



TREASURES FROM THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE

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

TUESDAY

JULY 18, 2017

7:00PM • WHITNEY
HUMANITIES CENTER

RACHEL GETTING MARRIED

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



"Ever since my days working with Roger Corman, and perhaps before that, I've been a sucker for a women's picture. A film with a woman protagonist at the forefront. A woman in jeopardy. A woman on a mission. These are themes that have tremendous appeal to me as a moviegoer and also as a director."

—Jonathan Demme



Director Jonathan Demme's goal was to create "the most beautiful home movie ever made" with *RACHEL GETTING MARRIED*, a sanguine and compassionate ambition for a film centered on a bohemian family's black sheep, Kym Buchman (Anne Hathaway), who introduces herself as "Shiva the Destroyer, your harbinger of doom for the evening." The first film from screenwriter Jenny Lumet, daughter of Sidney Lumet and granddaughter of Lena Horne, *RACHEL GETTING MARRIED* is "a film whose lightness of touch rides a wave of family conflict to perfectly balance smiles and tears," says Deborah Young of *The Hollywood Reporter*. Moira MacDonald remarks in *The Seattle Times*, "This emotionally wrenching drama is an actors' showcase, a primer on quick-and-dirty filmmaking that nonetheless looks beautiful, and a welcome-to-the-big-leagues party for Hathaway."

Given its rich and eclectic soundtrack—samba, Sister Carol, Robyn Hitchcock, an a cappella Tunde Adebimpe singing Neil Young—it is remarkable that there is no non-diegetic music in the film, and almost all of the music was recorded live on location. This meant that the actors and cinematographer Declan Quinn were able to hear and respond to the music in real time while shooting. Despite a short shooting schedule (33 days in Stamford, CT, in late 2007), Demme encouraged a collaborative, free-flowing, improvisational approach to shooting, which was made economically feasible by the advent of digital filmmaking technologies. As an example, for a twelve-step group meeting, all of the actors were asked to create and tell their own stories, taking as much time as they wished, with Hathaway volunteering Kym's story only when she felt moved to do so, adapting her monologue on the fly to reflect the remarks other participants had made. Though this led to quite a bit of material being captured that Demme didn't intend to use in the film, the entire scene was recorded in just one take because the participants had been given the time to create the right mood.

Like all good weddings, *RACHEL GETTING MARRIED* is filled with family and friends, with most roles cast based on existing relationships with Demme and the principals. The minister for the ceremony is played by Rev. Robert Castle, Demme's cousin and the subject of his 1992 documentary *COUSIN BOBBY*, and the attendees include his mentor, Roger Corman, camera in hand. Two of Demme's children appear in the film—most prominently his son Brooklyn as the teenage guitar player—and the poodle is played by the Demme family dog, Olive. Childhood photos of Thomas Hathaway, Anne's younger brother, can be seen throughout the Buchman house, representing the absent brother Ethan.

In 2008, *RACHEL GETTING MARRIED* opened both the Venice International Film Festival and the Toronto International Film Festival. The critical response was overwhelmingly positive, and the film garnered over 60 award nominations—including Anne Hathaway's first Oscar nomination—and appeared on over 20 major top ten lists for the year. David Edelstein of *New York Magazine* was one of several critics who declared it the best film of the year, writing, "I've never seen a movie with this mixture of fullness and desolation. *RACHEL GETTING MARRIED* is a masterpiece."

DIRECTED BY **JONATHAN DEMME**
WRITTEN BY **JENNY LUMET**
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY **DECLAN QUINN**
(2008) 113 MINS.

STARRING **ANNE HATHAWAY, BILL IRWIN,
ROSEMARIE DEWITT, TUNDE ADEBIMPE,
DEBRA WINGER, AND ANNA DEEVERE SMITH**

DID YOU KNOW: THE DISHWASHER-LOADING RACE WAS BASED ON A REAL INCIDENT FROM THE CHILDHOOD OF SCREENWRITER JENNY LUMET, AND THE ORIGINAL COMPETITORS WERE HER FATHER SIDNEY AND BOB FOSSE. "YOU'D THINK THESE TITANS WOULD HAVE SOMETHING BETTER TO TALK ABOUT OR DO! MY DAD SAYS THE FORKS GO UP AND BOB TELLS HIM THAT IT'S SO AMATEUR. I CAN'T SAY THAT AT 11 I KNEW I SHOULD USE THIS IN ART, BUT IT STUCK WITH ME BECAUSE IT WAS PSYCHOTIC BEHAVIOR."

NEXT UP: AFTER A BRIEF AUGUST BREAK, *TREASURES FROM THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE* RETURNS FOR OUR FOURTH SEASON WITH PEDRO ALMODÓVAR'S 2006 DRAMA **VOLVER** IN 35MM, FEATURING PENÉLOPE CRUZ AND AN AWARD-WINNING ENSEMBLE CAST, **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 AT 2:00 PM.**