

CINE CENTRAL CALCUTTA FILM BULLETIN



Vol. 13, Issue No. 3

DIGITAL EDITION

July 2023

Re-visiting Films of Jacques Demy

*A Festival dedicated to the
celebrated French Director Jacques Demy*

Organised by
Cine Central, Calcutta
and
Alliance française du Bengale

Jacques Demy is remembered as one of the most accessible filmmakers of the French New Wave, the pivotal filmmaking movement of the 1960's. The director of 21 films, his experimentation as a director was based deeply in the whimsical Hollywood Golden Age, and its colorful musicals and fantasy films that were his inspiration.

Born in Pontchâteau, France, Demy was from a young age entranced with film. He first studied at Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Nantes, where he studied fine arts and directed some live and animated short films. Demy continued his studies at the Ecole Technique de Photographie et de Cinématographiques and was assistant to the animator Paul Grimault, and then Georges Rouquier.

His first feature film, *Lola* (1961) was Demy's tribute to the Hollywood musical, and it instantly catapulted Demy into the mainstream. Not only was it a successful experiment in style, with a superb attention paid to capturing the details of the iconic imagery that it aspired to, but his attention to character and their emotional states drew in an audience that may have found some of the French New Wave films lacking in substance.

In 1964, Demy directed what many believe is his masterpiece, *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (The

Umbrellas of Cherbourg). Furthering the musical elements he applied in *Lola*, he set all of the film's dialogue to music. Also shooting in color, he reached a new height of detail and melodrama, as the film followed two star-crossed lovers who turn out not to have fate on their side. The film won the Grand Prix at Cannes Film Festival in 1964, and was also nominated for Best Foreign Picture at the Academy Awards.

Some say Demy's career peaked with *Cherbourg*. Although he continued to direct films, he never recaptured the same success with his latter work. Many believed that style began to overtake substance, and the emotional depth of his films became overshadowed by visual spectacle. However, after many critical and financial flops, Demy was awarded the Grand Prix des Arts et Lettres, the lifetime achievement award, after directing the successful, *Une Chambre en ville* (*A Room in Town*, 1982).

During his rise as a filmmaker, Demy married fellow accomplished filmmaker Agnès Varda – with whom he would remain married until his death in 1990. Varda spearheaded the restoration of *Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, which continues to enjoy re-releases into various theaters and festivals around the world.



Les demoiselles de Rochefort (1967)

Directed by Jacques Demy

Delphine (Catherine Deneuve) and Solange (Françoise Dorléac) are twin sisters who each want to find romance and leave their small seaside town of Rochefort, France. Soon they befriend a couple of visiting carnival workers who frequent their lonely mother's (Danielle Darrieux) café and hire the girls to sing in the carnival. Wanting a career as a songwriter, Solange falls for an American musician, Andy (Gene Kelly), while Delphine dumps her beau and searches Rochefort for her ideal man.



Peau d'âne (1970)

Directed by Jacques Demy

In a magical, faraway land, a widower king (Jean Marais) decrees that he will wed his daughter, the princess (Catherine Deneuve), because she's the only woman able to match his former queen's beauty. To dodge the incestuous union, the princess -- with the help of a magical fairy (Delphine Seyrig) -- disguises herself as a donkey and escapes to a neighboring kingdom. There, the donkey-skinned maiden encounters a handsome prince (Jacques Perrin) who falls in love with her.

Cine Central, Calcutta
and
Alliance française du Bengale
present

**REMEMBERING
JACQUES DEMY**

*A Festival dedicated to the
celebrated French Director Jacques Demy*

1st and 2nd July 2023, at Nandan III, at 5.00 p.m.

1st July, Saturday, 2023
Les demoiselles de Rochefort (1967)
Directed by Jacques Demy

2nd July, Sunday, 2023
Les parapluies de Cherbourg (1964)
Directed by Jacques Demy

Peau d'âne (1970)
Directed by Jacques Demy

You are cordially invited.

PROGRAMMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Les parapluies de Cherbourg (1964)

Directed by Jacques Demy

Geneviève (Catherine Deneuve), a beautiful young Frenchwoman who works at a small-town boutique selling umbrellas, falls for dashing mechanic Guy (Nino Castelnuovo). Their brief romance is interrupted when Guy is drafted to serve in the Algerian War. Though pregnant by Guy, Geneviève marries an older businessman, Roland (Marc Michel), and begins to move on with her life. Throughout the musical film, all the characters' dialogue is conveyed through song.