

## Document Citation

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**Les Noces Rouges**  
(Red Wedding Night)  
(FRENCH-COLOR)

Paris, May 1.

Les Films La Boetie, CIC release of Les Films De La Boetie (Andre Genoves) — Canaria Films production. Stars Michel Piccoli, Stephane Audran; features Claude Pieplu, Eliana De Santis, Clotilde Joana. Written and directed by Claude Chabrol. Camera (Eastmancolor), Jean Rabier; editor, Jacques Gaillard; art director, Guy Lattaye. Reviewed at Napoleon, Paris, April 16, '73. Running Time: 90 MINS.  
Lucienne ..... Stephane Audran  
Pierre ..... Michel Piccoli  
Paul ..... Claude Pieplu  
Clotilde ..... Clotilde Joana  
Helene ..... Eliana De Santis

Director Claude Chabrol is in excellent shape as he again delves into upper-middle class character and foibles, using, as usual, a murder to lay bare the emotions and even dedication of this characters. Chabrol's pix have found an urban following abroad and this should benefit from that with a wider distrib range also indicated on its expert handling, personality probing and wry balance of comedy and drama.

And the pic is almost wildly funny as its two illicit loves go at each other in the woods, in a chateau museum bedroom or in cars with wild grunts, groans, biting and clothing ripping. But their excess of desire is balanced by their respective home lives.

The man, Michel Piccoli, shrewdly pompous, self-gratifying as a left-leaning politico, has a sickly wife and the woman, Stephane Audran, electrifying and dramatically right and incisive in her playing, has a crafty, impotent husband and a 14-year-old daughter. The husband is also a mayor of their smalltown and a deputy in Paris.

His trips to Paris give the lovers time to meet. And the woman's husband asks Piccoli to join him in the city council and later wants him to back him in a shady deal to get some land to sell back to a proposed factory. But the overwhelming love has Piccoli poisoning his wife, which is bruited as suicide, and then their killing the husband and setting his car on fire and passing it off as an accident.

They almost get away with it except for the suspicions of the daughter who thinks she will help by making her mother confess to her liaison with Piccoli. The police, who have had to drop the case, now close in and they confess and also simply admit they never thought of leaving.

Chabrol's constantly right feel for the suffocating atmosphere of a closed-in social milieu, the fine playing, the shrewd jollops of suspense in an everyday setting and the habits and outlooks of his characters are all brilliantly blocked out as well as the catalysing effects of their violence. Claude Pieplu's extraordinary limning of the abject politico almost makes him pitiable which is a feat by him and Chabrol.

Film is a deceptively simple drama that goes deeper in dredging up character and motivation and walks its tightrope between the humanly comic and degrading sans slyness or morbidity.

The right handling should give this Chabrollean drama, in the line of "The Unfaithful Wife" and "The Butcher," some good offshore legs and hand Chabrol a

wider following. He is one of the more prolific filmmakers here and right now in top form. As usual, the technical credits are first-rate.  
Mosk.

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VAR 5/23/73