

Document Citation

Title	Alain Resnais and the enigmatic art of memory
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Source	<i>Harvard Film Archive</i>
Date	2010 Jan
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	3
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	Resnais, Alain (1922), Vannes, France New wave films -- France
Film Subjects	L'année dernière à marienbad (Last year at marienbad), Resnais, Alain, 1961 Je t'aime, je t'aime (I love you, I love you), Resnais, Alain, 1968 La guerre est finie (The war is over), Resnais, Alain, 1966 Muriel ou le temps d'un retour (Muriel, or the time of return), Resnais, Alain, 1963

Harvard Film Archive, Jan-March 2010, p.3

ALAIN RESNAIS AND THE ENIGMATIC ART OF MEMORY

JANUARY 15 – JANUARY 25

A legendary – and still incredibly active – figure in French cinema, Alain Resnais (b.1922) has created some of the most important and indelible films of the postwar era. In a career spanning over sixty years, Resnais has exhaustively explored the complex relationships between time and memory, truth and the subjectivity of the human mind. Intellectually rigorous, his films nonetheless remain immensely watchable, buoyed by a lightness of touch and a sheer beauty that effortlessly communicates the dreamlike interior of the mind.

A contemporary of the French New Wave, Resnais' relationship to that movement was always tangential, with his politically engaged, structurally formalist films standing apart from the looser, more personal early work of Truffaut, et al. Resnais began his film career directing documentaries before transitioning to narrative features with the groundbreaking and controversial *Hiroshima mon amour* (which sadly remains unavailable for this retrospective due to a long-simmering rights dispute). A long, fecund stage of his career is marked by his collaborations with such avant-garde novelists as Marguerite Duras, Alain Robbe-Grillet and Jorge Semprun and resulted in Resnais' most celebrated films, including *Last Year at Marienbad*, *Muriel, or the Time of Return*, *The War is Over* and *Je t'aime, je t'aime*. In recent years, Resnais has embraced his lifelong dream of directing musicals – with the lush, late work *Same Old Song* openly inspired, for example, by the still neglected work of British writer-director Dennis Potter.

This series is presented in conjunction with the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in New York and the Consulate of France in Boston. Special thanks: Sandrine Butteau, Delphine Selles, Cultural Services of the French Embassy, New York; Anne Miller, Eric Jausseran, Consulate General of France, Boston.