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TUESDAY

Eric Rohmer's **MY NIGHT AT MAUD'S** (1969), from his screenplay, with ~~A. S. Allen~~ Jean-Louis Trintignant, Françoise Fabian, Antoine Vitez, and Marie-Christine Barrault, is a refreshing reminder that sex is the most selective and irrevocable of affinities. Like *La Collectionneuse* before and *Claire's Knee* after, this Moral Tale takes a civilized view of intellectually serious provincials grappling with life and love. Again, per plot formula, a wistfully masochistic male (Trintignant) allows a blond mirage (Barrault) to becloud his chance to appreciate a true prize of brunette womanhood (Fabian). The

film positively aches with the sweet pain of desire mangled by decision, of life-giving reason surrendered to death-dealing romanticism, and of the instinct of Now swallowed up by the imperative of Always. The marvelously candid, dramatically interlocking actors are rigorously literate in a manner that elucidates, evaluates, and enhances the characterizations, and they are set off to highest advantage by the black-and-white, dark-and-snow cinematography of Nestor Almendros, who chisels the plastic contrasts on the screen into powerfully affecting compositions. (Cofeature: Robert Bresson's *Diary of a Country Priest*) **Film Forum 2: also Wednesday, 6:10, 10:10 ■**

Research: Lenge Hong