Amélie

Neil Lin Benjamin Lee Howard Huang Beckett Chang Amy Hsieh Elle Chen

Outline

Introduction

Places in the film

Amelie as flaneur, Nino as flaneur

Filmic technique

Cinema history

Narratology Sounds, Music

Conclusion

Introduction

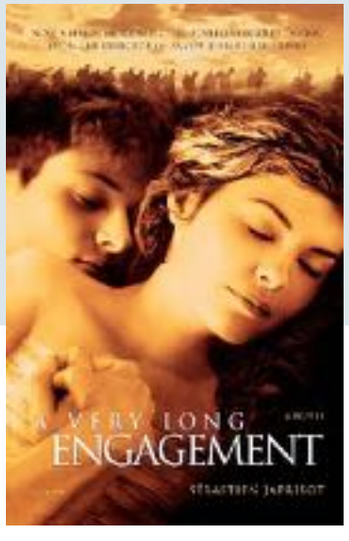
JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET

Director

- Cinéma du look
- Lots of characters

The City of Lost Children (1995)

Amelie(2001)



A Very Long Engagement (2004)

Main Plot

Gina

Joseph

Amélie Poulain

Georgette

Madeleine

Bretodeau

Collignon

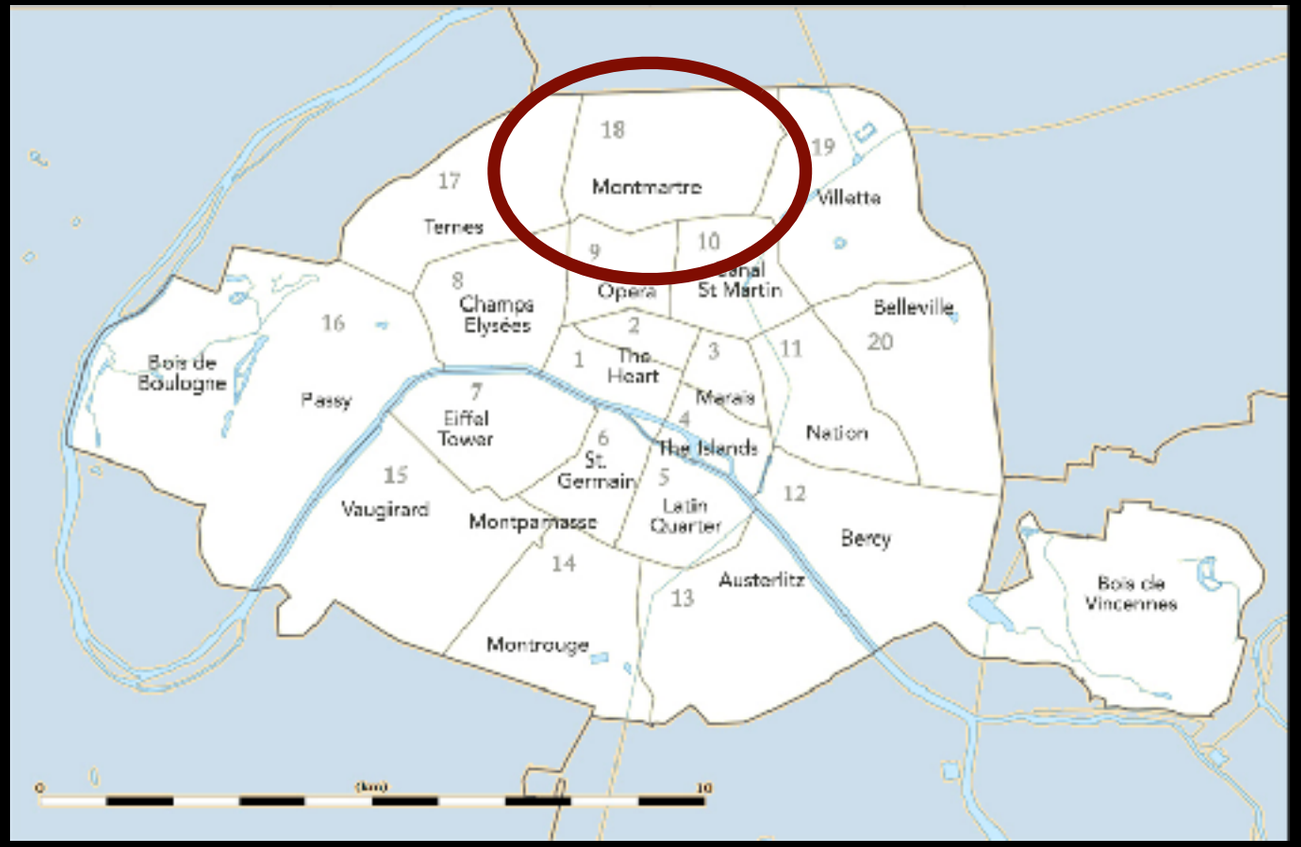
Lucien

Nino

Locations in Amélie

Locations in Amélie

- Centered in the 18th arrondissement/district
  - Presentation of the ideal 1980/1990 Paris
- Promotion of Frenchness and Paris
  - Amélie tour



The Maison Collignon grocery

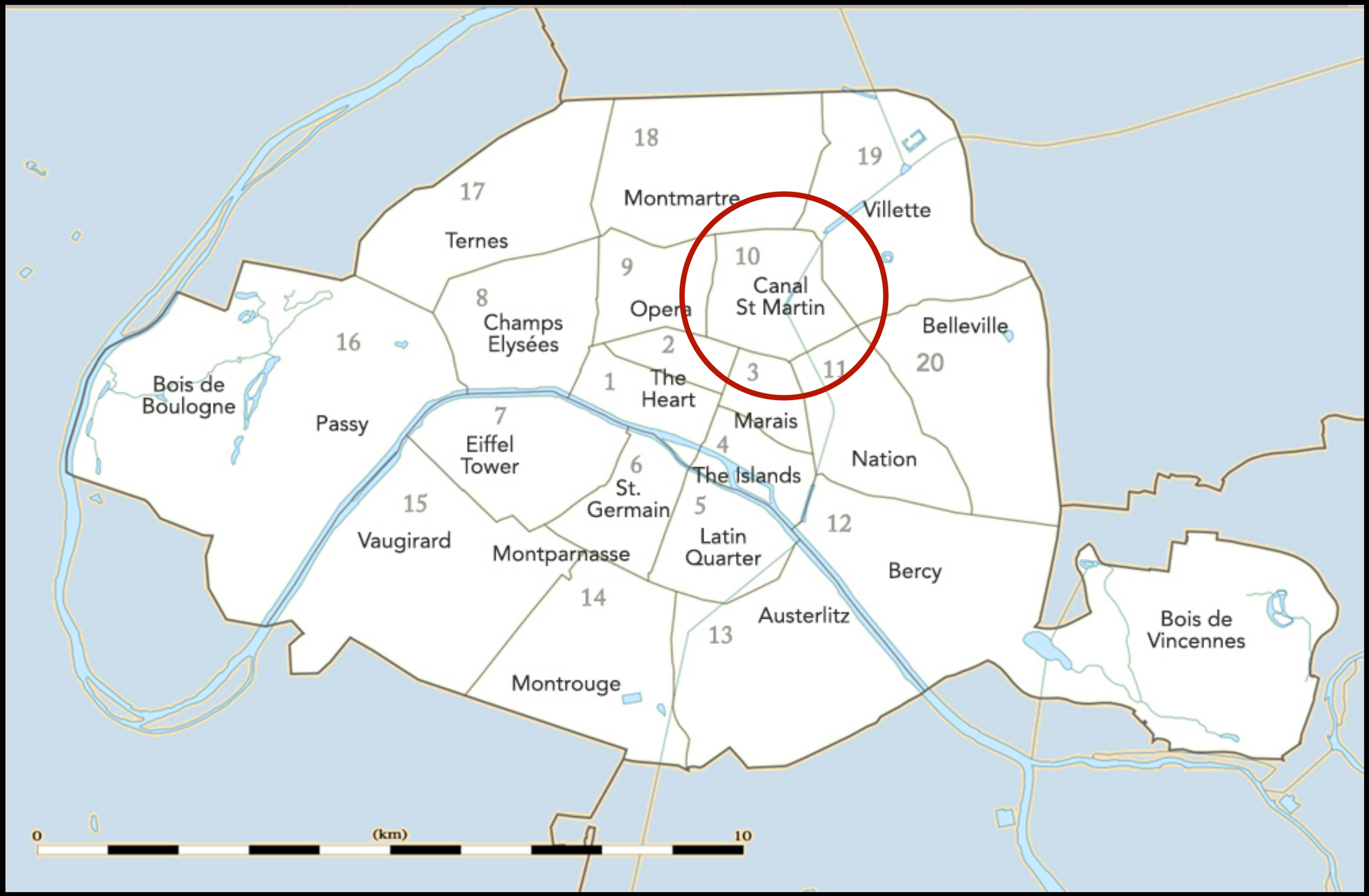
The Lepic street

The Café des 2 Moulins

Amelie

Lamarck-Caulaincourt Metro Station

Sacré-Cœur



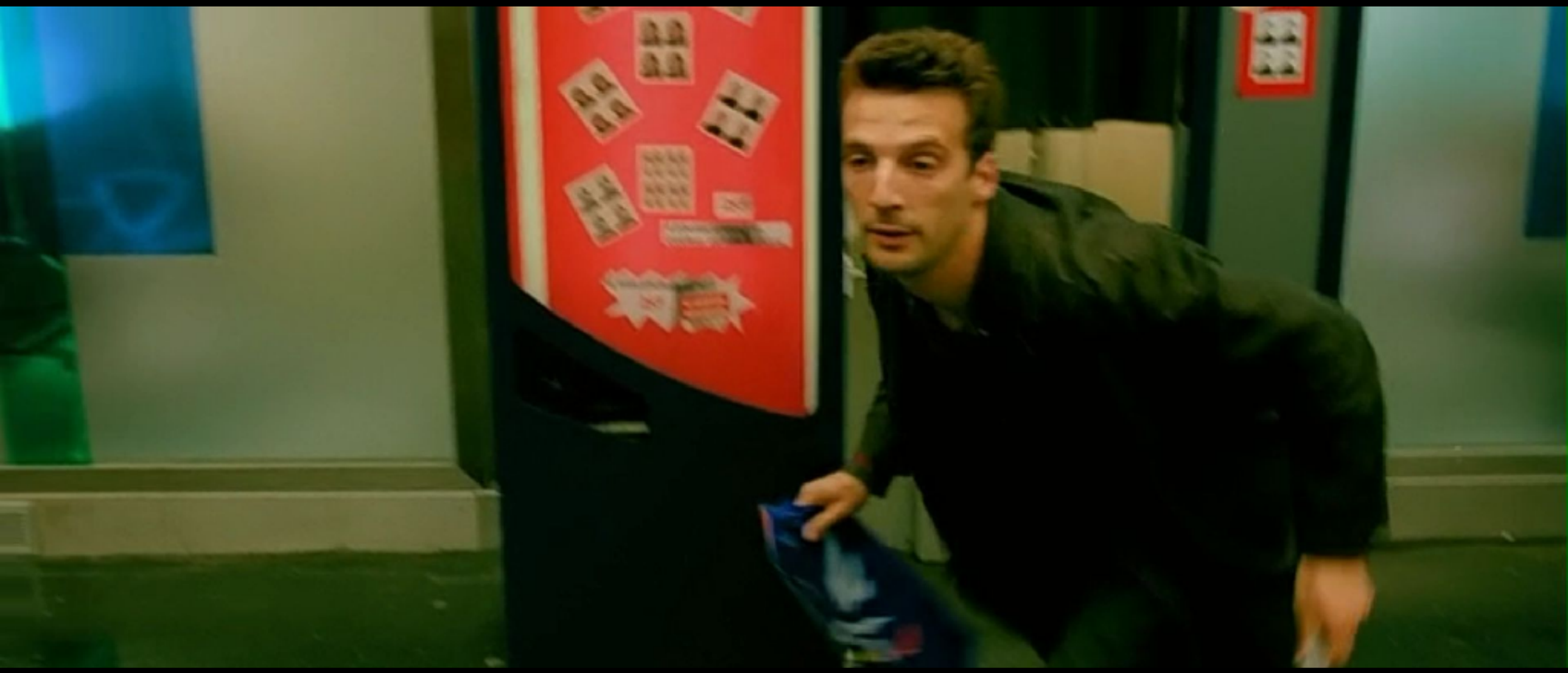
www.parisinsidersguide.com/montmartre-paris.html

The Canal Saint-Martin

Gare du Nord

NORD
NORD
NORD

Gare de l'Est



http://inspiredbyamelie.blogspot.com/2008/08/le-fabuleux-destin-damlie-poulain-movie.html

Flow of space?

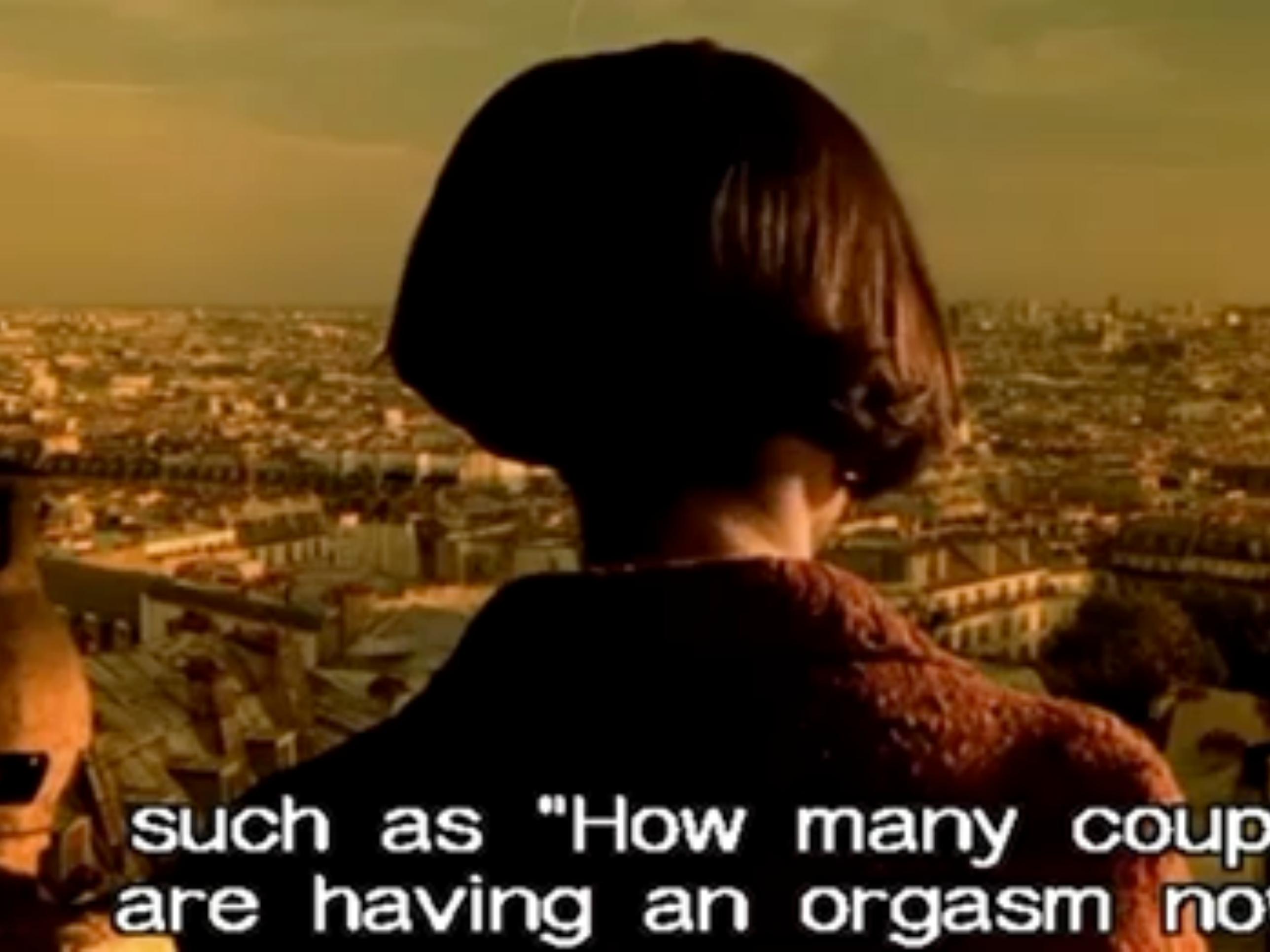
Flâneur in Amélie

Flâneurism

- Aimless
- Not just walking, but also observing at the same time
- Collecting fragments or re-organizing

Amélie

- female detective/flâneur
- fantasize the ordinary things in the city
    - **Solitude** causes her to observe the details of the city.


such as "How many coup
are having an orgasm no

Flâneur in Amélie

- Amélie: Observe the city in her own way and perception.
- Reorganize other people’s messy life.
- Living in her own fantasy world.
- Discovers some details in the city, and rearranges what she has collected.

Flâneur in Amélie

- Nino:
  - Aimlessly collecting photo stickers (and fragments) in the city.
  - Reorganizes these pictures in his own way.

Flâneur in Amélie

- Amélie **and Nino:**
  - Living in their own fantasy world, after they become together.
  - They are detached from the city, but part of the city. —> Discover in their own fantasy world.

- “The metropolis is no longer the place of loneliness and indifference, but a place full of infinite possibilities and adventures, where urbanites could find their pleasure and excitement as long as they use their fantasy and imagination.”(Lal).

Film Techniques

cinematographer Bruno Delbonnel and Director Jean-Pierre Jeunet

- Creates a **dream world** with the compositions and color usage in the movie

- “Postmodern cinema is a deliberate mixing of different genres and film styles, pastiche and exposing the nature of a constructed text” (Braudy and Cohen)

  - aware of their audience’s active role in viewing their films
  - makes the audience aware of watching structured and composed film

  - E.g. “Breaking the fourth wall”—close-up-shots

Camera shots

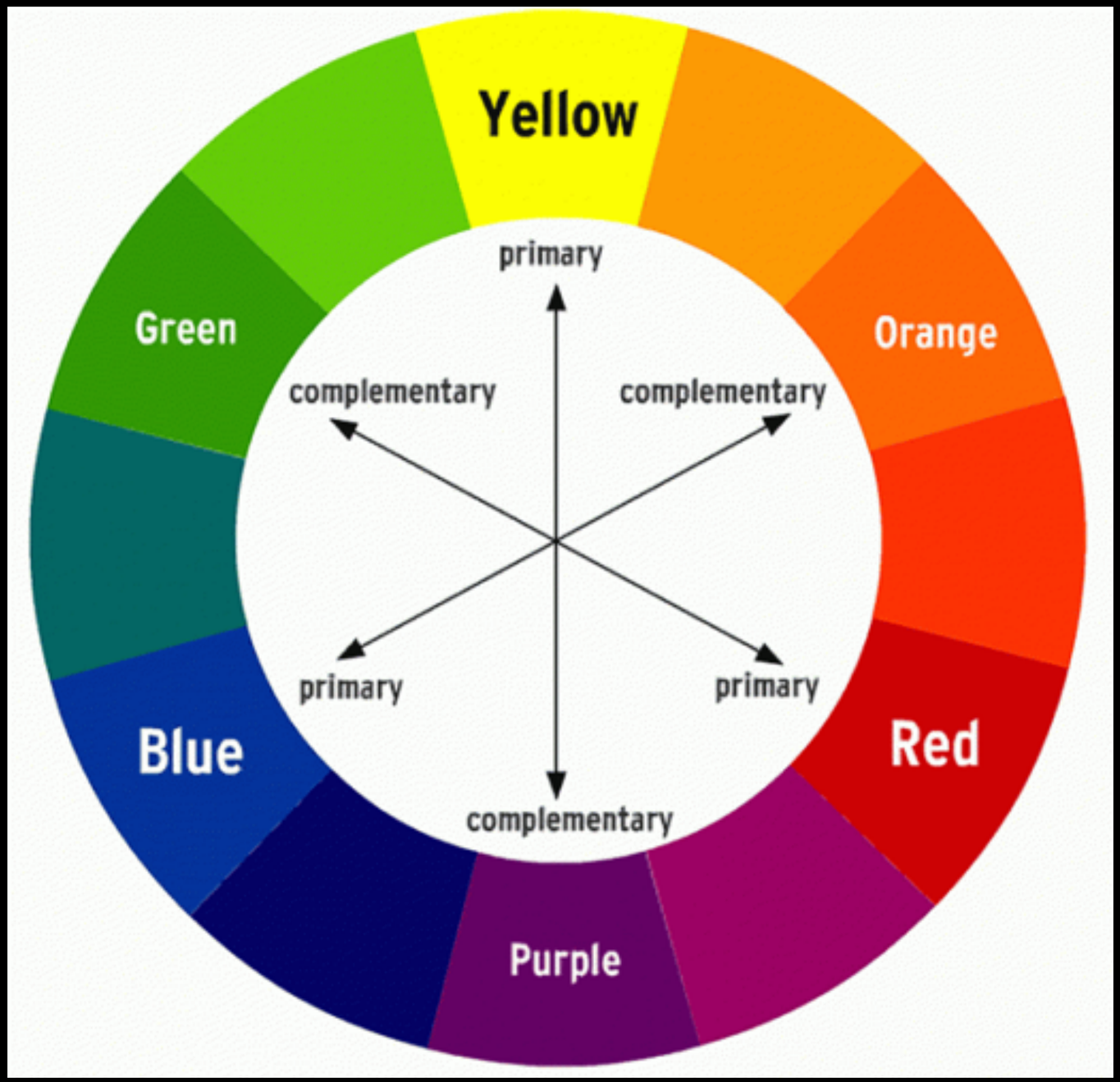
- Medium shot
- Set up movement: close-up, tracking or panning

Camera angle

- The camera angels shows perspective
  - Establishes Amelie's perspective of the world
  - camera techniques used throughout the film are "playful… reinforcing the light-hearted, cartoon-like tone" (Vanderschelden)
  - Pointless vs Useful information

Color schemes

- Color is used in film in many ways to convey meaning and emotion.
    - Filmmakers carefully choose colors when designing the art of the film, the sets, the lighting, and the costumes.
- **Color Saturation**: refers to the intensity(purity) of color in an image
    - Primary colors red, blue and yellow are considered truest version color as they are fully saturated
- Main colors used in the film are Yellow, Red and Green
    - Build an atmosphere and compassion with the audience


Yellow
Green
Orange
primary
complementary
complementary
primary
primary
Blue
Red
complementary
Purple

Red

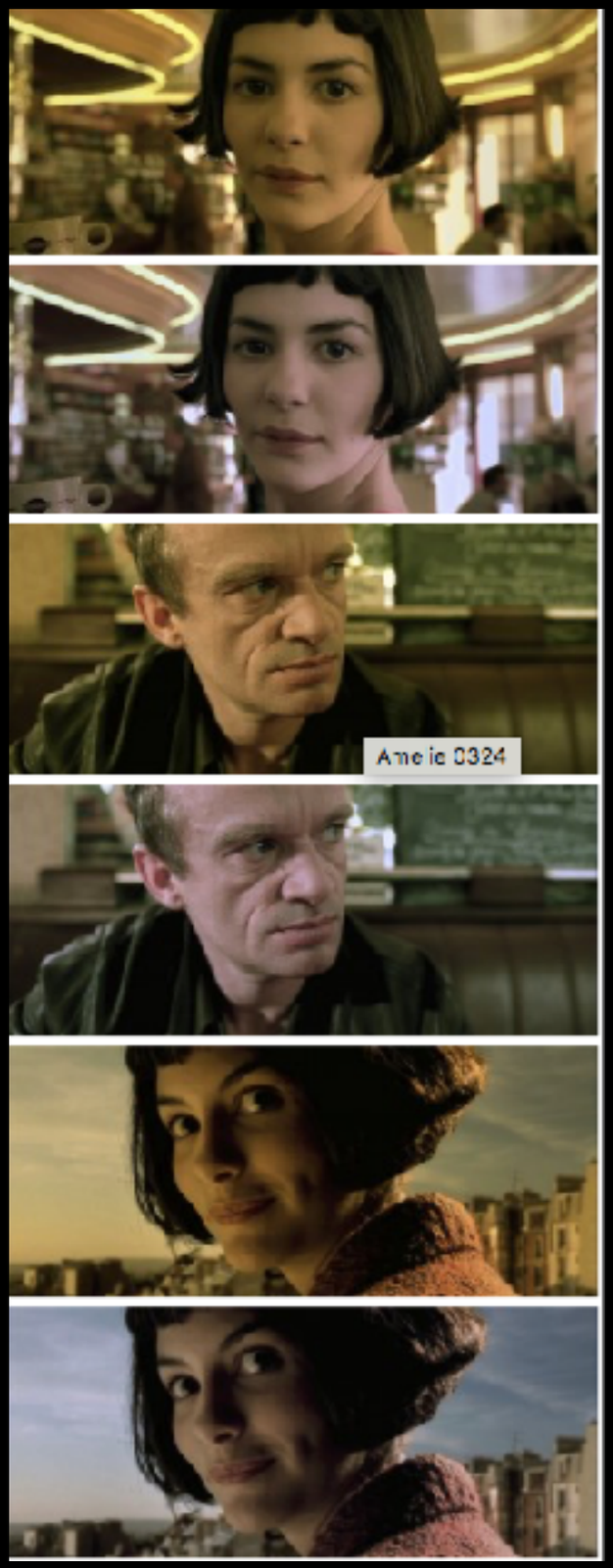
- Red: energy, passion and love
- Red is a striking color, stay focused of what is featured
- Symbol of love
- Symbol of Amelie’s life and mood

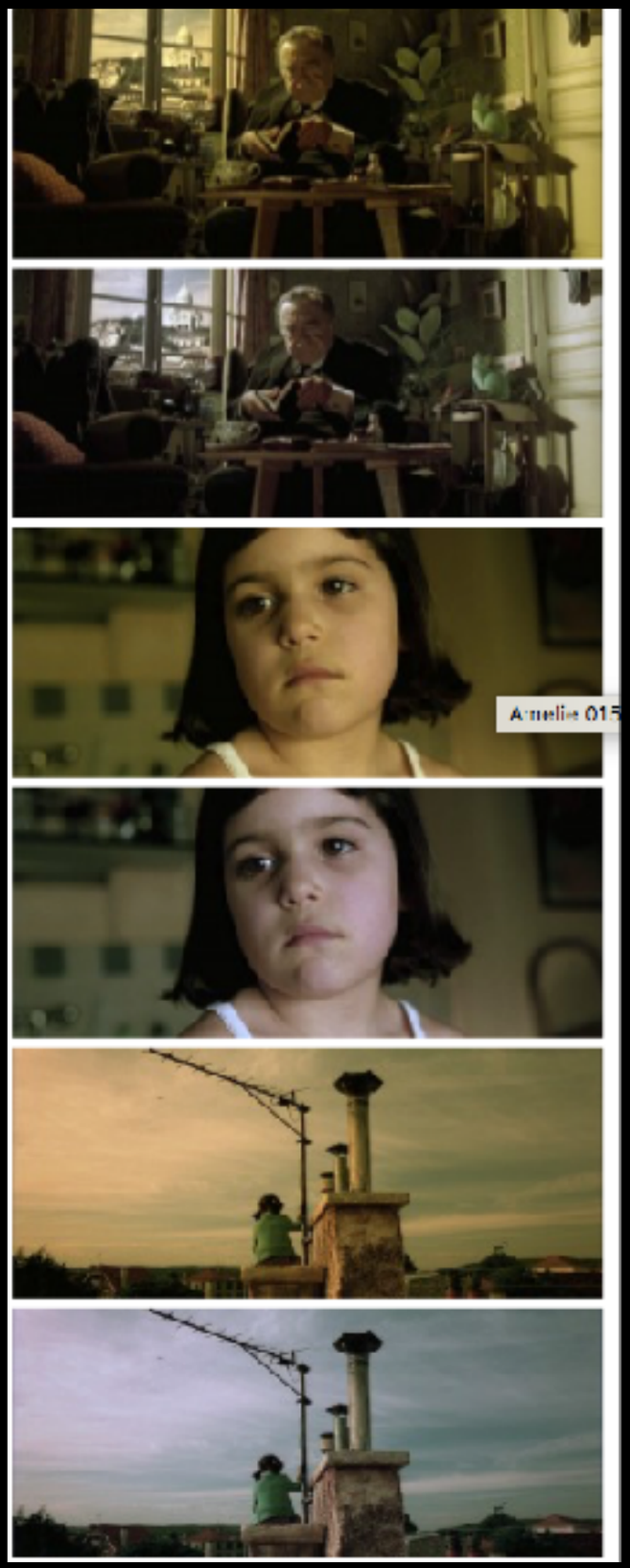
Yellow

- Nostalgia feeling: 1997 Paris
  - Golden age tone
- Stands for bright or lively
  - Happiness, warmth or comfort
- Surreal— fantasy

Green

- Nature or hope
- Spooky, mysterious
- Contrast to warmer colors
- Brings comfort to the audience’s eyes


Amelie 0324


Amelie 015

GROSSE POITRINE

Narratology

- Linear (in chronological order)
- Flashbacks
- Common three act structure (set-up, confrontation, resolution)

Narratology

- ACT ONE (Set-up):
    - Large amounts of detail towards Amelie's childhood
    - Setting the scene
    - Encouraging us to get involved with her life
    - Allows us to understand her unique and random behavior

Narratology

Narratology

- ACT TWO (Confrontation):
    - Trigger/turning point: The news about Princess Diana's car accident; the discovery of the box in the wall
    - Series of mini storylines (Amelie’s quest to help others)
    - Owner of the box, father, neighbors (Madeleine, Collignon, Lucien, Mr. Dufayel), coworkers, Nino

Narratology

Narratology

- ACT THREE (Resolution):
    - Turns imagination into reality (with the help of other characters)

Narratology

Narratology

- Narrator:
    - Narrators are usually used to structure a movie and tell us things the director can’t show otherwise.
    - In Amelie, the narrator doesn’t add up to the story.
    - A projection of Amelie’s imagination and way of thinking.
    - An ulterior personality that turns the every day life into grandiloquent/dramatic events that elevates the ordinary to awe-inspiring.

Narratology

Sounds & Music

- Insights into the characters' pleasures and peeves
- Hiss of Georgette's spray
- Pop of Joseph's bubble-wrap
- Orgasm noises in Amélie's daydream

Sound & Music

Sound & Music

- When Amélie is having her life-changing moment every sound is magnified (the joy of helping people)

- Time seems to slow and every sound becomes clear and distinct.

Sound& Music

Sound & Music

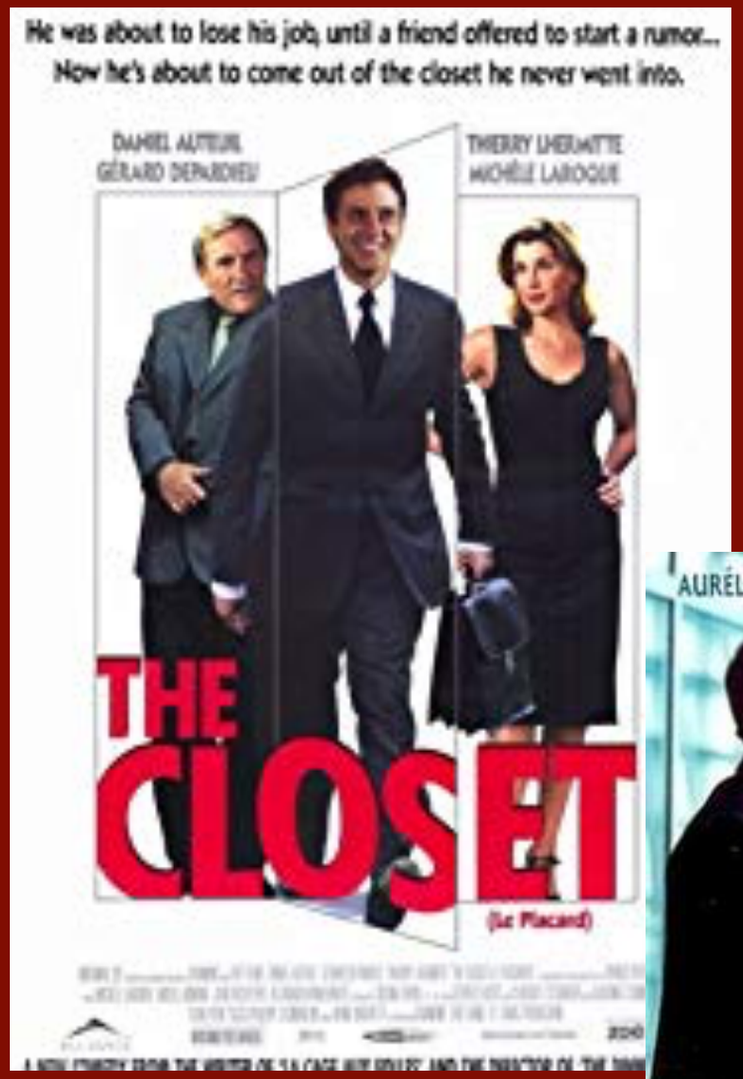
- Accordion; stereotypical French style music.
- The music captures the whole feeling of the film.
- While the score does evoke a sense of nostalgia and old movies, the main purpose of the music seems to be to draw the audience into the film's world (full of fantasies).
    - Old song playing from record echoes throughout metro station.

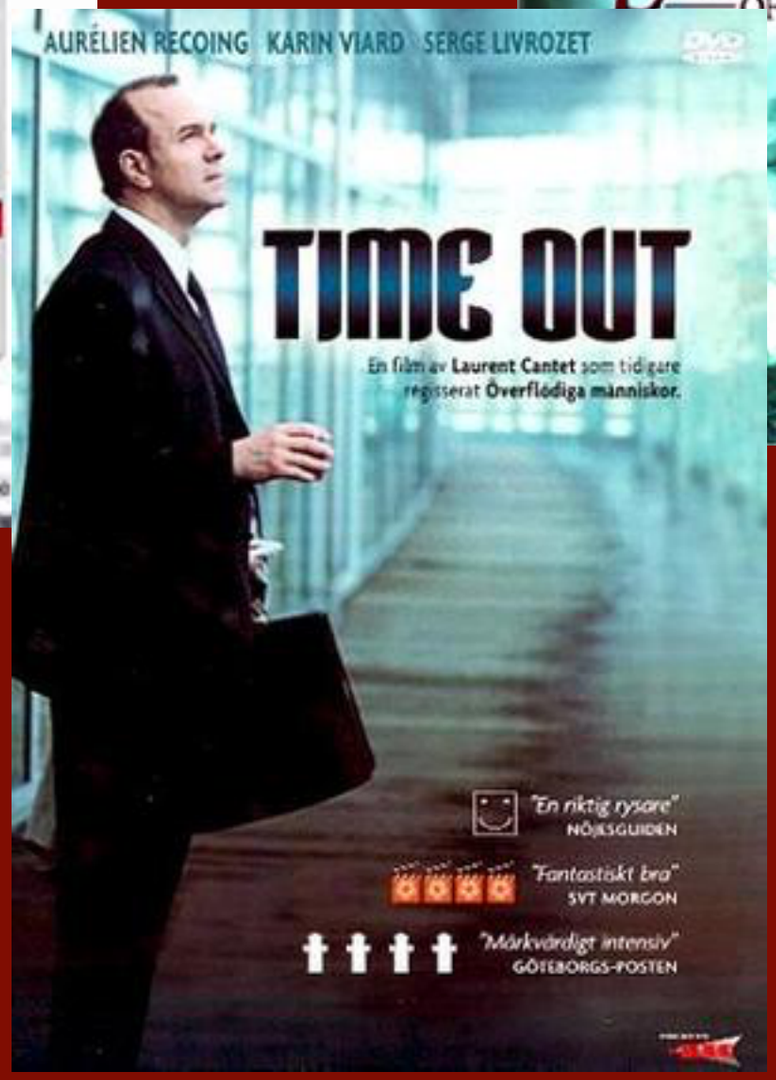
Sound & Music

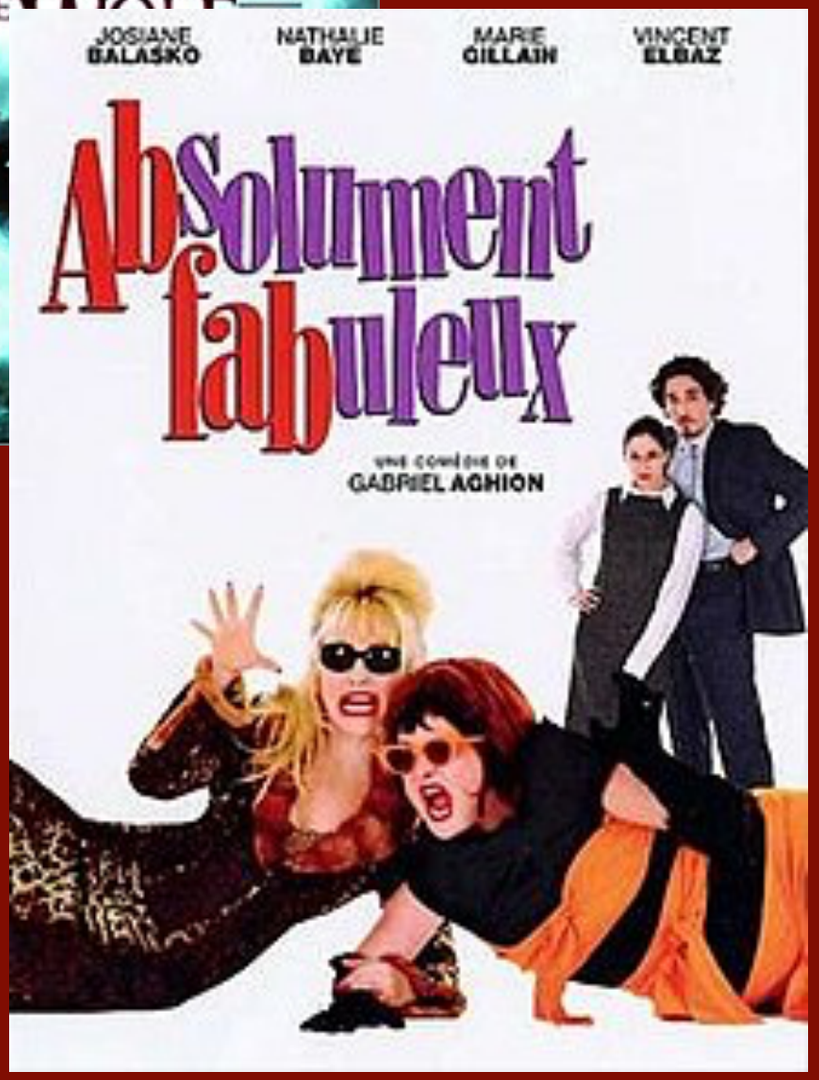
Film in Context

COMPARISONS WITH PREVIOUS FRENCH FILMS

- Amelie's French contemporary







- Amelie:
  - A 2001 film
  - Set in 1997
  - Looks like in 1970s (the clothes, the mise en scène, the filmic techniques and style)

A. Fourth wall breaking

B. dominating colours

C. Camera movement

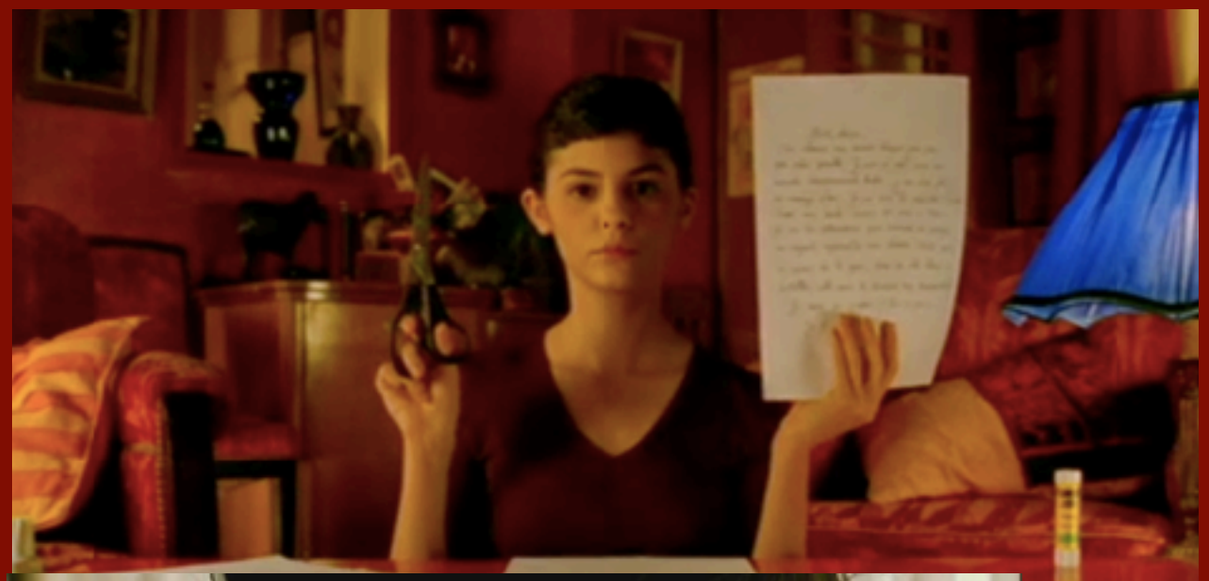
D. Flaneurism

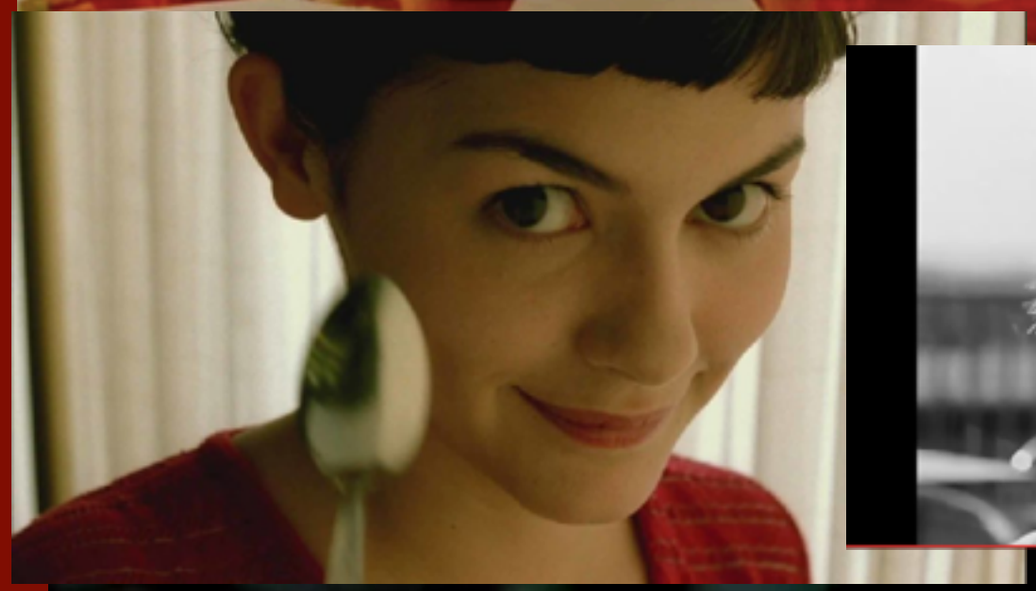
E. Emphasis on the city

- Fourth wall breaking:
  - Definition - “fourth wall:”
  - an imaginary wall (as at the opening of a modern stage proscenium) that keeps performers from recognizing or directly addressing their audience. (Merriam-Webster)
  - Effects: the camera becomes “neither an illusion of an omnipotent narrator nor Michel’s [Amelie’s] subjective point of view” (Mennel 78)
  - Commonly seen / used in films approximately before 2000s
    - E.g. the first one Mary MacLane's Men Who Have Made Love to Me (1918), Animal Crackers (1930), Annie Hall (1977), Ferris Bueller's Day Off (1986)

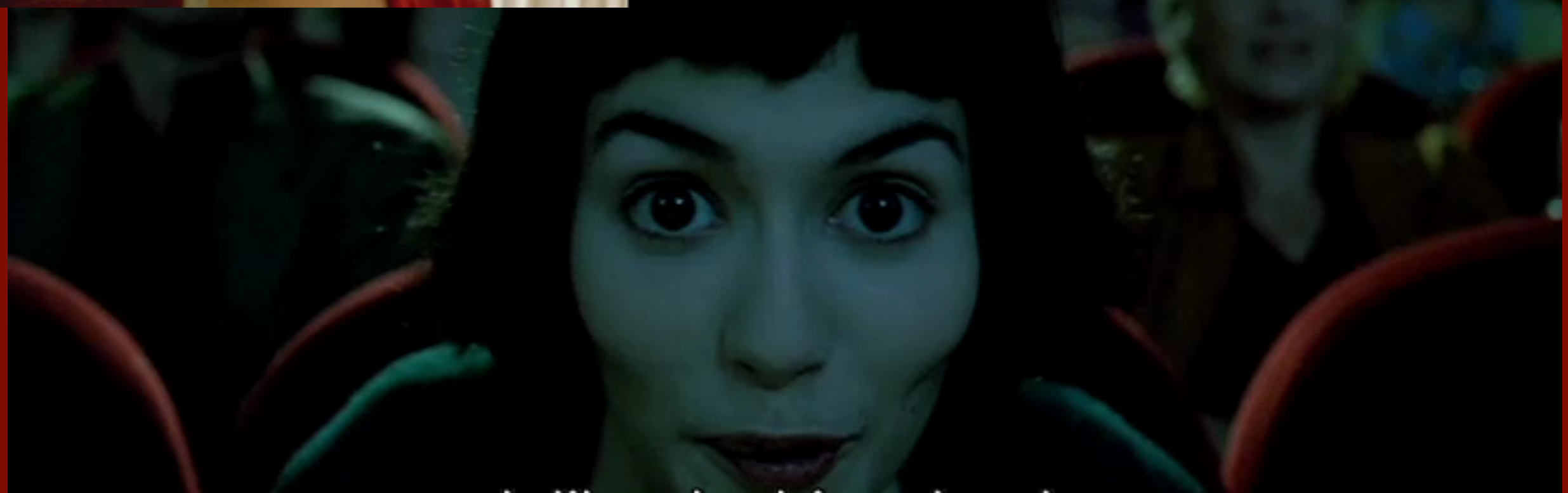
Pierrot le Fou
(1965)

Breathless (1960)





Fifteen!

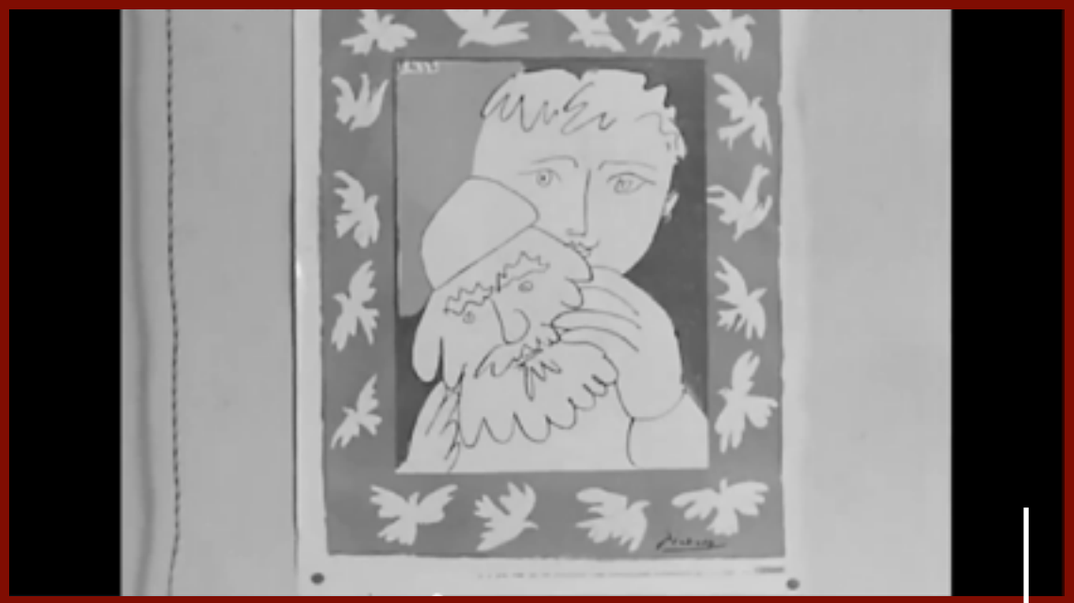


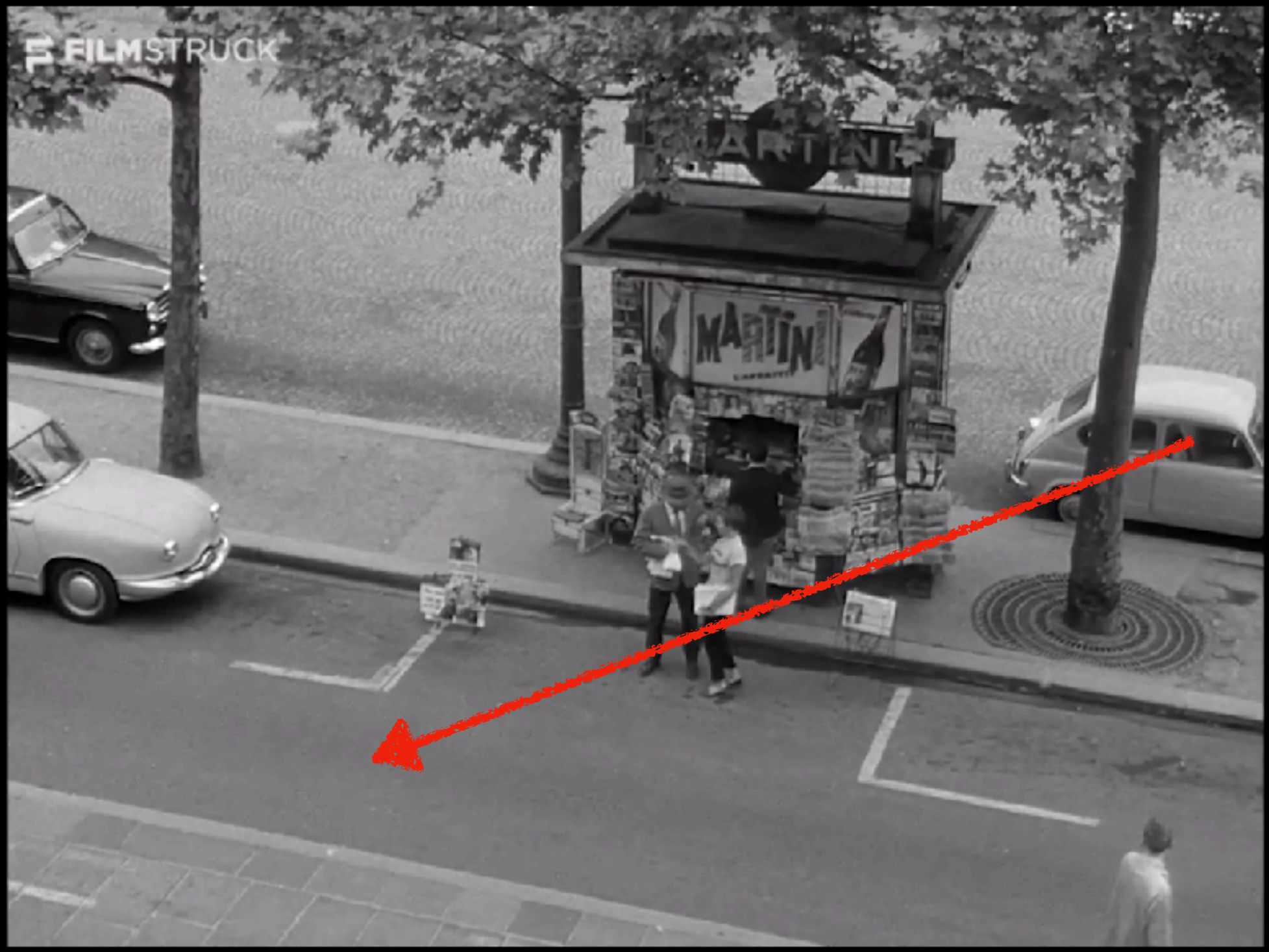
- <u>Dominating colours</u>:
  - Colour tones can convey messages
  - Colours are ever-present signifiers in films
  - "Auteur" - " ... the director, who oversees all audio and visual elements of the motion picture, is more to be considered the "author" of the movie than is the writer of the screenplay. In other words, such fundamental visual elements as camera placement, blocking, lighting, and scene length, rather than plot line, convey the message of the film. Supporters of the auteur theory further contend that the most cinematically successful films will bear the unmistakable personal stamp of the director." (Britannica)
- Example:
  - Amelie - Red, Yellow, Green
  - Le Mepris (Contempt) - Red, White, Blue

Le Mepris (Contempt) (1963)

Le Mepris (Contempt) (1963)

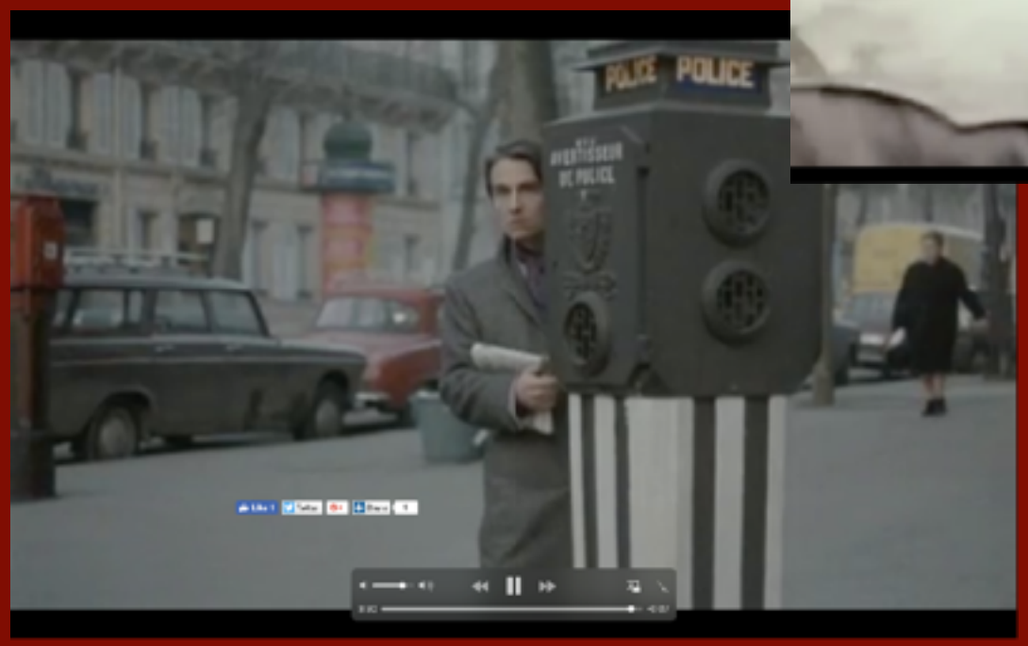
- Camera movements:
  - Camera panning from A to B
  - The use of bird-eye-view shot




FILMSTRUCK
MARTINI
MARTINI

- Flaneurism - detective story, cat - and -mouse game
  - Breathless (1960) - stocking girls, fugitives, finding a debtor
  - Stolen Kiss (1968) - protagonist as a detective
  - Amelie (2002) - looking for Bretodeau, the photo booth guy, stocking Nino

Les deux duchesses


POLICE POLICE

- Emphasis on the city - tourist attractions

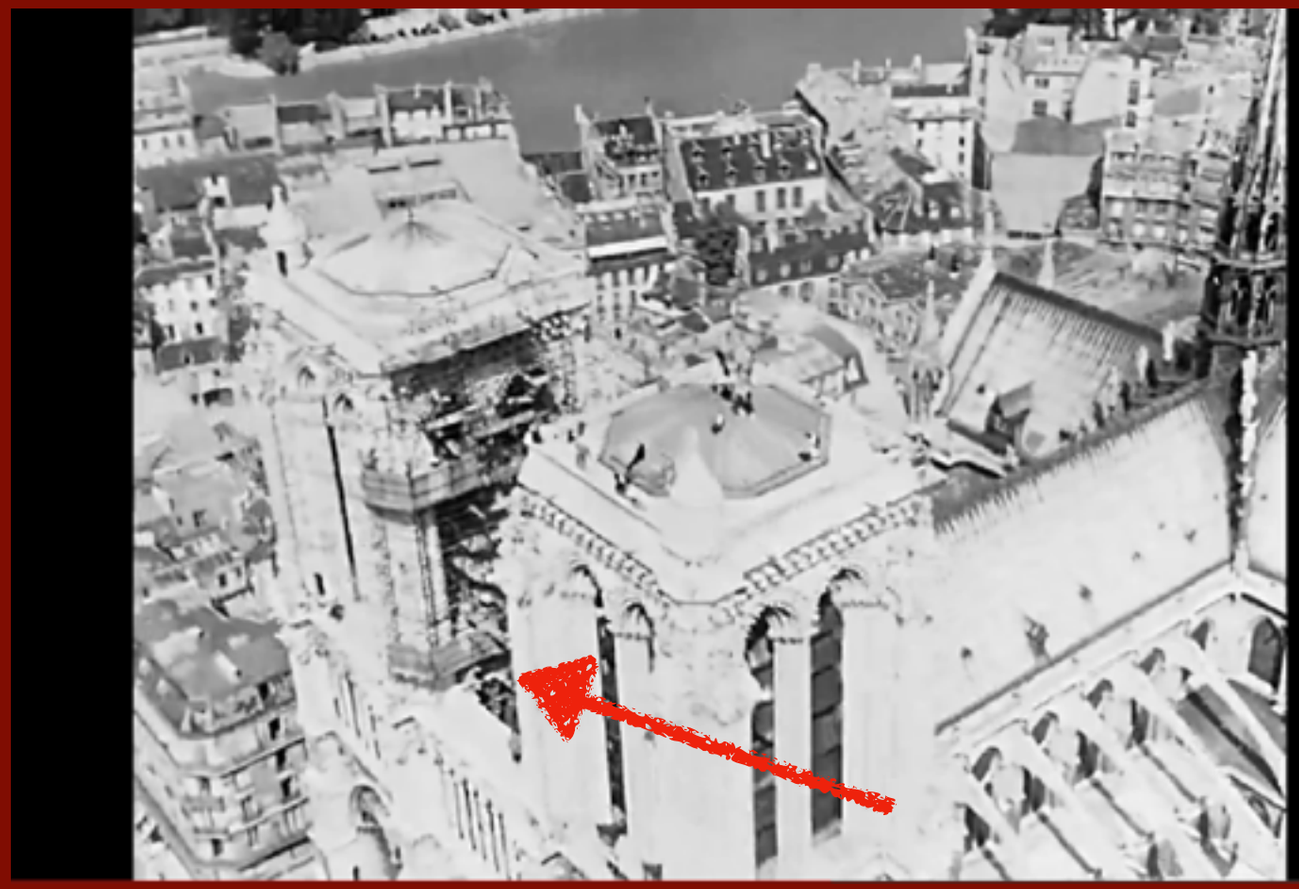
Breathless (1960)

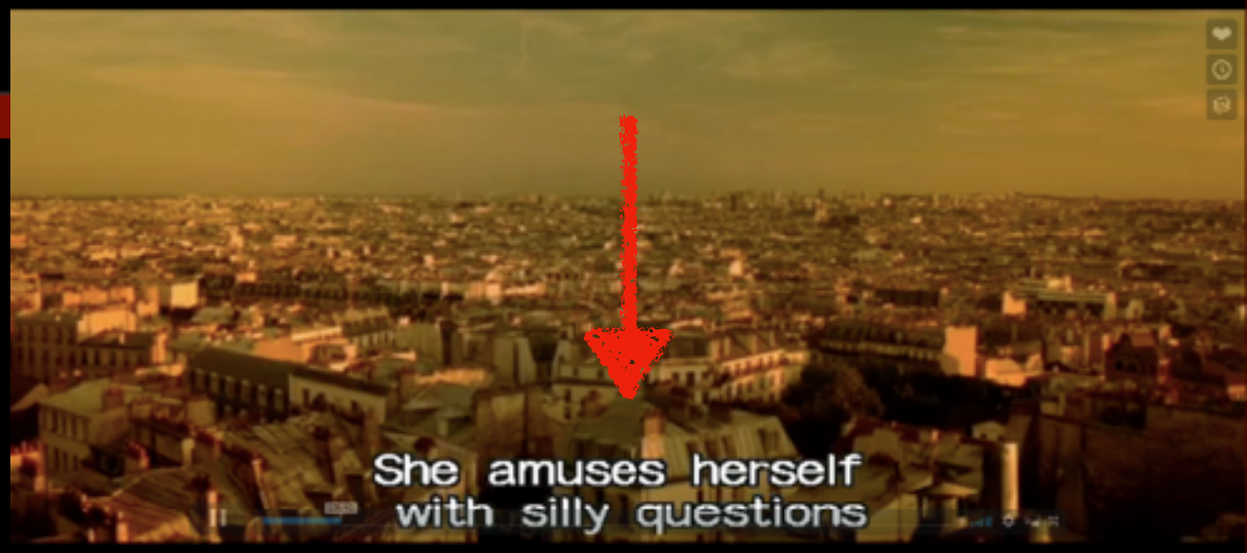
Stolen Kiss (1968)

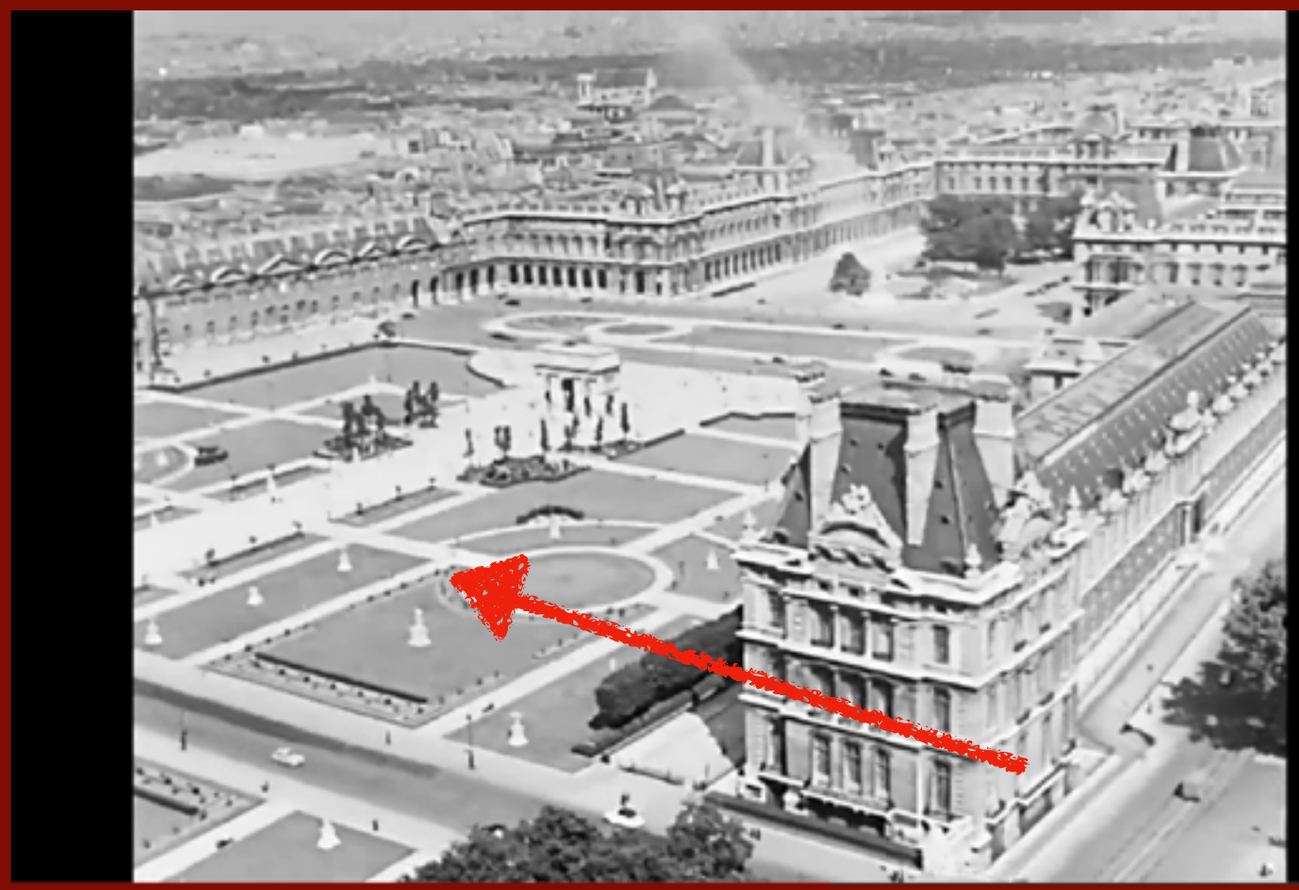
- Emphasis on the city - tourist attractions

Amelie (2002)

Stolen Kiss (1968)

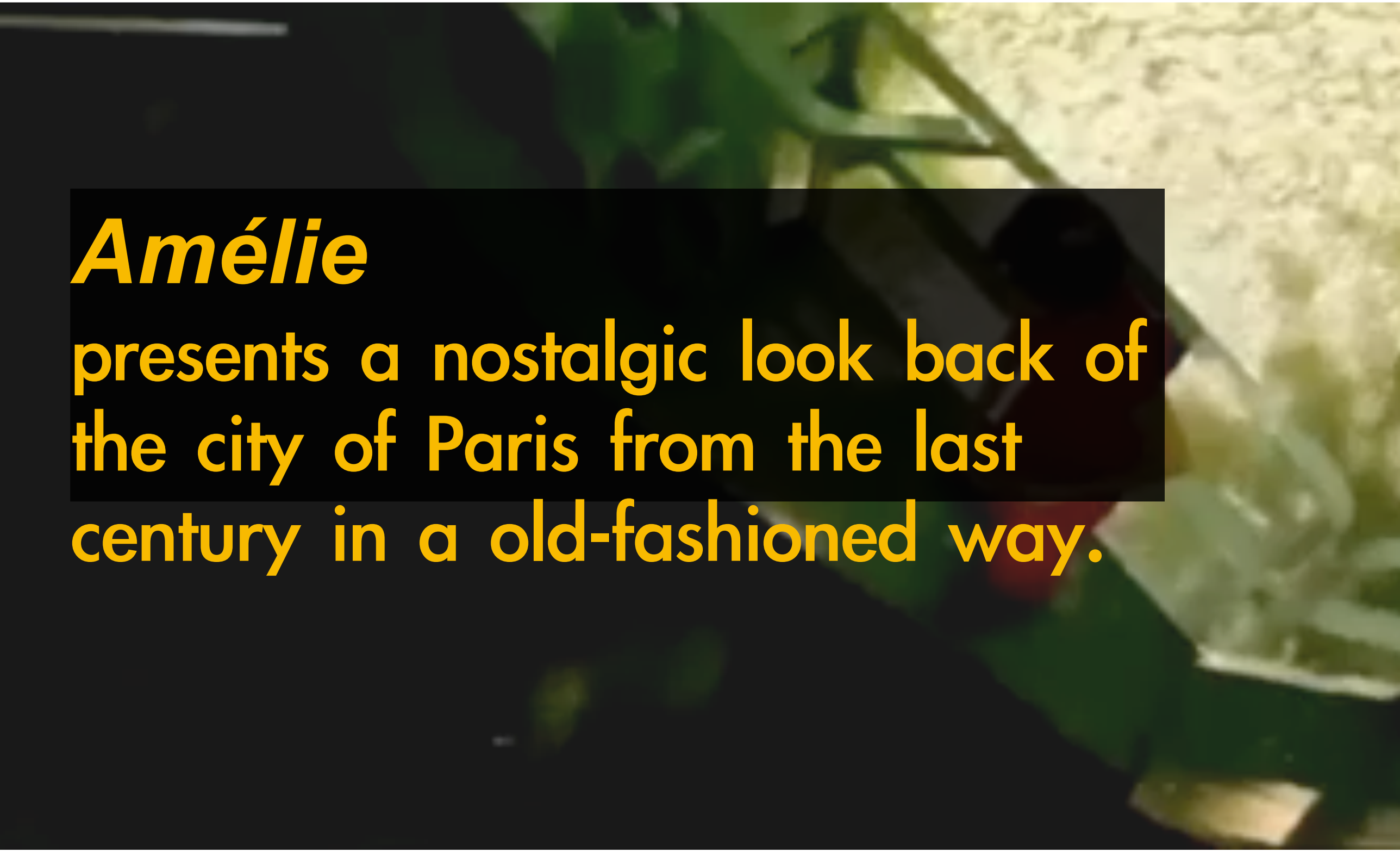



She amuses herself
with silly questions



Breathless (1960)

Amelie (2002)


Amélie
presents a nostalgic look back of the city of Paris from the last century in a old-fashioned way.

Conclusion

Fantasy&Reality

Princess Diana

Mother Teresa

Zorro

Evil

Too romantic?

Gnome - travel stereotypes

Fantasy

Reality

Conclusion

- The film suggests that everyone has their fantasies and dreams, we need to act to make them come true.

- The combination of fantasies and realities makes the whole film romantic. (Plus gorgeous visual style and beautiful music.)

- The film may be too romantic that it has gone too far from the real world.

Work Division

- We came up with the discussion questions together.
- Elle: Cinema history (compare to old French films) (in terms of city and its people)
- Beckett: Information of the director, the main plot, fantasies and realities in the film and conclusion.
- Neil: Amelie as flaneur, Nino as flaneur, final ppt editing.
- Amy: Filmic technique (camera, colour tone, film editing)
- Howard: Places and architectural analysis (film setting)
- Benjamin: Narration (narratology), sounds, music

Discussion Questions

1. What effect does it have on the audience when Amelie talks directly to them?

2. With the assistance of camera, Mr. Dufayel observes without going out. Do you agree that as technology advancing, we can be flanuer without “aimlessly wandering” on the street?

3. What are the functions of TVs in the film? Why do they keep appearing throughout the whole film? Can they be replaced by other media platforms like radio, newspaper etc.?

4. What effect does the shaky camera have in the scene where Amelie is walking at the train station and taking the train?

5. The music in the film relies heavily on accordion. If accordion is removed, would that change the atmosphere of the movie? Why?

6. Do you think Amelie is really helping others, or just fulfills her curiosity? Why?

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