

"TRIUMPHANTLY FUNNY AND WISE..."

—VINCENT CANBY



**"A DELIGHT IN THE WATCHING...
a tantalizing tease...for adults
who've done a little living."**
JUDITH CRIST *New York Post*

**"★★★ 1/2 SAUCY, EXUBERANTLY FUNNY...
easily one of the most delightful movies of the year."**
KATHLEEN CARROLL *New York Daily News*

**"BUNUEL AT PEAK FORM,
with the freshness of eternal youth
and the wisdom of experience."**
WILLIAM WOLF *Cine Magazine*

**"MYSTERIOUS, ENIGMATIC,...
EROTIC TEASING, LUXURIOUS
SEDUCING...you'll adore this movie!"**
LIZ SMITH *Cosmopolitan*

**"...PASSIONATE AND URBANE, WITTY
AND EROTIC, adventurous and
committed to the mystery
of the human soul"**
MOLLY HASKELL *New York Magazine*

Luis
Buñuel's
masterpiece,

That Obscure Object Of Desire

("Cet Obscur Objet du Désir")



English Subtitles

FIRST ARTISTS presents

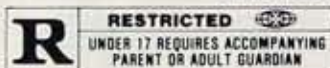
A SERGE SILBERMAN Production • Directed by LUIS BUNUEL

Screenplay by LUIS BUNUEL with JEAN-CLAUDE CARRIERE From the novel "La Femme et Le Pantin" by PIERRE LOUYS Published by ALBIN MICHEL
with FERNANDO REY • CAROLE BOUQUET • ANGELA MOLINA • JULIEN BERTHEAU • ANDRE WEBER • MILENA VUKOTIC

Art Director PIERRE GUFFROY • Director of Photography EDMOND RICHARD • Production Manager ULLY PICKARD

Produced by SERGE SILBERMAN

a French-Spanish co-production



a French-Spanish co-production A GREENWICH PRODUCTION (PARIS) LES FILMS GALAXIE (PARIS) IN CINE (MADRID)

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That Obscure Object Of Desire

("Cet Obscur Objet du Désir")

That Obscure Object of Desire — is Buñuel's latest film. It stars Fernando Rey as a fifty year old man hopelessly in love with a young woman. Since he sees her as a feminine Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (half whore, half virgin), Buñuel has her played by two actresses with her voice provided by yet a third! The outside world keeps on erupting into his tale of passion, punctuating it with terrorist actions.

Freely inspired by Pierre Louys' novel, "La Femme et Le Pantin" one is able to summarize the film into one phrase: a man who desires, a woman who refuses him, each with the same ardor.

And in this everyday struggle, bombarded every now and then by violence and absurdity, they possibly find a strong bond, a subtle harmony, more profound than all the others.

This film, a desire of Luis Buñuel's for many years, was finally realized, in full freedom, graced by the persuasive insistence of his producer, Serge Silberman.

The latest work of Luis Buñuel. Without doubt, his masterpiece.

Luis Buñuel Biography

A moving force in world cinema for over fifty years, and now a popular success, Luis Buñuel, the director of "**That Obscure Object of Desire**" was introduced to this country in the First New York Film Festival with his film, "The Exterminating Angel" (1962). Born in 1900 in Calandra, Spain, he has lived and worked in France, Spain, The United States, and Mexico.

Buñuel began his film career in Paris as assistant to Jean Epstein in the twenties. Then he made two surrealistic shockers, "An Andalusian Dog" and "L'Age d'Or", in collaboration with Salvador Dali. The audience threw inkpots at the screen and

nurses were in attendance to catch the faint-hearted. While shooting the second film, Buñuel thought that Dali's current girlfriend was an evil influence and tried to strangle her. Dali took offense at this and quit the film, commencing years of animosity between the two artists.

Buñuel's most important films have all been seen at the New York Film Festival; "L'Age d'Or" (1930) and "The Diary of a Chambermaid" (1963) were in the second Festival. "Simon of the Desert" (1965) in the fourth, "Tristana" (1969) in the eighth, "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie" (1972) in the tenth, and "The Phantom of Liberty" (1974) in the twelfth.

Luis Buñuel now makes his home outside of Mexico City with his wife and two sons. Asked to sum up the possible meaning of his films, he says, "The final sense of my films is this: that we do not live in the best of all possible worlds."

Running Time: 100 minutes

Director: Luis Buñuel
Produced by: Serge Silberman
Production Companies: Greenwich Film Production (Paris)/
..... Les Films Galaxie (Paris)/
..... In Cine (Madrid)
Screenplay: Luis Buñuel in collaboration with
..... Jean -Claude Carriere, from the
..... novel *La Femme et Le Pantin* by
..... Pierre Louys
Photography: Edmond Richard
Editor: Helene Plemiannikov
Art Director: Pierre Guffroy
Production Manager: Ullly Pickard

Cast:

Mathieu: Fernando Rey
Conchita: Carole Bouquet, Angela Molina
Judge: Julien Bertheau
Valet: Andre Weber
Traveler: Milena Vukotic
Psychologist: Pieral

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for adults who've done a little living... a delight in the watching."
JUDITH CRIST New York Post

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The incomparable Luis Buñuel...
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VINCENT CANBY
New York Times

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JUDITH CRIST New York Post

**"BUNUEL AT PEAK FORM,
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WILLIAM WOLF Cue Magazine

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Luis Buñuel's
**That Obscure
Object
Of Desire**
("Cet Obscur Objet du Désir")

"BEST FILM OF THE YEAR"
ANDREW SARRIS, Village Voice
MOLLY HASKELL, New York Magazine

"ONE OF THE YEAR'S 10 BEST"
CHARLES CHAMPLIN, Los Angeles Times
VINCENT CANBY, New York Times
JUDITH CRIST, New York Post
STEWART KLEIN, WNEW-TV
BERNARD DREW, Gannett Newspapers
NORMA McLAIN STOOP, After Dark
AMY TALBAN, Soho Weekly News
JACK KROLL, Newsweek
STEPHEN FARBER, New West Magazine
WILLIAM WOLF, Cue Magazine
GENE SHALIT, NBC-TV Today Show
PAT COLLINS, WCBS-TV

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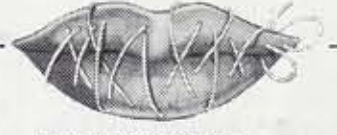
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KATHLEEN CARROLL,
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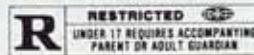
Production Manager ULLY PICKARD

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English Subtitles



T H E A T R E

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JUDITH CRIST *New York Post*

Luis Buñuel's That Obscure Object Of Desire



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English Subtitles

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**"MYSTERIOUS, ENIGMATIC,...EROTIC TEASING,
LUXURIOUS SEDUCING...
you'll adore this movie."**

LIZ SMITH
Cosmopolitan

**"...PASSIONATE AND URBANE, WITTY
AND EROTIC, adventurous and
committed to the mystery
of the human soul."**

MOLLY HASKELL
New York Magazine

**"★★★ 1/2 SAUCY, EXUBERANTLY FUNNY...
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KATHLEEN CARROLL
New York Daily News

**"SWIFT, CLEAR, GRACEFUL...
delightful fun."**

JACK KROLL
Newsweek

**"A DELIGHT IN THE WATCHING...
a tantalizing tease...for
adults who've done a
little living"**

JUDITH CRIST
New York Post

**"BRILLIANTLY WITTY COMEDY...
razor sharp."**

BRUCE WILLIAMSON
Playboy

**"BUNUEL AT PEAK FORM,
with the freshness of eternal youth
and the wisdom of experience"**

WILLIAM WOLF
Cue Magazine

**"...THE STORY IS SPUN WITH WIT,"
exuberance and masterful style..."**

STEWART KLEIN,
WNEW-TV

"ONE OF THE YEAR'S 10 BEST"
GENE SHALIT,
NBC-TV Today Show

"ONE OF THE YEAR'S 10 BEST"
VINCENT CANBY,
New York Times

"ONE OF THE YEAR'S 10 BEST"
JUDITH CRIST,
New York Post

**"ENDLESS FASCINATION...
delightful, full of wit."**

HOWARD KISSEL
Women's Wear Daily

**"A freshness, a warmth and
a sense of puckish humor...
Luis Buñuel has done it again."**

EDWARD BEHR
Newsweek

**"...A splendid film and a
serio-comic masterpiece."**

NORMA McLAIN STOOP
After Dark

**"Stylishly delicious...
a great deal of fun...
a winner."**

BOB LAPE
WABC T.V.

**"One of the most buoyant and
brilliant entertainments of the year...
a monument to the free spirit."**

ANDREW SARRIS,
Village Voice

**"Raises the spirit, as
should a thing of beauty."**

VINCENT CANBY
New York Times

**"A clean radiance...
entertainment of the senses."**

PAULINE KAEI
New Yorker

**"One of the most remarkable
movies in years—a film to see
and to see again."**

GENE SHALIT,
NBC-TV Today Show

THE NEW YORK TIMES,
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1977

Film Festival: 'Obscure Object'

Buñuel Work Triumphantly
Funny and Wise

by VINCENT CANBY

Every film festival should end with a new film by the incomparable Luis Buñuel, whose latest work, the triumphantly funny and wise "That Obscure Object of Desire," will be shown at Lincoln Center tonight at 8:30 to close the 15th New York Film Festival.

After one has sat through hours and hours of films by directors who don't know when to stop (and some who should never have started), seeing a work of such perfect control and precision has the effect of magically clearing the mind. It restores one's common sense and one's appreciation for the fantastic, and it reminds us of the profound possibilities of film in the hands of someone we now acknowledge to be an authentic master.

"That Obscure Object of Desire" is Buñuel's "Don Giovanni." It combines the effervescence and gaiety of "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie" with the dark wit of "Tristana," and though it continues to explore themes we recognize from these and other Buñuel films, it is something quite other.

Most obviously, I suppose, "That Obscure Object of Desire" is an upside-down romance in which love, Buñuel seems to be telling us, is "a devastating act of subversion." The setting is the easily recognizable contemporary world, but a world that is a half-degree off its axis and fast going to pieces, though everyone displays the fastidious manners of the members of a society that will last forever.

Just beyond the horizon of the film, which is set in Paris and in Seville, chaos reigns. Through newspaper headlines and radio broadcasts we learn that terrorism is rampant. Planes are being hijacked and innocents slaughtered. A mysterious virus is nearing Barcelona and a guerrilla group that calls itself the Revolutionary Army of the Infant Jesus has attempted to assassinate the Archbishop of Sienna. Even the Communists are outraged by the anarchic state of things.

Seemingly unruffled by all this (though he is impatient when a booby-trapped automobile in front of him explodes and forces his car to make a detour) is the charming, literate, wealthy Mathieu (Fernando Rey), Buñuel's Don, a French businessman whose life is in perfect order until the day that the beautiful Conchita enters it, dressed as a maid.

Though he has been a widower for seven years, Mathieu is no ordinary lecher. As he tells his brother, the judge (Julien Bertheau), Mathieu can count on the fingers of one hand the number of times he has ever made love to a woman whom he didn't love passionately. From the minute he sees Conchita, Mathieu is in the throes of an uncontrollable passion.

Conchita, though, is not someone whose measure he can get, and who eludes him even as he gets her into bed. Conchita flees his house, only to turn up a few months afterwards traveling through Switzerland with a group of musicians. Later Mathieu makes a deal with Conchita's pious mother to set up Conchita as his mistress. Again she runs away. Each time they meet again, she leads him further into the recesses of his obsession, always promising him the moon (in the form of her virginity), then suddenly changing her mind.

As Mathieu sees her, Conchita is so changeable that Buñuel has cast two lovely new actresses to play her — Carole Bouquet, who looks a little like a young Rita Hayworth, as the cool enigmatic Conchita, and Angela Molina as the earthy, flamenco-dancing Conchita whom he follows to Seville.

Poor old Mathieu. The night he succeeds in getting Conchita to his country house, where she has promised to be his mistress, the Conchita who goes into the bathroom to change, changes not only her clothes. Miss Bouquet goes in but Miss Molina comes out.

Mathieu huffs, puffs and groans in his agony. He leaves Conchita a dozen times but always is lured back. At one point he persuades her to live with him and to share his bed, though no sexual contact can be made. When the judge asks his brother why he doesn't marry her, Mathieu answers earnestly that if he married her Conchita for her maddening ways, she answers, "You only want what I refuse. That's not all of me . . ."

Who really loves whom? Though Conchita at first seems to be the classic coquette, she becomes, as the film progresses, the true lover, while Mathieu becomes the coquette, a reversal of roles that is, nevertheless, not to be taken as the last word.

"That Obscure Object of Desire" is beautifully played by its small, impeccably chosen cast, beginning with Mr. Rey who, at this point in his career, is virtually a projection of Buñuel's artistic personality — gentle, polite, self-aware incapable of the superfluous gestures, and driven. Miss Bouquet and Miss Molina are enchanting — I don't think Buñuel has ever before been so successful with neophyte actresses.

There are further delights in the performances of Mr. Bertheau (who played the "worker bishop" in "The Discreet Charm"), of Andre Weber, as Mathieu's all-wise valet, and of Píeral, a dwarf who plays the psychologist to whom Mathieu pours out his sad story on the train from Seville to Paris, which provides the frame for the film.

"That Obscure Object of Desire" is a lot more open-ended and surreal than I've indicated, but these are pleasures that one should discover for oneself. To attempt to interpret them in this sort of review would be as gross as giving away the ending of a whodunit. One particular prop, though, I would suggest that you watch out for. It's an ordinary, but apparently well-stuffed burlap sack that the always-well-groomed Mathieu carries with him.

With an effortlessness matched by no other director today, Buñuel creates a vision of a world as logical as a theorem, as mysterious as a dream, and as funny as a vaudeville gag. I especially like the response of a waiter in a posh restaurant when an insect turns up in Mathieu's martini. "A fly," the waiter exclaims. "I've been after that one for days, and he had to fall into your glass!"

COSMOPOLITAN EXOTIC BUNUEL'S BEST

Each and every one of Luis Buñuel's mysterious, enigmatic and often incomprehensible films is a classic and worthy of serious attention. As old as the 20th century, Buñuel started making movies in France in 1928 and never stopped. "That Obscure Object of Desire," Buñuel's latest, is one of the more capricious, literate and rewarding of his repertoire, which includes "Belle de Jour," "Tristana," and "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie." The story, if you can call these tormentingly inexplicable plots, stories, is as ridiculous, passionate and repulsive as real life, filled with lust and love. Fernando Rey stars as a rich and cultivated man trapped in his desire for a luscious nubile chambermaid, who is both innocent, as a peasant, and cunning as a courtesan . . . and maddeningly virginal throughout. The character is played by two beautiful young actresses, one passionately earthy, Angelina Molina, and the other seductively haughty, Carole Bouquet. Why the girls change places is never really explained, and if you love Buñuel's movies you know better than to ask silly questions. Buñuel forces you to be both lover and beloved . . . both sadist and masochist . . . both performer and audience. Buñuel leaves nothing to chance, for every moment and detail is here for a reason. The filmmaker leaves you only to enjoy yourself for a few delicious hours. If you like erotic teasing, luxurious seducing, beautiful naked women, beautifully dressed women, intellectual sexy parlor games, and a smart slap in the face every now and then, you'll adore this movie.

Liz Smith

Newsweek, December 5, 1977 Surrealist Cervantes

There have always been two obscure objects of desire in Luis Buñuel's movies — social justice and transcendent sexuality. Liberty and love were the twin gods of the surrealists, who ended up fighting among — and within — themselves because they couldn't decide which was more important. But Buñuel has come to terms with these forces and with himself. His first film, "Un Chien Andalou" (1928) shocked viewers around the world (and still does) with its unforgettable image of a woman's eye, in huge close-up, being slit open by a razor blade. At the outset of his career, Buñuel was slicing open our eyes so we could see the truth. In those days the truth looked simple — the enemies were Fascism, bourgeois complacency and a repressive church. At 77, Buñuel has survived into a more complex — or at least bolixed-up — age. In his 34th film, THAT OBSCURE OBJECT OF DESIRE, he pokes wise and delightful fun at the age and at himself.

Updating Pierre Louys's short novel "The Woman and the Puppet," Buñuel tells the story of Mathieu (Fernando Rey), a well-heeled businessman in our violent modern world — hijackers kidnap planes, terrorists blast the urban streets, a mysterious virus oozes through the land. But the acronyms for the terrorist groups are suspiciously erotic, such as P.R.I.Q.U.E. or R.U.T. Buñuel mischievously implies that these names apply even more to the highly nonpolitical Mathieu than they do to the terrorists: while the bombs explode, Mathieu is obsessively pursuing Conchita, a young Spanish dancer. The pursuit, ranging from Paris to Seville, becomes an odyssey of sexual frustration as the tantalizing Conchita continually offers and then withdraws her virginity. This epic tease reaches a farcical climax when Mathieu finally gets Conchita into bed only to find her laced into an impenetrable corset. Mathieu can't blast his way to victory any more than the terrorists can.

Flaming Arrow: But the bombs keep igniting and so does Mathieu. His story becomes the story of desire itself, growing funnier and more desperate as its objects get increasingly obscure. Buñuel, that old eye-slicer, slices Conchita into two different actresses, driving home the point that extreme desire turns reality into fantasy. Carole Bouquet is a cool, distant Conchita, with the chiseled beauty of a Venus carved from ice. Angela Molina is a hot-eyed, sensual Conchita whose dancing is like a flaming arrow sizzling into Mathieu's heart.

Buñuel tells this sagacious and salacious tale with that uncanny style of his — swift, clear, graceful but eerie, like a tarantula dancing the minuet. His actors don't seem to be acting, they're as crisp and exact as the thoughts in Buñuel's sly and subtle mind. All that famous Freudian folderol — the erotic symbols, the dream dislocations — by now seems perfectly at home in a dislocated world. As the impeccable Rey imperturbably totes a sackful of dung, we don't question it any more than we ask why Don Quixote is attacking windmills. Objects of desire may be obscure — or stained — but Buñuel, that surrealist Cervantes, knows they're all we have.

—Jack Kroll

NEW YORK POST

October 10, '77

'That Obscure Object of Desire'

By JUDITH CRIST



Luis Buñuel's "That Obscure Object of Desire," last night's final film of the 15th New York Film Festival, is a festival in itself.

A delight in the watching, this multi-leveled tale is equally pleasurable in the retrospective questioning and speculation that make Buñuel films stick to the ribs of the mind. It is marked by the urbanity and wit of the superb story-teller, and by sly perception and surreal suggestion of the master moviemaker.

At 77 Buñuel is as unsparing as ever of his energies, with neither cynicism nor affection to blur his perception of the human comedy.

The screenplay, by Buñuel and his long-time collaborator, Jean-Claude Carrière, is loosely based on Pierre Louys' novel, "La Femme et Le Pantin" ("The Woman and the Puppet"), which Joseph von Sternberg used in 1935 for "The Devil is a Woman," with Marlene Dietrich.

Buñuel has up-dated the story of a middle-aged man in thrall to a tantalizing tease and given it both a cosmopolitan flavor and contemporary spice.

His protagonist, Mathieu, portrayed by that epitome of fiftyish suavity, Fernando Rey, is a wealthy widower who, in a world riddled by crashes, explosions and other terrorist outbursts, devoted himself single-mindedly to the pursuit of carnal love.

His heroine — and Buñuel plays a masterly creative joke with her — is as single-mindedly devoted to the pursuit of non-carnal love. She is beautiful, sweet and loving — and the devil incarnate in bed, teasing, tormenting, humiliating and ever eluding, and frustrating her victim. To this end, Buñuel has used two actresses — the cool and elegant Carole Bouquet and the fiery, tousled Angela Molina — to portray Conchita interchangeably, with a third actress providing her voice. And such is the magic of movies and Buñuel, that you have to be on the alert to know which Conchita is at hand.

The story is given a fine framework of suspense. Mathieu is hurriedly abandoning Seville for Paris with his valet, (a wonderfully Bunter-like type, played by Andre Weber), leaving behind a bedroom marked by the wreckage of a fight and a woman's hasty departure. He boards the train and a sociable mood is established in the first-class compartment, whose occupants — a judge, a woman and her young daughter, and a dwarf who is a professor of psychology — all turn out to be neighbors or friends of friends.

As the train is about to depart, a lovely young woman, sporting a bandaged forehead and a black eye, hurries up to it, imploring Mathieu not to leave. He gets a water bucket from the porter and dumps it on her as she attempts to board.

His compartment-mates are shocked. But their curiosity overcomes their manners. "It was better to drench her than kill her," our hero notes. "My hope is that God won't forgive her." And then he starts his story of Conchita, who first appeared as a newly hired maid in his Paris apartment.

The tale of his pursuit, in Paris, Lausanne, Paris, Seville, Paris and finally Madrid; the disappearances and reappearances of Conchita as folk-singer, hat-check girl, flamenco dancer, and of Mathieu's involvement with her mother as well as with the girl is a picaresque one in itself. It is punctuated by the comments and questions of Mathieu's fellow travelers, as fascinated as we each step of the way.

In Buñuel's hands, the broad and well-filled canvas comes alive with an awareness, as he himself has put it, "that we do not live in the best of all possible worlds." In his age, however it sparkles with the high comedy of the varieties of love's frustrations.

Beyond the surface story is Buñuel's wry consideration of the trivia that consumes mankind amid the holocausts of the modern world, the high price placed upon the virginity and the even higher price paid for the conquest thereof.

His feminist view also appears. He shares Conchita's contempt for the man who can think of relationships with women only in sexual terms. Buñuel remarked to an interviewer, during the making of the film, that "to be in love and not make love is the act of a true revolutionary." And it is not difficult to think finally of Conchita as waging a war of liberation, particularly with the film's explosive conclusion.

To bring suspense, irony and topicality to the eternal tale of the fools who make their prayers to womankind is no mean accomplishment. To do so — and much more — in one's 32nd film is proof of the master artist that Buñuel remains.

The film has no MPAA rating. It's obviously for adults who've done a little living.

"A TANTALIZING TEASE..."

for adults who've done a little living... a delight in the watching!"

JUDITH CRIST *New York Post*

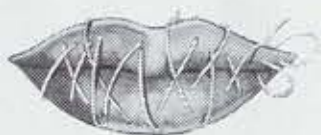
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