



# STUDIO FOCUS **ARGOS PICTURES**

Argos Films was a very important vehicle in creating opportunities for the "Left bank" filmmakers to emerge from the overall *Nouvelle Vague* (New wave French Cinema).



**U M B R E L L A**  
ENTERTAINMENT

# LA JETÉE

127 mins

In a post-apocalyptic future, humanity's hopes for survival hinge on time-travel experiments conducted upon a man whose time-tripping dream state folds his origins and destiny together in one fleeting, traumatic moment at an airport.

Comprised of black and white stills, *La Jetée* creates a striking analogy for the power of memory and packs all of the intensity of a full-length feature into 28 minutes and was the inspiration for Terry Gilliam's *12 Monkeys*.

DVD

ARGOS



# SANS SOLEIL

100 mins

Using narration, documentary footage, photographs and philosophical commentary, **Chris Marker** (*La Jetée*) takes us to many fascinating sights in Japan, Iceland and Africa and interrogates the nature of filmmaking, travel, memory and “the dreams of the human race” in one of the most remarkable film essays ever made by one of cinema’s most enigmatic and influential directors.

DVD

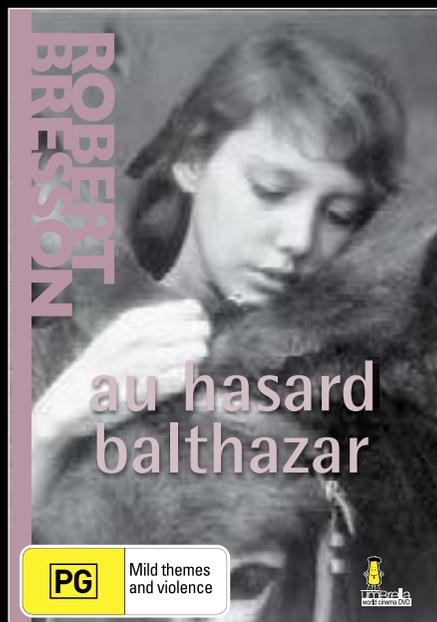
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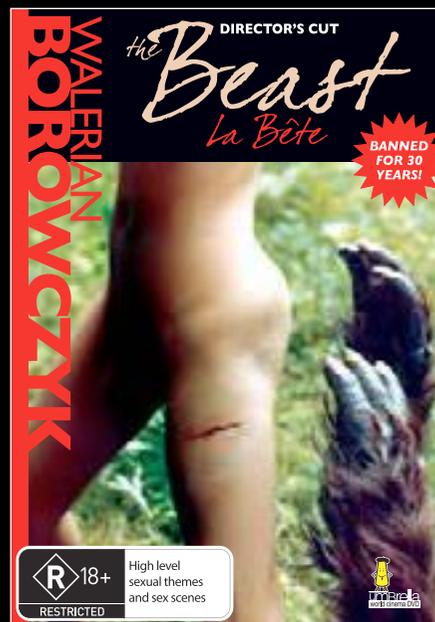


## AU HASARD BALTHAZAR

**Robert Bresson's cinematic masterpiece is the transcendent story of a saint-like donkey ruthlessly victimized by human greed and folly.**

Reared in the idyllic French countryside by doting young children, the donkey Balthazar is soon put into bondage before spurning his master and finding his way to the loving Marie, a poor, beautiful girl whose parallel destiny sees her abused by the village drunks and delinquents. Like Balthazar, she finds it difficult to resist these hostile men, especially the vicious Gerard, who also attacks the donkey out of twisted jealousy. **Jean-Luc Godard** famously called *Au Hasard Balthazar* "the world in an hour and a half", and Bresson brilliantly combines subtle performances from non-professional actors with sublime imagery to create a moving allegory of sacrifice, suffering and redemption.

DVD



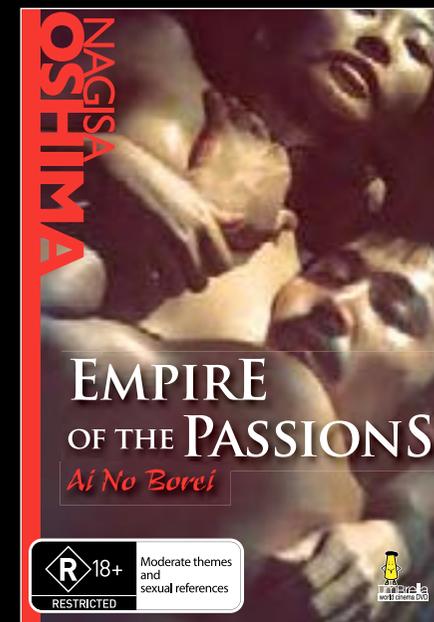
## THE BEAST

A black comedy of sexual manners set around an arranged wedding to occur on the grounds of an elegant chateau, **Walerian Borowczyk's** controversial masterpiece should be approached with caution but enjoyed with abandon!!

Infamous for the final scene where the titular beast ravishes an American heiress, Lucy Broadhurst (**Lisbeth Hummel**), on the eve of her wedding to a French aristocrat, the graphic scenes of the beast coupling with its human prey sees the daring **Borowczyk** (*Immoral Tales*) expound on the animalistic nature of human sexuality.

Proving too heavy-handed for the censors, the film, which ravishingly revives the beauty and the beast myth, has been banned for thirty years, is now available as a special director's cut.

DVD



## THE EMPIRE OF THE PASSIONS

The follow-up to **Nagisa Oshima's** notorious *In The Realm of the Senses*, this sublime period drama also stars the brilliant **Tatsuya Fuji** as an ex-soldier and adulterer whose ardent affair with the wife of an elderly rickshaw driver enamours the pair in mystery and murder. Despite the steamy sex scenes (though less explicit than *In the Realm of the Senses*) and horror shocks, the mood is mournful and tender, with Oshima blending film noir, ghost-story and detailed period imagery to make this one of his most accessible and entertaining works. Having been overshadowed by its more infamous predecessor, this sensual, provocative and visually rich film - which earned Oshima the Best Director Award at the Cannes Film Festival (it was also nominated for the Golden Palm) - is due for rediscovery.

# HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR

One of the most influential films of all time, **Alain Resnais'** first feature is a beautifully realised parable of love and war set in bomb-ravaged Japan.

Following *Night and Fog*, his devastating chronicle of the Nazi concentration camps, Resnais was asked to make a film about the atomic bomb, and responded with this moody masterwork, a love story in which a French actress (**Emmanuelle Riva**) and Japanese architect (**Eiji Okada**) exorcise their memories of war during a torrid affair amid the ruins of Hiroshima.

Utilizing an innovative flashback structure and Academy Award®-nominated screenplay by novelist **Marguerite Duras**, Resnais delicately weaves past and present, personal pain and public anguish, in a film that defined the French New Wave.

DVD

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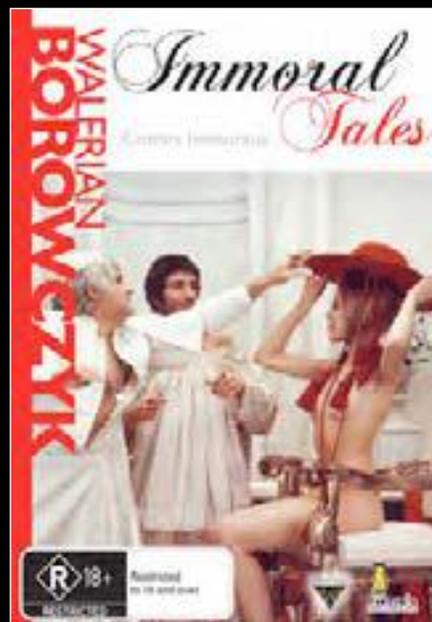
## FANTASTIC PLANET

**Rene Laloux's mesmerising sci-fi animated feature won the Grand Prix at the 1973 Cannes Film Festival and is a landmark of European animation.**

Set in a distant world, where tiny humans, or Oms, are kept as pets by large alien creatures, the Draags, the film travels through a strange and beautiful world. Soon, one Om absconds with a Draag knowledge device, using it to foment a wild Om uprising against his captors.

Inspired by the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia in the late '60s, Laloux's breathtaking vision immediately drew comparisons to Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and *Planet of the Apes*. Today, the film can be seen to prefigure much of the work of **Hayao Miyazaki** (*Spirited Away*) due to its political and social concerns, epic imagination and groundbreaking animation techniques.

DVD

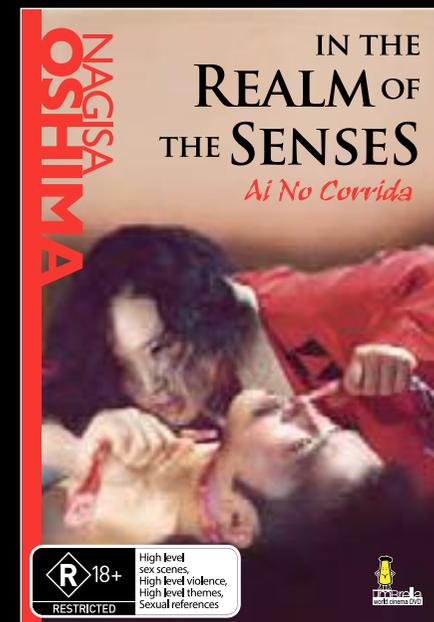


## IMMORAL TALES

Acclaimed by arthouse erotica fans for its unique surrealist vision, the controversial director **Walerian Borowczyk** (*The Beast*) explores the many facets of eroticism over the centuries. This portmanteau film includes four sublimely sexy stories:

*La Maree (The Tide)*  
*Therese Philosophe*  
*Erzebet Bathory*  
and *Lucrezia Borgia*

DVD



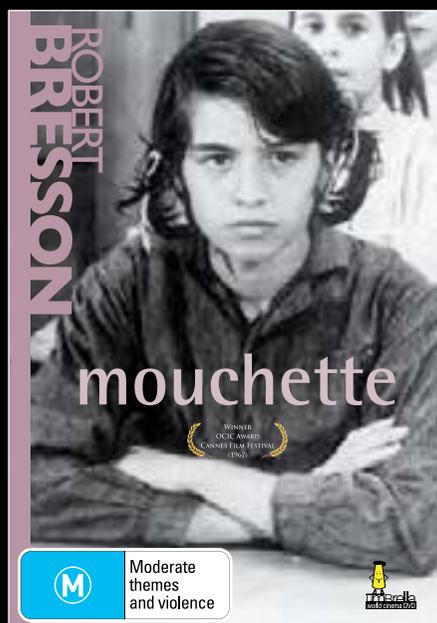
## IN THE REALM OF THE SENSES

**Banned around the world, Oshima's extraordinary tale of sexual obsession remains equally shocking over 30 years since it's notorious release - this explicit study of love and death was so controversial in Japan that cans of film were smuggled to France to be processed.**

Set in 1936, Oshima's erotic masterpiece tells the story of Sada (**Eiko Matsuda**), a beautiful young geisha who draws the attention of the handsome Kichizo (**Tatsuya Fuji**), a brothel owner's arrogant, sexually prodigious husband. Oblivious to a brutal war unfolding around them, the couple's initial flirtation soon turns to all-consuming passion, a frenzied and fatal love-making rite. As the *New York Times* wrote: "**Tatsuya Fuji has a haunting gentleness and passivity as he comes to recognize his destiny: to be literally loved to death.**"

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DVD



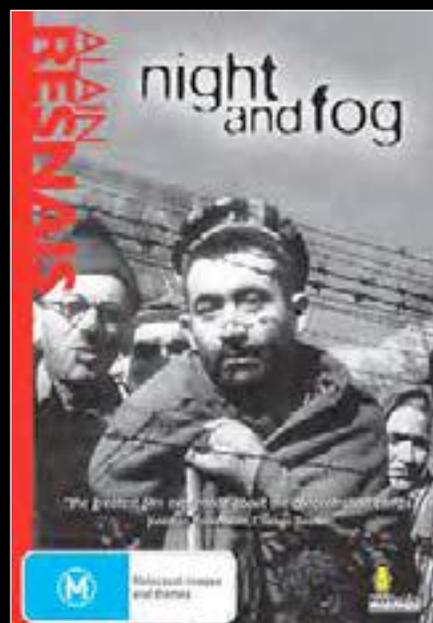
## MOUCHETTE

Following *Au Hasard Balthazar*, **Robert Bresson's** *Mouchette* is the heartbreaking story of an alienated teenage girl whose life is mired in desolation and brutality.

A metaphor for wider social conflict and alienation, Bresson said of the film: "*Mouchette* offers evidence of misery and cruelty. She is found everywhere: wars, concentration camps, tortures, assassinations."

Neglected by her terminally ill mother and her abusive, alcoholic father, *Mouchette's* chance encounter with a local hunter sets her on a downward spiral that can only end in tragedy.

DVD

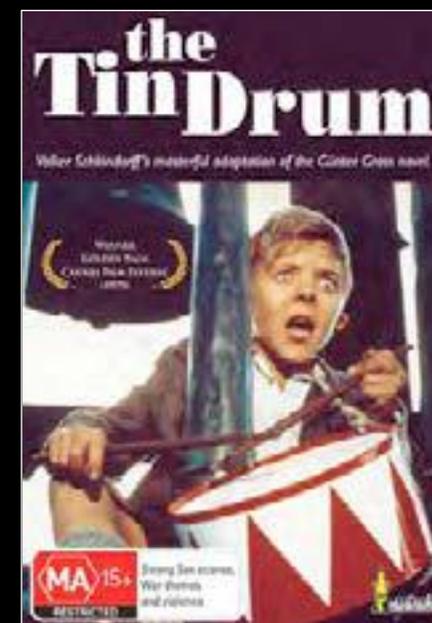


## NIGHT AND FOG

**Francois Truffaut** called it "the greatest film of all time", and more than 50 years later, **Alain Resnais' (Hiroshima, Mon Amour)** unforgettable document of the Nazi concentration camps remains a devastating record of man's inhumanity to man.

Filed only ten years after the horrific unfolding of Hitler's 'final solution', Resnais blends colour images of the strangely still, abandoned concentration camp at Auschwitz with black and white newsreel footage of the atrocities that occurred there, creating a diabolic image of political and ideological power, and the untold human suffering that it unleashed. Namesake for Hitler's Nacht und Nebel directive in which political prisoners across Europe were kidnapped in the night and removed to German death camps, *Night and Fog* remains the definitive cinematic statement on the horrors of the Holocaust.

DVD



## THE TIN DRUM

**Novelist Gunter Grass assisted in this brilliant film adaptation of his groundbreaking novel, which depicts the horrors of two world wars in Germany via the brazen gaze of a very special young boy.**

Frustrated by the lies and hypocrisies that surround him, three year-old Oskar resorts to breaking glass with his shrill voice and banging relentlessly on his tin drum. With the fascists rising-up in his Polish-German hometown of Danzig, and the events leading up to the onslaught of Nazism coming to a head, Oskar is determined to boycott the adult world and remain a child forever.