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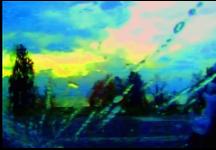
*Goodbye
to language* 3D

A FILM BY
JEAN-LUC GODARD



A 3D PRESENTATION
VUE WESTFIELD - STRATFORD
DECEMBER 4, 2014

Goodbye to language 3D



ADIEU



LANGAGE

Throughout periods of being both in and out of critical and audience favour, Jean-Luc Godard has had a consistent reputation for reinventing cinema. And *Goodbye to Language* (*Adieu au langage*) is cinema as we've never seen it before, with 3D proving to be a tantalising addition to the director's visual arsenal. There is emphasis on seemingly random foreground objects. There are ironic text effects. There are the barnburning moments where the stereoscopic image splits into independent pictures only to reconverge moments later. Godard uses the 3D tool unsparingly, challenging the limits of its capabilities, pushing the very medium of movies in the process.

"Those lacking imagination take refuge in reality," declares one of the film's opening lines. It thumbs its nose at our potential incomprehension, while asserting that this is a film about that most Godardian of concerns: what is, the image of what is and the lines that separate them. A maddening maestro, a mischievous meddler, Godard uses layers of image to construct realities where seeming digressions are central to our perception.

However difficult it might be to follow, there is a dense thematic texture to the film, stacked as high as its images. At the heart of the picture are two lovers – often naked, sometimes on the toilet, clashing in temperament with the constant rattle and hum of television in the background. Along with man and woman, we see human and beast, country and city, as well as, crucially, Frankenstein and his creature. As with all of Godard, *Adieu* is rich with literary allusions, but Mary Shelley's 1818 classic is the most prominent. We see Roxy – Godard's own real-life dog, as well as a key character – gazing across the shores of Lake Geneva, the very place where the book was written. There's also a portion of the novel dramatized later in the picture. Dr. Frankenstein's eloquent, philosophical creation is perhaps evoked to represent rifts in nature's progress, just like the television in the couple's lounge or Godard's constant structural interruptions.

The director himself, indeed, is playing the mad scientist. He lets his creation gather intellectual and emotional traction while imposing his own will by disrupting the aural and visual fidelity of the picture. He is the ghost in his own machine, the fly in the ointment of his own cinema – shifting perspectives, superimposing images, shooting on cameras of both high and low grades, and deploying every pun he can think of. (Even the title reverberates – 'adieu' means goodbye in conventional French, though in Godard's French-Swiss home of Vaud it can mean 'hello,' not to mention the more obvious pun involving "dieu" as the French word for God.)

However one digests its meanings, *Adieu au langage* is a visually and aurally experimental work that's dense with innovation, and a film where the third dimension is integral. Given that Godard's new work isn't getting a theatrical release in the UK, and viewers who don't see it in 3D are missing the complete experience, we're delighted to be hosting this presentation.

Five Steps to *Goodbye to Language*

by Craig Williams

In *Goodbye to Language*, Godard redefines our perceived notions of cinematic grammar. It feels like a culmination of his essay films, with his breathless, disparate polemics colliding with a deconstruction of form. The first fractures occurred late in the new wave, with Godard using thin dramatic scenarios to amplify the ideological slant of the work. When he returned to feature films after a fruitful period of experimental political video work, he abandoned narrative altogether and started a wholesale reimagining of the cinematic form. In *Goodbye to Language*, Godard resurrects the brave technological innovations of *Number Two* and the brilliant use of juxtaposition in *Histoire(s) du Cinema*, and brings them to bear on a new cinematic aesthetic of the 21st century - digital 3D. *Goodbye to Language* is also concerned with what these innovations mean for cinema, with Godard revising the postmodernist self-critique of *Scenario du Film Passion* for the new century. Taken together, each of these five films represents a building block that helps us to understand the intriguing challenges of *Goodbye to Language*.

Two or Three Things I Know About Her (1967)



With the end of his *nouvelle vague* period approaching, Godard's first great treatise on the contemporary state of capitalism finds the director dealing with a central tonal divide in his work and combining the dramatic and essayistic forms. The slender plot - involving a bourgeois housewife who occasionally moonlights as a prostitute - is thematic dressing, primarily there for Godard to project against the idea of a changing Paris. The city itself has become a construction site, and the film becomes another strand in the civic order re-setting itself.

Number Two (1975)



A film of jaw-dropping stylistic daring, *Number Two* was an early part of Godard's transitional 70s period as he moved from the Dziga Vertov Group films of the late 60s into his classic 80s works. With the narrative unfolding on two television screens within the frame, the film introduces the idea of a constructed reality within a reality; cinema within cinema. It's a key work of Godard's pioneering video experimentation, anticipating the way we will consume media in the future - in fragments, and with our minds fixated on what might be on the other screen.

Scenario du Film Passion (1982)



"What is cinema, Mr Coutard?" That is the question Godard asks his unseen cinematographer in *Passion* (1982). In the film-behind-the-film *Scenario du Film Passion*, Godard provides us with half an answer, in his own inimitable way. He speaks to us directly, narrating the process of *Passion's* creation. Godard is consumed by the idea of what it means to "write" a film in the new technological age. We get the sense of the process itself becoming akin to the final product. Does cinema lose something if we are cognisant of it? Perhaps, but this is the cinema of an unspecified technocratic future.

Histoire(s) du Cinema (1988 - 1998)



Arguably Godard's greatest achievement, *Histoire(s) du Cinema* is a film structured in television episodes. This is the history of cinema through the Godard looking glass; personal, provocative and highly idiosyncratic. The key to the dialectic is the use of image juxtaposition, with the director superimposing stock footage of modern atrocities onto key cinematic works. We are prompted to consider the canon in light of the tumultuous history of the century and vice versa. Godard's cinema is inherently political and, in *Histoire(s) du Cinema*, the story of cinema is radicalised beyond recognition, placing the images we know so well in an entirely different light.

Film Socialisme (2010)



Film Socialisme is, along with *Goodbye to Language*, the new wave of Godard's digital revolution. He is concerned with cinema as its own form of language; what it communicates and what it doesn't. The innovative subtitles were the subject of much critical derision on release, but they are a part of the deliberate structural disintegration that reaches its culmination in *Goodbye to Language*. Godard deconstructs and reconstructs the idea of the film in the brave new digital world. The cruise liner becomes an unlikely crossover point for both films, but many of the thematic concerns meet in the slipstream; digital ash in a digital urn.

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