

Film Notes

By Ric Rawlins

Nouvelle Vague

2025 | 105mins

Director: Richard Linklater

Less a 'making of the movie' and perhaps more of a bottling of its spirit, *Nouvelle Vague* will take us on a dreamlike tour behind the shoot for *A Bout de Souffle* (1960). In French, in black and white and with a cast of unknowns, it's just like the original. Get ready for a cine-literate exploration of the original Big Bang.

10 years after he'd started writing as a film critic for the French magazine *Cahiers du Cinéma*, Jean-Luc Godard had seen enough of the decline of French cinema to pull back his bow and launch an arrow into the heart of it: his debut film, *Bout de Souffle* (*Breathless*). On the surface, the film would tip its hat to the American film noirs that had flooded French cinemas in the 1950s: there would be a gangster. A girl. Passion, crime and a race against time. But those superficial details would merely be the decoy.

Punk rock filmmaking on a non-existent budget, Godard would hit the streets of Paris and film on real locations, surrounded by real people going about their business. There would be disruptive time-jumps in the editing. Dizzying montage. It would rebel against slick storytelling, favouring the raw, inconsistent messiness of real life. And it would even rebel against its audience, with actors breaking the fourth wall to shock cinema-goers out of their daydream.

A cinematic intro to a decade of revolution, *Breathless* achieved its goal of rejuvenating the French cinema scene which had become in thrall to imitating America. Perhaps less anticipated was that it would change the language of cinema for good – internationally – with Godard's fellow French New Wave directors inspiring the Americans right back again.

'Conventions were exploded to make something with the remains, just as the debris is collected after an explosion. And when there is nothing useful left, we can start from scratch on fresh ground'

- Jean-Luc Goddard

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Plus **Seabirds**

Eva Churchill | 10mins

Playing before the main feature is *Seabird*, which filmmaker Eva Churchill describes as "a personal and reflective story about growing up, created at a moment when my classmates and I were preparing to leave university and step into our careers".

Excellent

Fair

Poor



What did you think of the film? Please mark or tear the number.

Please add any further comments here

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Did You Know?

- In order to keep with the spirit of the French New Wave, the young French actors are all newcomers. For example, while he plays the key part of Jean-Luc Godard, it's the first feature film of Guillaume Marbeck.
- This is director Richard Linklater's first non-English film.

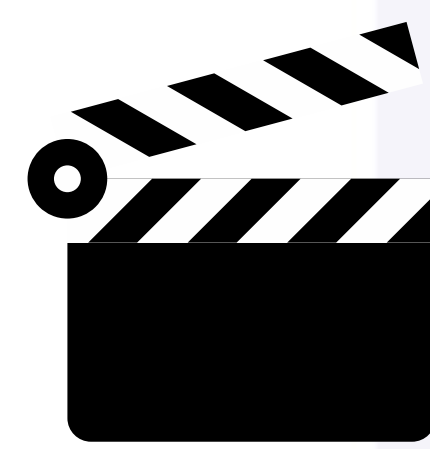
Continue Your Journey...

If you enjoyed this film, you might like:



Les Quatre Cents Coups (The 400 Blows) (1959)

Follows Antione Doinel, a misunderstood adolescent in Paris, who struggles with his parents and teachers due to his rebellious behavior.



A Bout de Souffle (Breathless) (1960)

The original film that Linklater based this film off. Follows a wandering criminal and his American girlfriend.

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We really value your opinion and your answers are really helpful to help us understand our audiences, improve the festival and apply for funding.

Excellent

Fair

Poor



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