

BIOGRAPHY

Patricia Plattner, born in Geneva (Switzerland) in 1953, studied art history at the University of Geneva before obtaining a degree in mixed media at Geneva's Fine Arts College (ESAV) in 1975. Working in the visual arts from 1975 to 1983, she put on exhibitions and performances in Switzerland and abroad. In 1979, after travelling around the world for a year thanks to a fine-arts grant from the federal government, she spent several months in Vancouver as an artist-in-residence at the "Western Front" artists' centre. The same year, she and a couple of artist friends founded "Les Studios Lolos" in Carouge (Geneva), focusing on the graphic arts and photography. In 1982, she published an artist's book entitled "L'âme du cochon" (The Pig's Soul – Publ. Benteli). Since founding "Light Night Production S.A." in 1985, Patricia Plattner has devoted herself to filmmaking, and to producing and co-producing numerous films. From 1989 to 1993, she sat on the Suissimage Cultural Commission. In 1993, she conceived the book "Le hibou et la baleine" (The Owl and the Whale – Publ. Zoé) in collaboration with Nicolas Bouvier, as a follow-up to the film of the same name. That year she also received the UBS Jubilee Foundation Award. From 1994 to 2000, she sat on Pro Helvetia's Board of Trustees and the Advisory Committee of the Federal Office of Culture in Berne. Winner of the UBS Award (Solothurn Film Festival) in 2000, Patricia Plattner is currently writing the screenplay for her next film.

LIGHT NIGHT PRODUCTION SA

Light Night Production SA is a company producing films for cinema and television. Since its foundation in 1985, Light Night has produced or coproduced numerous fiction and documentary films. Since 1993, the director Christophe Marzal works regularly with Patricia Plattner in Light Night Production SA. Light Night Edition also publishes a selection of DVD and video tapes of the films produced. (www.lightnight.ch).

PATRICIA PLATTNER



A preference for light

One day, or was it a night, in her early thirties, Patricia Plattner decided to make movies. She started up a production company called *Light Night*, a symbol of her artistic vision of *light*: meaning both *bright* and *subtle*. There are no nightmares in the work of this filmmaker. Misfortune for her is simply part of life, like joy and friendship. She says she loves day as well as night. Let's add that she expresses her own preference for *gentle lightness*. From the start, Patricia Plattner has felt that she is not one to teach

people lessons or make examples; she is not out to impress or intimidate. The light she infuses into her fictional and documentary work is intended to guide, tenderly and delicately. She prefers stories with a happy end – should they really need an ending at all. She prefers to document what is encouraging rather than depressing. She believes that an hour and a half of film is more useful if it brightens rather than darkens the audience's mood. "I have no need to be *against*. I need to be *for*." *Light Night*, both bright and subtle.

A rainbow of desires

Her aesthetic position grew up with her. As a teenager – she was born on the 22nd of January 1953 – Patricia Plattner saw herself as a theatre director or an architect. Making movies, in the days of Antonioni, was merely a dream. A girl like her would tremble at the magic of *The Red Desert* or *Profession: Reporter*, yet that she would ever be behind the camera...? In Switzerland there was not even a film school. The Tanner and Goretta from the *Group of 5* had gone to London to study. She would have had to leave... No doubt the time had not yet come for the passionate traveller she was to become. As a filmmaker, Patricia Plattner, who describes herself as a "firmly rooted nomad", was also committed to travelling and discovering other worlds.

At first, Patricia dedicated herself to art history and painting at Geneva Fine Arts School. Painting, then, was already more than painting: photography, performances, installations, conceptual art and video were all beginning to find their way. A year of travelling around the world, a grant in Vancouver, Canada, and there she was, holding a video camera, learning about moving images in the context of contemporary art.

Then, for a few years, in Carouge, Geneva, where she still lives, she cut and stuck texts and photographs, devoting herself to graphic design with the studios she had launched in 1979 with artist friends (*Les Studios Lolos*).

FILMOGRAPHY

- 2005 **Carnets de valse: Vienne-Paris-Lima** (documentary)
- 2004 **Les dieux ne meurent jamais** (film for tv)
- 2002 **Les petites couleurs** (fiction)
- 1999 **Maestro, Maestro! Herbert von Karajan** (film for tv)
- 1998 **Made in India** (documentary)
- 1997 **Une histoire qui enjambe les alpes** (film for tv)
- 1996 **Hôtel Abyssinie** (documentary)
- 1994 **Le livre de cristal** (fiction)
- 1993 **Le hibou et la baleine, Nicolas Bouvier** (documentary)
- 1991 **Le sismographe, la lune et le léopard, David Streiff, 10 ans de Locarno (1981-1991)** (film for tv)
- 1990 **Des tableaux qui bougent, Georges Schwizgebel** (film for tv)
- 1989 **Piano Panier ou la recherche de l'équateur** (fiction)
- 1986 **La dame de pique** (short film)
- BOOK
- 1982 **L'âme du cochon – Etat des lieux** (éd. Benteli)

PATRICIA PLATTNER

> A preference for light

Rhymes, pastels and sketches

Her first experience of cinema was soon to come. A friend of hers was shooting a film and she was taken on as *Jill of all trades*: scenery, location and office work, production and catering. She got a glimpse of what filmmaking is about: professionalism, learning to cope, human and financial management and, above all, if things go well, art too. Discovering that she had the makings of a director, she decided to make her own film. This was **The Queen of Spades** (1986), a short black-and-white film, a wink to Satyajit Ray's *Music Room*, which brought her into the profession. "A promising sample of her qualities as a filmmaker", commented one Geneva newspaper on seeing these twenty minutes about the life of a Russian prince exiled on the banks of lake Léman, whose death turned the life of an unemployed man upside down. The wheel is turning.

Three years passed until her first full-length film. An unexpected meeting with French-Portuguese producer Paulo Branco, a symbolic financial contribution to *The Cannibals* (Manoel de Oliveira, 1988) and a collaboration was settled. Co-productions followed

such as *Abraham's Valley* (Manoel de Oliveira, 1993), *Modern Life* (Laurence Ferreira Barbosa, 2000) or *That Day* (Raul Ruiz, 2003). And here she comes with **Piano Panier or In Search of the Equator** (1989): low budget, shot in Portugal, professional actors, a subtle, connivent cameraman, Matthias Kaelin, who was to remain her loyal accomplice; a talented editor, Loredana Cristelli and an emerging style: light, leisurely scenes in the lives of two young girls faced with love and uncertainty – with no moral ending. Life as it is, simple ordinary life, between bursts of emotion. Light, *light*, no burden!

"A journey needs no symbols. It does not take long to prove that it is enough in itself. You believe that you are making a journey, but soon it is the journey that is making – or unmaking – you."

Nicolas Bouvier

Light and music from real life

Patricia Plattner is not trying to seduce or bamboozle anyone: presence and action are what matters. This is the fantastic challenge on which she has founded her work. She has grasped the possibilities offered by cinema – narrative, image, sound, attentive listening, actors' direction, editing – to stimulate whatever exists or whatever is created by an artist. Whether in documentary or fiction, her position is that of the *author* of a reality, both the one she encounters and the one she invents. As an author with a light touch, she won't force her point.

Amongst all the documentaries she has made, three masterful portraits illustrate her skills. With Nicolas Bouvier, (**The Owl and the Whale**, 1993), she remains at a distance behind the poet, a fragile man whom she allows to unveil himself through a long conversation, respecting his silences. They were close. From him, through her desire for restraint, she received this overwhelming story of a writer's torment as he seeks words to tell his truth.

AWARDS

- 2002 Les petites couleurs**
Nomination Swiss Film Prize
2002 (best fiction film)
- 1999 Made in India** International
Prize of the Independants,
Médias Nord-Sud Film Festival,
1999; Quality Award (Swiss
Federal Office of Culture, Bern),
1999
- 1996 Hôtel Abyssinie** Quality Award
(Swiss Federal Office of Culture,
Bern), 1996
- 1994 Le livre de cristal** Jury Award,
Minsk, Bielorussia; International
competition (Locarno Inter-
national Film Festival, 1994)
- 1993 Le hibou et la baleine,**
Nicolas Bouvier Quality Award
(Swiss Federal Office of Culture,
Bern), 1993; Prize from the
Swiss Society of Authors (SSA),
1993; Quality Award (Canton
of Geneva, Public Instruction
Department), 1993
- 1989 Piano Panier ou la recherche**
de l'équateur Prize Max Ophüls
(award for the best young
actress Anne Laure Luisoni),
Saarbrücken 1989, Germany;
Public Prize, Saarbrücken
Film Festival 1989, Germany;
Quality Award (Swiss, Federal
Office of Culture, Bern), 1989;
International competition
(Locarno International Film
Festival, 1989)
- 1986 La dame de pique** Study
Award (Swiss Federal Office of
Culture, Bern)

PATRICIA PLATTNER

> A preference for light

With Herbert von Karajan, (**Maestro, Maestro**, 1999), she faces the opposite challenge: to set aside the noise that surrounds the director, to ignore his riotous celebrity and do justice to the power of the musician, the toil and vision of a man whose gift had been veiled by his reputation of wealth and fulfilment. He had died ten years before, so that archives and witnesses alone spoke for him. Some spoke well of him, and others did not. There were choices to be made. "I am here for the better", says Patricia Plattner. Light takes precedence over darkness.

With **Made in India** (1998), the filmmaker has chosen to shine her light on the Untouchables of India who have formed themselves into a trade union. This certainly was a political and moral choice, but it was also a characteristic one: Nicolas Bouvier was able to lighten his night through his words and images. So why should these women from India not lighten their own darkness by joining forces to demand dignity and fair treatment? It was a different situation, and a different method, but the same need to emerge from a tunnel.

"Inconsolable, but joyful", says Patricia, who always lives in hope, wherever her cinematographic journeys around the planet take her.

Red yellow and blue

Fiction, like documentary, is all about tunes. The tune of the Swiss cinema during the sixties and seventies, as part of a political culture of opposition, was gradually altered during the following decades. While documentaries, including those by Patricia Plattner, continue in a Swiss tradition of expertise, relevance and originality, fictional films are isolated and disconnected. Each filmmaker has his own inspiration and takes his own chances.

When she presented her second fictional film, **Crystal Book**, to compete at the Locarno Festival in 1994, Patricia Plattner faced some uncompromising criticism. She was accused of being ambitious. This was an international film, shot in Sri Lanka, with a script that was as a little Swiss as it could possibly be. So it was judged according to the criteria of international cinema: glamour, surprise effects and effectiveness. Jean-François Balmer and Valeria Bruni-Tedeschi were not yet the celebrated actors they are today. It was a commercial failure. Not all the audiences got her point. Weaknesses were emphasised. There was no understanding of this war between Tamils and Sinhalese threaded in the story nor of the Buddha's secret message recorded on transparent crystal plates. Nevertheless, the photography is splendid, the music inspired, and the commitment of her whole European and local crew overwhelming! Is the audience more demanding when it comes to fiction?

Joëlle Kuntz writes editorials for the French language Swiss newspaper *Le Temps* and has written several works including *Terminus, Réflexions sur les frontières d'un monde globalisé* (Hachette-Littérature, 2004), *L'histoire suisse en un clin d'œil* (Zoé /Le Temps, 2006).

PATRICIA PLATTNER

> A preference for light

Patricia Plattner went back to work, creating a documentary in Ethiopia and Eritrea, drawing from the shadows some of those old men, forgotten by history, washed up by the Italian colonial war (**Hotel Abyssinia**, 1996). This unexpected, glowing experience was an encouragement. More documentaries followed.

2002 was a turning-point: with her new fiction **A Little Colour**, she brought a beautiful simplicity to the theme of solidarity between two women (played by Anouk Grinberg and Bernadette Lafont). Although the subject of the film was quite profound, Patricia Plattner gave it a rather comical treatment, introducing a film within the film, *The Ranch of Love*, a soap opera: she alone believed in it at the time the script was written, joined by Jacques Robellaz, her constant musical companion. This time her film found an audience. It has something Swiss about it, a rhythm, a sense of workmanship, a firm root in the landscape (although it is a *no man's land!*). It was a successful film. With large audiences in Switzerland, France, Germany and even Japan, this film found its place in the box office and the festivals. It even made money. The challenge was met.

A full rainbow

After the tunnel of uncertainty, what remains is to continue, like her heroine, the hairdresser in **A Little Colour**. For ever "inconsolable but joyful", Patricia Plattner repeats. "Cinema is the most beautiful job in the world. Each film is an adventure, a journey."

In her last documentary, **Waltz Diaries: Vienna-Paris-Lima** (2005), Patricia Plattner sheds light on the charm and turbulence of this overly sparkling music. Behind the waltz, in Vienna and in Paris, hearts meet or break. Behind the waltz, in Lima, there are stories of exile, cross-cultural mix and rebirth. The wheel keeps on turning.

She is encouraged by the success of Swiss directors. "If anyone can reach an audience of a hundred thousand in this country, things may get moving again". With a generous, sharing approach and a love of teamwork, she supports (mainly through her efforts as a producer) the work of the technicians and directors that surround her, such as Christophe Marzal, who works with her at *Light Night*.

On a Swiss budget, however, it is difficult to make headway in the international landscape. She ends up complaining about this, gently, by the way. Though accepting to be a filmmaker in today's Switzerland, she does not isolate herself but builds networks, crosses borders if necessary and moves forward. Patricia Plattner's night is never completely dark, for the day will be bright, for

SURE. Joëlle Kuntz

Script: Sarah Gabay, Jean Bobby, Patricia Plattner
Cinematographer: Matthias Kaelin
Sound: Henri Maikoff

Editing: Jeanetta Ionesco, Maya Schmid
Cast: Anouk Grinberg, Bernadette Lafont, Philippe Bas, Gilles Tschudi, Jean-Pierre Gos
Music: Jacques Robellaz

Production: Light Night Production SA, Carouge
Coproduction: Gemini Films, Paris; Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Genève; Canal +, Paris

World Rights: Light Night Production, Carouge; Gemini Films, Paris
Original Version: french (subtitles: english, german)
DVD: http://www.lightnight.ch/2002_les-petitesCouleurs.html

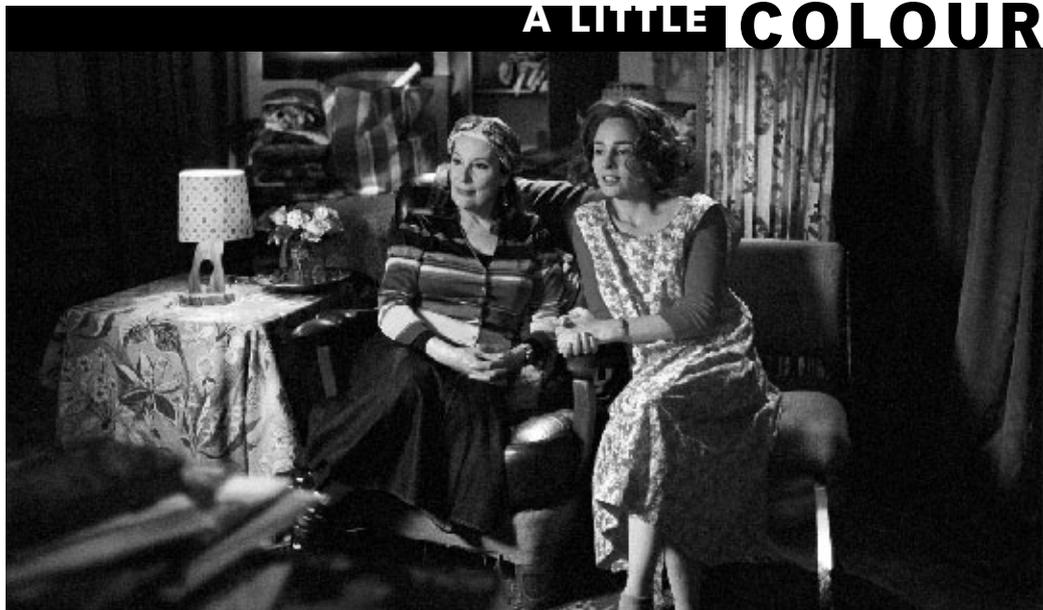
"I never see life in black. But this film is like a springtime within a springtime." Anouk Grinberg, actress (*Aujourd'hui le Parisien*, May 25, 2002)

"This creates a painful and enchanting dialectic between the longing for freedom and the wish for connectedness, between letting go and drawing close. The combination is so powerful and moving that the camera merely remains still and has no need to run after the characters. The audience follows them uninvited. In the end Patricia Plattner declares that great happiness is possible, and Christelle finds a fitting name for it: 'Thank you'. [...]"

'A little colour' has emancipated itself from aggressive feminism, and from the fear of kitsch as well. Nevertheless, this film does not offer shallow comfort, and you leave the cinema feeling that things may turn out well – and that you have not been deceived." Caspar Wieck, *Berliner Zeitung*, 16 September, 2004

"Patricia Plattner, Anouk Grinberg and Bernadette Lafont do not miss an opportunity and have conspired to create a rather indecent little film, open to rude humour and with an uncomfortable edge. The idea is ingenious: to bring together two poor girls who are addicted to a television series [...]. The very simple screenplay intelligently cultures and ultimately diverts the power of television productions, taking clichés and restoring them to powerful authenticity. Mona and Christelle make plans, dream of love and overcome their problems to achieve the promised happy ending. It would take very little for their belief, in the midst of this poverty, to tip over into open rebellion. Everything collapses when the two striking, brave and delightful actresses draw you, helpless into irresistible delight: this is truly funny." L.B., *Les Cahiers du cinéma*, April 2002

A LITTLE COLOUR



| 2002

| 35 mm

| colour

| 96'

| Les petites couleurs

After a terrible argument, Christelle, a hairdresser, flees her violent husband. She lands up in the Galaxy, a shabby old motel, frequented by long-distance drivers and sales representatives. Mona, the landlady, a pathetic and rather petulant widow, takes Christelle under her wing and helps her to find a taste for life again. They discover a shared passion for a televised soap opera: "The Ranch of Love". Christelle has to face returning to her husband, but, thanks to Mona and her new environment, she becomes aware of her creative gifts. She also has encounters and discovers her own sensuality and desire and the love of Lucien, a young truck driver. Torn between her wish for independence and her desire for love, she becomes an itinerant hairdresser and roams the countryside until the day when Mona, Lucien and the last episode of her favourite soap open up new horizons for her.

"[...] The two comic figures playing the leading roles shine with obvious enjoyment. Anouk Grinberg plays the vulnerability of her character exquisitely well and Bernadette Lafont, who is moving and funny by turns, breathes a communicative energy into the whole. As for the screenplay and the script, they always sound right and fit perfectly with this simple, magical story. Concentrated happiness!" T.B., *Studio Magazine*, April 2002

Script: Patricia Plattner, Seth Linder, Didier Haudepin, after the novel of Claude Delarue "L'herméneute ou le livre de cristal" (Editions de l'Aire, 1982)
Cinematographer: Matthias Kaelin
Sound: Daniel Ollivier
Editing: Loredana Cristelli

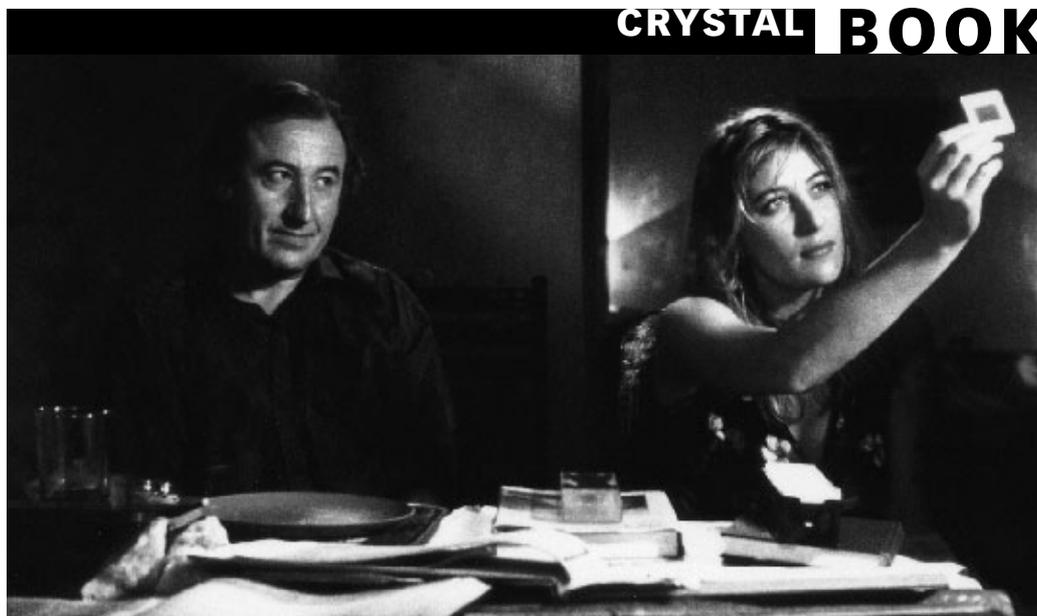
Cast: Jean-François Balmer, Valeria Bruni-Tedeschi, Douglas Ranasinghe, Gamini Fonseka, John Arnold, Swarna Malawarachchi, S Madan, Jean-Pierre Sentier
Music: Jacques Robellaz
Production: Light Night Production SA, Carouge; Gemini Films, Paris;

Madragoa Filmes, Lisboa
Coproduction: Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Genève
With the financial support of the Office Fédéral de la Culture (DFI), Berne; Ministère de la Culture et de la Francophonie (CNC), Paris; Instituto Portuges da Arte Cinematografica e

Audiovisual (IPACA), Lisboa; Ville de Genève, Eurimages
World Rights: Gemini Films, Paris; Light Night Production SA, Carouge
Original Version: french and english (subtitles: french, english, german)

"[...] It is not the place that creates a sense of the exotic; it is the way in which you see it. With the exception of the opening scene, Patricia Plattner never pauses on a landscape, neither does she offer picturesque details of the customs and morals of the country. There is nothing spectacular about the choice of her images. Patricia Plattner is a hardened traveller. You can feel it in her film: her view is never comparative ('look how he eats, look how he dresses'); she identifies with the place. This filmmaker from Geneva does her work by hollowing out the strongest scenes: she barely shows the refugee camp at all, nor the war which is raging, and she is unmoved by the terrorist attack. 'Crystal book' is above all a film about an inner adventure. 'Whatever happens, nothing happens', says one character. It is a difficult challenge to build a fiction on a phrase like that. The achievement of this film is that it has done this without becoming boring or annoying, or preaching at the audience."

Marie-Claude Martin, *Le Nouveau Quotidien*, 11 August 1994



| 1994 | 35 mm | colour | 110' | Le livre de cristal

Called by Unesco to decipher a sacred document that was recently discovered, famous orientalist John Billetter has to overcome his own past to complete the task. It was precisely in Sri Lanka that his wife committed suicide. It is his own story that he deciphers in this book, and which leads him to encounter his own destiny. A film about memory. Personal memory: individuals' lives, with their past, their loves and achievements; and collective memory: culture, religion and ethnic belonging.

Script: Patricia Plattner
Cinematographer: Matthias Kaelin
Sound: Paulo de Jesus
Editing: Loredana Cristelli

Cast: Anne-Laure Luisoni, Rita Blanco,
Diogo Doria, Daniel Wolf, Antoine
Basler, Stefan Gusber, Paulo Branco
Music: Jacques Robellaz

Production: Light Night Production,
SA, Carouge
Coproduction: Filmargem, Lisboa;
Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR),
Genève

World Rights: Light Night Production
SA, Carouge
Original Version: french and portu-
guese (subtitles: english, german,
spanish)

"This story demands an intimate tone, and the greatest achievement of 'Piano Panier' is that it has caught that tone and communicated it perfectly. Patricia Plattner reveals the tensions that arise between these two women with their different temperaments and contrasting social and cultural backgrounds with a precise, light and even humorous touch, as well as the moments of uninhibited intimacy..." *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, August 1989

PIANO PANIER OR THE SEARCH OF THE EQUATOR



| 1989

| 35 mm (blow up)

| colour

| 95'

| Piano Panier ou la recherche de l'équateur

A bitter-sweet sentimental comedy. The friendship between two young girls. Marie is Swiss, and Filipa is originally Portuguese. One of them is the eternal student, while the other is about to marry. After Marie is disappointed in love, Filipa suggests that they spend a month in Portugal with her family. Happiness, personal and cultural conflicts follow. There is joy, sadness, and a number of encounters. This is a period in their lives when they have to make choices. Sometimes they find it dizzying.

Script: Patricia Plattner
Cinematographer: Johannes Hammel,
Dominique Delguste, Béatrice Mizrahi,
Aldo Mugnier, Alejandro Legaspi

Sound: Bruno Pisek, François Wal-
edisch, Guillermo Palacios
Editing: Loredana Cristeli
Music: waltzes

Production: Artline Films, Paris;
Light Night Production, Carouge;
Navigator Film, Wien
Coproduction: Arte France, Issy-les-
Moulineaux; Télévision Suisse
Romande (TSR), Genève

World Rights: Artline Films, Paris;
Light Night Production, Carouge;
Navigator Film, Wien
Original Version: german/french/
spanish (subtitles: french, german,
english, spanish, italian)

"In these three capitals, which have all developed this three-beat rhythm in their own style, she finds people passionate enough to declare, with tears in their eyes: 'The waltz is the soul of my country'. Since she loves to dance, watch, listen and film while enjoying herself, Patricia Plattner has made an enchanting documentary, with a delicate touch and generous images and music." Joëlle Kuntz,

Le Temps, 27 December, 2005



| 2005

| video

| colour

| 55'

| Carnets de valse: Vienne-Paris-Lima

Is the waltz revolutionary? Historically it was the first dance in which the couple were entwined, a man and a woman pressed together, turning to the rhythm of the music until they were dizzy and intoxicated. Whether a waltz is classical Viennese, Parisian musette or Peruvian with singing, it is part of the world's heritage. In Vienna, students are preparing for the opening of the Opera Ball. In Paris, enthusiasts visit dancing halls and open-air dance floors: "The musette? It is intravenous champagne!" In Lima, the waltz is a song of love to the sound of the guitar and the "cajon".

Direction: Laurent Aubert, Ravi Gopalan Nair, Patricia Plattner, Johnathan Watts
Cinematographer: Johnathan Watts
Sound: Laurent Aubert, Johnathan Watts

Editing: Patricia Plattner
Music: live
Production: Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève (MEG), Genève
Coproduction: Light Night Production, Carouge

World Rights: Light Night Production, Carouge; Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève (MEG), Genève
Original Version: french and english
DVD "Sketches of Kerala" (Gods never

die/The Time of the Puppets / The Three Wise Monkeys – original version: french/english / subtitles: english/french)
http://www.lightnight.ch/2004_lesdieux.htm

"I am one of those nomadic Swiss who can also find happiness at home. What I like best is experiencing my home alongside the rest of the world." Patricia Plattner, *Le Nouveau*

Quotidien, 5 April, 1994



| 2004

| video

| colour

| 52'

| Les dieux ne meurent jamais

During the dry season, certain villages in the district of Calicut in Southern India celebrate the Tirayattam, or *Dance of the Splendour*. For several days, the villagers live to the rhythm of rites dedicated to their ancestors and to protective deities. These then make their appearance on earth, incarnated by dancers in flamboyant costumes and make-up. The Peruvannân, a family troop of former Untouchables, are responsible for organizing the celebrations. Between 1998 and 2003, Laurent Aubert, ethnomusicologist, and Johnathan Watts, photographer and video director, stayed several times in the region of Kerala. Accompanied by a specialist, they brought back on behalf of the Ethnographic Museum of Geneva more than 70 hours of rushes. These were Patricia Plattner, who restored all their meaning and significance by scrupulous editing. The aesthetic limitations observed in **Gods never die** are strict: no interviews, no voices off, simply a title card at the beginning and end of the film mention a few essential elements. Processions, sacrifices, sessions of possession, the camera plunges to the heart of the ceremonies and their preparations. Diametrically opposed to conventional didactics, this film offers us a total immersion in rich and complex festivities. With its clearly established assumptions, it invites us to appreciate first and foremost the visual qualities of the spectacle and the force it radiates. A veritable explosion of colours and energy, each stage of the ritual is a moment of intense aesthetic pleasure. Geneviève Rossier (in catalogue of "Visions du réel",

International Film Festival, Nyon, 2004)

Script: Patricia Plattner
Cinematographer: Séverine Barde
Sound: Susanna Kumschick
Editing: Maya Schmid
Music: Indian music live

Production: Light Night Production,
Carouge
Coproduction: Télévision Suisse
Romande (TSR), Genève

World Rights: Light Night Production,
Carouge
Original Version: english, gujarati
(subtitles english, french, german)
DVD "Made in India"

(original Version: english, gujarati,
subtitles: french, german, english,
spanish, spanish voice over)
DVD: http://www.lightnight.ch/1999_madeinIndia.html

"With assistance from her head camerawoman Séverine Barde, this filmmaker is devoted above all to restoring the reality of this experience of social change, through images and interviews, without being unaware of its limitations and difficulties. Thanks to the quality of the stories that she has gathered, her sense of looking and listening – indeed thanks to her feminine qualities – Patricia Plattner demonstrates above all how revolutionary this initiative is – and how it could serve as a model!" Frédéric Maire, *L'Impartial*,

19 January 2000



| 1998

| 35 mm (blow up)

| colour

| 91'

| Made in India

Made in India paints the portrait of SEWA, an association of self-employed female workers which comprises no less than 211'124 members in 1998. Based in the heart of India, at Ahmedabad, SEWA federates, organizes and educates women of the lowest castes, inspired by the political, economic and moral model advocated by Gandhi. To say that this is no small task, given Indian society's apriorism, compartmentalization and economic difficulties, would be an understatement. In order to illustrate what a daunting job it is, Patricia Plattner accompanies Martha, Ranbai, Geeta, Badrunnisha, Shakri and above all Rami on their daily rounds: with the support of the association, each plays her role in educating embroiderers, collecting and selling natural rubber, and carrying out the programmes of cleaning up urban areas and reforesting rural areas. It is seen how mentalities and activities are thus slowly but surely reformed. Others featured in the film are Ela R. Bhatt, the association's founder, and Mirai Chattarjee, Reema Nanavaly and others in charge of running and developing the association's bank, university, insurance and so on, structures which play a vital part in its activity. The film also deals with the questions – or criticisms – aimed at the enterprise concerning the inclusion of women belonging to the upper classes, the admission of men, and so on. Patricia Plattner remains in the background and allows her superb images to tell the story of an unfolding new world. Bertrand Bacqué (in catalogue of "Visions du réel", International Film Festival, Nyon, 1998)

Direction and script: Patricia Plattner,
based on an idea of Fabienne
Le Houerou
Cinematographer: Daniel Cavillon

Sound: Michèle Cavillon
Editing: Edwige Ochsenbein
Music: Italian and Ethiopian music

Production: MC4 Production, Paris
Coproduction: Light Night Production
SA; la sept/arte France; Televisione
Svizzera Italiana (TSI), Lugano

World Rights: MC4 Production, Paris
Original Version: French, Italian

"We are transported back to Dino Buzzati's *The Desert of the Tartars* – the same feeling of strangeness, of hypnotizing heat and of being fatally stranded in the sand. And too, the same waiting. Waiting for what? For death, no doubt. In *Hotel Abyssinia*, Geneva's Patricia Plattner describes a group of aged Italians so long lost to the world that the world has forgotten them. They explain, in their mother tongue, why they chose to remain in Ethiopia after 1942 – after Mussolini's defeat and the fall of the short-lived Empire of Italian East Africa. In *Hotel Abyssinia* the filmmaker unearths an unsung or totally unknown slice of post-war history. Why this voluntary exile? Out of love for Africa? To lead an easy life? To avoid facing the war damage to Italy? Or because they had nothing to lose? Testimony provided by several survivors in their eighties (in 1936 they were barely twenty) alternates with a more physical and sensuous approach to a country that the filmmaker – despite her extensive travels – had not explored before working there. An enthralling film."

Marie-Claude Martin, *Le Nouveau Quotidien*,
29 July 1996



| 1996

| 35 mm (blow up)

| colour

| 64'

| Hôtel Abyssinie

Starting from the work of Fabienne Le Houerou published under the title "Les Ensablés", Patricia Plattner travelled to Ethiopia to meet the last surviving Italians sent to Abyssinia during the time of fascism and the Italian colonial war: these men and women had come from Italy at the age of 20, their heads filled with dreams, and remained there despite the defeat. Some of them found a freedom there which they had not known in Italy; others found work; others still found a woman... Through the stories of Amedeo, Cesar, Oreste, Alba, Gino and the others, the filmmaker today seeks to understand the reasons for this unexpected exile.

Script: Patricia Plattner,
Nicolas Bouvier
Cinematographer: Matthias Kaelin
Sound: Jean Faravel

Editing: Najet Ben Slimane
Music: Claude Debussy, ethnic live
music recorded by Nicolas Bouvier
during his trips

Production: Light Night Production,
Carouge
Coproduction: PCT cinéma télévision
sa, Martigny-Combe; Télévision Suisse
Romande (TSR), Genève

World Rights: Light Night Production,
Carouge
Original Version: french (subtitles:
english, german, spanish)
DVD: http://www.lightright.ch/1993_Lehibouetlabaleine.html

"Dear Nicolas,
Some pleasures come in stages, like
space rockets. In this case, you were
the first stage, and that was enough
to point me towards the destination.
The second was the voyage, Japan,
the owl and the whale, in short
everything that I love. The third, and
the crowning glory of them all: the
exceptional quality of the film, its
elegance and poise, this way of melt-
ing away in the face of one's subject
while affirming a style that should
be the standard for television por-
traits (but is it perhaps in Switzer-
land?). In brief, this was a captivating
moment, and I would like to ask you
to pass this on to Patricia Plattner,
whose name sounds like a Chandler
heroine or a billionaire heiress from
Boston.

The owls and whales that surround
me (and a few cats) all send you
their love on this Autumn day."

Chris (letter sent by Chris Marker to Nicolas
Bouvier on 28 August 1993)

"This filmmaker has created a model
documentary: her editing and sense
of rhythm are perfect, her camera is
always listening to Nicolas Bouvier
but without becoming preachy or
boring, and the selected sequences
paint the picture of a man who is
always fascinating."

Pascal Gavillet, *La Tribune de Genève*,
2 March 1994

THE OWL AND THE WHALE NICOLAS BOUVIER



| 1993 | 16 mm | colour | 57' | Le hibou et la baleine, Nicolas Bouvier

The great Swiss writer Nicolas Bouvier was as full of ideas as he was curious about the world – a consummate traveller whose slanting eyes bespoke endless readings of Buddhist monks. His stays in Asia and the West afford his descriptions a breadth and rhythm that sets them at a vast remove from those of the hurried globetrotter. This captivating figure of many talents and facets was a man of images. His taste for photography and libraries made an iconographer of him, as did, too, the need to make a living. In this film, Bouvier ponders seven of his preferred topics of reflection of the moment, interspersed with a choice of emblematic images and favourite music pieces.

MAESTRO, MAESTRO! HERBERT VON KARAJAN

| 1999 | video | colour & b/w | 85' (55' TV version)

Herbert von Karajan is without doubt the greatest conductor of this century. But he is also one of the most secretive. Who is hiding behind the impressive figure of the maestro? How has he built up his musical empire? What were his working methods? Did he really collaborate with the Nazi regime? Ten years after his death, this film creates a portrait without indulgence of a controversial man whose modernity continues to surprise us.

"Maestro, Maestro! (that was what Ozawa decided to call his master) demonstrates the precision of its maker's eye and opens our eyes to a man who so often liked to close his own – whether he was facing his orchestra or certain aspects of his life." *Classica*, September 1999



Script: Claire Alby
Cinematographer: Sven Kiesche
Sound: Stephan Schaedlich, Thomas Gaede, Raffaele Ventura
Editing: Loredana Cristelli
Music: Mozart, Verdi, Beethoven, Brahms...
With the participation of: Christa Ludwig, Seiji Osawa, Anne-Sophie Mutter

Production: MC4 Production, Paris
Coproduction: Arte, France; Pro Vobis, Germany; Ina, Paris; Mezzo, Paris; Strada Productions, Greece, Light Night Production, Carouge
World Rights: MC4 Production, Paris
Original Version: german, french, english

A STORY CROSSING THE ALPS

| 1997 | video | colour | 43' | Une histoire qui enjambe les Alpes

Mont-Blanc is surrounded by three valleys, in three different countries: Switzerland, Italy and France. This mountainous area shares a culture, a language and a love of cows, bells, cheese and smuggling. This report allows us to discover a number of different, colourful characters who share with us their sense of "Alpine belonging".



Script: Patricia Plattner
Cinematographer: Romed Wyder
Sound: François-Christophe Marzal
Editing: Patricia Plattner, François-Christophe Marzal
Music: La Kinkerne, Schubert

Production: Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Genève
World Rights: Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Genève, magazine Viva
Original Version: french, Alpine dialect

THE SEISMOGRAPH, THE MOON & THE LEOPARD.

| 1991 | video | colour | 50' | Le sismographe, la lune et le léopard, David Streiff, dix ans de Locarno (1981-1991)

David Streiff, director of the Locarno International Film Festival. For a decade David Streiff has demonstrated his talent for discovering films, looking for young filmmakers and new forms of cinematography. He has also set the Locarno Festival in a direction that would please both professionals and amateurs. To ensure that the moon looks favourably on the films at Locarno, the festival's director listens carefully and attentively throughout the year, recording like a seismograph. Who is this shadowy man and what is this work that he does, built on his love of cinema?

DAVID STREIFF, TEN YEARS OF LOCARNO (1981-1991)



Script: Patricia Plattner
Cinematographer: Matthias Kaelin
Sound: John Furrer
Editing: Najet Ben Slimane, Patricia Plattner
Production: Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Genève

Coproduction: Televisione Svizzera Italiana (RTSI), Lugano; Schweizer Fernsehen (DRS), Zürich
World Rights: Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Genève
Original Version: french, german, italian (subtitles: french, german, italian)

MOVING PAINTINGS, GEORGES SCHWIZGEBEL

1990 | 16 mm | colour | 43' | Des tableaux qui bougent, Georges Schwizgebel

Animator Georges Schwizgebel is not an unknown figure. His short films have travelled all around the world. These films, which are strongly inspired by music, draw us into a whirl of personal images, mostly painted or drawn. In this portrait, the audience has the opportunity to discover many excerpts from films by Georges Schwizgebel and to meet an appealing artist, as modest as he is gifted. Following a one-year stay in Shanghai, a city to which he has dedicated a film, he married Yaping with whom he has had two children, Louis and Tina.



Script: Patricia Plattner
Cinematographer: Roger Bovard
Sound: François Barmaverain
Editing: Najet Ben Slimane
Production: Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Genève; magazine Viva, Genève

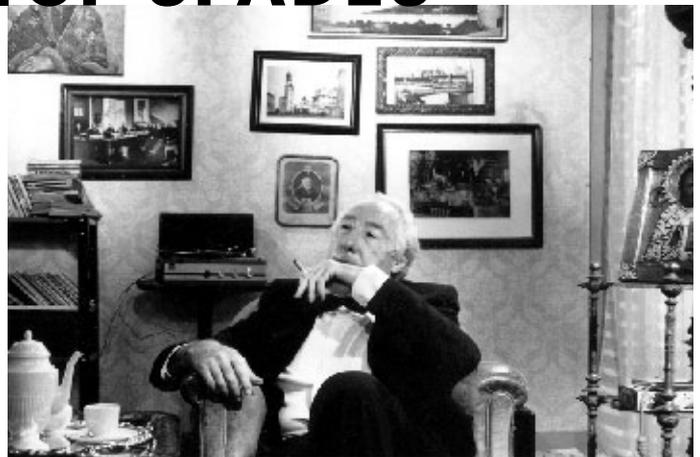
Coproduction: Light Night Production, Carouge
World Rights: Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Genève
Original Version: french

THE QUEEN OF SPADES

1986 | 16 mm | b/w | 22' | La dame de pique

On the banks of Lake Léman, an old, exiled Russian prince spends an hour each day in memories and nostalgia. Now poor and alone, he even pays a companion to help with this ritual, so that he can perpetuate what used to be his world and avoid sinking into depression. To pay for this he gradually loses his family heirlooms to an obsequious antiques dealer, with a strong aesthetic sense and a keen sense of money. When the prince dies, the world is turned upside down, with an unexpected twist...

"Genevese filmmaker Patricia Plattner has made a success of 'The Queen of Spades', her first short film. Shot in black and white, it follows an old, exiled Russian prince on the banks of the Léman, and in about twenty minutes she offers a promising sample of her qualities as a filmmaker." Françoise Deriaz, *La Suisse*, 30 January 1987



Script: Patricia Plattner
Cinematographer: Aldo Mugnier
Sound: Pierre-Alain Besse
Editing: Loredana Cristelli
Cast: Boris I. Fedotov, François Berthet, Natalie Gerber, Pierre Michaëlis, André Martin
Music: Jacques Robellaz

Production: Light Night Production SA, Carouge
Coproduction: Télévision Suisse Romande (TSR), Genève; Ville de Genève
World Rights: Light Night Production, Carouge
Original Version: without dialogues