

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Classic Cinema in LA

Elisa Leonelli · Wednesday, July 6th, 2016

I've been a regular film festival-goer ever since I was 19-years-old studying Cinema at Bologna University, where I graduated with a thesis on Alain Robbe-Grillet, the French novelist and filmmaker. But I have never been more awed by a festival as I was last week, when I attended the 30th edition of [Il Cinema Ritrovato](#) (Rediscovered Cinema), organized by the [Cineteca](#) (Cinemathèque) of Bologna. I was in cinema heaven, watching Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* (1936) accompanied by a live orchestra in the main square, Piazza Maggiore.



Free screenings take place in the square throughout the summer, and a program of movies in their original language (not dubbed as it's customary in Italy and many other countries) is shown year-round in their Lumière theaters, named after the French brothers Louis and Alfonse, who invented moving pictures in 1895 with their Cinématographe cameras, that only shot 57 seconds of 35mm film at a time. The 2 screening rooms are named Mastroianni after Marcello, and Scorsese after Martin, the courtyard with an outdoor cafe is called Piazzetta Pasolini, after Pier Paolo.



Casque d'or-Simone Signoret, Serge Reggiani

I mostly enjoyed watching Italian movies by [Mario Soldati](#) (1906-1999), a novelist as well as a film director, such as *La Provinciale* (1953) with [Gina Lollobrigida](#), and French films by [Jacques Becker](#) (1906-1960), such as *Casque d'Or* with Simone Signoret.

I presented the Japanese classic *Ugetsu Monogatari* (1953), restored by Scorsese's Film Foundation with funds donated by my association, the Hollywood Foreign Press. [Read article on our Golden Globes website.](#)

UGETSU MONOGATARI

(1953, d. Kenji Mizoguchi)

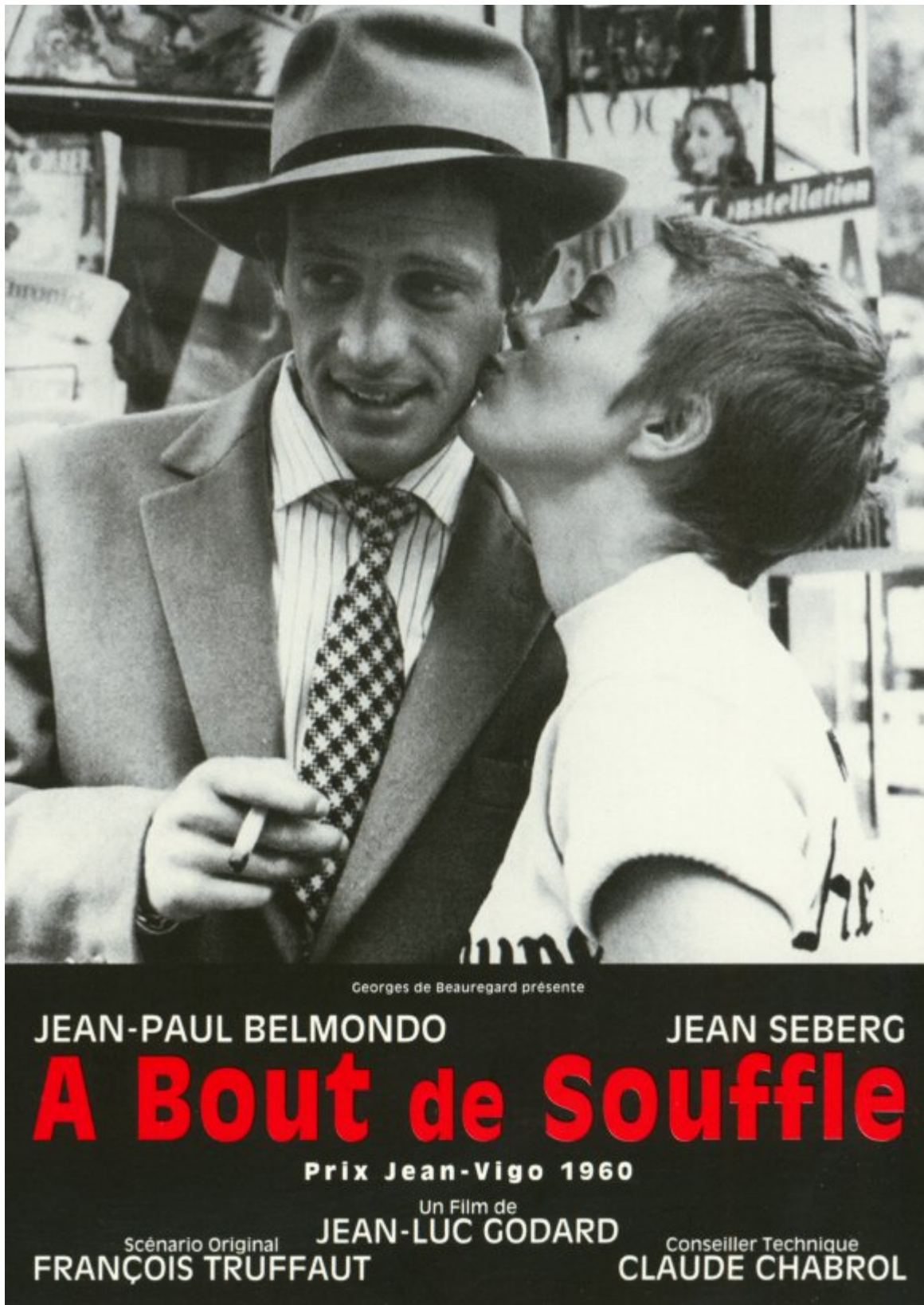


Restored by The Film Foundation and KADOKAWA Corporation at Cineric Laboratories. Special thanks to Masahiro Miyajima and Martin Scorsese for their consultation on this restoration.

Restoration funding provided by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association in association with The Film Foundation and KADOKAWA Corporation.

But you don't have to travel around the world to see classic films, because Los Angeles has plenty of venues where you can watch these timeless movies on the big screen. Ever since moving here in 1973, I have frequented what used to be called revival houses, the [Fox Venice](#) on Lincoln and the [Vagabond](#) on Wilshire, where I remember seeing *Rebecca* (1940) by Alfred Hitchcock with Joan Fontaine in 1975. Those theaters are all gone, except for the [New Beverly](#), with the programming now [curated by Quentin Tarantino](#). On July 10 you can see *A Bout de Souffle* (Breathless, 1960) by

Jean-Luc Godard with Jean-Paul Belmondo.



The [LACMA film program](#) is all over the place after Ian Byrne's departure, but they still show classics at their Tuesday matinees. For instance, *Beauty and the Beast* (1946), by Jean Cocteau with Jean Marais, screens on August 9. The [American Cinematheque](#), a cherished dream of Filmex founder Gary Essert, has two venues, the Egyptian on Hollywood Blvd since 1998, where you can see *The Lady Eve* (1941) by Preston Sturges with Barbara Stanwyck and Henry Fonda on July 23, and the Aero on Montana in Santa Monica since 2004, where French classics like *M. Hulot's Holiday* by Jacques Tati are in a program celebrating Bastille Day on July 14.



The Lady Eve-Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda

My favorite is the Billy Wilder Theatre, built inside the Hammer Museum in Westwood in 2006, where programing is handled by the [UCLA Film Archives](#). This month they feature a centennial celebration of [Kirk Douglas](#), who turns 100 on December 9.

And if you really don't want to leave the house, you can watch a movie from your DVR collection recorded from [TCM](#), Turner Classic Movies. Every Friday in July, host Robert Osborne presents a tribute to [Olivia De Havilland](#), who turned 100-years-old on July 1st. TCM also holds a [Classic Film Festival](#) in Hollywood. This year among their guests was Gina Lollobrigida, who will be 100 on July 4, 2017.

I discovered recently that many [Criterion Collection](#) titles are now shown on Hulu. I used to rent their laserdiscs from Laser Blazer while studying Film History for a master in Critical studies at USC's School of Cinematic Arts in the 1990s. So I added several to my queue, to save for a rainy day. Because one of my fears is to run out of classic films to watch, after seeing so many during the past 50 years as a cinephile. But then I may start watching films I've already seen a second time...

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