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| Malle, Louis (1932-1995) |
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| Louis Malle (30 October 1932-23 November 1995) was a French filmmaker associated with the French New Wave of the 1950s and 1960s. He directed dozens of films in both French and English in a variety of genres and styles, from documentaries (*Le Monde du silence* [*The Silent World,* 1956]) to crime drama (*Ascenseur pour l’échafaud* [*Elevator to the Gallows,* 1957]) to screwball comedy (*Zazie dans le metro,* 1960). His willingness to explore different cinematic styles and genres sometimes put him outside of the New Wave as defined by the critic-filmmakers of the influential journal *Cahiers du cinema.* Nevertheless, his emphasis on narrative ambiguity, personal storytelling and taboo-breaking are in keeping with the interests of that cohort of filmmakers. His films are well-known for their thematic controversy (as in *Pretty Baby,* 1978) and narrative experimentation (as in *My Dinner with André,* 1981). His film soundtracks often featured jazz, most famously in *Elevator to the Gallows*, for which Miles Davis improvised the score. Malle sometimes incorporated surrealist elements in his films, a good example being *Black Moon* (1975). His final film, *Vanya on 42nd Street* (1994), is arguably more postmodernist than modernist. It intertwines scenes of a rehearsal of Anton Chekhov’s play *Uncle Vanya* with behind-the-scene interludes, in a redeployment of the play’s Russian concerns about environmental and social instability to contemporary American anxieties about urban and artistic decay. |
| File: malle1.jpg  1 Photo of Louis Malle [Corbis, via www.allocine.fr]  Louis Malle (30 October 1932-23 November 1995) was a French filmmaker associated with the French New Wave of the 1950s and 1960s. He directed dozens of films in both French and English in a variety of genres and styles, from documentaries (*Le Monde du silence* [*The Silent World,* 1956]) to crime drama (*Ascenseur pour l’échafaud* [*Elevator to the Gallows,* 1957]) to screwball comedy (*Zazie dans le metro*, 1960). His willingness to explore different cinematic styles and genres sometimes put him outside of the New Wave as defined by the critic-filmmakers of the influential journal *Cahiers du cinema.* Nevertheless, his emphasis on narrative ambiguity, personal storytelling and taboo-breaking are in keeping with the interests of that cohort of filmmakers. His films are well-known for their thematic controversy (as in *Pretty Baby,* 1978) and narrative experimentation (as in *My Dinner with André,* 1981). His film soundtracks often featured jazz, most famously in *Elevator to the Gallows*, for which Miles Davis improvised the score. Malle sometimes incorporated surrealist elements in his films, a good example being *Black Moon* (1975). His final film, *Vanya on 42nd Street* (1994), is arguably more postmodernist than modernist. It intertwines scenes of a rehearsal of Anton Chekhov’s play *Uncle Vanya* with behind-the-scene interludes, in a redeployment of the play’s Russian concerns about environmental and social instability to contemporary American anxieties about urban and artistic decay.  Link: http://www.criterion.com/explore/136-louis-malle  2 Louis Malle. The Criterion Collection  Link: http://webmuseum.mit.edu/detail.php?type=related&kv=14624&t=people  3 MIT Museum Collection: People. Images of Louis Malle and other crewmembers of Jacques Cousteau’s documentary team working with underwater cameras and equipment. Selected Works: *Le Monde du silence* [*The Silent World*] (1956)  *Ascenseur pour l’échafaud* [*Elevator to the Gallows*, a.k.a. *Frantic*] (1957)  *Les Amants* [*The Lovers*] (1958)  *Zazie dans le métro* (1960)  *Vie privée* [*A Very Private Affair*] (1961)  *Vive Le Tour* (1962) (documentary short)  *Le Feu follet* [*The Fire Within*] (1963)  *Bon Baisers de Bangkok* (1964) (documentary short)  *Viva Maria* (1965)  *Le Voleur* [*The Thief of Paris*](1967)  *Histoires extraordinaires,* ‘William Wilson’ episode [*Spirits of the Dead*] (1968)  *Calcutta* (1969) (documentary)  *L’Inde fantôme* [*Phantom India*] (1969) (television documentary)  *Le Souffle au coeur* [*Murmur of the Heart*] (1971)  *Humain, trop humain* [*Human, All Too Human*] (1974) (documentary)  *Lacombe, Lucien* (1974)  *Place de la république* (1974) (documentary)  *Black Moon* (1975)  *Pretty Baby* (1978)  *Atlantic City* (1980)  *My Dinner with André* (1981)  *Crackers* (1983)  *Alamo Bay* (1985)  *God’s Country* (1985) (television documentary)  *And the Pursuit of Happiness* (1986) (documentary)  *Au revoir les enfants* (1987)  *Milou en mai* [*May Fools*] (1990)  *Damage* (1992)  *Vanya on 42nd Street* (1994) |
| Further reading:  (Billard)  (Chapier)  (Colville)  (Malle, Malle on Malle)  (Frey)  (Hawkins)  (Higgins)  (Horton)  (Macksey)  (Malle, 'Creating a Reality that Doesn't Exist': An Interview with Louis Malle)  (Malle and Kant, Louis Malle par Louis Malle)  (Neupert)  (Nicholls)  (Sellier)  (Southern and Weissgerber) |