



# HITCHCOCK CONFIDENTIAL

A 52 minute documentary

Written by Patrick McGilligan and Laurent Herbiet

Directed by Laurent Herbiet

Produced by Patricia Boutinard Rouelle

The moviemaking legend, master of suspense, inventor of forms, incorrigible prankster...

We may think that everything has been said about the great Alfred, but what do we really know about the man behind the director?

Through the intimate, gentle and critical eyes of his wife and collaborator, Alma, this film will allow us to discover Hitchcock anew, between darkness and light.

**Nilaya**  
Productions

**arte**

# RESUME

Alfred Hitchcock is known as a giant of moviemaking, a facetious master of suspense, obsessed with blond heroines in peril, with the reputation of being tyrannical towards his actors.

But who knows the real Hitchcock? During his last public appearance, "Hitch" paid tribute to the wife, mother, co-writer, editor and partner of a lifetime that was Alma Reville Hitchcock. The two Hitchcock were inseparable, engineering the unquestionable masterpieces together. Their genuine collaboration never stopped from the day they met until the end of their lives. It's in light of this fusional relationship that this film will revisit and shed fresh light on the legend. But there is no light without shadow and Alma's voice will also reveal Hitch's dark side, his contradictions and flaws, which come together to make the myth.

We will explore the role played by women throughout the director's career. Alma's role of course – his "most demanding critic," and brightest too – but also the stars and collaborators who played a part in his work's progression. At a time when harassment in the world of moviemaking is a major talking point, we will also look afresh at Hitchcock's sometimes controversial relationships with his actresses.



# DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

## ALMA'S VOICE

Alma will be our guide throughout this account. We will bring her back to life through the research of her American biographer Patrick McGilligan, co-author of this documentary and author of the authoritative book, "Alfred Hitchcock: A Life Between Darkness and Light." Her voice incarnate will bring us into the private life of this brilliant creator who was forever feeding on his deepest and most obscure obsessions and fantasies.

Alma was the closest person to Alfred and also provides an inside account. She underlines the contrast between this moviemaking magician who could dive into the abysses of the human soul and create a universe by turns romantic or more often terrifying, alongside the husband who was also a loving and warm father. Alma wasn't just Alfred's wife, she was also Hitchcock's closest collaborator, continually solicited for advice and approval. Alma's voice will thus be both tender and critical, analytical and even sometimes ironic.

She reveals some of the cracks in the legend ... How is it that this director at the height of his craft and admired by his female collaborators, could come to be accused on the set of *Marnie* of psychological and sexual harassment by his lead female actress? Alma will allow us to explore the crucial creative influence of women throughout Hitchcock's life and career – from his mother to his sister, including writers and screenwriters (Daphné Du Maurier, Dorothy Parker...), collaborators (Joan Harrison, Edith Head...), stars (Ingrid Bergman, Grace Kelly, Kim Novak...), and the incredible array of female characters to whom he gave life.

## A FILM MADE ENTIRELY FROM ARCHIVES

The documentary will be made entirely from archival material and clips of Hitchcock's masterpieces. Our deep research has already provided us with a very diverse trove of documents: news clips, making-ofs, interviews of stars and collaborators, set shots, screen tests, screenplays, screen and costume designs, story-boards, trailers, promotional material...

This film will serve as an opportunity to discover little-known and surprising images, gems such as the restored clips of his first feature films made in England, propaganda movies that he directed during World War II, the documentary he put together about the liberation of the Bergen-Belsen, Dachau and Buchenwald camps, or the very moving images from his last public appearance when he paid homage to his beloved wife Alma.

In contrast, the film will also pay attention to some of the lighter aspects of his personality – a teaser known for his cockney humor, who liked to be the center of attention and filmed, playing on his curved silhouette to become the public's best-known director. We will thus rediscover the best scenes from "Alfred Hitchcock presents" and the making of for "Frenzy."

This lightness is also apparent in his surprising family films and photos made by the Hitchcocks themselves and those close to them from the 1920s on (8mm films, black & white and color). These personal archives reveal Hitch with his family, with Alma and playing with his daughter, Pat, joking with friends, traveling across Europe... We see him as he often described himself: a completely ordinary family man, a loving father and husband, and an incorrigible joker.

## INTERVIEWS FROM THE ERA

The interviews used will be contemporaneous to the works and events evoked. Hitch's American career was very widely documented at the time by the major studios' marketing departments, and on television as it grew in importance. In the US one can find a remarkable collection of interviews about the master given by other directors, actors, Hollywood greats and Hitchcock's own stars.

In France, the Cinémathèque Française and the INA will also provide interviews surrounding Hitchcock's sets in France and Morocco, his promotional visits, and appearances at the Cannes Festival. And there's of course the audio and visual material from his interviews with François Truffaut for Hitchcock/Truffaut.

#### FROM LIFE TO WORK

All of these resources will allow us to better explore the creative process in general and how the life and ambitions of an exceptional director can resonate with his own films. Beyond appreciating the mythical filmmakers' craftsmanship, our approach that will take in Hitchcock, Alma, his collaborators and the female characters that he created to provide both an intimate journey through his work, but also shed a fresh light on this remarkable creator of emotions.

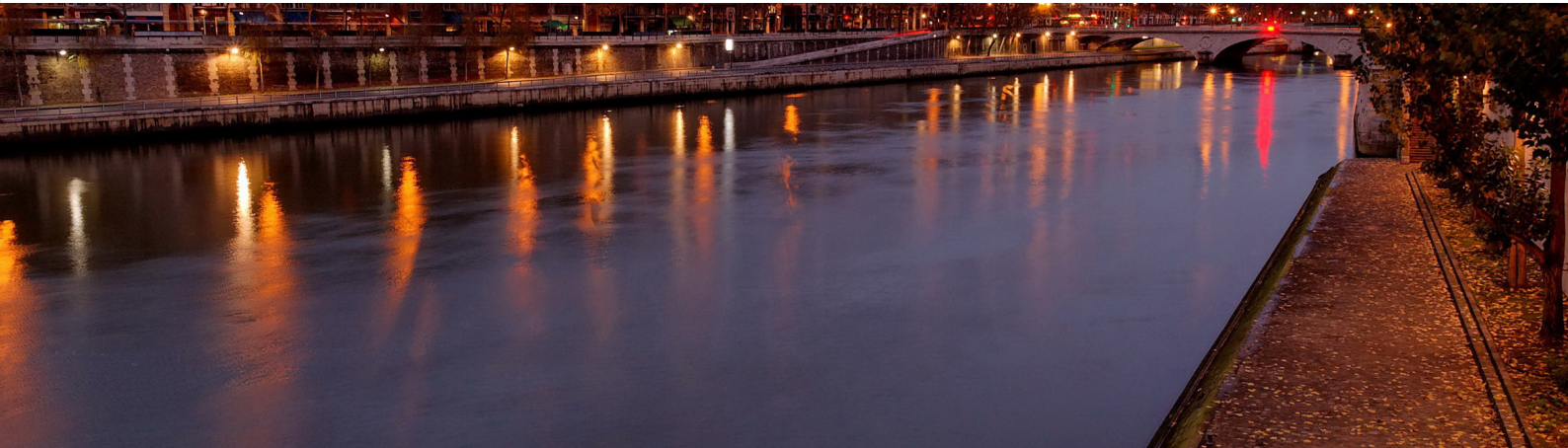
Laurent Herbiet





# Nilaya

## Productions



Nilaya is an independent production company. Founder Patricia Boutinard Rouelle aims to develop ambitious, creative projects for leading international broadcasters, using innovative image technologies and high production standards.

For M6 in France, ZDF in Germany, CCTV9 in China, RTBF in Belgium, Curiosity Stream in the USA, SVT in Sweden, and NRK in Norway, Nilaya produced "The First Man" (90' or 2x45'), an event docu-drama directed by Frédéric Fougere and Jérôme Guiot. For France 2, Nilaya produced "A Brief Moment of Optimism" (52' - Quinzaine des réalisateurs, Cannes), "A L'Ouest du Jourdain" (90') directed by Amos Gitai and "Nos bébés ont une histoire" (90'), a scientific docu-drama directed by Romain Icard.

For France 3 and National Geographic, Nilaya recently produced the blue-chip documentary "Das Reich, une division SS en France" (2x44'), "Alain Delon" (90' - France 3 and Arte) and "Simone Veil" (Selection Prix Europa).

For France 5, Nilaya produced "Etats-Unis, le nouvel apartheid" (52'), which exposes the return of segregation in the American school system, and "Sous le nuage d'Hiroshima" (52'), a coproduction with NHK to mark the 70th anniversary of the first A-bomb.

Patricia Boutinard Rouelle spent the previous 16 years in charge of the different documentary units at France Televisions Group. During that time, she initiated a great number of documentary slots still on the air and developed a policy of prime-time events on France 2 and France 3 such as the celebrated blue-chip series on prime-time "Apocalypse", sold internationally, the very successful prime time programs "Rendez-vous en terre inconnue" acclaimed as the French favourite show and the weekly documentary slot "Infrarouge".

She coproduced many series with BBC such as "Walking with Dinosaurs" and one-shots like "D-Day". She initiated the renowned international trilogy on prehistory: "L'Odyssée de l'Espèce", "Homo Sapiens" and "The Rise of Man", on France3. In April 2011, she created her new production company, Nilaya Productions.

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