



Quartet (extract)

Director: Ralph Smart
UK 1948
22 mins
35mm

The Romantic Age (aka Naughty Arlette)

Director: Edmond T. Gréville
Production Company: Pinnacle Productions
Producer: Eric L'Epine-Smith
In charge of production: Edward Dryhurst
Production Manager: Harold Richmond
Assistant Director: Peter Bolton
Continuity: Olga Brooks
Screenplay: Edward Dryhurst, Peggy Barwell
From the novel by: Serge Weber
Director of Photography: Hone Glendining
Camera Operator: Cecil Cooney
Editor: Ralph Kemplen
Art Director: Anthony Mazzei
Dress Designer: Eleanor Abbey
Make-up Supervisor: Tony Sforzini
Hairdressing Supervisor: Vivienne Walker
Music: Charles Williams
Recordists: Dudley Messenger, George Croll
Dubbing Editor: Harry Booth
1st Assistant Dubbing Mixer: Peter T. Davies *

Cast:

Mai Zetterling (Arlette)
Hugh Williams (Arnold Dixon)
Margot Grahame (Helen)
Petula Clark (Julie)
Margaret Barton (Bessie)
Carol Marsh (Patricia)
Marie Ney (Miss Hallam)
Paul Dupuis (Henri Sinclair)
Raymond Lovell (Hedges)
Dorothy Latta (Virginia)
UK 1949
86 mins
35mm

A BFI National Archive print

* Uncredited

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Passion and All That Goes with It: The Films of Mai Zetterling

The Romantic Age

As a precocious French pupil who seduces the new male teacher at a prim girls' school, Zetterling steals the film. French-English director Edmond Gréville pushes at the moral limits of what was permitted within post-war British cinema, in this reflection upon a man's mid-life crisis and the emergence of the teenager as a dangerous breed.

Publicity notes for 'The Romantic Age'

Edmond Gréville, the French director of *The Romantic Age*, has long had the intention of making a film with a Girl's Finishing School for a background. At first he intended to make such a film in France for a French producer who owned the rights of Serge Weber's novel *Lycée de jeunes filles*, but, odd as it may sound, he found it impossible to find a cast for the picture, in France. He says that there are not sufficient pretty and talented teen-age girls there. Eventually he persuaded Pinnacle Productions to acquire the film rights of the novel, he adapted it for the screen himself and the dialogue was written by Edward Dryhurst and Peggy Barwell. Gréville transferred the whole setting of the story from France to England and the main background is now Littleton Girl's Finishing School.

The story itself is a romantic triangle drama with an unusual twist. It concerns a middle-aged schoolmaster whose affections are captured in a series of diverting escapades by an 18 year-old French pupil at the Finishing School. His wife refuses, at first, to take the threat seriously and only realises what has happened when it is too late. The situation is finally resolved when the schoolmaster's young daughter intervenes with a smart stratagem which brings him back to his family.

Edmond Gréville, who in France has acquired the reputation of being a 'woman's director', although *Noose*, which he made in England, shows him from quite a different aspect, has divided the screen-play into a series of long scenes which allow him to let his camera tell the story in long sweeping movements. In order to employ this technique which is characteristic of Gréville's work, Lighting Cameraman Hone Glendining is employing deep focus photography for the whole of the film.

Mai Zetterling is starring as the French girl, Arlette, a role which will show this talented Swedish star in an entirely new light. After a succession of sympathetic roles in which Miss Zetterling has usually been the subject of an unkind fate, she will now be seen as a designing minx who wreaks havoc in the settled family life of the staid schoolmaster.

The schoolmaster, Arnold Dixon, will be portrayed by Hugh Williams, who faces a difficult task in this role which consists of two almost entirely different characterisations – on the one hand he is the sedate middle-aged schoolmaster and family man, but after Arlette goes to work on him he is suddenly transformed into an irresponsible playboy to whom work and family mean nothing.

Helen Dixon, his forgiving wife, is played by Margot Grahame and Petula Clark brings all her youthful vitality to the role of Julie, their daughter. For the other girl roles Gréville has selected a number of talented young actresses, some of them, like Carol Marsh, Margaret Barton and Dorothy Latta, have already a

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number of films to their credit. American Dorothy Latta was a Warner Bros. starlet in Hollywood until marriage brought her to England. Most of the other girls will be facing the cine-camera for the first time. Gréville expects that a fair number of those girls will justify the hopes he has pinned on them and become permanent assets to the British screen.

Some of the exterior scenes showing Littleton Girl's Finishing School were filmed at Great Fosters, a palatial country house near Egham, which was originally built for Anne Boleyn, but is now a fashionable country hotel. Even the grounds of the hotel were found to be eminently suitable for the film as they include a cottage which, in the film, is inhabited by schoolmaster Arnold Dixon. Other scenes, mainly a treasure hunt, will be filmed on the lot at Denham and in the countryside surrounding Denham Studios.

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An attractive woman seduces and robs a young man at a casino in this Somerset Maugham adaptation.

Passion and All That Goes with It: The Films of Mai Zetterling

Sunshine Follows Rain Driver dagg faller regn
Thu 1 May 18:10; Sat 10 May 20:50

Frieda

Fri 2 May 20:50; Sat 10 May 14:50

The Romantic Age (aka Naughty Arlette)

Sat 3 May 12:30; Fri 9 May 20:45

Blackmailed

Sat 3 May 15:10; Wed 14 May 18:20

Desperate Moment

Sun 4 May 12:20; Thu 15 May 18:20

Jet Storm

Sun 4 May 15:10; Tue 13 May 20:40

The Man Who Finally Died

Mon 5 May 15:00; Sat 17 May 18:00

The War Game + In Conversation with Professor Louis Lemkow, Mai Zetterling's son
Tue 6 May 18:10

Loving Couples

Älskande par
Tue 6 May 20:20 (+ intro by Professor Louis Lemkow, Mai Zetterling's son); Sun 18 May 14:20

Knock on Wood

Wed 7 May 18:10 (+ intro by Professor Louis Lemkow, Mai Zetterling's son); Thu 15 May 20:40

Night Games

Nattlek
Wed 7 May 20:45 (+ intro by Professor Louis Lemkow, Mai Zetterling's son); Wed 21 May 18:10

Doctor Glas

Doktor Glas
Sun 11 May 12:30; Mon 19 May 20:45

The Witches

Sat 17 May 12:40; Mon 26 May 11:50;

Sat 31 May 12:00

The Girls

Flickorna
Sat 17 May 15:00 (+ discussion presented in partnership with Club des Femmes);
Wed 28 May 20:40

We Have Many Names

Vi har många namn
Sun 18 May 18:20; Sat 24 May 14:40

The Moon Is a Green Cheese

Månen är en grön ost
Fri 23 May 20:50; Mon 26 May 18:20

Scrubbers

Sat 24 May 20:30; Tue 27 May 18:00 (+ intro by producer Don Boyd)

Amorosa

Sun 25 May 11:45; Fri 30 May 20:40

One Pair of Eyes: You Must Make People Angry

Sun 25 May 18:10; Sat 31 May 14:40

With thanks to

Reece Goodwin, ACMI


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