

TREASURES FROM THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE

AN ONGOING SERIES OF CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY FILMS PRESENTED IN 35MM BY THE YALE FILM STUDY CENTER

SUNDAY
OCTOBER 21, 2018
2:00PM • WHITNEY
HUMANITIES CENTER

MARIE ANTOINETTE

PRESENTED WITH SUPPORT FROM
PAUL L. JOSKOW '70 M.PHIL., '72 PH.D.



Sofia Coppola lets the queen eat frosting from a cake as an anachronistic French maid slides on her bubblegum pink kitten heels in the opening shot of 2006's *MARIE ANTOINETTE*, while Gang of Four declares one of the film's central concerns: "the problem of leisure, what to do for pleasure." From there, Coppola creates an idiosyncratic and iconoclastic celebration of visual pleasure—what Fiona Handyside called a "willful embrace of superficiality and frivolity"—but does so in a way that constantly calls audience expectations and desires into focus and into question. The script was sourced from Antonia Fraser's *Marie Antoinette: The Journey*, and was written by Coppola with Kirsten Dunst in mind for the title role. "I guess the main objective when I thought of making the movie of her story," Coppola said, "was not to make a big historical epic—the biography's a huge story—and I wanted to really focus on trying to make more an impressionistic telling from *her* point of view, because so many of the stories about Marie Antoinette are people's *perceptions* of her."

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MARIE ANTOINETTE had a \$40 million production budget and was shot from January to April 2005. Coppola was given unprecedented access to Versailles, refurbishing and shooting in the Petit Trianon, the "rustic" Hameau de la Reine, the palace, and its grounds. (When not filming in Marie Antoinette's actual bedroom, the crew used it as a storage room for their gear.) The Parisian bakery Ladurée provided the film's plentiful pastries, mixing some authentic 18th century recipes with their trademark modern style of macarons. Shoes for the film were designed by Manolo Blahnik, and costume designer Milena Canonero won her third Academy Award for her work on the film. The film's wardrobe alone required a crew of 60, seven transport drivers, and ten rental houses near Versailles for storage and workspaces. Coppola and Canonero chose to keep fairly accurate shapes and cuts for the costumes, but stylized them through ahistorical fabric and color choices.

Coppola looked to her own early interests when envisioning the world of the teen queen, famously including a pair of Converse sneakers in the "I Want Candy" sequence and modeling Count Axel von Fersen (Jamie Dornan) on Adam Ant. "A lot of the bands in the early eighties had this kind of romantic idea of the 18th century," she said. "I always wanted to be a little bit in this kind of New Romantic spirit which was decadent, and they were teenagers, and to have the colors and the music and everything reflect that." The film's largely New Wave and post-punk soundtrack includes Ant along with acts such as Siouxsie and the Banshees, New Order, the Cure, and Bow Wow Wow, mixed with period music by Vivaldi, Rameau, and Couperin. Coppola has said the look of the film was influenced by the work of filmmakers Stanley Kubrick, Terrence Malick (particularly in the Petit Trianon scenes), Miloš Forman, and Ken Russell, though *MARIE ANTOINETTE* also frequently references paintings by Goya, Monet, and Jacques-Louis David.

MARIE ANTOINETTE, like the queen, has been polarizing over the years, but recent evaluations have focused on its feminine and feminist voice, finding substance in the style. Todd Kennedy praised its "wholly feminine" aesthetic "pertaining to female characters, feminine pleasures of consumption, and a filmic point of view that portrays women as dominated by the environment surrounding them," while Handyside called attention to its "aesthetic that asks the audience to identify and sympathize with the naked, vulnerable object of the gaze, not those who gaze upon her." Tina Hassannia links *MARIE ANTOINETTE* to Coppola's filmography and biography, writing, "The public mockery, the inability to be taken seriously due to one's age and gender, the fake and expensive atmosphere in which Coppola was raised—these factors must be taken into consideration given how uncompromising [her films] are in representing the luxurious boredom of one female character after another, the director daring to empathize with them instead of easily mocking them for not being aware of their privilege."

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY **SOFIA COPPOLA**

CINEMATOGRAPHY BY **LANCE ACORD**

A PRODUCTION OF **COLUMBIA PICTURES**

(2006) 123 MINS.

STARRING **KIRSTEN DUNST, JASON SCHWARTZMAN, JUDY DAVIS, RIP TORN, ROSE BYRNE, ASIA ARGENTO, MOLLY SHANNON, SHIRLEY HENDERSON, DANNY HUSTON, JAMIE DORNAN, TOM HARDY, MATHIEU AMALRIC, AND STEVE COOGAN**

DID YOU KNOW: SINGER MARIANNE FAITHFULL, WHO PLAYS MARIE ANTOINETTE'S MOTHER, THE HOLY ROMAN EMPRESS MARIA THERESA, IS HERSELF THE DAUGHTER OF AN AUSTRIAN ARISTOCRAT: EVA VON SACHER-MASOCH, BARONESS ERISSO. "THINKING ABOUT HER HAS HELPED ME A LOT," FAITHFULL NOTED DURING FILMING. "WHEN SOFIA SAYS, 'BE MORE COOL, BE MORE STRONG, THINK OF YOUR MOTHER,' I'VE GOT THE WHOLE BACKGROUND, 800 YEARS BACK."

FIRST, ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4 AT 2PM, TREASURES PRESENTS AN ULTRA-RARE SCREENING OF DIRECTOR ASHISH AVIKUNTHAK'S 2011 EXPERIMENTAL FILM **KATHO UPANISHAD**, ADAPTED FROM THE ANCIENT SANSKRIT TREATISE OF THE SAME NAME. THE FILM WILL SCREEN ON 35MM WITH AVIKUNTHAK AND CINEMATOGRAPHER BASAB MULLIK IN PERSON FOR THIS SPECIAL EVENT.

THEN, JOIN THE FILM STUDY CENTER FOR THE THIRD EVENT IN OUR ONGOING THROUGH BERGMAN'S LENS: INGMAR BERGMAN CENTENARY SERIES. TO CELEBRATE 100 YEARS SINCE THE BIRTH OF THE SWEDISH CINEMA ICON, WE PRESENT NEW 35MM PRINTS OF **THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY** AND **PERSONA**, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY PROF. DAVID BROMWICH. **THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15 AT 7PM**