

Document Citation

Title	Les creatures
Author(s)	Gene Moskowitz
Source	<i>Variety</i>
Date	1966 Aug 29
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Les créatures (The creatures), Varda, Agnès, 1966

~~New K'...~~
(FRENCH-SCOPE)

Venice, Aug. 29.

Mag Bodard - Parc Films - Madeleine Films-Sandrews release and production. With Catherine Deneuve, Michel Piccoli, Eva Dahlbeck, Jacques Charrier, Ursula Kubler. Written and directed by Agnes Varda. Camera, Willy Kurant; editor, Janine Verneau. At Venice Film Fest. Running Time, 102 MINS.

Wife Catherine Deneuve
Writer Michel Piccoli
Hotel Owner Eva Dahlbeck
Young Man Jacques Charrier
Electrician Nino Castelnuovo
Vamp Ursula Kubler

One can understand what French filmmaker Agnes Varda is trying to do in this intellectually-slanted pic, but it is not always visually and dramatically effective. Its unfoldment on two levels, real life and an author's imagination while writing a book, that blends both, makes this somewhat overwrought and a bit pretentious and literary with patches of tedium. Mainly arty chances abroad on its theme and treatment which might create some curio and critical values. But payoff looks chancey.

An accident has a writer's wife left mute. They hole up on a little island, sometimes attached to the mainland at low tides, where he writes his book. But he begins to notice sudden strange actions of the inhabitants as he walks among them which he incorporates in his book. The real and imaginative get intertwined.

He spies on a recluse who he finds has a machine that allows him to make people act as their subconscious, rather than their conscious, demands at times of

crisis or change. He gets into a sort of chess game with the man with the various characters as the pieces. A red-tinted screen marks when the characters are being manipulated from the game. The writer rebels and in a fight kills the man.

Then as his child is born and his wife regains her speech, he hears that an old recluse killed himself out of loneliness. It was the man in his imagination. So perhaps Miss Varda wanted to comment on creation, and keep it clear as it mounts, as well as showing how it also is an imaginative interpretation and twisting of reality to attain it.

But trying to get this on film does not quite work. It waters down both the real and unreal and finally neither makes a comment on the problems of artistic creation, nor can the film quite build characters out of the ambivalent nature of the two sets of actions.

It is well shot and does create a sort of clinical interest as the vanities, pettiness and sometimes violent underpinnings of small-town life are exposed and treated. But, finally, it appears affected rather than revealing, and somewhat cold and remote rather than truly entering the joy or anguish of creativity.

So this is an offbeater that would need extremely careful handling and placement abroad. It is technically fine and players are adequate.

Mosk.

Sept. '66