

# ELATHAN CINEMA

ASPECTS AND ANALYSIS OF SHORT FILMS

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## C'était un Rendez-Vous (1976)

Posted on [January 9, 2018](#) by [Alby Darling, L. Dalrymple](#)

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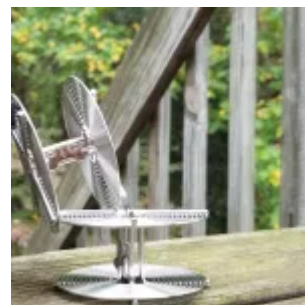


Zooming Around L'Arc de Triomphe, Casual Like

**\*Note: Do not attempt this in any way, shape, or form, most of the driving here is blatantly illegal, and the Champs-Élysées, not to mention the 12-point merge circle that is Place Charles de Gaulle, are high traffic areas. As is most of Paris.**

*C'était un Rendez-Vous / Rendezvous / It Was A Date* is a French short film of about 9 minutes, its' length largely being dictated by the fact it was shot in one take on a 1000 foot roll of 35mm film which if it had taken up in full length at a

### Short Focus, Short Theory



Elathan Cinema aims to be a project focusing on film theory as it applies to short films, as well as news and developments (where applicable).

Over time, the hope is to both share the joy of film, as well as deconstruct some of what makes short films magic in a way a feature may not be able to accurately capture, or even be accurately discussed due to the longer nature of their content.

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directed and shot by Claude Lelouch, who is also the driver as seen at the end of the film.

The car covers through it's route a distance of about 6km or 3.7 miles, and according to Google maps, should take about 16 to 17 minutes in standard traffic conditions. It is just far enough of a distance that if Claude Lelouch *hadn't* been breaking through red lights at unusual city limit speeds the film reel would have been empty before the routes' completion.

Lelouch actually says in a 2006 behind the scenes interview on the short that time was one of the things he was most concerned about, as he wasn't sure he was going to make it – especially because he ends up taking a slight detour due to a truck.

## In Search of Cinéma Vérité



Skipping Every Red Light Towards Pl de la Concorde

This short probably looks very familiar to people who have seen some part of *The Fast and the Furious* series as it is of a similar action sub-genre, only this is not a staged set, and Lelouch really did drive through real traffic in his own car without a permit to achieve the effects of this film.

Which is not so much a set of effects, but an observational point of view.

The observational “character” in this case would be the car – it has the camera, and the direction of the camera can *only* face where the car is pointing. There is no editing to the visuals, and what the viewer sees, really is what they would see from the car's level.

occur about once or twice a month as we have a tiny staff. Email is always open for suggestions on new short films to view, or questions on cinematic film theory.

Allowances may occur for major international or public holidays.

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If you would be interested in contributing to the project please check the Submissions page!

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not to have altered the sound.

This short is shot from the perspective of the driven car — Lelouch's Mercedes-Benz 450SEL 6.9, but the sound is provided by Lelouch's Ferrari 275GTB after re-tracing the same route.

This was revealed in the same 2006 interview on the 30th anniversary of the production, and solves what was one of the greatest mysteries surrounding the film for a stretch of time before that. (Another being – *who was driving the car?*) However, the sound manipulation calls into question the “truthfulness” assigned to the film as a state of what might be pure documentary of what Paris really did look, feel, and sound like on that very specific morning. Given the opening credits, if someone was to *believe* them, they might also believe the sound really did come from the car itself and this is truthful, observational cinema, or the achievement of cinéma vérité (cinema showing objective reality).

What the film does manage to do, unusually well, is tell a story in thirty seconds.

Which would be the last thirty of the film where Lelouch slides in front of the Sacré-Cœur and gets out of the car upon the appearance of a lady and goes to greet her. Without this very *critical* part of the film structure, this whole short film is just a dangerous stunt ride that acts as a very quick tour of important and famous parts of Paris, but with it, it becomes a story about the compelling power of human connection.

So perhaps the truth of the cinema is then its' power of bring people together regardless of conflict.

## Notes on Tenacity and Unanswerable Questions



Locations in Time, Space, and History interlaced during *Others Will Follow* (2017)  
Manipulating Perceptions and the Flow of Time in *The Golden Fish / Histoire d'un poisson rouge* (1959)

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## The Blind Intersection, Guichets du Louvre

Being that this is before dash cams and the GoPro style camera, as is as seen in behind the scene photos, is a rig mounted to the front of the car itself. It is a wonder – among many other things about this film – that the camera even managed not to dislodge from the car.

The film also brings up a question of safety. Many stunt performers die or are injured on sets, and while there might have been less rules in 1976, certainly there were at least *road* rules if not production rules, and one of the great mysteries surrounding this film is the question of if Lelouch ever got arrested or, at least, in other legal trouble for it. This is still one of the mysteries of the film and has conflicting reports.

Now, Will Smith **has an interview bit** about jumping out of an airplane saying in paraphrase, that when you go to jump out of an airplane, you're scared the whole night before hand, but not when it is actually occurring.

This concept has applicability here.

In order to do this, Lelouch needed to be *committed* to the take. Just like, once you jump out of a plane you're pretty much committed to falling because you have no other options. The alternative option to this short being completed would have been injury or death to Lelouch or possibly another car or pedestrian. The pressure was *on*.

Which brings up another set of great mysteries of the film, the first, how was the driver never followed by police, and two, how did they manage to avoid hitting all those buses and cars given at times they are in the wrong lane completely. This is an amount of luck no one can plan for. And certainly not a set of questions that anyone can answer.

It is an anomaly of a short film, but at the very least, it is a fun one.



Arrival, and The Sacred Heart

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This short is available from the French version of the [ARTE channel](#) online (depending on region and time zone), as well as a standalone DVD or part of the *Claude Lelouch Edition 5* disc if one has access to a region 2 DVD player or computer.

Additionally, there is a modified version that is used for the 2007 Snow Patrol song “Open Your Eyes”, and starts somewhere after Lelouch passes the Luxor Obelisk but before passing the Louvre Museum.

The link to the song version is provided below for comparison and legal accessibility.

- And also brings into question — are, or could, music videos be short films? But those are questions for another time. (In this case, survey says **yes**.)

# Snow Patrol - Open Your Eyes (Official Video)



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