the person "like a variable of the milieu and the milieu as a variable of the person". This is how he historicizes the story. All Tanner's films in fact allude to present historical becoming.

The utilization not only of comments and quotations but also humour and irony promote a critical withdrawal on the part of the spectator. Tanner, however, has often doubted the aptitude of this procedure, saying that "irony plays

TANNER IN THE SIXTIES

on the contrast between what is and what could be, and provokes a nostalgia for what could be. But irony also marks the limits of our powers. Perhaps it is a sign of our powerlessness."

With Tanner, the actor's performance is the principal motor of distancing. Rigorous directing also permits a distance to be established by a process he calls "permanent theatricalization", something that intervenes in the actors' performance without their knowing it.

ALAIN TANNER AND JOHN BERGER

Born in London in 1926, John Berger is one of the best-known writers of the British Humanistic Left. The works of this art critic, poet, novelist, essayist, researcher and scriptwriter are among the most diversified and original products of this movement.

Tanner and Berger met in London in the 1950s. Tanner has confirmed the importance of this encounter in the following terms: "We were very close friends and I often had recourse to his collaboration because it had a dimension on the level of culture and intelligence that I found very fascinating." Recalling Berger's vision of the world, Tanner says, "His ideas are rooted in the stuff of life. John loves life, he loves people. Even though he has been a theoretician of art, he's not a theoretician. His Marxism is no dry, esoteric and academic doctrine." Both of them being poets, they found a common ground in directing people, their relationships and their psychology framed within an ideology as 'types' of social groups.

Tanner also found in Berger a support in the elaboration of the screenplay. Their first collaboration gave rise to a docu-

mentary on Chandigarh, the city designed by Le Corbusier at the foot of the Himalayas on which construction was started in 1951. In 1966, when the city was still not yet completed, Tanner went there in the company of Ernest Artaria and Fred Hufschmid and made **Une ville à Chandigarh** (A City at Chandigarh, 1966). John Berger



assisted in organizing the filmed material and wrote the commentary. The fruitful collaboration between these two kindred spirits lasted about ten years: from 1966 when John Berger, who had been living in Geneva for some time, was first approached by Tanner, until 1976, when **Jonah...** was made.

MAY '68

With the events of May '68 in Europe the form and contents of Tanner's films took on a political dimension, and the relations between political practice and that of film-making became of greater interest and more urgency, more in need of resolution than ever.

May '68 was also the crisis in the search for a revolutionary model for France and the prosperous Western countries. In fact, that same year saw a crisis break out at the heart of the Communist

Party in the USSR which condemned the Soviet model in the eyes of Western Europe. The French Communist Party (PCF) showed signs of running out of steam in its revolutionary practice. The Maoist model, Trotskyism, the war in Vietnam and Latin American specific revolutionary practice were shown to be partial experiences, giving rise to sterile sectarianisms.

The impossibility of adopting historical models or importing models applied elsewhere provoked the necessity of turning one's gaze to the nature of the daily life of contemporary society, the consumer society, and undertaking its criticism.

For that it was necessary, as Godard had done particularly in *La Chinoise* (The Chinese Woman) and *Vladimir et Rosa* (Vladimir and Rosa), to renew the language of film-making or, as Costa-Gavras had done in *Z*, to express another point of view using a cinematographic language already known. Tanner himself is situated somewhere in-between. His concern is to create films that are not so difficult as to limit the number of their spectators, nor so simple as to be comfortably consumed. The political problems raised by the events of May '68 raised questions about the entire notion of realism by stimulating a structuralist analysis of cinematographic language: by considering filmed and social reality as a system of codes and signs, Tanner adopts a structuralist approach enriched by the importance conferred by the film director on the role of history and the experience of everyday life. His films appeal to the notion of structure but they also show that structures are temporary and subject to changes.

DEPENDENCE

The status of subordination to producers that Tanner has succeeded in avoiding in Switzerland by making auteur films, and one that he has carefully avoided going in search of elsewhere. (CD. 1985)

DIALECTIC

In its terrible homogeneity, television is the antithesis of all dialectical thought. (1980)

DIRECT SOUND

For me the height of misfortune is to find myself, three months later, with actors around a microphone in a dubbing studio. (1971)

DIRECTING I

To centre something is to delineate space. Turning on and off the motors of the camera is to define a span of time for this space. These are the most important elements in directing, and it is within these that the actors are going to move. (1985)

DIRECTING II


The profession of a filmmaker is an activity that is very "foreign-minded". A film must be capable of being seen just as well in Lausanne, Los Angeles or Tokyo. If it isn't, you're dead! (1989)

DISTANCE

Numerous variants and techniques can be imagined to heighten the feeling of distance in the spectator (in order to facilitate judgement). I have often used fragmentation of the narration, interruptions of the sound, humour, voice-off, and the sequence shot. (1976)

DURATION

One of the major conquests of the modern film is work based on duration, on the length of the shots, on dead intervals – dead time –, on time which is not systematically filled. (1978)



The relation between Tanner and television has always been that of an impossible love between a film director who needs to create images freely and an institution that produces them but is subjected to laws of rationalization and therefore bureaucratization, in other words, inevitable disenchantment. After his return to Switzerland in 1964 Tanner began a period of steady collaboration with the SSR, the French Swiss television network. This period was characterized by an attempt to reach an acceptable modus vivendi for both parties and by Tanner's elaboration of a veritable critical theory of television.

Nevertheless it was television that permitted Tanner to explore some formal possibilities of getting his point of view across, notably with the four portraits filmed for the *Aujourd'hui* (Today) programme between 1968 and 1970. The last of these, called **La vie comme ça** (Life as it comes), is without doubt the TV film which best reflects the most authentic elements of Tanner's filmmaking style. This 60-minute film is the fruit of what we call chance. Tanner had to make a portrait of a person who at the last minute was unavailable. He therefore decided to take his team and visit an old friend, Claudévard, the grandson of Jura peasant farmers who had become a painter, to do the portrait. The film consists of 24 tableaux constructed in an allegorical manner, corresponding to the same number of the painter's notions. Each tableau is announced by its own title in the film and touches on themes that will mark Tanner's later films.

Tanner himself gave his impressions of the film in these words: "The programme on Claudévard is the one that

gave me the chance to go furthest in exploring a language on the edge of fiction. As his accomplice, I used and manipulated Claudévard as if he were a fictional character. That could only result in a complete fiction."

THE 'GROUP OF FIVE' AND OTHER FRIENDS

Composed initially of Claude Goretta, Jean-Jacques Lagrange, Jean-Louis Roy, Michel Soutter and Alain Tanner, later joined by Yves Yersin and Francis Reusser, the Group of Five has almost become a myth in Switzerland and abroad. Here we only recall the fact that, from the angle of the relations established between these film-makers and French Swiss television, the Group of Five was a platform which would assure the SSR a supply of original films and in the right quantity. As for the film directors, they enjoyed, thanks to signed agreements, a relative security in order to realize their projects, but they would have to assume the production risks.

TANNER AND TELEVISION



Tanner's friend, the painter Claudévard in *La vie comme ça*, 1970

15

The first participation agreement, signed for the years 1969–70 for the sum of Sfr. 60 000 per production, allowed Tanner to make **Charles mort ou vif** (Charles Dead or Alive), Michel Soutter to make *James ou pas* (James Or Not), Jean-Louis Roy to make *Black Out* and Claude Goretta to make *Le Fou* (The Madman).

The second participation agreement with the SSR (1971–72, for Sfr. 80 000 per film) financed the production of *Les Arpenteurs* (The Surveyors, Soutter), **Le Retour d'Afrique** (Return from

Africa, Tanner) and *L'invitation* (The Invitation, Goretta).

Apart from its rather closed character, the Group of Five constituted, especially for its most celebrated members at the time, the core of a movement quite similar to that which had created the Free Cinema and the Nouvelle Vague. Tanner, Soutter and Goretta were closely linked to one another. They submitted their screenplays to each other and discussed their projects together but separated before starting the actual shooting of their films. Tanner's contacts with

the other members of the Group of Five were less intensive. It was instead outside the group that he found stimulating discussion partners in the person of François Roulet, one of the founders of the Théâtre populaire romand (TPR, the French Swiss People's Theatre), and of the Cinémathèque d'Alger (Film Library of Algeria) and the Centre d'animation cinématographique (CAC, Cinematographic Animation Centre) in Geneva, and younger film-makers such as Renato Berta (his chief cameraman in 6 films) and Francis Reusser.

EDITING I

The montage is intended to end up in a fluidity, a continuity corresponding to a certain vision of the world (without ruptures or hitches). It opens out on simple naturalism in order to dissimulate reality better. (1973)

EDITING II

The visible montage (as opposed to cutting or invisible montage) signifies rupture, opposition. The cinema (and art itself, for that matter) is a rupture with vision and a calling into question. One can make a distinction between montage within a scene or simply one between scenes. Within a scene, the role of the montage is the opposite of cutting. I am especially fond of montage between scenes, the latter being most of the time one single shot. (1973)

EDITING III

The montage actually does not exist; it is only the final phase of the production. Generally the montage which is learned in the professional schools is the opposite, a sort of erasing of passages or traces of work and making invisible splices and cancelling out the dead intervals. (1973)

EYE

Despite all the efforts tending towards greater suppleness, a greater liberty of filming and its instruments, the fact still remains that the camera is never a gaze or an eye. I sometimes call the camera "the big cripple". (1971)

FILM-MAKER I

Being a film-maker means working on forms, working so that the content is in the form. (1989)

FILM-MAKER II

There are two kinds of film directors: those who say there is no such thing as aesthetics and run after their actors with a camera



Waiter Gérard Mollard at the Lausanne station restaurant in *Le buffet, les heures et les jours*, 1969



The harbour of Buenos Aires in *The 100 Days of Onganía*, 1966



In the Jura: Dr. B., *Médecin de campagne*, 1968

FROM DOCUMENTARY to feature film

In May of 1968 Paris had just experienced the ephemeral peak of the revolt of the youth of Western Europe against the process of integrating the human being into a hyper-speed economy. Tanner was totally exposed to the wind that was then blowing.

FROM DOCTEUR B. TO CHARLES DÉ

Two filmed reports, **Fleet Street** and **Le Creux de la vague** (Trough of the Wave), made for the French Swiss Television at the beginning of 1968 had taken him back to Great Britain, the primary source of his inspiration.

Mike ou l'usage de la science (Mike or the use of science), made in February 1968, had again reunited him with his friend John Berger, with whom he worked intensively.

In May '68 Tanner went to Paris with a small TV crew and filmed **Le pouvoir est dans la rue** (Power Is in the Streets). But it is above all in **Docteur B. médecin de campagne** (Dr. B., Country Doctor), made for SSR several months before, that we can find the key to Tanner's conversion to the feature film. Here he inserted himself between the director and his character, a very intense relationship which however was not mastered with the distance Tanner would have liked: "Television had come into this man's life. (...) It had the effect of a break in his life. He thought it over again, and the fact of participating in this television show made a profound impression on him."

In **Charles mort ou vif** Tanner describes what he could not describe in **Dr. B.**: the change in the person after his encounter with television. Thanks to this detachment from reality and this

proper distance from the character of Charles, Tanner invites the spectators to identify themselves no longer with the characters but with the process of change itself.

Charles Dé, remarkably played by François Simon, embodies the essence of what can be called a Swiss above all suspicion. His contact with television thrusts the character into a crisis, a process of voluntary decentration. Weary of conformism, comfort and material security, he begins by recognizing his nostalgia for his libertarians of the Jura, openly avows everything that oppresses him, takes refuge in a hotel under an assumed name and finally moves in with a couple who live in the country, where little by little he rediscovers the pleasures of life, communication and indeed himself.

LA SALAMANDRE AND THE ORDEAL BY FIRE

La Salamandre (The Salamander, 1971) is situated in a context characterized by the approach of a crisis which provokes a general malaise. In a society with stable institutions, the problems involved in this same economic development (inflation, overpopulation, foreign workers, housing shortages) give rise to the logical reactions. Xenophobia develops. Reminiscences of the Cold War surface and the government

publishes "the little red book of civil defence" for the benefit of the Swiss citizen. This manual in fact betrays a stiffening of political morals. But the healthy pamphleteering side of the film, which goes back to the facts of Swiss daily life, constitutes precisely this backdrop on which the film-maker can weave his work as he begins to affirm his artistic autonomy vis-à-vis social reality.

An apparently romanesque framework soon furnished Tanner a pretext for taking up some important themes, namely his relations with cinematographic language and with society.

Rosemonde (Bulle Ogier), "a girl who is wild, secret and instable, who has never received any education or instruction, who rejects by self-defence the constraints of society", embodies countless girls of that time, with their layers of petty bourgeois values. She is not politicized, likes pop music and dresses in the fashions of the day, but she has developed a categorical refusal of the society that is harassing her.

Pierre (Jean-Luc Bideau), 32, is a journalist, a bachelor who is broke, a freelance collaborator with several newspapers, exuberant and generous with his friends.

Paul (Jacques Denis), 27, Pierre's friend, is also a writer and lives with his wife and daughter in the country. He prefers working at a construction site rather than writing bad journalism.

The two male characters embody two approaches to reality: Pierre arrives at a conclusion by deduction, after compiling data, by the empirical scientific method. He passes from the isolated fact to the ensemble of facts. Paul operates by induction, by imagination and by a poetic approach.

held in the hand or mounted on rails, depending on the budget. Here the narrative and the characters are in the foreground and the camera, which must not be "seen", records it. Other directors – the category to which I belong – say that before the story and the characters there is a formal, aesthetic principle which will determine what happens afterwards. The characters will put themselves into it, but they will be at the service of this formal principle. (1983)

FORM I

Today it seems evident that film work has to be done on language and the manner of carrying on a specifically cinematographical discourse which has its own capacity for action. (1987)

FORM II

In an era of standardization and banalization of images, one's salvation (and risk) is to work on the singularity of the form. (1987)

FREEDOM

I have never made a film under the slightest constraint, except budgetary ones, which I accept. In fact I am very comfortable with the relation between the film I am working on and its budget. (1982)

FRIENDSHIP

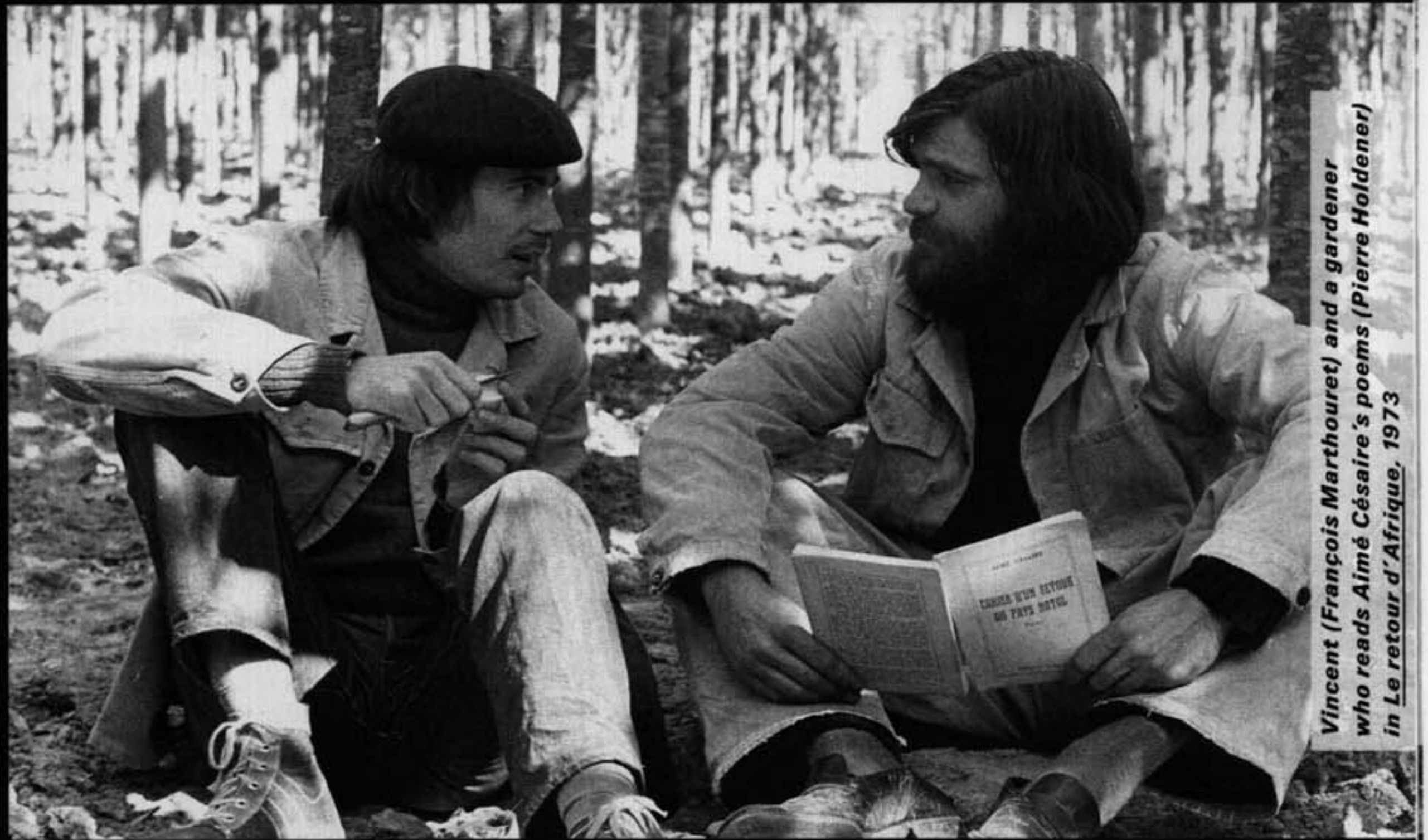
When they are at work, certain film-makers try to establish relations of conflict from the very first day. I for my part try for the very opposite: to establish non-conflicting, if possible friendly relations. (1976)

HUMOUR

After *The Salamander* I became somewhat dubious about humour, which solicits support in a rather facile manner and especially because it contains a sort of weakness ("it's better to laugh it off"). Humour and irony are all fine, but I have found that people do not always laugh for the right reasons. (1972)



Rosemonde (Bulle Ogier) in the sausage factory. La salamandre 1971



Vincent (François Marthouret) and a gardener who reads Aimé Césaire's poems (Pierre Holdener) in Le retour d'Afrique, 1973



Paul (Philippe Léotard) and Adriana (Olimpia Carlisi) in Le milieu du monde, 1974

This film has served as a model for numerous researchers in the social sciences, because the changing, interactive relations that exist between the three characters Pierre, Paul and Rosemonde are situated within the labyrinth of the relations existing between researchers in the social sciences, the film director and the public, and results existing on a wider level between social research, artistic creation and society.

IN CAMERA IN GENEVA

Le retour d'Afrique "is a black and white film with words. Sometimes it is a film about words: words said to others, words said in silence. To say words is perhaps an act in itself. Perhaps it is also a substitute for action. To quote the words of someone else may contribute to one's knowledge of oneself or to the flight from oneself." This is the meaning stated in a voice-off. The image associates the narration with a place and a time: Geneva in the autumn at the beginning of the 1970s. Throughout the film, a tension provoked by the contradiction between a hypercodified reality and the search for happiness outside time stimulates the spectator's attention.

The *in camera* situation which the two characters impose on themselves in their quest for happiness is a condition in which Vincent says: "Time has no further importance. Neither the time on the clock nor the time that goes by." Later, Françoise discovers the happiness of being suspended in time thanks to reading books. This state of mind is the herald of Paul, the character in **Dans la ville blanche** (In the White City). Outside, the names of the streets and squares indicate what Geneva has become a city where, under the din of airplanes taking off, all possible directions are presented to drivers and pedestrians; where the institutions have become like underground car parks because nothing happens outdoors any more, every exchange takes place underground; and where urbanization follows the paths of the motorways.

THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD

Metaphorically translating the unity of time and space of the making of the film,

the title is borrowed from a place called *The Middle of the World*, which presents the natural curiosity of finding itself at the fork of a river, one of whose branches flows into the North Sea via German-speaking Switzerland and the Black Forest, and the other into the Mediterranean, where Adriana comes from. This site has always struck the imaginations of the peoples inhabiting it and symbolizes their ethnic enclosure. Tanner's voice-off relativizes the ethnocentrism implicit in this place by indicating that "in reality there are as many middles of the world as there are people" and that "the narrative and the form of the film depend in large measure on the time, place and circumstances in which it is made".

This, Tanner's first full-length colour film, gave him the possibility of describing in an elliptical manner "how the weather looked" in the Europe of the 70s. The theme of **Le milieu du monde** is change, or rather non-change, which is offered to the spectator's reflection thanks to the tension existing between what happens in the film (the relations between Paul and Adriana) and what happens in reality (the return of Europe to normalization after May '68).

JONAH AND THE 8 LITTLE PROPHETS

In **Jonas - qui aura 25 ans en l'an 2000** (Jonah Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000, 1976) the collaboration between Tanner and Berger reached its high point. At the level of the screenplay, the two friends wrote a film that would go as far as possible in the exploration of the theoretical possibilities developed over 10 years of collaboration. The original idea before writing the screenplay of **Jonah...** was to make a film on individual dreams aiming to transform the world. The point of departure of the film, says Tanner, was the definitive choice of the eight actors (who did not know they were selected until six months later). These actors inspired the film more than anything else. Jonah represents at once the analysis and synthesis of May '68. Each of the protagonists, called the eight little prophets, embodies a fragment of the discourse. Jonah himself embodies somewhat the synthesis of the characters and their cousins from Tanner's previous films.

Pages 20 and 21

(Top, from left to right)

Trevor Howard

Bulle Ogier

Jean-Louis Trintignant

Marie Gaydou

Philippe Léotard

Olimpia Carlisi

Francisco Rabal

Myriam Mézières

(Centre, from left to right)

Françoise Marthouret and Josée

Destoop in Le retour d'Afrique, 1973

Mick Ford and Bernice Stegers in Light Years Away, 1981

Jean-Philippe Ecoffey in

No Man's Land, 1985

Dominic Gould and Francisco Rabal in L'homme qui a perdu son ombre, 1991

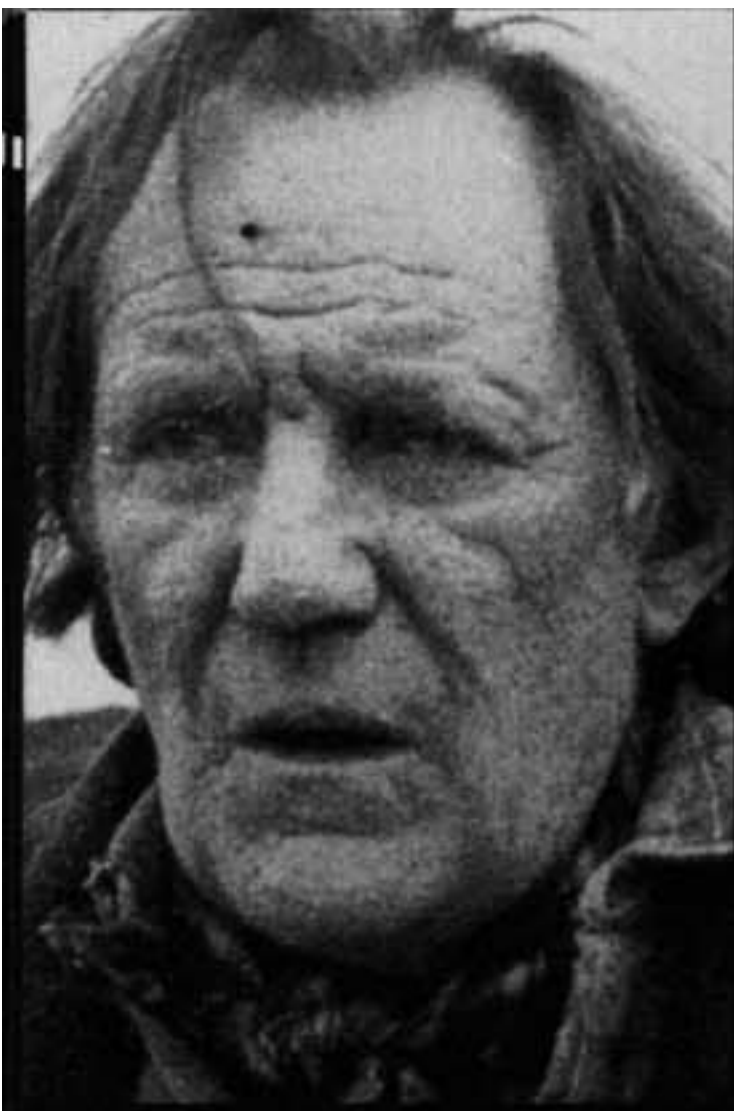
(Bottom, from left to right)

Rufus with Cécile and Nathalie

(Tanner's daughters) in Jonas, qui aura 25 ans en l'an 2000, 1976

François Simon in

Charles mort ou vif, 1969





IDEOLOGY

As long as cinema has existed, no photogram, however small, no film, as a whole, is innocent. The moment you press the starting button on the camera you set ideology in motion. (1973)

INSPIRATION

My only source of inspiration, except in the case of *Light Years Away* is the everyday and the present. (1989)

INTUITION

So as not to be blocked too much by a project where everything is in place in advance, leaving few openings at the moment of filming, there is a little room for intuition – with the risk of sometimes being betrayed by it. (1980)

MEANING

You are a producer of meaning. Nothing else. (1991)

MISE EN SCÈNE

I prefer to call it mise en film. It is the overall operation that begins by reflection on cinema and continues with the simultaneous operations of writing the screenplay, shooting, montage and sonorising. (1976)

MOVEMENT

When the camera moves, you know very well that it's going to say something else than when it's stationary. While it's moving there is more chance of escaping the connotation of reality. (1973)

MUSIC

Music must simply be one element of a film's structure among others, and nothing more. But it does act differently. Above all, you have to dissociate it from the image, the story and the feelings of the characters, not letting it run before or underneath the images but parallel to them. You have to make it play the same role that all the other factors are



Mick Ford in *Les années-lumière*, 1981



Clémentine Amouroux and Catherine Rétoré in *Messidor*, 1979



Jacques Denis and Jean-Luc Bideau in *La salamandre*, 1971

CENTRIFUGAL TEMPTATIONS

After **Jonah...** the paths of Berger and Tanner separated and the latter undertook alone a journey to the interior of Switzerland and of himself. This was the trajectory of **Temps mort** (**Dead Time**, 1977) and the journey of the two girls in **Messidor** (1979).

FROM DEAD TIME TO MESSIDOR

Temps mort is one of the film experiments on audiovisual language that the French Swiss Television had ordered from the 4 directors.

Tanner, who carried out the project on Super 8 mm film, wanted to work on the images of Switzerland and their status. He wanted to consecrate kilometres of film to its roads, cafes and landscapes. To do this he attached his camera to the window of his car and filmed a number of 3-minute cassettes. The result was fascinating: "A sort of film magic. Some of the images were beautiful and marvellous, especially the shots made during the storm". He simply joined the 3-minute fragments end to end, added some comments mixed in with music to make them harder to understand, and finally arrived at a "strange combination of images that are completely empty yet crammed with information on emptiness, time, the weather, roads, lorries". In **Messidor** (1979), Tanner reversed the approach of his previous films, the shooting of which had been based on already-existing screenplays and scripts. **Messidor** is projected onto elements that are much more material: roads, cafes, landscape. It is what Tanner calls the materiality of the film. **Messidor** is a film of settings that only become significative through the signs

they contain. Thus the landscape has a principal role in the production, and is not limited to a simple walk-on role, and still less to that of a natural reserve of the traditional myths of the Swiss countryside. Thus the high mountain bears in secret the code of a new collective language: that of Swiss culture which is expressed through the cinema. In **Messidor** the system of signs and symbols to which a structuralistic analysis would tend to confine the Swiss landscape is overturned. With the ascent of Jeanne and Marie to the heights of the glacial lakes and their kiss, everything changes in significance.

After this film, one can no longer read a high mountain in Switzerland as a place of purification of body and soul, nor as the symbol of Swiss virtues like those sketched by the Swiss tradition before the 1960s.

SIDE LEAP INTO LEGEND

Light Years Away (French title *Les années-lumière*) is an adaptation of the novel *La voie sauvage* (The Wild Road) by the Geneva writer Daniel Odier. The film was made in 1981. As is often the case with Odier, the novel is impregnated with oriental spiritualism. **Light Years Away** was dedicated to François Roulet, whose premature

death had prevented him from bringing Odier's novel to the screen. For Tanner it was the occasion to return to themes beyond political and ideological frontiers. First there existed in Tanner "a desire for the Atlantic, the wind and to be elsewhere", which was to transform the wind of the times which was blowing around him. From this he made a film of the fantastic.

Tanner's desire to take to the open sea is affirmed in this film at several levels: the choice of Ireland as its location, the use of English in the original version and especially the use of legends and myths as metaphorical illustrations. The film is mainly the story of an intense relationship between a father and a son. In centring the narrative on the relation of filiation between Yoshka, an old man who is looking for a son and on the process of apprenticeship-initiation of Jonah, Tanner introduces another side of ancient mythology: the legend of Dedalus and Icarus. By calling his young hero Jonah and placing the story in the year 2000, he makes his film a sort of sequel to the one on the *eight little prophets* and takes up again references to biblical mythology. The mythical path of the parable also proceeds via a reference to Leonardo da Vinci, from whom Tanner takes the idea of wings, destined to fulfill man's dream of flying under his own power.

ON THE BANKS OF THE WHITE CITY

If I had to characterize **Dans la ville blanche** (In the White City, 1983) in one word, I would say it is freedom: the freedom of the character in the blank space of his forgetfulness, the freedom of the film-maker in his profession and the freedom of his cine-

playing in the process of distancing. At the same time, music can give a film a tonality that the images do not necessarily possess. (1974)

MYTH

Myth is when a great big battleship car pulls up at a service station in the middle of nowhere in Nevada; you know something's going to happen. When a Renault stops at a service station on a highway in France, you would just say it needs petrol. (1985)

NARRATION

To narrate a film as if you were telling a child a story, without making any mysteries, is something real in the highest degree. (1981)

NATURALISM

Like realism, naturalism is a certain way of telling something in a totally codified and arbitrary manner. (1974)

NORMALIZATION

A period during which everything can be exchanged between nations, classes and even political systems that are theoretically opposed, on condition that nothing changes the nature of things. (1974)

OBLIVION I

The process of television, where everything ends up resembling everything else in a uniform and endless chain so as to cancel itself out in the end, is the liquidation of memory. It is oblivion. (1980)

OBLIVION II

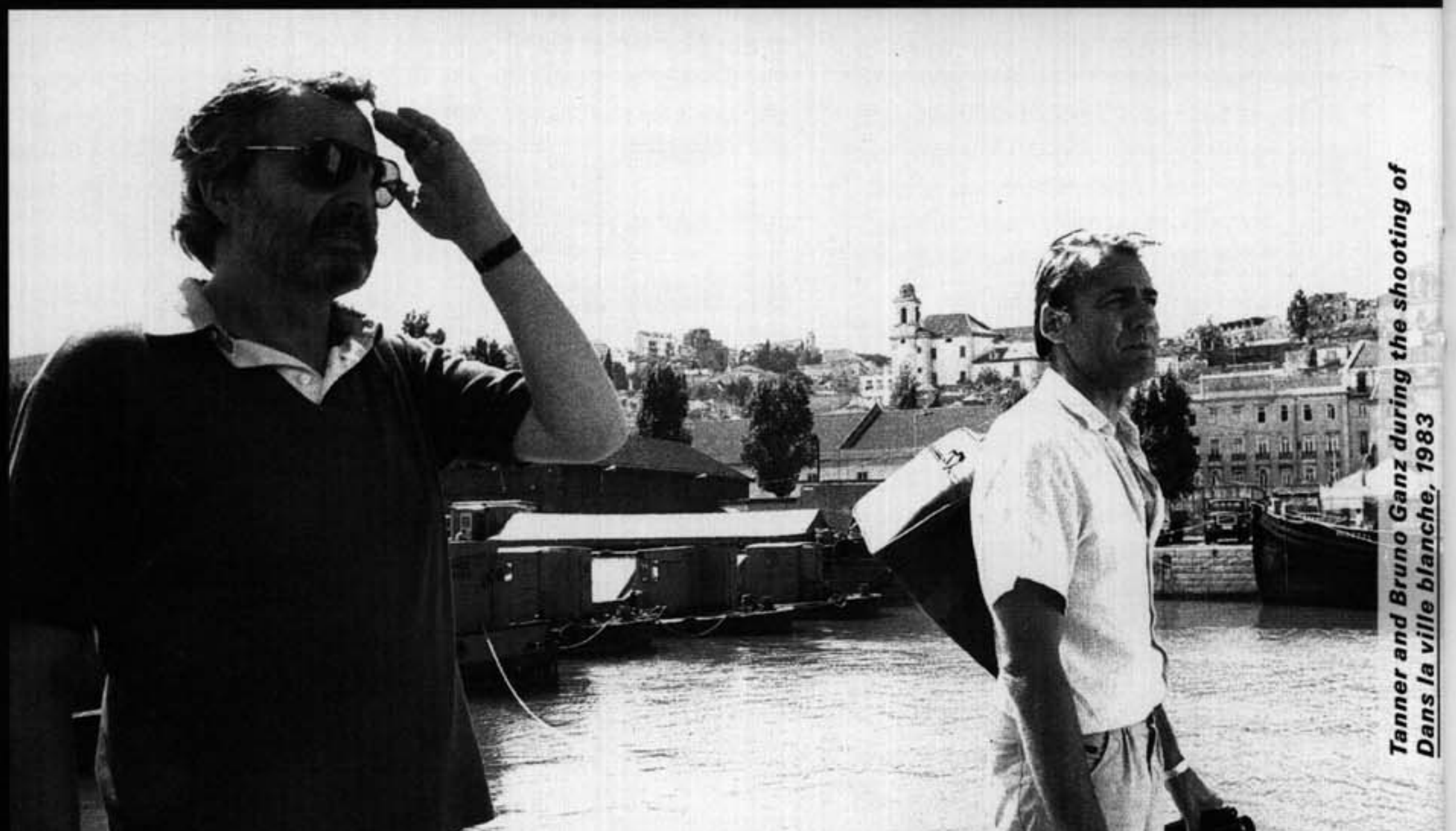
There is no better way of banishing great historical events from the human memory than to present them in a TV series (Example: The Holocaust). (1990)



Bruno Ganz. Dans la ville blanche, 1983



Teresa Madruga. Dans la ville blanche, 1983



Tanner and Bruno Ganz during the shooting of Dans la ville blanche, 1983

matographical language. But this freedom, one suspects, is not universal; it is determined, for both Tanner and his character, by the conditions of their daily life. Paul's freedom, admirably portrayed by Bruno Ganz, is acquired during a trip which takes him from a German Swiss city (Basle, where nothing is left to chance) to Lisbon, where the wind blows off the Atlantic, the wind that had so impregnated Tanner during his seafaring days in the 1950s. Paul finds his freedom in a context where people cultivate relations that are determined in another way than they are in Basle: by his attempt to remove himself from time and space – like the axolotl described by Cortazar – from the astonished, anxious gaze of his girl friend Rosa and even from the sometimes ironic smiles of his Portuguese friends. Without being autobiographical, the film is nourished by elements experienced by Tanner: his freedom was acquired in the struggle he carried on despite a threatening illness, which he escaped after finishing the film. The freedom of Paul, the main character in the film, is won at the price of his economic and social exclusion.

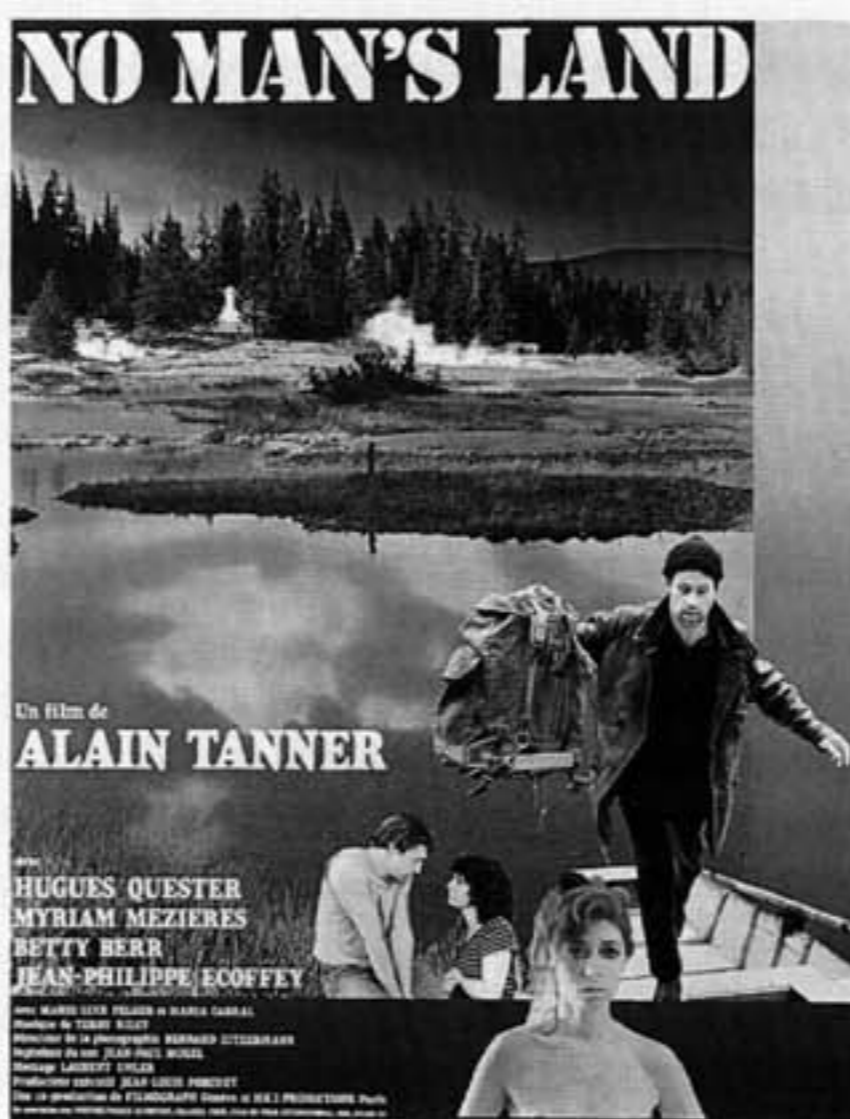
THE FRONTIER, COUNTRY OF FICTION

No Man's Land (1985) is an effort in the adventure category. But it is not an adventure movie in the entertaining sense of the word; rather it is an adventure of four people trying to satisfy their simplest vital needs. All the anxieties are focused on the four characters: Paul, who only desires to go to Canada, Madeleine, who wants to play music and stay where she is, because she doesn't know how she can leave, Jean, who wants to move to the country while everybody else is succumbing to the siren song of the city, and Mali, who wants to go back to Algeria. Under the appearance of a detective film that takes place in the country, Tanner attempts to seek answers to questions he has been asking himself for some time: how does one work, love, live or even make films in the midst of these fleeting times? It is therefore a film about the loss of discourse – about the exhaustion of one's political response to the ideology secretly held by today's society – to the benefit of the search for a new poetic language.

A CHARACTER BORN BEFORE HIS AUTHORS

There is a close connection between the two films made by Tanner and released in 1987: **La vallée fantôme** (The Ghost Valley), which serves as a preface to **Une flamme dans mon cœur** (A Flame In My Heart). The first film was to tell the story of a film director – and his assistant – who is looking for an ideal actress, and the second was to be the implementation of this search, permitting Myriam Mézières to carry out her own screenwriting project and to devote herself entirely to being an actress. The opposite in fact occurred; due to a change in the calendar of Jean-Louis Trintignant, **Une flamme dans mon cœur** was made first. Theoretically, this inversion in the release of the two films was no problem. Commercially, however, it worked against the commercial success of **La vallée fantôme**. For Tanner it was an opportunity to make a film in black and white, shot in 16 mm and enlarged to 35 mm. It is a passionate, violent film, produced with means reduced to the necessary minimum (this film, intended to be the conclusion, cost only a sixth of what the preface cost!). In Tanner's own words, it became a "formal luxury, a pure and simple fiction".

The principal characters are the ones that always preoccupied Tanner and form an integral part of his universe: the volcanic Mercedes (Myriam Mézières), Johnny, her violent and passionate lover (Aziz Kabouche) and Pierre (Benoît Régent), who closes the triangle with



his process of understanding and the despairing distance that underlies his approach to everything as a journalist. Bérénice, Racine's tragedy, very quickly situates the relations between the characters. The action takes place in Paris and Cairo. The time is now. The music of Johann Sebastian Bach's Partita No. 2 and Sonata No. 1 for violin is integrated into the structure of the film and contributes to modulating his general rhythm. Tanner has said that the music "gave me the most work... The more I thought about it, the more this music, which I know well, imposed itself on the film." **La vallée fantôme** was started 24 hours after work on the master print of **Une flamme dans mon cœur** was finished in the laboratory. The outward appearance of a pretty story in which Paul the film director (played by Jean-Louis Trintignant as Tanner's alter ego) goes off in search for the ideal woman (Laura Morante in the role of Dara), together with his young assistant (Jacob Berger), fresh out of a film school in New York, gave Tanner the opportunity to express his reflections on the cinema, his passions and his place in today's world.

Breaking up the narrative, especially by using several languages: French, Italian and English, and several locations: a Jura valley, Chioggia, Brooklyn, etc. Tanner forces the spectator to reflect on the how of film-making without telling yet another story, on the role of the actors and the characters they play and on the status of images as compared with life.

Deprived of romanticism, yet also stuffed with quotations from Marguerite Duras, Samuel Beckett and Rainer Maria Rilke, **La vallée fantôme** allowed Tanner to deal systematically with the path to the heart of the matter, which in fact he had already taken in **Une flamme dans mon cœur**.

THE GAZE OF THE FOREIGN WOMAN

La femme de Rose Hill (The Woman from Rose Hill) is Julie, played by Marie Gaydou, a serene beauty from the Island of Mauritius. The other characters are ourselves, with all our positive and negative characteristics. There is Marcel (Roger Jendly in the role of a peasant farmer in Canton Vaud) who marries Julie by placing an advertise-

PARADOX

Television, or rather the television effect, operates a great deal on paradoxes. A first effect is the transformation of information to the status of fiction (...). The global effect is produced at the moment where surfeit occurs – and it occurs very quickly – and information changes into fiction. This return to fiction ends up in a fictionalization of the world, a fictive world. (1980)

PLEASURE

Filming is an enterprise that is complicated, difficult and sometimes borders on the anguishing. It would all risk becoming a nightmare if I didn't try to associate it with the notion of pleasure – mine and that of others. (1978)

PLOT I

A story has a beginning and an end, something that at once delimits it from the rest of the world and opposes it to the "real" world. (1978)

PLOT II

A story has a beginning, a middle and an end, but not necessarily in that order. (Jean-Luc Godard, 1981)

PLOT III

The technique of the narrative is closely connected with ideology. The language one is habituated to in films and from which one's manner of reading is derived (...) corresponds exactly to a type of relation established by an industry in search of the largest possible public. It is codified – and sometimes even raised to the status of a dogma – by the rules of a so-called cinematographical grammar. (1978)

POLITICS

Politics is what is hidden in images. (1980)



ment through a specialized agency. There is also Jean (Jean-Philippe Ecoffey) who loves Julie madly and puts her up at his Aunt Jeanné's (Denise Péron). And there are the others: Jean's father, Marcel's mother and the police officer, all of whom correspond to certain supporting role caricatures seen in *Charles*, *La Salamandre*, *Messidor* and others. Julie, who has been made pregnant by Jean, refuses to have an abortion. Calamity swoops down on traditional values. The rest of the story reveals the social hypocrisy and ends with a police ball-up and Julie's expulsion from Switzerland. Numerous

critics have sulked about this troubling fable because, after all, the naive and spontaneous gaze of Julie, the foreigner, is one we dare not direct at ourselves.

THESIS AND ANTI-THESIS

Whereas *La vallée fantôme* and the reflections contained in it constituted the theoretical preface to *Une flamme dans mon cœur*, which in fact became its result, *L'homme qui a perdu son ombre*, (The Man Who Lost His Shadow) is designed to be the thesis, and *Le journal de Lady M.* (The Diary of Lady M., provisional title) the anti-

thesis to the new film at a stylistical level. Such is the approach Tanner hopes to accomplish in Spain in 1991, as these lines are being written.

When he made *L'homme qui a perdu son ombre*, Tanner had an important tool at his disposal: a team of 20 persons, travelling rails, a station, a chief cameraman who did an impeccable job, producing clean, very polished images on Kodak 35 mm film by the super 35 process which permits scope – in short, an image of no further interest to him, as far as film-making is concerned.

Le journal de Lady M. is to be the antithesis of the preceding film, "ac-

ording to an idea of Myriam Mézières the screenplay has to be worked on, a team of 4 technicians engaged, the film shot in 16 mm which will be enlarged to 35 mm in the lab, without special lighting and without the camera travelling on rails. I want a raw image, a dirty one as compared with the other *beautiful* well-lighted one, where this time the actors move around to a certain extent."

The underlying origin of *L'homme qui a perdu son ombre* is the Spanish Civil war, which Tanner had vicariously experienced through the stories of a Catalonian friend of his father about which he says: "This event over-

whelmed my childhood" because for him it was an event that "marks this century more than the two world wars". Then there was the desire to create a character, an old Spanish emigrant, in Francisco Rabal, whom Tanner describes as "an adorable, generous, likeable man", and the need to call upon a Paul (Dominic Gould) for help, again the alter ego similar to that played by Jean-Louis Trintignant in the preceding film, and two female characters (Angela Molina and Valérie Bruni Tedeschi). "They're all here! I can't get away from them!", says Tanner about the new characters who populate his older universe.

Beach of Cabo de Gata: Tanner directing Valeria Bruni Tedeschi and Angela Molina in *L'homme qui a perdu son ombre*, 1991

POWER

The power of a film director is at once enormous and derisory, because reality resists very strongly when you try to steal its substance. (1985)

PRODUCTION I

There are two ends of a rope, with somebody else pulling at one end – in general it is the money and where it is coming from – and me at the other. It is essential that the balance of power is in my favour. If not, I won't make the film. It is my guarantee of freedom to do what I want to do. (1976)

PRODUCTION II

Marguerite Duras has said that the production is already the film. (1985)

REALISM

Realism is a technique developed in order to be as invisible as possible so that no trace of "work" appears and in the end, to give the impression of reality and exercise the fascination of this reality. (1974)

RISK

The point where there is real risk-taking in my films is at the level of shooting. In *The Man Who Lost His Shadow*, I filmed about 170 shots and was still not totally covered for the montage. (1991)

SCENE

In the last few years I have improved my technique, which consists in concentrating all the elements of a scene in one shot. The adjustments are made within the shot, without cutting. (1978)

SCREENPLAY

If I had a screenplay where everything was completely written out, shot for shot, I would no longer have any desire to shoot the film. A great part of the fun in



Jean (Jacob Berger) and Dara (Laura Morante) in *La vallée fantôme*, 1987



Johnny (Aziz Kabouche) and Mercedes (Myriam Mézières) in *Une flamme dans mon cœur*, 1987



Julie (Marie Gaydou) and Marcel (Roger Jendly) in *La femme de Rose Hill*, 1989

CHARACTERS

Although Tanner's deep-down motivation can be traced back to his reflections on human nature and the human condition and their representation in films, he reveals the world to the spectator with the connivance of his characters.

With certain film-makers, the direction given to the actors and the treatment of objects operates only by mobilizing the emotions to a highly aggravated extent. The meaningfulness is literally ripped out of the characters and the settings and at all costs thrust under the spectator's nose under the form of a sign. With Tanner, on the contrary, the relations with persons and with the public are of a distinctly more serene and distant nature.

It is mutual respect, dictated perhaps by the modesty that guides his actions, which conditions Tanner's approach to directing and which forms the basis of the generosity that characterizes his work. The characters constituting Tanner's intimate universe have allowed him to find, by the method of keeping a proper distance, a new, expressive language that confers on his work the originality that fascinates us.

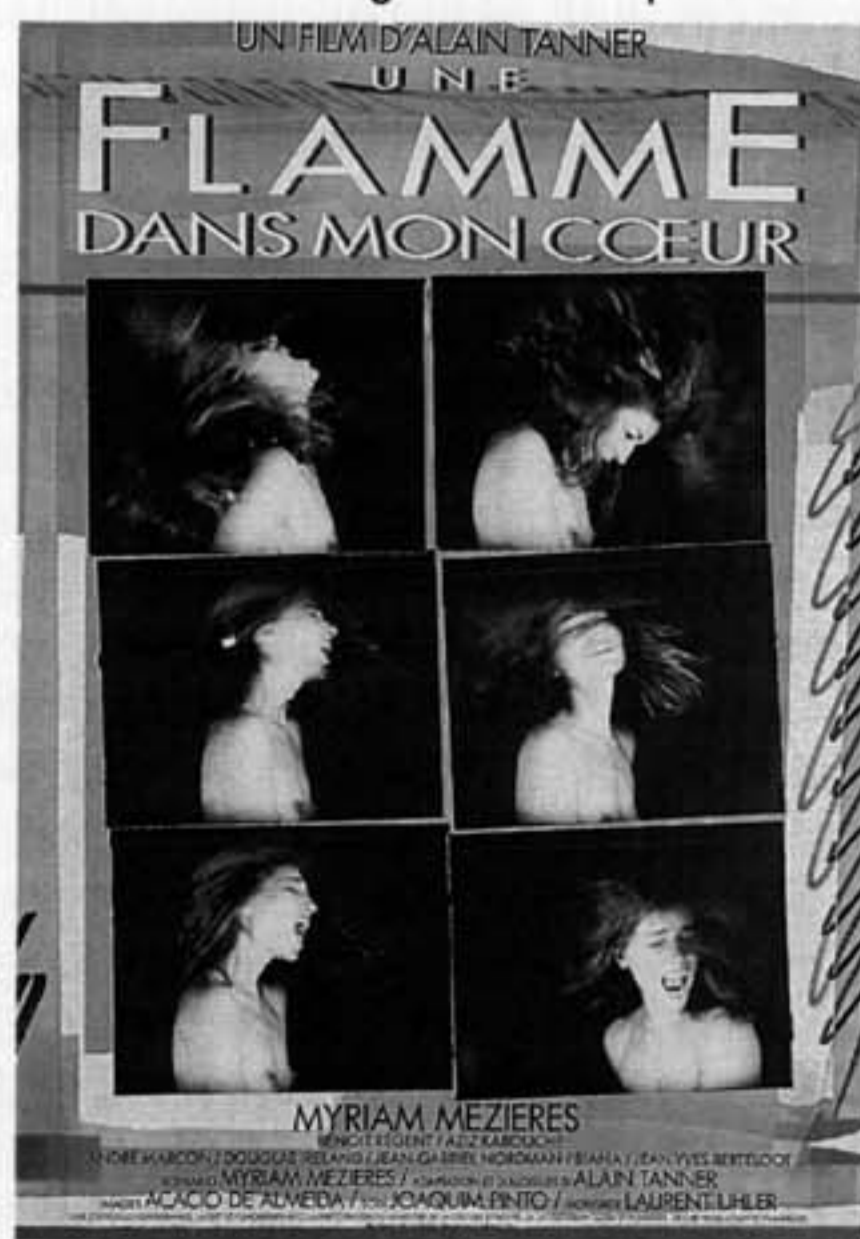
It is his characters who have permitted Tanner and his public to go beyond the original intention to achieve the degree of possible conscience. They function in Tanner's universe like the protagonists of a fable whose precepts are brought out by recourse to a metaphor.

AUTHENTIC FEMININITY

The role of woman occupies an important place in Tanner's reflection. Certain critics have discerned in some of his films a desire on Tanner's part to return

to the pre-natal state (e.g. in the metaphor of the whale in *Jonah*, in the soft indolence of Charles Dé, in Paul's hotel room in Lisbon, in the maternal characteristics of Adriana, in certain feminine characters in *Jonah* or in Aunt Jeanne in *La femme de Rose Hill*). Others, especially certain "politically correct" critics on the West Coast of the USA, have even denounced the absence of any trace of the revolutionary emancipation of women in Tanner, based on his inclusion of charwomen, female servants and dancers. In *Les années-lumière* women even keep the men from flying.

This however ignores the primordial



role played by characters like Rosemonde in *La Salamandre*, Adriana in *Le milieu du monde*, Rose in *La ville blanche*, Mercedes in *Une flamme dans mon cœur* and Julie in *La femme de Rose Hill*. These women, all of them very strong characters, traverse Tanner's films – and life – affirming and sometimes pushing to the furthest extreme their reason for being and their sexuality. Woman or girl, friend-accomplice or object of desire, servant or dancer, women – woman – play the role of revealer in the self realization by men and by women of their human condition.

MAN, THIS RUMINANT

Men, by the way, do not get off as lightly as women in Tanner's films. Whereas the latter play the role of the authentic element of communication and the vital expression of society – they are always themselves – men run up against existential doubts, provoked by the fact that they play roles imposed by society or individually consented to: fathers and sons, fathers and citizens, masters and apprentices, Yoshkas and Jonahs, Pauls and Jeans, Calvin and Rousseau, sacrificing their being to their projects. Whether principal or secondary – whether friends, prophets, revolutionaries or fugitives in the constant din of our age; nurses, cops, border guards, interested witnesses – women or men, normalized or outsiders, Tanner's characters sometimes exhibit a crackpot – or at least eccentric – side that not only permits them to be at a distance with respect to the narrative but also furnishes a system of references for an understanding – not without irony – of our own identity, whatever our origin may be.

film-making is to arrive in the morning and not know what you're going to do. It's true: for me, film-making is all about finding happiness in a thousand agonies... As a result, I sometimes oscillate between two ways of approaching a film: do I need a good screenplay or can I succumb to the pleasure of incertitude? (1980)

SCRIPT

The script or screenplay is the censor of the film. It is a budget and a guarantee: a budget, because it is the working instrument for the producer's bookkeepers, who use it as the basis for estimating the costs; it is also a guarantee for the people who want to buy the film - TV, the distributors, the cinema operator - a fact that often causes the film to be stillborn. (1988)

SEA

The sea is my favourite country. (1983)

SENSE

A system of thoughts which ought to pass through the form in movies. (1991)

SEQUENCE SHOT I

Paradoxically, the sequence shot puts reality at a distance by the very fact of restoring its duration. It is because duration is so compressed in a film that the simple fact of re-integrating it provokes the effect of strangeness. (1976)

SEQUENCE SHOT II

The sequence shot has other advantages than that of permitting distancing. Redoubled by the recording of synchronous sound, it permits the actors to work much more in continuity. Finally, the sequence shot gives back to film shooting its weight, its duration, its form, its visual impact and its central place in the structure of the film where it has an essential role in the cutting, which creates the link between what went before



FABLE, METAPHOR MORALE

and poetry

It is surprising to observe in Tanner's detractors the naturalness with which they reproach him for abandoning poetical language in favour of a supposed sociological and cerebral approach to the perceptible world. In reality, his work consists of fables that appeal to a metaphorical language and whose elements proceed from an individual poetic symbolism of the imagination which is extremely rich in collective representations.

Tanner's catalog of recourse to the metaphor is vast; it goes from a simple and vital symbolism all the way to the parabolical formulation of the most complicated representations.

ANIMALS

One of Tanner's methods is his recourse to a transfer of meaning by the introduction of terms or images from the besti-

ary, whether they are of the everyday variety or more exotic, even mythological creatures. Thus we find already beginning with his first works, animals like the *buffalo*, connotating the unchanging and traditional world in which the modern city of Chandigarh was built, the *goat*, symbolizing the warmth of life in the winter, or the *cuckoo*, conjuring up the feverishness of the passing time in *La vie comme ça*, or

the *eagle*, powerful and paternalistic, in *Les années-lumière*, *pigs* and *chickens* as the incarnation of humanity's regression, and of course *cows*, whose expressivity in a film was the source of controversy between Tanner and Godard, raised by *Les cahiers du Cinéma* and pursued in *No Man's Land*.

Stranger animals are used for more complicated parables. The whale named and suggested in *Jonah...* was to become the metaphorical element for a journey through history. The *salamander*, with its legendary capability of passing through fire without being burned, represents the innocent vitality of Rosemonde.

The *axolotl*, taken from Julio Cortázar's *Armes secrètes*, symbolizes the immobility in time and space of the White City and becomes the point-zero metaphor for Tanner's cinematographical writing.

MYTHOLOGIES

Tanner's recourse to mythology and legend, i.e. a symbolism close to that of Christian hagiography, provides his work with a system of references permitting the spectator to fuse his or her individual perception in the collective representations of universal civilization. Thus we have the *seven sages of Thebes* in *Une ville à Chandigarh*, the myth of Icarus in *Les années-lumière* and the *eight little prophets* in *Jonah...*

Two scenes, filmed in sequence shots and interpreted by actors in a manner close to the notion of performance, constitute the essential moments in *Jonah...* and intervene like parables intended to transcend the director's work. One of them recalls the Crucifixion of Christ, and the other The Last Supper; two episodes that are admitted by the texts of the Reformation...



Jeanne and Marie, the two tramps, surprised by a strange bird in *Messidor*, 1979

and what follows... In a sequence shot, that which happens takes place within the shot and no longer in the invisible descriptive chain of an action. (1976)

SHOOTING

It's the transition from theory to practice. In other words, it's also to some extent the passage from purpose to picture, from dream to reality. Shooting is the moment where you breathe life into the film. Ideally, shooting should be something of a criticism of the screenplay and the montage a criticism of the shooting, so as to give some free play to these operations. (1974)

SHOT I

This is the stake of the whole film. Between "Action!" and "Cut!" the whole film is on the line, every time. (1983)

SHOT II

The classic narrative is embodied in the invisible concatenation of shots, i.e. their sequence. They are only a part of the whole. For my part, I work essentially on the autonomy of the shot. Instead of producing the narrative, the shots must simultaneously break it and re-launch it via a relation with both the previous and the following shots, which is not a relation of continuity but of a "leap".

SMELL

The main thing is not just to find money but also to know by its smell what sort of money it is. (1965)

SPECTACLE

Unless you want to go in for laboratory work and do theory filming, you've got to work on the spectacle if you want to keep in contact with the spectator. The difficulty then comes from the fact that the introduction of meaning will automatically undermine the recognized forms of spectacle, and you must try and maintain a balance between these two notions. (1976)



Time – that which passes, that which is shown on a clock, that of history or that of stories – in other words duration, is of very great importance in Tanner's films. The treatment of time in his films gives the feeling that real time evokes in him. It is brought out by numerous procedures and recourse to symbols.

The title **Nice Time** connotes the many approaches to time that are possible, especially the kind that is agreeably passed or eventually consumed, or how the weather is in Geneva in the autumn. From history, now symbolized by a sausage, now by a whale or by a clock whose hands go around counterclockwise, to working time measured in the number of sausages produced by Rosemonde in **La Salamandre**; it all denotes the inexorable passage of the present, as exemplified by the news on the radio or looking at the calendar, signifying our submission to the precision of its measurement; time is never evaded

or deformed in Tanner's work. **Temps mort** is, in the final analysis, that beginning with which every action becomes possible again...

Space, whether represented by a location, a landscape or a setting, never dissimulates reality in Tanner. On the contrary, it offers him possibilities of metaphorical use.

Le milieu du monde serves as the metaphor of centering on yourself and returning to the bowels of the earth, to your mother's womb. In **Les années-lumière**, the flight into space symbolizes the search of liberty. The frontier becomes the setting of Tanner's fiction

and **No Man's Land** the point-zero of his cinematographical space. Just as music is above all the art of sound and silence, for Tanner the modern film is the art of duration and dead time. Thanks to the metaphor of the axolotl, **La ville blanche** becomes at once the point-zero of time, or space and – by explicit reference – of the memory. Beginning at point-zero and by means of the formal elements utilized by Tanner, the realization of the space-time unity which is necessary to the language of film-making becomes possible.

TIME AND SPACE

SPECTATOR

At the end of the process of creating a film, there is a spectator who is going to see it and be transformed or not. (1979)

STORY

It is what the story tells me that interests me, rather than telling the story. (1989)

TELEVISION

After television's phases of creative development, codes and signs, we now find ourselves in a third phase: it's now a piece of furniture with a little football and some old late-night movies. (1980)

TERRITORY

The cinema is a devourer of territory that demolishes frontiers. (1980)

THEORY

You have to apply it. That's how it changes. (1971)

TRUTH

Truth in the cinema does not consist in its being a simulation of reality; it can only be in the art of representing it, and nowhere else. (1980)

VITALITY

Today, images are completely devitalized by TV. Narration by means of the image has become totally devitalized. (1991)

WORKING RELATIONSHIP

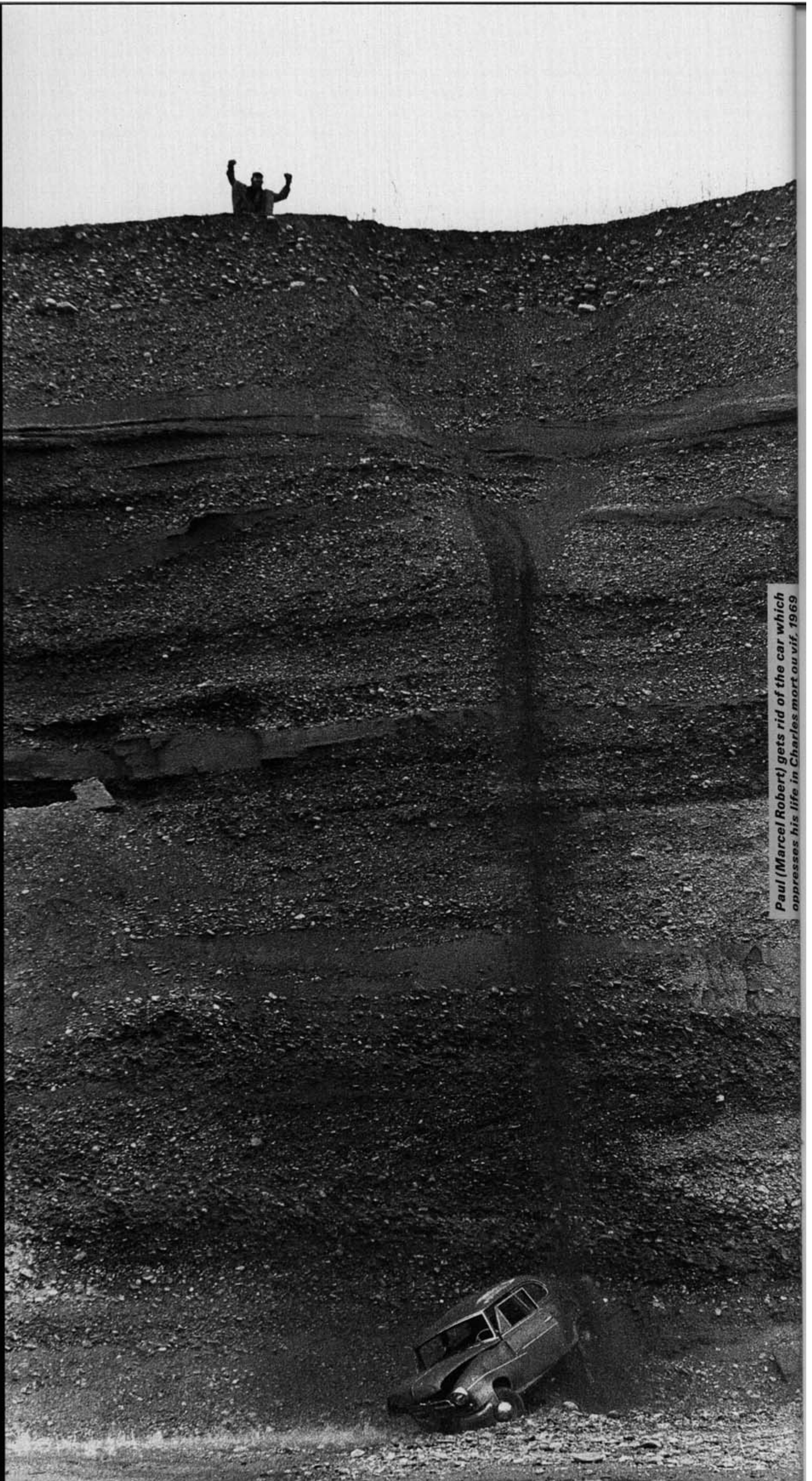
I have a horror of hierarchy, and even though it inevitably exists in the case of the so-called auteur film, I try to play it down by a practical division of labour which is intended to stay in the background in face of the finality of the work and its purposes. (1976)

WRITER

The professional script-writer is a cinematographical species I have a horror of. (1985)

ZOOM

Never! A travelling focus is too mechanical and lazy. (1985)



Paul (Marcel Robert) gets rid of the car which oppresses his life in *Charles mort ou vif*. 1969

OPTIMIST WITHOUT

a cause

Viewed retrospectively, Tanner's work retains its coherence with respect to the genetic programme discussed earlier. Despite the cataclysms of history in this second half of the 20th century and their logical influence on his entire work, it is possible to identify a certain number of constants in this film-maker's sensitivity and the formal biases which give it its original truth.

This general survey has been intended to permit the reader to discern certain essential elements contained in Tanner's films and to suggest others. From the outset, his work has been under the heading utopian. This is not meant in the sense of a chimera which is unattainable, but in the sense of a project opening out onto a possible better future. Did he not wish to be a sailor and a film director in a country without a sea or a film industry? Well, he went to sea in 1952 and became a film director in London in 1955.

For the rest, influenced by the state of mind and the thinking of the 1950s and 60s, Tanner became the film-maker of the possible, by making a certain type of film possible, outside timeworn codes that are losing their validity, by addressing himself to the possible conscience of a public desirous of passing beyond just the real conscience level and more open to calling itself into question. This is the notion of the subjunctive mode developed by the British critic and novelist Raymond Williams that can be applied to Tanner to designate his will to make possible the utopian projects of mankind.

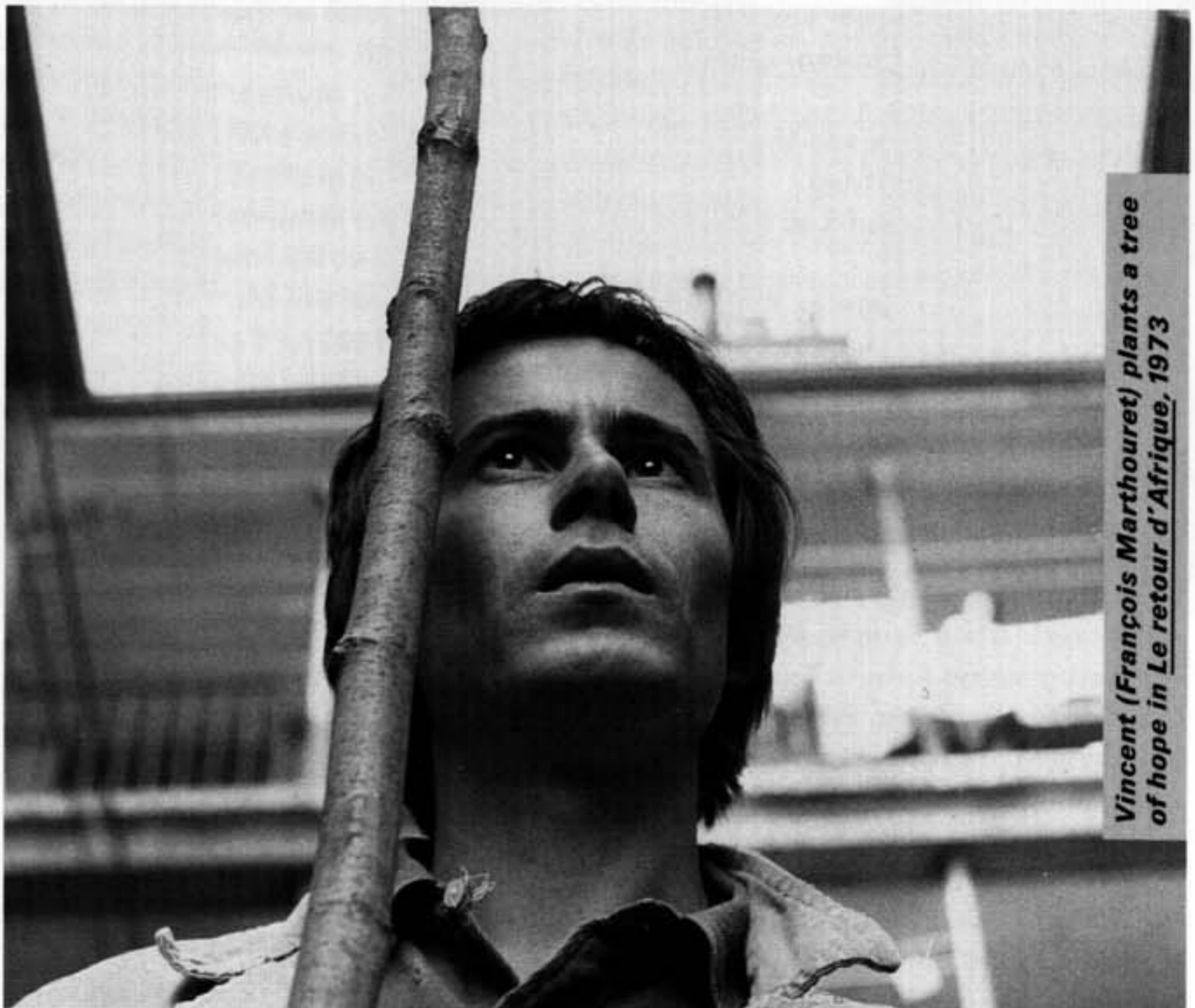
To conclude this journey through Tanner's work, which by the way can be taken in a thousand different ways, a

few words may be added about his relations with the public, a public that is young and changing and finds in Tanner's characters interlocutors capable of questioning the world and finding in their dialogues an outline of a possible response. Paradoxically, in spite of the winds and the tides, who call

for bitterness because the course of the world certainly does not make one smile, Tanner has always been able to keep the jovial optimism which underlies his work.

In recent years I have known a number of young people who have not hesitated to set off for Lisbon from Frankfurt, Madrid, Stockholm or Zurich to recapture the spirit of **La ville blanche**, thus disavowing the embittered views of a few grumpy minds who see in Tanner's work only pessimistic ideas that doom every project to failure.

What better proof of the winningness and resolve to search for a better future on the part of the young than the little ad that once appeared in *Liberation*: "Young female seeks nice guy. Tanner character-type welcome".



Vincent (François Marthouret) plants a tree of hope in *Le retour d'Afrique*, 1973

Rights available from:
Filmograph SA
12, Ch. du Point-du-jour
1202 Geneva (Switzerland)

1969

**CHARLES MORT OU VIF
(CHARLES DEAD OR ALIVE)**
Director: Alain Tanner.
Screenplay: Alain Tanner.
Music: Jacques Olivier. Director of
Photography: Renato Berta.
Cast: François Simon, Marcel
Robert, Marie-Claire Dufour, André
Schmidt, Maya Simon, Michèle
Martel and others.
Produced by: Alain Tanner and the
Groupe Cinq (Group of Five).
Process: 16/35 mm black and white.
Length: 94 minutes.

1971

**LA SALAMANDRE
(THE SALAMANDER)**
Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay
and Script: Alain Tanner and John
Berger. Director of Photography:
Renato Berta.
Music: Patrick Moraz and the
Main Horse Airline Group.
Cast: Bulle Ogier, Jean-Luc Bideau,
Jacques Denis.
Produced by: Alain Tanner, Svociné.
Process: 16/35 mm black and white.
Length: 123 minutes.

1973

**LE RETOUR D'AFRIQUE
(RETURN FROM AFRICA)**
Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay
and Script: Alain Tanner. Director
of Photography: Renato Berta.
Cast: Josée Destoop, François
Marthouret, Juliet Berto, Anne
Wiazemsky, François Roulet and
others. Music: J.S. Bach, orchestra-
tion by Arié Dzierlatka. Produced
by: Alain Tanner, Groupe Cinq.
Process: 16/35 mm black and white.
Length: 110 minutes.

1974

**LE MILIEU DU MONDE
(THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD)**
Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay:
Alain Tanner, John Berger. Director
of Photography: Renato Berta.
Cast: Olimpia Carlisi, Philippe
Léotard, and others.
Music: Patrick Moraz.
Produced by: Citel Films, Geneva,
Action Films-Paris, SSR Geneva.
Process: 35 mm colour.
Length: 115 minutes.

1976

**JONAS QUI AURA 25 ANS
EN L'AN 2000 (JONAH WHO WILL
BE 25 IN THE YEAR 2000)**
Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay
and Script: Alain Tanner and John
Berger. Director of Photography:
Renato Berta.
Cast: Nicolas, Myriam Mézières,
Jean-Luc Bideau, Myriam Boyer,
Rufus, Dominique Labourier,
Roger Jendly, Miou-Miou,
Jacques Denis, Raymond
Bussières, and others.
Music: Jean-Marie Sénia.
Produced by: Citel Films Geneva,
Action Films Paris, SFP, SSR.
Process: 35 mm colour and black
and white. Length: 116 minutes.

1977

FOOT-BALL
Short film in Super-8, Written
and directed by Alain Tanner and
Francis Reusser in the form of an
open letter addressed to the orga-
nizers of a Super-8 film festival
in Geneva. No copies of this film
can be found.

1978

TEMPS MORT (DEAD TIME)
Short experimental film shot in
Super-8.
Director: Alain Tanner.
Produced by: SSR.
Length: 40 minutes.

1979

MESSIDOR
Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay
and Script: Alain Tanner. Director
of Photography: Renato Berta.
Cast: Clémentine Amouroux,
Catherine Rétoré, and others.
Music: Arié Dzierlatka.
Produced by: Citel Films Geneva,
Action Films Paris, SSR.
Process: 35 mm colour.
Length: 117 minutes.

1981

**LES ANNÉES-LUMIÈRE
(LIGHT YEARS AWAY)**
Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay
and Script: Alain Tanner based on
La voie sauvage by Daniel Odier.
Director of Photography:
Jean-François Robin.
Cast: Trevor Howard, Mick Ford,
Bernice Stegers, Odile Schmitt,
and others.
Music: Arié Dzierlatka.
Produced by: L.P.A. Phénix-Paris,
Slotint SSR Geneva.
Process: 35 mm colour.
Length: 105 minutes.

FILMOGRAPHY

Full length feature films

1983

**DANS LA VILLE BLANCHE
(IN THE WHITE CITY)**

Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay: Alain Tanner. Director of Photography: Acacio de Almeida.
Cast: Bruno Ganz, Teresa Madruga, Julia Vonderlinn, and others.
Music: Jean-Luc Barbier.
Produced by: Filmograph SA Geneva, Metro-Filmes Lisbon.
Process: 35 mm colour, with sequences in Super-8 enlarged to 35 mm.
Length: 108 minutes.

1985

NO MAN'S LAND

Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay: Alain Tanner. Director of Photography: Bernard Zitzermann.
Cast: Hugues Quester, Myriam Mézières, Jean-Philippe Ecoffey, Betty Berr, Marie-Luce Felber, André Steiger, Teco Celio and others.
Music: Terry Riley.
Produced by: Filmograph SA Geneva, MK2 Paris.
Process: 35 mm colour.
Length: 100 minutes.

1987

**UNE FLAMME DANS MON CŒUR
(A FLAME IN MY HEART)**

Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay: Myriam Mézières. Adaptation and Script: Alain Tanner. Director of Photography: Acacio de Almeida.
Cast: Myriam Mézières, Aziz Kabouche, Benoît Régent.
Music: J.S. Bach interpreted by Nell Gotkovsky.
Produced by: Garance, La Sept Paris, Filmograph SA Geneva.
Length: 110 minutes.

1987

**LA VALLÉE FANTÔME
(THE GHOST VALLEY)**

Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay: Alain Tanner. Director of Photography: Patrick Blossier.
Cast: Jean-Louis Trintignant, Laura Morante, Jacob Berger, and others.
Music: Arié Dzierlatka.
Produced by: Filmograph SA Geneva, MK2 Paris.
Process: 16/35 mm black and white.
Length: 105 minutes.

1989

**LA FEMME DE ROSE HILL
(THE WOMAN FROM ROSE HILL)**

Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay: Alain Tanner. Director of Photography: Hugues Ryffel.
Cast: Marie Gaydou, Jean-Philippe Ecoffey, Denise Péron, Roger Jendly, and others.
Music: Michel Wintsch.
Produced by: Filmograph SA Geneva, CAB Productions Lausanne, Gemini Films Paris.
Process: Super 35 Scope, colour.
Length: approx. 94 minutes.

1991

**L'HOMME QUI A PERDU SON
OMBRE (THE MAN WHO LOST HIS
SHADOW)**

Director: Alain Tanner. Screenplay: Alain Tanner. Director of Photography: José Luis Gomez Linares.
Cast: Francisco Rabal, Angela Molina, Dominic Gould, Valeria Bruni Tedeschi, and others.
Music: Arié Dzierlatka.
Produced by: Filmograph SA Geneva, Tornasol Films SA Madrid, Gemini Films Paris.
Process: Super 35 Scope, colour.
Length: approx. 100 minutes.

1992

**LE JOURNAL DE LADY M.
(THE DIARY OF LADY M.)**

(provisional title)
Screenplay in preparation, with Myriam Mézières.
The film will be made in Spain.

DOCUMENTARIES, COMMERCIAL AND

EXPERIMENTAL FILMS

1957

NICE TIME (PICCADILLY LA NUIT)

Documentary.

Directed by: Alain Tanner,
Claude Goretta.

Screenplay: Alain Tanner,
Claude Goretta.

Photography: John Fletcher.

Music: Chas. McDevitt Skiffle
Group.

Produced by: BFI.

Process: 16 mm black and white.

Length: 19 minutes.

1959

Production of several commercial
films in Paris.

1961

**RAMUZ, PASSAGE D'UN POÈTE
(RAMUZ, PASSAGE OF A POET)**

Documentary.

Director: Alain Tanner.

Screenplay: Frank Jotterand.

Photography: Fernand Reymond
and Adrien Pochet.

Music: Jacques Olivier.

Commentary and texts by Ramuz
spoken by André Pache.

Produced by: Actua Film.

Process: 35 mm black and white.

Length: 27 minutes.

1962

L'ÉCOLE (THE SCHOOL)

Experimental film (3 screens).

Director: Alain Tanner.

Screenplay: Alain Tanner.

Photography: Fernand Reymond
and Adrien Porchet.

Music: Jacques Olivier.

Produced by: Actua Film.

Length: 20 minutes.

No copies of this film can be found.

1964

**LES APPRENTIS
(THE APPRENTICES)**

Documentary.

Director: Alain Tanner.

Photography: Ernest Artaria.

Music: Victor Fenigstein.

Process: 35 mm black and white.

Produced by: Téléproduction.

Length: 80 minutes.

1965

**PARTI DE IJMUIDEN (WEIGHING
ANCHOR AT IJMUIDEN)**

Documentary.

Producer and Director:

Alain Tanner.

Director of Photography:

Georges Hofer.

Music: Jean-Pierre Canel.

Process: 16 mm black and white.

Length: 33 minutes.

1966

**UNE VILLE À CHANDIGARH
(A CITY AT CHANDIGARH)**

Documentary.

Director: Alain Tanner.

Screenplay: Alain Tanner and
John Berger.

Photography: Ernest Artaria.

Music: Chander Kanta Khosla
(sitar), Gopal Das Garg (tabla),
Sharda Bhardwaj (vocals),
Devendra Murdeshwar,

Parma Lal Gosh

and Prakash Wadhera (flutes).

Commentary: John Berger.

Produced by: Alain Tanner and
Ernest Artaria.

Process: 16 mm colour.

Length: 52 minutes.

FILMOGRAPHY

FILMS FOR TELEVISION

1958

Alain Tanner collaborates as Assistant Director in the TV series **LIVING WITH DANGER** – BBC London.

1964

Assistant to Dickinson in a film on the UN for American TV.

FOUR PORTRAITS FILMED FOR THE

"AUJOURD'HUI" SHOW (SSR-TV)

1968

MIKE ET L'USAGE DE LA SCIENCE (MIKE AND THE USE OF SCIENCE)
Reported and directed by Alain Tanner, assisted by John Berger.
Length: 55 minutes.

1968

DOCTEUR B. MÉDECIN DE CAMPAGNE (DR. B., COUNTRY DOCTOR)
Reported and directed by: Alain Tanner.
Length: 61 minutes.

1969

LE BUFFET, LES HEURES ET LES JOURS (THE BUFFET, TIMES AND DAYS)
Reported and directed by: Alain Tanner.
Length: 46 minutes.

1970

LA VIE COMME ÇA (LIFE AS IT COMES)
(24 statements of an artist by the name of Claudévard)
Directed by: Alain Tanner.
Journalist: Michel Boujut.
Length: 59 minutes.

OTHER TELEVISION FILMS MADE FOR

"CONTINENTS WITHOUT A VISA" AND

"TIME PRESENT" FOR THE SSR-GENEVA:

1965

THE RIGHT TO HOUSING (21 min.)
DIARY OF A MURDERER (5 min.)
TO BE A GAUL (18 min.)
THE BERNESE JURA (18 min.)

1966

THE SOLDIERS OF GOD (23 min.)
A WORKER'S DAY (72 min.)
THE LAST BASTION OF THE EMPIRE (22 min.)
THE 100 DAYS OF ONGANIA (28 min.)
1966 YEARS AFTER JESUS CHRIST (19 min.)

1967

THE SIEGE OF GRENOBLE (42 min.)
THE TAILORS OF THE RUE DU TÉLÉPHÉRIQUE (23 min.)
THE NEW GREEKS (10 min.)
ONLY TOO MUCH TO CHOOSE (23 min.)
FLEET STREET (27 min.)

1968

THE TROUGH OF THE WAVE (53 min.)
THE BELGIUM-THREE (24 min.)
POWER IS IN THE STREETS (47 min.)

1969

DANCING ON A VOLCANO (35 min.)
ARE YOU REALLY THAT UGLY? (21 min.)
THE DEFREGGER AFFAIR (21 min.)

1970

THE ADMINISTRATIVES AND ARTICLE 42 (53 min.)

FILMS ABOUT ALAIN TANNER

1978

CINEMA MORT OU VIF? (CINEMA DEAD OR ALIVE?)
Directed by: Urs Graf, Mathias Knauer, Hans Stürm.
Produced by: Filmkollektiv Zürich.
Process: 16 mm colour.
Length: 105 minutes.

1981

TANNER TOURNE LIGHT YEARS AWAY (Tanner makes LIGHT YEARS AWAY)
Directed by: Francis Reusser.
Produced by: SSR.
Process: 16 mm colour.
Length: 15 minutes.

ESSENTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

1974

Freddy Buache: *Le cinéma suisse, L'Age d'homme*, Lausanne (pp. 139–159), publication completed in 1978.

1984

Jim Leach: *A Possible Cinema: the Films of Alain Tanner*, The Scarecrow Press Inc., Metuchen, New Jersey and London.

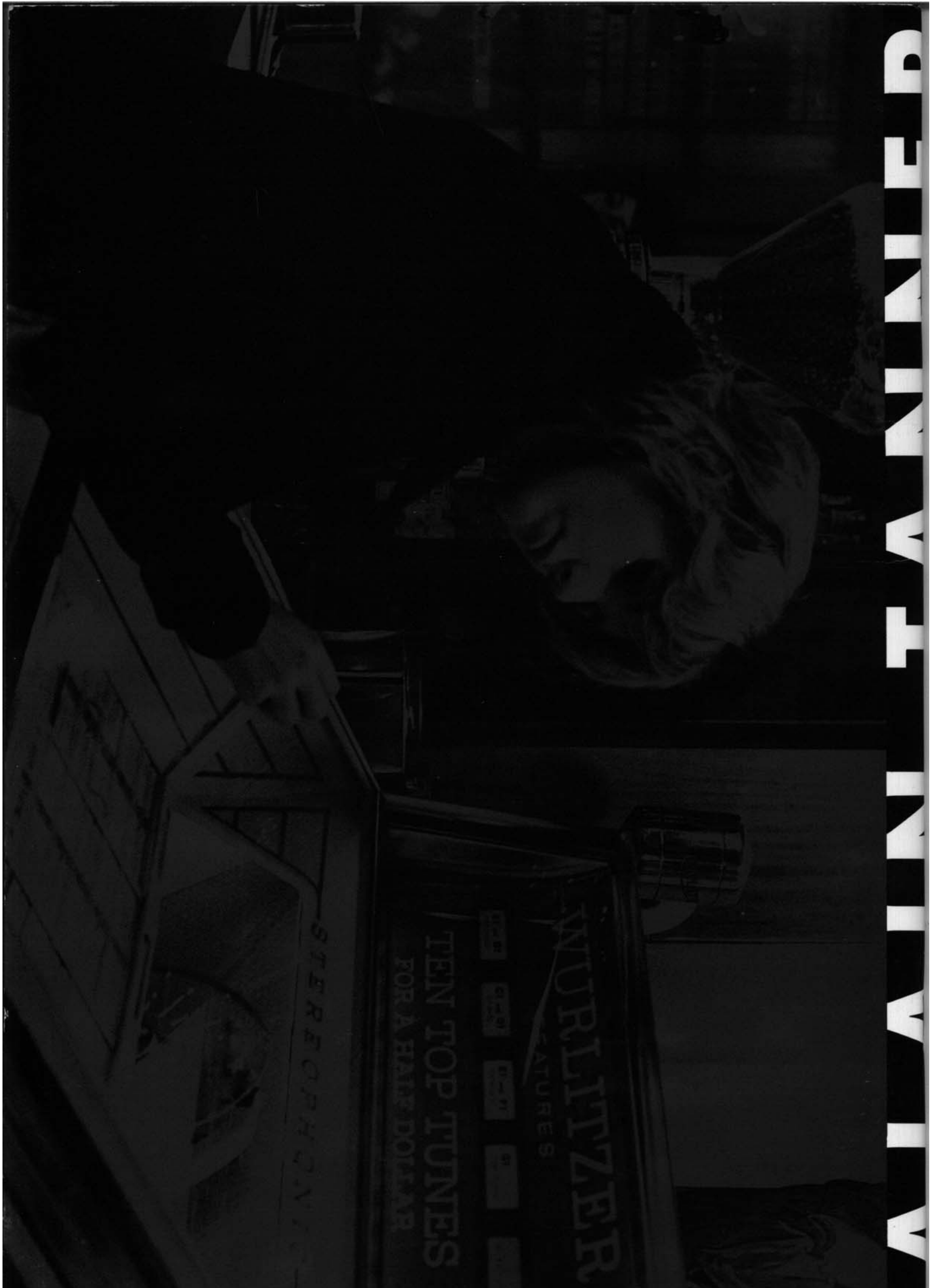
1985

Christian Dimitriu: *Alain Tanner*, Henri Veyrier, Paris.

1987

Piera Detassis: *Alain Tanner*, La Nuova Italia, Il castoro cinema, Florence.





W I A I N T A N I E D