



OFFICIAL SELECTION
CANNES CLASSICS
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

ORSON WELLES

Shadows & Light

A film by
Elisabeth Kapnist



WHAT ELEMENTS DO WE DISPOSE OF ?

1) HIS FILMS,

most of them shot in chiseled black and white, all endowed with unforgettable sequences that are now part of the world's cinematographic heritage.. The excerpts of his films have been given a particular status so that they may appear as windows into the the man's soul, into moments of his life: they have never be used for solely illustrative purposes, but always as new, detonating elements bringing us each time one step further along on our quest, our inquiry, our questioning about Orson Welles. As pieces of a puzzle that progressively outline a man.

The films thus appaear as so many mirrors of Welles's personality: **Citizen Kane, The Magnificent Ambersons, The Lady from Shanghai, Touch of Evil, Mr. Arkadin, Othello, Chimes at Midnight.**

ORSON WELLES

The legendary character, the personified myth of the creator, the man who reinvented theatre and film language at the age of 24.

The unfathomable man of a thousand faces: the moralist, the humanist, the Don Juan, the bon-vivant, the American and the expatriate, the magician, the actor, the filmmaker, the stage director, the poet, and always the child prodigy searching for himself. A child who lures us into a labyrinth of mirrors that he transorms and ecreates ath his whim.

Who hides behind this impressive figure? This quest is the underlying theme of the film.

May 2015, it will be the hundredth anniversary of his birth: the unique opportunity to pay tribute to Orson Welles - a tribute worthy of the man he was and of the gifts he left us.

2) A PROFUSION OF PHOTOS

that shed light on Orson Welles's countless physical transformations, through the many roles he played in film. Thanks to a **visual animation**, the photos appear as a flock of birds that will land on a wall in a rustle of wings. Some will fly away, others will find their place in this magical, moving puzzle, bringing us further still in the comprehension of his life and work.

3) SOUND AND VISUAL ARCHIVES,

of American or european origin, which tell the story of the man without the comedian's mask. We thus discover the bare Orson Welles, himself and no one else, giving interviews or master classes at the Cinemathèque in Paris, or in the United States, or in London, in front of a public of fascinated young students. There are treasures in theses archives, which gives us a glimpse of the man's complexity, and charms us with great laugh. The archives reveal him through the gaze of others - friends, enemies, collaborators, actors, actresses - but also through his own words: fragments of his childhood shared with Jeanne Moreau during an intimate dinner at the Ritz, his love for theater, for Shakespeare, his radio tour de force, « The war of the worlds », his complex and passionate relationship to film.

INTENTIONS

How can we define or describe the most multi-faceted and versatile of artists? Who really hides behind the many theatrical masks and disguises? Conceiving of a film about Orson Welles immediately means deciding not to make a standard, classic biography. We have to break the mould and the chronological structure, and profile him through games, surprises, the unexpected, the metaphorical and allegorical, tales and fable... The film basically tells the story of a fall, reflected in the lucid but melancholic words of Orson Welles himself :
« I started at the top and worked my way down. »



ELISABETH KAPNIST

Writer and director, and founding member of the Ateliers Varan, Elisabeth Kapnist began her career in 1982 with « *Diadia Pavlik, my uncle from Russia* ». A first film and a first success. Retracing the history of her family during the Russian Revolution, the film won the Special Jury Prize at the Festival de Belfort. Fascinated by the complexity of great artists' work and lives, she has worked on portraits of Jean Cocteau, Nathalie Sarraute, Louise Weiss, Isadora Duncan, Carolyn Carlson.



JOHN HUSTON, ORSON WELLES & PETER BOGDANOVITCH DURING THE FILMING OF THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WIND



A high-contrast, black and white graphic portrait of Orson Welles. The image is dominated by deep blacks and bright whites, with very little gray. It shows a close-up of his face, looking slightly to the right. His hair is dark and textured, his eyes are closed or looking down, and his lips are full and dark. He is wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a dark tie. The overall style is reminiscent of a stencil or a high-contrast photograph.

Producers:
Compagnie des Phares et Balises
ARTE France

The other
ORSON

<http://www.arte.tv/orson-welles>

arte



Authors and Graphic Designers:
France Swimberge, Samuel Pott and Antoine Silvestri

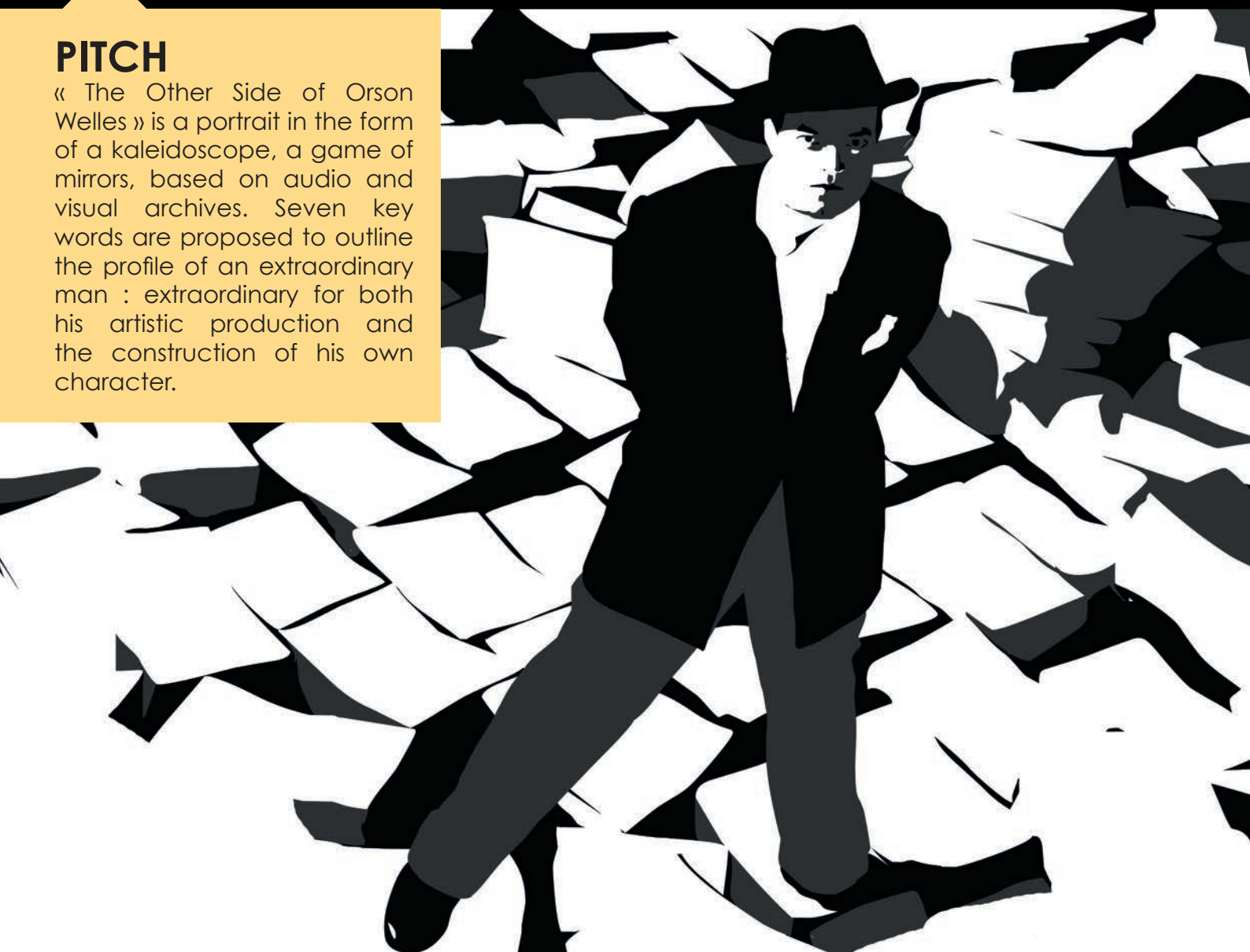
r side of
WELLES

(available online in early May)



PITCH

« The Other Side of Orson Welles » is a portrait in the form of a kaleidoscope, a game of mirrors, based on audio and visual archives. Seven key words are proposed to outline the profile of an extraordinary man : extraordinary for both his artistic production and the construction of his own character.



Chameleon

1934 : Orson Welles plays Death in his second short film, *The Hearts of Age*. The first metamorphosis of a future man-of-a-thousand-faces.

Derisory

1970 : Orson Welles films an advertisement for frozen peas. One of hundreds that he was obliged to make in order to finance his films.

Committed

1942 : Orson Welles does his bit for the 'war effort' by making *Ceiling Unlimited*, a patriotic programme for CBS.

Fabulator

or how Orson Welles recounted his own legend.

Magician

1976 – 1985 : Orson Welles performs some of the greatest magic tricks in front of the cameras for *Magic Show*.

Rebel

1936 : Orson Welles produces *Macbeth Voodoo* at the Lafayette Theatre in Harlem. He puts together a cast composed uniquely of black actors.

Literate

Welles was inspired by literature throughout his life. We have chosen to focus on two of his adaptations: H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, which Welles recorded for CBS in 1938, and *Moby Dick*, undoubtedly Orson Welles' favourite literary work, which he attempted to adapt for radio, theatre and cinema.

INTENTION

One hundred years after his birth and thirty years after his death, what image of Orson Welles still resounds in our collective memory?

That of a cinematic genius, of course, whose masterpieces have forever marked the history of the 7th art, with the haunting power of a 'Rosebud'. That of a jinxed artist, beleaguered by so many unfinished, megalomaniac projects. And a voice, too, that brought a whole country to a standstill on one night in October 1938 with the announcement of Earth's invasion by extraterrestrials... and a Rabelaisian laugh that made all his jokes and hoaxes more than palatable.

But what lies beyond these almost indelible images ?

A « *one-man-band* », as he liked to define himself, an iconoclast and an astonishingly prolific jack-of-all-trades. « *Very unfair, very generous, very tender, very violent, he's very everything* » said his friend Jeanne Moreau. Like his work, Orson Welles was a man of infinite variety : a chameleon, committed, a fabulator, magician, rebel, literate, derisory...It is these multiple facets that we wish to evoke and play against one another to draw up the profile of a man of many talents and faces. We shall explore his world of magic, disguise and pretense, which was such a significant aspect of both his life and work. At the end of his life, disillusioned, he said: « *My life : 98% prostitution and 2% cinema* ».



ORSON WELLES - Shadows & light

A film co-produced by Compagnie des Phares et Balises and ARTE France
With the participation of RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, ORF and YLE
With the support of CNC, PROCIREP and ANGOA
and Creative Europe programme - MEDIA of the European Union



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ORF

yle

RTS

CNC

PROCIREP

ANGOA



A film by Elisabeth Kapnist,
French narrator: Céline Sallette
English narrator: Sharon Mann Vallet
Camera: Thomas Bataille
Editor: Dominique Faysse

Original music composed and performed by: Samuel Hirsch
produced by Fanny Glissant and Jean Labib

for Compagnie des Phares et Balises with ARTE France

HD - 16/9 - Stereo - Versions : French, English - 56 minutes - France

The film has already be sold to Canada (Ici Radio Canada), Poland (Ale Kino +),
Australia (Foxtel), Argentina (Canal Encuentro), Belgium (VRT) and Slovenia. (RTV)

The other side of ORSON WELLES

Co-produced by Compagnie des Phares et Balises and ARTE France
Authors and Creative Designers: France Swimberge, Samuel Pott and Antoine Silvestri
HD - 16/9 - Stereo



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