



Interviews with Eric Rohmer

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In a career that spanned six decades, Eric Rohmer (1920-2010) earned a reputation as one of France's most incisive, eloquent, and free-spirited film directors. A leading light of the French New Wave, he crafted films of immense beauty and poetry: throughout his career, his work demonstrated a consistency of style and theme, yet retained a freshness and youthful vigour.

His first full-length film, The Sign of Leo, was released in 1959, the same year that Jean-Luc Godard and François Truffaut had their filmmaking débuts. Soon after, Rohmer began a project that was to take over ten years to complete - his celebrated series of films, Six Moral Tales, outstanding among which are My Night at Maud's (1969) and Claire's Knee (1970).

After a brief foray into historical drama, Rohmer began another series of films, Comedies and Proverbs, which occupied him for much of the 1980s. Within this series, Pauline at the Beach (1983) and The Green Ray (1986) took a lighthearted look at the French middle class, broaching subjects such as infidelity and promiscuity in the search for everlasting love.

The Comedies and Proverbs were followed in the 1990s by Tales of the Four Seasons, each of the four films dealing with emotional isolation, as the central character tries to cope with a recent crisis.

The director's final three films - The Lady and the Duke (2001), Triple Agent (2004), and The Romance of Astrée and Céladon (2007) - show a surprising diversity in technique, although each is fundamentally concerned with the recurring Rohmeresque themes of love and fidelity.

Eric Rohmer's films, modest as they are, are certain to outlive many of today's mainstream successes, if only because of the love and wisdom with which they were crafted. Rohmer's own words, preserved in these interviews that span from 1970 to 2009, reveal a critical, reflective sensibility that thoroughly complements the authorial one visualised in his films.



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