



Big Screen Classics

Eden

Eden

Directed by: Mia Hansen-Løve
©: CG Cinéma, France 2 Cinéma, Blue Film Productions, Yundal Films
In co-production with: France 2 Cinéma, Blue Film Productions, Yundal Films
With the participation of: Canal+, France Télévisions, OCS
With the support of: Région Île-de-France
In association with: Cofinova 10
With the participation of: CNC
With the support of: SACEM
Production Company: CG Cinéma
With the participation of: Le Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée
Presented by: CG Cinéma
Produced by: Charles Gillibert
Production Managers: Patrick André, Albert Blasius
Post-production Supervisor: Luc Pourrinet
Assistant Director: Marie Doller
Script Supervisor: Clémentine Schaeffer
Casting: Antoinette Boulat, Elsa Pharaon
Screenplay: Mia Hansen-Løve, Sven Hansen-Løve
Cinematography: Denis Lenoir
Camera Operator: Pascal Auffray
Editor: Marion Monnier
Art Director: Anna Falguères
Costumes: Judy Shrewsbury
Make-up: Véronique Clochepin-Lassalle
Hairdresser: Arnaud Dalens
Music Artistic Directors: Mia Hansen-Løve, Sven Hansen-Løve
Sound: Vincent Vatoux, Olivier Goinard
Sound Editors: Vincent Vatoux, Caroline Reynaud, Damien Tronchot
Artistic Consultant: Sven Hansen-Løve
Mia Hansen-Løve and Sven Hansen-Løve thanks: Olivier Assayas
Charles Gillibert thanks: Tom Sturridge
Cast:
Félix de Givry (*Paul*)
Pauline Etienne (*Louise*)
Vincent Macaigne (*Arnaud*)
Roman Kolinka (*Cyril*)
Hugo Conzelmann (*Stan*)
Zita Hanrot (*Anaïs*)
Vincent Lacoste (*Thomas*)
Arnaud Azoulay (*Guy-Man*)
Paul Spera (*Guillaume*, 'Respect')
Sébastien Chassagne (*Hervé*)
Ugo Bienvenu (*Quentin*)
Laurent Cazanave (*Nico*, 'Respect')
Léa Rougeron (*Théodora*)
Pierre-François Garel (*FG animator*)
David Blot (*Coupoles manager*)
Ludovic Bergery (*Yes party DJ*)
Tony Humphries (*himself*)
Arnold Jarvis (*himself*)
François Buot (*Cheers physio*)
Clara 3000 (*DJ Silencio*)
La India (*herself*)
Terry Hunter (*himself*)
Arsinée Khanjian (*Paul's mother*)
Greta Gerwig (*Julia*)
Brady Corbet (*Larry*)
Laura Smet (*Margot*)
Golshifteh Farahani (*Yasmin*)
France 2014©
131 mins
Digital

SPOILER WARNING The following notes give away some of the plot.

Mia Hansen-Løve's elegiac descriptions of the ephemeral, will-o'-the-wisp experience of girlhood have earned her comparisons with Sofia Coppola, and *Eden* – in which the French director turns her remote gaze on a fading male protagonist – might at first glance appear to be her *Somewhere*. Tracing, over 20 years, the quietly devastating rise and fall of DJ Paul (Félix de Givry), it certainly works the same show-business territory of hedonism and ennui. Yet for all that the two share an astute attention to surface, Hansen-Løve's film beds down deeper in its milieu than Coppola's did. The result is a glorious celebration of the 90s dance scene which, like Hansen-Løve's breakthrough feature *Father of My Children* (2009), asks poignant questions about the struggle involved in doing what we love.

Hansen-Løve has described *Father of My Children*, which was inspired by the suicide of independent producer Humbert Balsan, as the central episode in an autobiographical trilogy bookended by *Tout est pardonné* (2007) and *Goodbye First Love* (2011). Each of these films – despite the centrality of middle-aged men to their stories – viewed the narrative through the eyes of adolescent girls. *Eden* too draws on Hansen-Løve's life, in that it was co-written by her brother Sven, a former DJ, and is seen from the perspective of his stand-in Paul.

The film begins in November 1992, when Paul is a starry-eyed, soft-edged, pigeon-toed teen, sneaking out to illicit raves in basement dives and warehouses, lured by the siren call of Frankie Knuckles's now legendary 'The Whistle Song'. From the opening meet-cute when Paul comes across the track, the first half of the film – entitled 'Paradise Garage' – follows his developing romance with garage music ('a mix of machines and voices', as he calls it) as he forms a duo with pal Stan, drops out of university and steadily builds up a following.

There are other pulls on Paul's attention: girls (including awkward Greta Gerwig and firecracker Pauline Etienne) come and go, cocaine is snorted. But first and best is the music, and Hansen-Løve vividly evokes the excitement and freshness of Paul's early encounters with the scene. In nightclubs, her handheld camera insinuates itself among the crowds, bobbing at shoulder height, swerving and dipping, excitable and distracted. At a party where Paul's friends Daft Punk – the Bob Dylan to his Llewyn Davis – give birth to electronica, their now classic hit 'Da Funk' feels radically new. Likewise Paul and his friends, clad in high-tops and cardigans, racing to phone booths to put in calls to one another, are distinctly of the era. One of Hansen-Løve's more subtle touches is to mark the passage into the second part of the film, 'Lost in Music', not with radical haircuts and makeup but with the gradually increasing presence of cell phones and the shinier skin and shorter skirts of the girls who surround Paul as his music slides up the commercial scale. He, however, changes remarkably little. Indeed, he finishes the film in the same tiny studio apartment where he began, battered, broke and exhausted: the music he loves has grown tired and the crowds have moved on to newer things.

If there's a question at the film's core it's how hard should one work for a dream? When is it time to give up? The film takes pains – occasionally at the expense of narrative thrust – to detail the tedium and sheer graft of the DJ life.

Big Screen Classics

Piccadilly

Tue 1 Sep 20:40; Sat 12 Sep 12:10

Cabin in the Sky

Wed 2 Sep 18:10 (+ intro by musicologist and cultural historian Dr Hannah Robbins);
Sun 6 Sep 12:00

Night and the City

Thu 3 Sep 15:30; Mon 7 Sep 20:30;
Sun 20 Sep 12:00

The Roaring Twenties

Fri 4 Sep 20:50; Sun 27 Sep 12:00

The Blue Angel

Der blaue Engel
Sat 5 Sep 12:00; Mon 14 Sep 14:40;
Tue 29 Sep 20:55

Victims of Sin

Victimas del pecado
Tue 8 Sep 20:40; Mon 21 Sep 14:30;
Sun 4 Oct 12:00

Cruising

Wed 9 Sep 20:30 (+ intro); Sat 19 Sep 20:50

Cabaret

Thu 10 Sep 20:40; Sat 3 Oct 15:00

Dance, Girl, Dance

Sun 13 Sep 18:10; Thu 17 Sep 20:50

Belly

Tue 15 Sep 20:40; Wed 30 Sep 18:10 (+ intro by heritage and music professional Naz Hamdi)

Saturday Night Fever

Wed 16 Sep 18:10 (+ intro by Ruby McGuigan, BFI Programme Development Manager);
Sat 26 Sep 20:40

Eden

Fri 18 Sep 20:20; Mon 28 Sep 18:05

Funeral Parade of Roses

Tue 22 Sep 20:50; Thu 1 Oct 18:10

Paris Is Burning

Wed 23 Sep 18:20 (+ intro by Tahliah Simumba, artist and BFI Inclusion Partner); Tue 6 Oct 20:40

Shame

Thu 24 Sep 20:50; Mon 5 Oct 18:20

The Last Days of Disco

Fri 25 Sep 20:40; Fri 2 Oct 20:40

Even at the peak of their career, playing parties at New York's MoMA, Stan and Paul must spend the morning after deflating balloons and sweeping glitter. The characters who exit *Eden* with their sanity intact are those who get out early – Stan, Paul's ex Louise – or who get lucky, as the affable pair behind Daft Punk do. Others, such as illustrator Cyril, find themselves consumed, or simply, as in Paul's case, spent.

At the end, Paul reads a Robert Creeley poem, 'The Rhythm', which reflects on the world's indifference to the individual, describing life as 'light at the opening, dark at the closing'. It's a great description of the film itself, and a perfect elegy for the career of so many artists: almost imperceptibly, euphoria cedes to melancholy as newer, fresher pretenders arrive. Yet a reprise of the film's most upbeat moment sweeps this to one side as the titles come up and we cut to Paul and Louise bouncing and bobbing to a Charles Dockins' track, fittingly entitled 'Happy Song'. Tastes change. The beat goes on.

Catherine Wheatley, *Sight and Sound*, August 2015

Mia Hansen-Løve on *Eden*'s sound

'We wanted the music to have a real texture, just as it has in life. To be part of the scenes, and not to be from the outside.' The director rejected the tendency to submerge the scene in music for a documentary feel in which the tracks ebb and flow, euphoric crowd singalongs often rising up into the sound mix. Dancers and DJs alike are sensitive to room sound, good or bad, and here the audience is made to feel likewise, whether that 'room' is a basement dive or a huge outdoor party.

'Everything is drowned in music,' Hansen-Løve says of other approaches. 'It was the one thing we didn't want to do. Of course, we wanted to have the emotion, the lyricism, the poetry, but I wanted to find it through realism. And to actually do that in a club scene is tough: if you go into a club and take the sound, it is really terrible. If you do it purely realistically, ultimately you won't show anything because [the sound] is going to be too dirty. To find the right balance was a real challenge that started from the beginning; that's something we spent half the time thinking about and working on with the sound editors and recordists.'

Mia Hansen-Løve interviewed by Frances Morgan, *Sight and Sound*, August 2015

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