

= Jean de Florette =

Jean de Florette (French pronunciation : ? [?? ? d? fl??t]) is a 1986 French period drama film directed by Claude Berri , based on a novel by Marcel Pagnol . It is followed by Manon des Sources . The film takes place in rural Provence , where two local farmers scheme to trick a newcomer out of his newly inherited property . The film starred three of France 's most prominent actors ? Gérard Depardieu , Daniel Auteuil , who won a BAFTA award for his performance , and Yves Montand in one of the last roles before his death .

The film was shot , together with Manon des Sources , over a period of seven months . At the time the most expensive French film ever made , it was a great commercial and critical success , both domestically and internationally , and was nominated for eight César awards , and ten BAFTAs . The two films helped promote Provence as a tourist destination .

= = Plot = =

The story takes place in a small village in Provence , France , shortly after the First World War . Ugolin Soubeyran (Auteuil) returns early in the morning from his military service , and wakes up his uncle César ? known as ' Le Papet ' (Montand) . Ugolin stays only briefly to talk , as he is eager to get to his own place farther up in the mountains . Here he throws himself into a project that ? at first ? he keeps secret from Papet . He eventually reveals that the project consists of growing carnations . Papet is at first skeptical , but he is convinced when the flowers get a high price at the local market . They decide the project is worthy of expansion , and together they go to see the local farmer Pique @-@ Bouffigue , to buy his land .

The land in question is apparently " dry " , but Papet knows of a source of water , a spring , that can solve that problem . The neighbour does not want to sell , and an altercation breaks out when he insults the Soubeyran family . In the fight Pique @-@ Bouffigue is killed , but rather than feeling remorse , Papet sees this as an opportunity . After the funeral , they dig out the rubble that is blocking the spring , plug the hole , and cover it with cement and then earth . Unknown to them , they are seen blocking the spring by a poacher inside the house .

The property descends to the dead man 's sister , Florette de Berengere , a childhood friend of Papet ; who married the blacksmith in another village , Crespín , whilst Papet was recovering in a military Hospital in Africa . He writes to Grafignette ? a common friend ? for news on Florette , and finds that she died the same day his letter arrived . The property thereby descends to her son Jean , who is a tax collector and " unfortunately , by God 's will ... he 's a hunchback " . To discourage the new owner from taking up residence , Ugolin breaks many tiles on the roof of the residence .

Florette 's son (Depardieu) arrives with his wife Aimée and young daughter Manon , and Soubeyran 's hopes of an easy takeover are soon shattered . The new owner is called Jean Cadoret , but Ugolin , in the local custom , calls him Jean de Florette . Jean makes it clear that he has no intention of selling , but plans to take up residence and live off the land . He has a grand scheme for making the farm profitable within two years , involving breeding rabbits and feeding them off cucurbit . Jean does not know about the nearby spring , but he knows of another , more distant spring ; and the house has a cistern that can supply some water for irrigating crops . The distant spring , where an old Italian couple lives , is 2 kilometres (1 @.@ 2 mi) away and also part of the property . Jean believes the needs of the farm can be met from here . Ugolin is discouraged , but Papet tells him to befriend Jean and gain his confidence . They also keep secret from him the fact that ? while average rainfall for the surrounding region is sustainable ? the area where Florette 's farm lies rarely gets any of this rain . Meanwhile , the two work to turn the local community against the newcomer , who is described merely as a former tax collector from Crespín , as the deceased Pique @-@ Bouffigue has distant cousins living in the village who know about the spring .

Jean initially makes progress , and earns a small profit from his rabbit farm . In the long run , getting water proves a problem , and dragging it all the way from the distant spring becomes a backbreaking experience . Jean asks to borrow Ugolin 's mule , but is met only with vague excuses . Then , when the rain does come , it falls on the surrounding area but not where it is needed . Jean

loudly berates God , whom he thinks has already given him enough trouble by making him a hunchback . Later , the dusty winds of the Sirocco also arrive , bringing the farm to near catastrophe . Jean is undeterred , and decides to dig a well . At this point Ugolin sees it fitting to try and convince Jean that his project is hopeless , and that he might be better off selling . Jean asks how much he could expect to receive for the farm , and Ugolin gives an estimate of around 8 000 francs . Jean has no intention of leaving though , but wants to use the value of the property to take up a mortgage of half that sum . Ugolin is not happy , but Papet again sees opportunity : he will himself grant the mortgage ; that way he will either earn the interest , or drive Jean away for good . From the money Jean buys dynamite to finish the well , but an accident occurs , and he is hit by a rock and falls into the dynamite hole . At first the injuries seem minor , but it turns out the rock fractured his spine , and when the doctor arrives he declares Jean dead . Ugolin returns with the news to Papet , who asks him why he 's crying . " It is not me who 's crying , " he responds , " it 's my eyes " .

Aimée and Manon are now forced to leave the farm , and Papet offers to buy them out . As the mother and daughter are packing their belongings , Papet and Ugolin make their way to where they blocked the spring , to pull out the plug . Manon follows them , and when she sees what the two are doing , understands and gives out a shriek . The men hear it , but quickly dismiss the sound as that of a buzzard making a kill . As Papet performs a mock baptism of his nephew in the cold water of the spring , the film ends with the caption " end of part one " .

= = Cast = =

Yves Montand as César Soubeyran / " Le Papet " : In the local dialect " Papet " is an affectionate term for " grandfather " . César is the proud patriarch of a dying family , and his only known relative is his nephew Ugolin . Eager to restore his family 's position , he manipulates his nephew to do his bidding . For Yves Montand the filming experience was particularly trying because his wife of thirty three years , Simone Signoret , died during filming . Montand himself died in 1991 , and the two films were among the last of a cinematic career spanning forty five years . Having grown up in nearby Marseilles , he visited the location before filming started , and endeared himself with the locals .

Daniel Auteuil as Ugolin : Ugolin is César 's " rat faced sub intelligent nephew " . Somewhat more conscientious than his uncle , he is nevertheless persuaded to carry through with the diabolical plan . Auteuil used a prosthetic nose to make the character uglier . The role represented a great change for Auteuil . He had previously tended to play " smart , funny , urban hipster types " , and the role as Ugolin ? which earned him both a BAFTA and a César ? was a great step forward in his career .

Gérard Depardieu as Jean Cadoret / " Jean de Florette " : Jean is a city man with a romantic idea of the countryside , yet obstinate and hard working . Depardieu was well established as a versatile actor even before this role . Seemingly impervious to the great pressure on the film crew , he earned a reputation on the set for " fooling about , telling jokes , swearing at planes interrupting the shot and never knowing his lines until the camera was rolling " .

Élisabeth Depardieu (Gérard Depardieu 's real life wife) as Aimée Cadoret : Jean 's beautiful wife is a former opera singer , who has named her daughter after her favourite role , Manon Lescaut .

Ernestine Mazurowna as Manon , the daughter of Jean and Aimée .

= = Production = =

Marcel Pagnol 's 1953 film *Manon des Sources* was four hours long , and subsequently cut by its distributor . The end result left Pagnol dissatisfied , and led him to retell the story as a novel . The first part of the novel , titled *Jean de Florette* , was an exploration of the background for the film ; a prequel of sorts . Together the two volumes made up the work Pagnol called *L'Eau des collines* (*The Water of the Hills*) . Berri came across Pagnol 's book by chance in a hotel room , and was

captivated by it . He decided that in order to do the story justice it had to be made in two parts .

Jean de Florette was filmed in and around the Vaucluse department of Provence , where a number of different places have been mentioned as filming locations . La Treille , east of Marseille , in the Bouches @-@ du @-@ Rhône department , was the village where Pagnol had shot the original film . The village is now within the city limits of Marseille and has undergone extensive development since the 1950s , so Berri had to find alternatives . For the village of the story he settled on Mirabeau (65 km to the north) , while Jean de Florette 's house is located in Vaugines , where the church from the film can also be found . The market scenes were filmed in Sommières in the Gard , and the story 's Les Romarins was in reality Riboux in the Var .

Extensive work was put into creating a genuine and historically correct atmosphere for the film . The facades of the houses of Mirabeau had to be replaced with painted polystyrene , to make them look older , and all electric wires were put underground . Meanwhile , in Vaugines , Berri planted a dozen olive trees twelve months before filming started , and watered them throughout the waiting period , and for the second installment planted 10 @,@ 000 carnations on the farm .

Jean de Florette and Manon des Sources were filmed together , over a period of thirty weeks , from May to December 1985 . This allowed Berri to show the dramatic seasonal changes of the Provençal landscape . At \$ 17 million , it was at the time the most expensive film project in French history . The long filming period and the constantly increasing cost put a great burden on the actors , many of whom frequently had to return to Paris for television or theatre work . Once completed , the release of the film was a great national event . A special promotional screening before the film 's official release 27 August 1986 , was attended by then Minister of Culture Jack Lang . The musical score is based around the aria Invano Alvaro from Giuseppe Verdi 's 1862 opera La forza del destino .

= = Reception = =

The film was a great success in its native France , where it was seen by over seven million people . It also performed very well internationally ; in the United States it grossed nearly five million US \$, placing it among the 100 most commercially successful foreign @-@ language films shown there .

Critical reception for Jean de Florette was almost universally positive . Rita Kempley , writing for The Washington Post , compared the story to the fiction of William Faulkner . Allowing that it could indeed be " a definitive French masterwork " , she reserved judgement until after the premiere of the second part , as Jean de Florette was only a " half @-@ movie " , " a long , methodic buildup , a pedantically paced tease " . Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun @-@ Times commented on Berri 's exploration of human character , " the relentlessness of human greed , the feeling that the land is so important the human spirit can be sacrificed to it " . Ebert gave the film three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half out of four stars .

The staff reviewer for the entertainment magazine Variety highlighted ? as other reviewers did as well ? the cinematography of Bruno Nuytten (an effort that won Nuytten a BAFTA award and a César nomination) . The reviewer commended Berri particularly for the work done with the small cast , and for his decision to stay true to Pagnol 's original story . Richard Bernstein , reviewing the film for The New York Times , wrote it was " like no other film you 've seen in recent years " . He called it an updated , faster @-@ paced version of Pagnol , where the original was still recognisable . The newspaper lists the film among the " Best 1000 Movies Ever Made " . Later reviews show that the film has stood up to the passage of time . Tasha Robinson , reviewing the DVD release of the two films for The A.V. Club in 2007 , called the landscape , as portrayed by Berri and Nuytten , " almost unbearably beautiful " . Grading the films ' A ' , she called them " surprisingly tight and limber " for a four @-@ hour film cycle .

= = = Awards = = =

Nominated for a total of eight César awards in 1987 ? including ' Best Film ' , ' Best Director ' and ' Best Cinematography ' ? Jean de Florette won only one , ' Best Actor ' for Daniel Auteuil . At the

BAFTA awards the next year it fared better , winning awards for ' Best Actor in a Supporting Role ' (Auteuil) , ' Best Cinematography ' , ' Best Film ' and ' Best Adapted Screenplay ' . The film also earned six more nominations , including both Depardieu and Montand in the ' Best Actor ' -category , as well as ' Best Direction ' and ' Best Foreign Language Film ' . Amongst other honours for the film were a U.S. National Board of Review award for ' Best Foreign Language Film ' , and a ' Best Foreign Language Film ' nomination at the 1988 Golden Globes . It was also nominated for the Golden Prize at the 15th Moscow International Film Festival .

= = Legacy = =

Jean de Florette and Manon des Sources have been interpreted as part of a wider trend in the 1980s of so @-@ called ' heritage cinema ' : period pieces and costume dramas that celebrated the history , culture and landscape of France . It was the official policy of President François Mitterrand , elected in 1981 , and particularly his Minister of Culture Jack Lang , to promote these kinds of films through increased funding of the ailing French film industry . Berri 's pair of films stand as the most prominent example of this effort . It has also been suggested that the treatment given the outsider Jean de Florette by the locals was symbolic of the growing popularity of the anti @-@ immigration movement , led by politicians like Jean @-@ Marie Le Pen .

The two films are often seen in conjunction with Peter Mayle 's book A Year in Provence , as causing increased interest in , and tourism to , the region of Provence , particularly among the British . The films inspired a vision of the area as a place of rural authenticity , and were followed by an increase in British home ownership in southern France . As late as 2005 , the owners of the house belonging to Jean de Florette in the movie were still troubled by tourists trespassing on their property .

Ranked No. 60 in Empire magazine 's " The 100 Best Films Of World Cinema " in 2010 .