

FACES PLACES (Visages, Villages)

France (2017) 94 minutes

Director: Agnès Varda, JR

Cast: Agnès Varda (Herself), JR (Himself)

Soundtrack: Mathieu Chedid (M)



Screening 11 December 2019 at Swindon Arts Centre

Synopsis

Legendary French film director Agnès Varda and hipster muralist JR take us on the most appealing of road trips. Charming, eye-opening, and consistently hilarious, this photographic adventure through a series of French villages highlights the changes through rural life and how people of all ages are responding.

Reviews



What a charmer! ... Varda was a founder of the French New Wave avant-garde film movement, while artist JR specializes in placing giant photographic images on buildings and other surprising outdoor locations.

At the time the film was shot, Varda was 88 years old and JR was 33. She's a tiny woman while he's a tall man, yet they make a perfect team in this often comic but also thought-provoking exploration of rural France. In ***Faces Places***, they travel around France meeting ordinary people, taking photos, and turning them into striking giant photo art works plastered on walls and other large surfaces.

... Filled with surprising and unexpectedly beautiful images of people and places, ***Faces Places*** is a perfect little gem of a film, a pleasant way to spend a couple of hours, on the road with two fascinating and ever-curious people as they see what is around the next bend, in life and on the road. There is one word for this film: Wonderful!

Cate Marquis, wearemoviegeeks.com

Two friends, the 88-year old director Agnès Varda and 33-year old JR, a hipster artist known for his enormous photographs pasted onto huge outdoor backdrops invite us to a road trip across France.

... At the same time Varda looks back on old friendships and addresses the changes in her own life, as old age inflicts its physical struggles.

... What holds this deliberately meandering trip together is the relationship between JR and Varda. Their warmth and consideration for each other means they can joke together constantly. It seems as if they have been cross-generational best friends for an eternity.

... ***Faces Places*** really is a sheer delight from beginning to end. A genuinely life-affirming film, charming and understanding, the stories it tells may be everyday but they are also funny and intriguing and, crucially, never patronising.

... JR says that his photos are designed to be ephemeral (some more so than others, depending on where they are located and the power of the elements). But the faces they portray – young or old, smooth or wrinkled, smiling or sad, sometimes smiling and sad, are anything but.

Cautionspoilers.com

Film Facts

- ***Faces Places*** was Agnès Varda's penultimate feature film.
- JR is the pseudonym of a French artist who describes himself as a photographeur, he flyposts large black-and-white photographic images in public locations, in a manner similar to the appropriation of the built environment by graffiti artists.
- The film was screened at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival where it won the L'Œil d'Or award.

swindonfilm.org.uk