

CGCINÉMA PRESENTS

CLOUDS OF SILS MARIA

A FILM BY OLIVIER ASSAYAS



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JULIETTE **BINOCHÉ**

KRISTEN **STEWART**

CHLOË GRACE **MORETZ**

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123 MIN – COLOR – 2.35 – DOLBY SRD 5.1 – 2014



SYNOPSIS

At the peak of her international career, Maria Enders (Juliette Binoche) is asked to perform in a revival of the play that made her famous twenty years ago. But back then she played the role of Sigrid, an alluring young girl who disarms and eventually drives her boss Helena to suicide. Now she is being asked to step into the other role, that of the older Helena. She departs with her assistant (Kristen Stewart) to rehearse in Sils Maria; a remote region of the Alps. A young Hollywood starlet with a penchant for scandal (Chloë Grace Moretz) is to take on the role of Sigrid, and Maria finds herself on the other side of the mirror, face to face with an ambiguously charming woman who is, in essence, an unsettling reflection of herself.



FLOATING CLOUDS...

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

This film, which deals with the past, our relationship to our own past, and to what forms us, has a long history. One that Juliette Binoche and I implicitly share.

We first met at the beginning of both our careers. Alongside André Téchiné, I had written *Rendez-vous*, a story filled with ghosts where, at age twenty, she had the lead role. Even then, the film looked at the invisible and the path a young actress takes towards the attaining fulfillment in a role. Since then, our paths have run parallel, only crossing much later when we shot *Summer Hours* together in 2008.

It was Juliette who had first had the feeling there was some missed opportunity, or rather film, that remained virtual in our shared history, and that would bring both of us back to the essential. With this same intuition in mind, I began taking notes, then breathing life into characters, and then into a story that had been waiting to exist for a

long time.

Writing is a path, and this one is found at dizzying heights, of time suspended between origin and becoming. It is no surprise that it inspired in me images of mountainscapes and steep trails. There needed to be Spring light, the transparency of air, and the fogs of the past, those of the *Cloud Phenomena of Maloja*. A path that both brought me back to where everything started, for Juliette and myself, and where we find ourselves today, in our questions about the present, and especially the future.

Maria Enders is an actress. With her assistant, Valentine, they explore the wealth and complexity of characters created by Wilhelm Melchior – characters who still have yet to give up all their secrets, even twenty years later.

But it is not so much about theatre and its illusions, nor about the meanderings of fiction, so much as it is about the Human, of the simplest and most intimate kind.

In this respect, words, those written by authors, those that actors appropriate, those that spectators allow to resonate within themselves, evoke nothing other than the questions we all ask ourselves, everyday, in our own interior monologues.

Yes, of course, theatre is life.

And even a little better than life, because it unveils grandeur in the best of situations and the worst, in the trivial and in our dreams.

In this sense, Maria Enders is neither Juliette Binoche nor myself. She is each of us through this necessity to revisit the past – not to elucidate it, but rather to find the keys to our identity, which has made us who we are, and which continues to push us forward.

She peers into the void and observes the young woman she was at age 20. At heart, she's still the same, but the world has changed around her, and her youth has fled – youth as virginity, as discovery of the world. This does not come around twice.

On the other hand, we never forget what our youth has taught us: this constant reinvention of the world, the deciphering of hyper-contemporary reality and the price one must pay to be part of it. Giving every new time the urgency and danger of a first time.

It is the confrontation between the past and present of a landscape that appeared to me as an ideal setting for a comedy – or drama, depending on the perspective one chooses – of an actress diving into the abyss of time, either out of professional or moral obligation, rather than desire.

When we stare into this void, it does not reflect much aside from our own image, frozen in the absolute present. This snapshot is at the heart of *Sils Maria*. Maria Enders discovers herself to be diffracted into a thousand avatars that resonate in the virtual world of fame – and detestation – of modern media. This is where the border between the most intimate, the most pathetically banal, and virtual public space is erased. We look for it, but cannot find it. Perhaps it simply no longer exists.





Is Maria Enders the young girl who once played Sigrid in Wilhelm Melchior's film, is she the adult, the mature woman that other people see her as being; or perhaps is she still one of the characters she embodied, or another of the faces that appear when one types her name in *Google Images* or on *YouTube*?

Is there anything she can still cling to, if not the secret of her own privacy, the one place where time cannot leave its trace?

The place where it can only flow, like the *Cloud Phenomena of Maloja*?

Very early on, I thought of clouds, of the sky above the Engadin Valley, of how simultaneously immutable and moving a landscape can be, which is both intimidating and so human. It is strangely inscribed in time, and has witnessed all the beings who have roamed through it, merged with it, from every period. And who have experienced its dizzying heights.

In 1924, at the dawn of cinema, Arnold Fanck, one of the pioneers of

mountain photography, filmed the strange *Cloud Phenomena of Maloja* where mountaintops, clouds and the wind all mix together abstractly, evoking classical Chinese painting. He shot it in black and white, and the only form in which it now exists is a worn and scratched-up print. In a word, a memory of what might have been and onto which time, in turn, has engraved itself.

It is nevertheless unsettling to feel an intimate and mysterious truth in these spaces, despite (or thanks to) the filters that separate us from them. They reveal themselves through a remote subjectivity, with nearly a century between us.

Is this not the exact process of art, which reproduces the world but through a singular gaze, which takes away as much as it reveals, indifferently bringing to light the visible and invisible?

OLIVIER ASSAYAS



ARNOLD FANCK

(1889-1974)

This mountain climber and doctor of geology became interested in cinema very early on. He first began with documentaries, shooting his first film in 1913 about the climbing of Monte Rosa, making him the German pioneer of nature, sports, and mountain films. In 1924, he shot *Cloud Phenomena of Maloja*. The film's original negative lasted 14 min. 30 seconds, but only now exists in the form of two identical, 9-minute long nitrate copies, one preserved in Austria, the other in Switzerland. Arnold Fanck began making

fiction films in 1925. His cameramen were also two pioneers of high-altitude photography, Sepp Algeier and Hans Schneeberger. He is the inventor of the mountain film as a genre. In particular, thanks to the success of the films he directed between 1924 and 1931 starring Leni Riefenstahl, often with Luis Trenker as the love interest: *The Holy Mountain* (1926), *The Big Jump* (1927), *Der weiße Stadion* (1928), *The White Hell of Pitz-Palü* (1929), co-directed with G. W. Pabst and which earned him his first international success, *Avalanche* (1930) and *White Ecstasy* (1931). He first fled the rise of National Socialism and filmed in foreign countries. Including Japan. He then returned to Germany in 1939, became a card-carrying member of the Nazi Party in 1940, and made two propaganda films. After the war, he was prohibited from ever filming again, and all his works were banned. It was the end of his career. He ended up penniless and worked as a forest ranger.





THE MAJOLA "SNAKE"

On an early autumn day in the Engadin, one might be lucky enough to witness the strange "snake" of Maloja creeping between the mountains. This dreaded phenomena, generally signalling the arrival of bad weather, occurs when humid air rising from lakes in Italy transforms into a cloud that winds its way through the Maloja pass. It stretches, extends and flows into the valley, above Sils Maria, Silvaplana and all the way to St. Moritz. Then, in the early afternoon, another weather phenomenon indigenous to the Engadin inevitably appears: the Maloja wind. This flow of air is also baffling for meteorologists. Indeed, in the valley, daytime winds rise. This, however, is a daytime *night-wind*, or rather, a *reverse wind*.

WILHELM MELCHIOR

(1935-2010)

In the 1960s, this Hamburg-born playwright chose Swiss nationality, setting the better part of his work in a Switzerland both real and imaginary. The renown of this Renaissance man (poet, essayist, botanist, filmmaker) runs deep in the German-speaking world. His nihilism and raw commentary on the society of the German economic boom earned him much enmity, but also cult status as an author for an entire generation. Very little of his work has been translated, and he is virtually unknown abroad, despite the fact he was widely talked about as potential candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature in the year of his death. His filmography – with *Maloja Snake* as his seminal work – was recently rereleased as a DVD box set, allowing a whole new audience to discover his original, disturbing, and transgressive writing, which has lost none of its modernity or strange, fascinating power.



NIETZSCHE AND SILS MARIA

SILS MARIA IN LITERARY HISTORY



Late July, in an attempt to escape the heat, Nietzsche climbed towards the Engadin, the same place he had so enjoyed two years earlier. He chose a rustic house in the village of Sils Maria and, for one franc per day, had a room with a landlord, with the neighbouring inn provided his meals. Long before luxury hotels began sprouting, a great solitude pervaded these high places. When Nietzsche had the urge to chat, he would pay a visit to the local schoolteacher or priest, honest people who fondly remembered this German professor who was so learned, modest and kind. However, deep down, the German professor hid his true emotions from these good people. More than ever, he felt agitated. Inside, he was drifting towards unknown heights. [...] One afternoon, making his way through the woods of Silvaplana, he sat down next to a powerful rock formation – now dedicated to his memory – not far from a village called Surlej. The waters of Lake Sils run the length of this formation which, in its smaller proportions, holds the majesty of a summit, sharp like a peak. This is where Nietzsche found ecstasy. A text has given us the content of this ecstasy: Nietzsche had his vision of *Eternal Return*.

This is how he explains it: the cosmos are animated by perpetual cyclical movement; the elements that compose them are finite; as is the number of combinations they are capable of; every moment is therefore bound to return. Here is Nietzsche, convalescent from long bouts of pain, sitting in the shadow of this rock, visited by ecstasy. In only a few days, this same Nietzsche, the same convalescent, will find himself in the same place, and will be revisited by the same ecstasy. This is the myth of *Eternal Return*. [...] Nietzsche wrote: "The fact that everything returns is the extreme coming together of a world of becoming with a world of being: the summit of meditation." And the date of the note: "Beginning of August 1881, in Sils Maria, 6500 feet above sea-level and much higher above all things human!"

Daniel Halévy, in *Nietzsche*, chapter on *The Vision in Surlej*.



CREW

Written and directed by
Producer
Co-producer
Executive Producer
Associate Producer
Cinematography
Production Design
Sound
Costumes
Editing
Casting
Assistant Director
Continuity
Make-up Artist
Hair Stylist
Key Grip
Electrician
Grip

OLIVIER ASSAYAS
CHARLES GILLIBERT
KARL BAUMGARTNER, THANASSIS KARATHANOS, JEAN-LOUIS PORCHET, GÉRARD RUEY
SYLVIE BARTHET
ANTOUN SEHNAOUI
YORICK LE SAUX
FRANÇOIS RENAUD LABARTHE
DANIEL SOBRINO
JURGEN DOERING
MARION MONNIER
ANTOINETTE BOULAT & ANJA DIHRBERG
DOMINIQUE DELANY
CHRISTELLE MEAUX
FRÉDÉRIQUE NEY
MORGANE BERNHARD
STÉPHANE GERMAIN
MATHIAS BEIER
CHRISTIAN ALMESBERGER

CAST

Maria Enders
Valentine
Jo-Ann Ellis
Klaus Diesterweg
Christopher Giles
Rosa Melchior
Henryk Wald
Urs Kohler
Urs' assistant
Mayor of Zurich
Berndt
Piers Roaldson
Maria's new assistant
Maria's agent
Journalist in Zurich
Superhero film actress
Talk-show hostess
Chanel press agent
Concierge in Waldhaus
Journalist in London
Theatre assistant in London

JULIETTE BINOCHÉ
KRISTEN STEWART
CHLOË GRACE MORETZ
LARS EIDINGER
JOHNNY FLYNN
ANGELA WINKLER
HANNS ZISCHLER
ALJOSCHA STADELMANN
LUISE BERNDT
GILLES TSCHUDI
BENOIT PEVERELLI
BRADY CORBET
CLAIRE TRAN
STUART MANASHIL
PETER FARKAS
NORA VON WALDSTÄTTEN
RICARDIA BRAMLEY
CAROLINE DE MAIGRET
ARNOLD GIAMARA
BEN POSENER
SEAN McDONAGH

MUSIC

LARGO DE XERXES
GEORG FRIEDRICH HAENDEL

CANON AND GIGUE IN D MAJOR FOR 3 VIOLINS
AND BASSO CONTINUO
JOHANN PACHELBEL
Orchestra Leopoldinum-Wroclaw conducted by
KAROL TEUTSCH

PAAVIN OF ALBARTI
HESPÈRION XX
Conducted by
JORDI SAVALL

KOWALSKI
PRIMAL SCREAM

CONCERT IN WALDHAUS

SONATE N°2 IN D MINOR,
GEORG FRIEDRICH HAENDEL
Interpreted by **PHOEBE LIN / KATARZNA NAWROTEK /**
DAVID SEGHEZZO / CLAIRE-ANNE PIGUET



PHOTO © CAROLE BÉTHUEL

JULIETTE BINOCHÉ

SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

2014 - **CLOUDS OF SILS MARIA** by Olivier Assayas • **GODZILLA** by Gareth Edwards •
2013 - **CAMILLE CLAUDEL 1915** by Bruno Dumont • 2012 - **COSMOPOLIS** by David
Cronenberg • 2011 - **ELLES** by Malgorzata Szumowska • 2010 - **CERTIFIED COPY** by
Abbas Kiarostami • 2008 - **SUMMER HOURS** by Olivier Assayas • **PARIS** by Cédric
Klapisch • 2007 - **DAN IN REAL LIFE** by Peter Hedges • **DISENGAGEMENT** by Amos
Gitai • **FLIGHT OF THE RED BALLOON** by Hou Hsiao-Hsien • 2006 - **BREAKING AND
ENTERING** by Anthony Minghella • 2005 - **MARY** by Abel Ferrara • **CACHÉ** by
Michael Haneke • 2004 - **IN MY COUNTRY** by John Boorman • 2002 - **JET LAG** by
Danièle Thompson • 2000 - **CODE UNKNOWN** by Michael Haneke • **THE WIDOW
OF SAINT-PIERRE** by Patrice Leconte • 1999 - **CHILDREN OF THE CENTURY** by Diane
Kurys • 1998 - **ALICE ET MARTIN** by André Téchiné • 1996 - **THE ENGLISH PATIENT**
by Anthony Minghella • 1995 - **THE HORSEMAN ON THE ROOF** by Jean-Paul
Rappeneau • 1993 - **THREE COLORS: BLUE** by Krzysztof Kieslowski • 1992 - **DAMAGE**
by Louis Malle • 1991 - **THE LOVERS ON THE BRIDGE** by Léos Carax • 1988 - **THE
UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING** by Philip Kaufman • 1986 - **BAD BLOOD** by Léos
Carax • 1985 - **RENDEZ-VOUS** by André Téchiné • **HAIL MARY** by Jean-Luc Godard



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KRISTEN STEWART

SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

2014 - **CLOUDS OF SILS MARIA** by Olivier Assayas • **ANESTHESIA** by Tim Blake Nelson • **CAMP X-RAY** by Peter Sattler • 2012 - **THE TWILIGHT SAGA: BREAKING DAWN - PART 2** by Bill Condon • **SNOW WHITE AND THE HUNTSMAN** by Rupert Sanders • **ON THE ROAD** by Walter Salles • 2011 - **THE TWILIGHT SAGA: BREAKING DAWN - PART 1** by Bill Condon • 2010 - **THE TWILIGHT SAGA: ECLIPSE** by David Slade • **THE RUNAWAYS** by Floria Sigismondi • 2009 - **THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON** by Chris Weitz • 2008 - **TWILIGHT** by Catherine Hardwicke • 2007 - **INTO THE WILD** by Sean Penn • 2002 - **PANIC ROOM** by David Fincher



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CHLOË GRACE MORETZ

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2014 – **CLOUDS OF SILS MARIA** by Olivier Assayas • **LAGGIES** de Lynn Shelton • 2013 – **CARRIE** by Kimberly Peirce • **KICK-ASS 2** by Jeff Wadlow 2012 – **DARK SHADOWS** by Tim Burton • 2011 – **HUGO** by Martin Scorsese • 2010 – **LET ME IN** by Matt Reeves • **KICK-ASS** by Matthew Vaughn • 2009 – **(500) DAYS OF SUMMER** by Marc Webb • 2008 – **THE EYE** by David Moreau, Xavier Palud • 2007 – **THE THIRD NAIL** by Kevin Lewis • 2006 – **WICKED LITTLE THINGS** by J.S. Cardone • **ROOM 6** by Michael Hurst • **BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2** by John Whitesell • 2005 – **HEART OF THE BEHOLDER** by Ken Tipton • **THE AMITYVILLE HORROR** by Andrew Douglas



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LARS EIDINGER

SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

2014 - **CLOUDS OF SILS MARIA** by Olivier Assayas • 2012 - **GOLTZIUS AND THE PELICAN COMPANY** by Peter Greenaway • **HOME FOR THE WEEK-END** by Hans-Christian Schmid • 2011 - **FESNTER ZUM SOMMER** by Hendrik Handloegten • **HELL** by Tim Fehlbaum • **CODE BLUE** by Urszula Antoniak • **TABU** by Christoph Stark • 2010 - **VIDEO NASTY** by Jörg Buttgerit • 2009 - **ALLE ANDEREN** by Maren Ade • 2007 - **AFTER EFFECT** by Stephan Geene • 2005 - **SEE YOU AT REGIS DEBRAY** by C.S. Leigh



FILMOGRAPHY

1986 **DISORDER**
1989 **WINTER'S CHILD**
1991 **PARIS AWAKENS**
1993 **A NEW LIFE**
1994 **COLD WATER**
1996 **IRMA VEP**
1997 **HHH: A Portrait of Hou Hsiao-Hsien**
1999 **LAST AUGUST, EARLY SEPTEMBER**
2000 **LES DESTINÉES**
2002 **DEMONLOVER**
2004 **CLEAN**
2005 **NOISE (Music documentary)**
2006 **PARIS JE T' AIME (Short film)**
2007 **BOARDING GATE**
2007 **TO EACH HIS OWN CINEMA (Short film)**
2008 **ELDORADO (Documentary)**
2008 **SUMMER HOURS**
2010 **CARLOS THE JACKAL**
2012 **SOMETHING IN THE AIR**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1984 **HONG-KONG CINÉMA (with Charles Tesson)**
1990 **CONVERSATION AVEC BERGMAN (with Stig Björkman)**
1999 **ÉLOGE DE KENNETH ANGER**
2005 **UNE ADOLESCENCE DANS L'APRÈS-MAI**
2009 **PRÉSENCES**

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