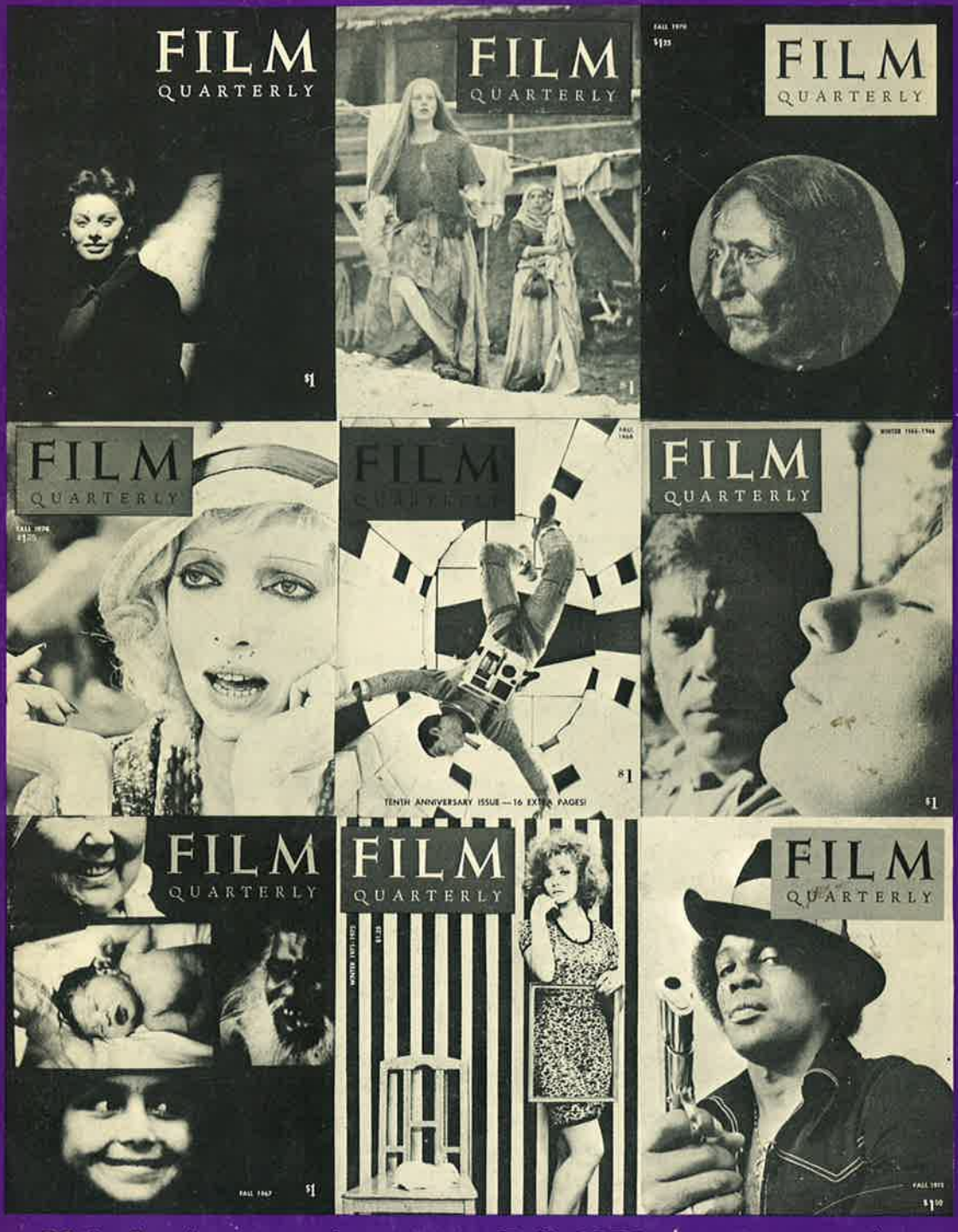

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when the purchasing power and the king of the family is home, he has come off the train at Greenwich to hear Cronkite.

The news has become an industry. The news has grown from a half hour to an hour and a half and in some cases two hours, because the news now produces more income than anything else, and this is why the news cannot say anything. The news cannot offend anybody, that is why the news cannot analyze anything, and has to be sort of blanched out until it is a nothing that deals only in personalities. And this is why there is no investigative journalism.

You make a tube to place in the ground for the year 2078 and all you need is the TV page of the *New York Times* for one week with the TV material to go with it. Do that and you will see why this culture will drop like a ripe fruit, if there will be anybody to push it off the tree. The thing is we are so empty we don't even have the strength to knock this ripe fruit off the tree. It is going to hang on the bloody tree.

BEVERLE HOUSTON and MARSHA KINDER

The Losey-Pinter Collaboration

Film is a collaborative medium, yet little is written or known about the actual process. One of the most remarkable collaborations in recent times has been between director Joseph Losey and playwright Harold Pinter, resulting in three brilliant films and one extraordinary screenplay—*The Servant* (1963), *Accident* (1967), *The Go-Between* (1971), and *Remembrance of Things Past (The Proust Screenplay, 1977).*[1] All four works focus on complex power struggles, yet they grow out of a harmonious cooperation that combines the unique talents of these two artists, creating a whole that is greater than the sum of their individual contributions.

Many who have worked with Losey claim that he is an unusually sensitive collaborator. The striking visual continuity of his films results partly from his cooperation with design consultant Richard McDonald with whom Losey has a "language worked out over many years, which is partly drawn and partly verbal,"[2] and from his own cinematic vision, of which McDonald says: "Joe has already planned his idea of how he's going to control the whole film before he walks on the set."[3] Editor Reginald Mills says that he and Losey work together "really rather by means of some mysterious telepathy. . . . I assemble the material in the way I think it should go, and fortunately nine times out of ten it's the way he imagined it anyway."[4] Dirk Bogarde, who starred in both *The Servant* and *Accident*, attests to Losey's subtle transmitting powers: "We work together without any words ever being spoken. I never ask him anything, he never tells me anything. It's completely a mutual marriage of minds.[5]

Though Losey and Pinter disagreed somewhat in their comments about their first collaboration, the same harmony soon developed in their relationship:

The Servant—Losey: Our finished film uses about one-fifth or a quarter of the original Pinter script written before I came into it.[6]

Pinter: I must make it quite clear that I didn't write a second script. I

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modified and developed to a certain extent the first script.[7]

Accident—Pinter: He wanted to do it, and when I had read it I wanted to do it. I think we wanted to do it for the same reasons, We thought a lot about how it should be done, and worked together very closely.[8]

Remembrance—Pinter: We evolved a working plan and I plunged into the deep end on the basis of it. . . . For months I wrote and discussed the results regularly with my colleagues. . . . Working on *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* was the best working year of my life.[9]

The works Losey and Pinter have created together far surpass their other films. Despite their visual continuity, Losey's films without Pinter are highly variable in quality, depending on the basic material. The weaknesses of his early works can perhaps be partly explained by the fact that he did not choose his own scripts (as in *The Lawless*, 1949, or the remake of *M*, 1950), or lost control of the creative process (as in *The Big Night*, 1951; *Stranger on the Prowl*, 1951; or *Eve*, 1961–62). In fact, he acknowledges that *The Servant* marked a turning point in his career: "By the time of *The Servant* . . . there was no longer a desire to make direct statements, no longer a desire to give solutions, a greater security with the medium, a greater sense of knowledge of the society I was dealing with, and far greater freedom than I had ever had before. And also subjects of my choice."[10] Yet even after *The Servant*, Losey went on to make films like *Modesty Blaise* (1966), *Secret Ceremony* (1967), *Boom* (1968), *Figures in a Landscape* (1970), *The Assassination of Trotsky* (1972), *Doll's House* (1973), *Galileo* (1975), *The Romantic Englishwoman* (1975), and *Monsieur Klein* (1976), which are more or less disappointing.

It is equally true that Pinter's best films have been directed by Losey. So far, Pinter's screenplays are film versions of his own plays, collaborations with Losey, or scripts written for other directors (all adapted from novels by other writers). *The Caretaker* (1962, directed by Clive Donner) and *The Birthday Party* (1968, directed by William Friedkin) are both good filmed plays whose strength lies in the basic conception and brilliant dialogue and acting, exactly as in the theater. *The Pumpkin Eater* (1964, directed by Jack Clayton) and *The Quiller Memorandum* (1966, directed by Michael Anderson), while still good screenplays, are less sophisticated in their basic conceptions and fairly conventional visually. Their unique strength lies in individual scenes of emotional intensity (like the beauty parlor and department store freakouts in *Pumpkin Eater*) or bizarre dialogue, as in this exchange from *The Quiller Memorandum:*

Quiller: At the end of the conversation he ordered them to kill me.

Pol: And did they?

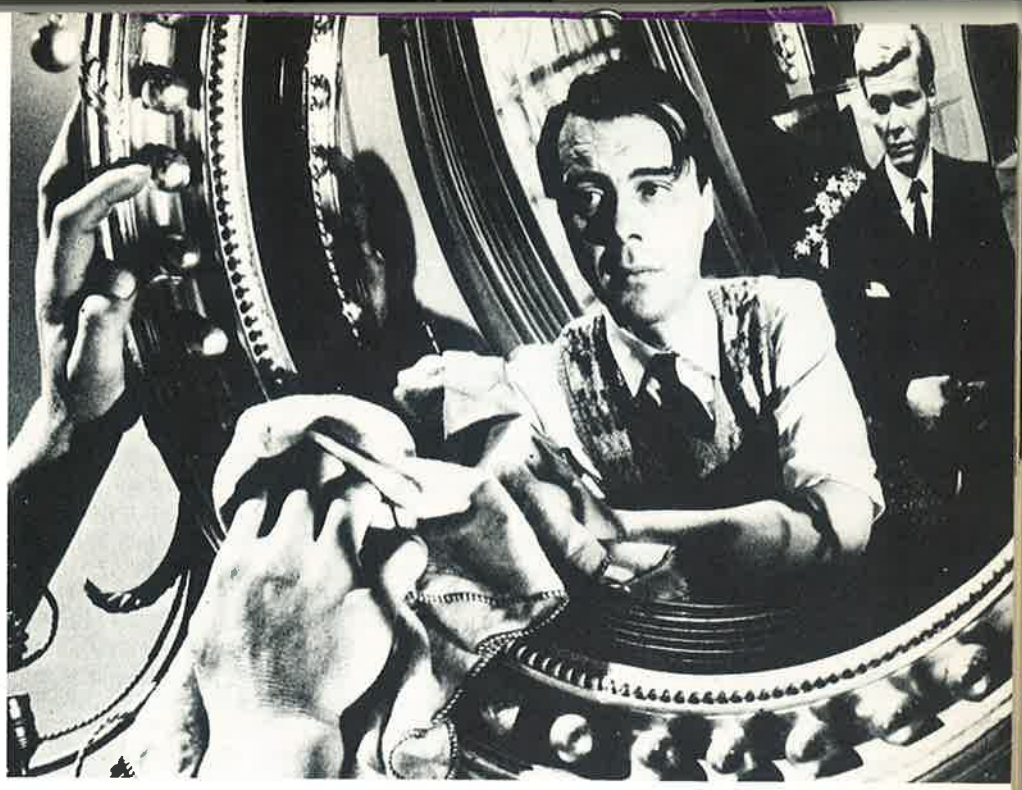
Quiller: No.

The Last Tycoon (1976, directed by Jack Clayton) is such a disappointment that it is hard to recognize it as Pinter's work. When Pinter made his directorial debut, a film version of the highly acclaimed *Butley* (1974), he unfortunately left Simon Gray's script intact and chose limited visuals typical of most filmed stage plays. Only the films made with Losey are brilliant both conceptually and visually.

PINTER'S DRAMATIC SITUATION: ROOMS AND VISITORS

The Servant, Accident, The Go-Between, and *Remembrance* present a dramatic situation that Pinter described in the program for the 1960 performance of *The Room* and *The Dumbwaiter.*

> Given a man in a room and he will sooner or later receive a visitor. A visitor entering the room will enter with intent. If two people inhabit the room the visitor will not be the same man for both . . . A man in a room and no one entering lives in expectation of a visit. He will be illuminated or horrified by the absence of a visitor. But however much it is expected, the entrance, when it comes, is unexpected and almost always unwelcome. (He himself, of course, might go out of the door, knock and come in and be his own visitor. It has happened before.)



THE SERVANT: *Dirk Bogarde and James Fox*

All four works focus on a household (an expansion of Pinter's single room) into which come disruptive intruders who transform or are transformed by the interaction. The visitor, whether threat or victim, brings about a confrontation between self and non-self, perceiver and perceived, inner and outer reality. At a climactic moment, a character loses his innocence by intruding upon a sexual scene (the primal discovery), which either victimizes or corrupts him. In either case, his growth is stunted.

The Servant opens with Tony (James Fox) asleep in the empty house he plans to equip for elegant bachelorhood. When Hugo Barrett (Dirk Bogarde) arrives to be interviewed for the position of manservant, he must cough to wake the master. ("However much it is expected, the entrance, when it comes, is unexpected.") Later, when Barrett insinuates his "sister" Vera into the household, she, too, first encounters Tony by entering a room where he is sleeping. In the discovery scene, Tony and fiancée Susan come home unexpectedly to find Vera and Barrett in the master bed. Tony breaks down weeping; from this point on, his disintegration is inevitable.

Accident begins and ends with images of a country house, well kept and secure. The intruding events are represented by the loud sounds of a car crash, a violence that reverberates throughout the film and throughout the life of the main character, Stephen (Dirk Bogarde). The car was bringing two visitors, both students of Stephen—Anna (Jacqueline Sassard) who was driving, and the aristocratic William (Michael York) who is killed by her recklessness. Anna is an exotic foreigner who intrudes upon the complacent lives of Stephen and Charlie (Stanley Baker), middle-aged Oxford dons, and sets off a competitive struggle among the three men. The rhythm of the film is punctuated by visits: everyone comes to Stephen's house on Sunday and begins the complex set of interactions; Stephen visits Francesca (Delphine Seyrig), his former lover; out of guilt, he visits Charlie's wife (Ann Firbank), only to intrude grossly on her despair over Charlie's affair with Anna, as she waters flowers in the rain. The climactic intrusion takes place when Stephen enters his quiet house to discover Charlie and Anna, who have been making love upstairs. It's as if Stephen has discovered himself acting out his own

ACCIDENT: *Stephen visits Francesca (Delphine Seyrig).*

secret desires, as he has just tried to do with Francesca. Although he is victim in this scene, he begins to take vicarious pleasure in the adultery without having to accept any of the responsibility; by the end of the sequence, Stephen's worst nature has taken control.

The Go-Between focuses on two visits. Leo, the central character and narrator, visits Brandham Hall in the past as an energetic 12-year old (Dominic Guard), and in the present as a dried up man of 60 (Michael Redgrave); both times he is victimized by the inhabitants. As in *Accident*, the film is framed by images of the country house that encloses and frames people and behavior, providing an elegant veneer that hides the underlying selfishness and corruption. The two women in the house are engaged in a conflict of wills: the beautiful young Marian (Julie Christie) uses Leo as a go-between in her illicit affair with Ted Burgess (Alan Bates), a local farmer whom she prefers to her aristocratic fiancé; in an attempt to save the family honor, her powerful mother Mrs. Maudsley (Margaret Leighton) traps Leo into betraying the lovers. In the climactic intrusion scene, Leo leads Mrs. Maudsley to the lovenest. Closer to the primal scene than the sexual intrusions in the other films, this discovery has Oedipal overtones: Ted is the surrogate father with whom Leo identifies, and Marian the seductive mother he desires. In one traumatic moment, Leo moves out of childhood innocence into corruption and betrayal. Both men are doomed; Ted commits suicide and Leo is traumatized for life.

THE GO-BETWEEN

After an opening montage of scenery and houses from his childhood, the *Remembrance of Things Past* screenplay cuts to eight-year old Marcel in his bedroom in the family summer home. Having been sent to bed for protection from the sexual gossip of one visitor, Marcel is now writing a note desperately pleading with his mother not to allow the present visit (from Charles Swann, an old friend of the family) to prevent their accustomed bedtime exchange of love. Though the father tries to discourage their unseemly affection, Marcel waits for Swann to leave and pulls his mother into his room, where she acknowledges their mutual love and agrees to spend the night. The rest of the screenplay is largely comprised of visits to and from Marcel. During these visits, usually to the homes of great aristocrats, he sits silently in the background; when other guests speak to him, they frequently intrude upon the intense observation of human behavior—especially sexual—which is his primary purpose. A number of sexual scenes are observed and heard by Marcel, usually involving homosexuality and/or infidelity. At 13, Marcel peers intently into the bushes where he hears the suggestive giggling of girls and meets the intense, seductive stare of Gilberte, Swann's 13-year-old

daughter; at 15, he watches the beginnings of lesbian love-making between a friend's daughter and her lover; at 17 he again watches Gilberte and her girlfriends in the bushes, but this time Swann watches him watch; at 20, he creates the opportunity to listen and watch Baron de Charlus have sex with a local tailor. These observations are prefigured by Swann, whose life is in many ways paralleled by Marcel's, when he goes to his fiancée's house late at night because he thinks she has another lover (possibly a woman); because he goes to the wrong house in the dark, Swann ironically misses observing the primal scene. Though Marcel remains largely sexually aloof, and certainly uncommitted, until the age of 41 when the screenplay ends, and though he is described in the opening scene (the visit to the Guermantes, which also closes the film) as having a "defeated" posture, the vicious social hierarchy and the sexual ambiguity do not absolutely truncate his growth. Instead, after meeting some of the beautiful children of the women of his generation, his voice-over tells us: "It was time to begin," implying that the great *Remembrance* can now be written (and in ironic circularity, has, of course, already been created).

PINTER'S ADAPTATIONS: COMPLEXITY AND MYSTERY

Despite the great differences among his literary sources, he manages to discover these Pinteresque situations in the material and to sharpen their outlines through amplifications, omission, and condensation. But at the same time, he adds an ambiguity that expands the meaning of the central conflict between intruders and hosts, making the adapted work peculiarly his own.

The screenplay of *The Servant* is much richer, yet at the same time much vaguer, than Robin Maugham's slight, 60-page story. Pinter omits the narrator and complicates the relationship between Tony and Barrett. We gain access to Tony's character only through inference from his interactions with Susan, Vera, and Barrett. Pinter mystifies Vera, Barrett's alleged sister, by omitting all information about her history and her feelings for Barrett and Tony. A replacement for the clearly defined Sally Grant, Susan is ambiguous in her relationship with Tony. We do not know how they met, how long they have been together, whether they have ever made love before, or how they really feel about each other. Pinter introduces two highly abstract scenes (the restaurant date where Susan tries to persuade Tony to fire Barrett and the young couple's visit to her parents' country estate) with conversations that are snide and strikingly Pinteresque, which make us wonder whether a conventional life with Susan would really be preferable to a decadent coupling with Barrett. Pinter makes the film equally Barrett's story. The focus is on the subtle shifting of power between the two men, in which Barrett is presented complexly and with considerable sympathy; he, too, is corrupted and declines as a result of the interaction. Much more so than in the story, Barrett's evil always remains nameless.

In *Accident,* Pinter adapts a full length stream-of-consciousness novel by Nicholas Mosley. Although the film does not use the conventional first-person techniques, we see things primarily through Stephen's point of view, which is established by the flashback structure; but we don't have access to his thoughts and motives. As narrator of the novel, Stephen was a highly sympathetic character, but the film audience is always uneasy about where to direct sympathy. As in *The Servant,* one of the most mysterious characters is the woman for whom the men compete. Pinter transforms the novel's Anna into a dark princess whose feelings and motives are never revealed. Silent, self-contained, her immobile face expressing little, she is perceived in a variety of ways—innocent schoolgirl, seductive Lady of the Lake, international *femme fatale,* and dying swan. The mysterious tension between the calm surface and the hidden conflicts is explicitly described in the Pinteresque dialogue that takes place on an idyllic sunny afternoon.

William: What are you working on?

Charlie: A novel. It's child's play. All you need's a starting point. Here for instance, on this lawn, what're we all up to? Describe to me what we're all doing.

William: Rosalind is sewing. Stephen's mowing the lawn. Clarissa and Anna are making a daisy chain.

Charlie: But you might add, Rosalind is pregnant; Stephen is having an affair

with a girl at Oxford. He's reached the age where he can't keep his hands off girls at Oxford. But he feels guilty so he makes up a story.

William: What story?

Charlie: Why this story, of course.

William: What do you mean? What are you talking about?

In *The Go-Between* the complexities are nearly all present in the literary source. Pinter's task is to pare down and mystify the romanticism of the novel. He eliminates the heavy-handed symbolism, which presented Leo as a serpent in the Garden of Eden who, reaching adolescence around 1900, romantically exaggerates his own importance by identifying his fate with that of the new century. In Pinter's hands, Leo becomes a passive vulnerable innocent whose "magic powers" we never take seriously; he does not share the social snobbery and corruption, but is mainly baffled by it. In the novel we are curious about the past as a source of the present. In the film the flashes forward are fragmented and puzzling, interrupting the linear movement of the past. The reflective narrator almost disappears, and we do not know that young Leo will be transformed into this gray, defeated old man.

To an even greater extent, of course, the subtle complexity of *Remembrance* was already present in Proust's original; the problem is primarily one of selection and it is Pinter's triumph to have maintained the wholeness of the novel in a kind of microcosm rather than selecting and omitting major elements. He consistently emphasizes the mysteriousness of Marcel's experience, particularly in the realm of sexuality and social obligation. He is never able to learn whether Albertine is a lesbian (as Swann could never learn the truth about his wife Odette). Albertine and others casually lie throughout the work, particularly about the urgency of social appointments, which they then ignore if they choose. Finally, it is often impossible to tell what effect experiences are having on Marcel; memory may reveal significance or impact that cannot be determined during the experience itself.

Pinter's adaptations deserve major attention in themselves, but all four works reveal that in his combining and eliminating characters, omitting explicit motive and explanation, and developing complex events and relationships, his goal is to preserve and enhance an impenetrable mysteriousness that he and Losey believe lies at the center of human experience.

LOSEY AND PINTER'S EXPERIMENTS WITH TIME

Time in cinema involves writer and director (with cinematographer, actors, and editor) in an elaborate dance where it's hard to tell who is leading. Moving from *The Servant*, which is basically linear with time shifting primarily through changes in visual style and cutting pace, through *Accident*, where the whole film is apparently contained in a flashback, to *Go-Between*, where the flashes forward are intermittent and unpredictable, Losey and Pinter reveal an increasingly innovative temporal choreography. Written between Pinter's two time-centered plays *Silence* (1969) and *Old Times* (1972), *Go-Between* reflects his growing concern with this element.

> I think I'm more conscious of a kind of ever-present quality in life. . . . I certainly feel more and more that the past is not past, that it never was past. It's present. . . . The only time I can ever be said to live in the present is when I'm engaged in some physical activity. . . . The whole question of time and all its reverberations and possible meanings really does seem to absorb me more and more.[11]

This view of temporal experience suggests that human interaction is a loop feedback system in which causality depends on where a person enters the circle of events and interactions.

The Servant begins punctually with the appointed meeting between master and servant; it ends at some unlocatable time when the power relationships have been reversed. The first part alternates between scenes involving Barrett and Susan, the two main competitors for Tony. The intensified competition is marked by rapid intercutting between Susan and Tony in the restaurant and Barrett bringing on Vera like heavy artillery. Once Vera begins working on Tony, the smooth linear pattern is resumed—only to be disrupted by the discovery scene. After the reconciliation between Tony and Barrett, it is no longer possible to tell what time has elapsed between the short sequences; it could be months or minutes. The power wheel has come full circle.

This circularity becomes even more subjective in *Accident*, which opens and closes with the car

ACCIDENT: *Anna (Jacqueline Sassard) and Stephen.*

crash that echoes through Stephen's mind. Through his flashbacks, the film explores the accident from the point of view of the past; the final return to the opening image implies its impact on his future life. The repetition also suggests that Losey and Pinter have broken open a moment in time—one chosen by accident. Although Stephen would say that his behavior (the rape) resulted from the accident, it might be argued that the accident resulted from Stephen's repressed and manipulating behavior. The scene where Stephen discovers Anna and Charlie is framed by two sequences that are most experimental in handling subjective time. When Stephen goes to visit Francesca, the discontinuity between the visuals and dialogue creates an innovative shift to a memory within a flashback. As we see an overhead shot of the two of them lying silently on their backs like corpses, blankly staring at the ceiling, we hear fragments of conversation.

Francesca: Have I changed?

Stephen: You're the same.

Since their lips are not moving, these words may have been spoken at any time during the evening; but the lies and deathly quality of the experience remain in Stephen's memory. After the discovery scene, Stephen visits his pregnant wife (Vivian Marchant) and tells her he plans to visit Laura, Charlie's wife. But the film intercuts between Rosalind and Laura, the simultaneity underlining Stephen's own identification with Charlie. As in the sequence with Francesca, emotional pressure requires a non-linear structure. Losey remarked:

> No stunt was intended at all, but simply two dialogues inter-cut in time and place; and at the end a deliberate sense that he is going to do—or is talking about doing—something he may already have done, which is part of his deception. If it seems a trick, then it's a failure; if it doesn't, then I think it's as much an extension of the medium as Picasso in his medium when he began to paint three or more aspects of the same face in one portrait. . . . I think in a curious kind of way the throwing away of rules by directors like Lester and Godard is a step in the same direction, perhaps a little less politely, and maybe a little less successfully in the long run in terms of lasting result than Resnais or Fellini, or maybe even me a little bit in *Accident.*[12]

The disruptions of linear time grow more frequent in *The Go-Between.* Brief scenes from the present (future?) are intercut with the past (present?); sounds from one scene overlap the visuals of another; sequences are difficult to isolate. During the opening image while young Leo and Marcus Maudsley ride through the idyllic landscape of the past, an adult voice observes: "The past is a foreign country—they do things differently there." We do not yet realize that this voice belongs to Leo grown old, in whose mind the memories are taking place. Just after Ted offers young Leo the information about sex that might enable him to understand Marian's baffling behavior, Losey offer us the first pairing of visuals and dialogue from old Leo's present, enabling us to recognize the flashes forward. The minds of young and old Leo are directly linked only when the boy performs a magic ritual with the Belladonna plant and the old man repeats the chant. Leo's traumatic discovery scene is framed by the conversation in which the dowager Marian tries to persuade old Leo to perform "another errand of love," this time with her grandson who looks just like Ted Burgess. Once more the past is put in the center of the present, creating a circular pattern of inevitability. The final moments between Leo and Marian in the present are interrupted by brief flashes back to Marian lying in the hammock dressed in white and Ted's dead body propped on the rifle. These images of deceptive innocence and real violence expose the bitter irony of Marian's cajoling charm: "You came out of the blue to make us happy and we made you happy." Her destructive self-delusion reflects the blind hypocrisy of the Edwardian era, imbuing the relationship between past and present with social signifi-

This experimentation with time must have provided some of the incentive for the highly ambitious task of bringing Proust to the screen. As

Pinter says in the Introduction, "The subject was Time," which is characterized by a double movement presenting at once the unpredictable, spiralling movement of experiential time and the ability of art to fix and retain time. If the screenplay as a whole can be seen as a flashback from the visit to the Guermantes that encircles it, then there are flashbacks and memories within flashbacks, flashes forward, and movements into time before Marcel was born. Sometimes, radical time shifts are based on subjective association, as when Marcel is kissing Albertine and the screenplay cuts to the earlier shot of Gilberte peering through the bushes, suggesting that past and present are one in actual experience. Other shifts involve events that are at first unlocatable in time, and are then exactly repeated in their (later) temporal contexts, suggesting a consciousness that has already experienced or been told about all the events and is placing them in a controlled way to show their significance for the consciousness that is the subject of the work—that of Marcel the developing novelist at work on his own experience. There are a number of images—best represented by the frequent shots of the yellow wall in Vermeer's *View of Delft*—that are repeated in montages throughout the film, which suggest that no time is ever lost, and that its chaos is susceptible to control and permanence through art.

LOSEY'S VISUAL STYLE

These temporally elusive films are also characterized by a mystifying gap between surface and inner meaning, which is greatly enhanced by the rich complexity of the visual texture. Losey's visual embodiment of Pinter's rooms makes them a living force in the drama. Images are framed by mirrors, railings, windows, arches, and doorways, suggesting that the environments, like the social rules, impinge upon and reshape the lives of the characters. In *The Servant*, frequent mirror shots explicitly reflect the changing triangles of power and sex. In the opening montage of *Accident*, we see images of Michael, Anna, and Stephen framed by the open door, shattered mirror and windows of the ruined car, further fragmenting our visual understanding of this already baffling event. Characters move in and out of doorways, pop their heads through open windows, bump themselves on low ceilings, and appear and vanish through narrow corridors. After Stephen discovers Charlie and Anna, the interiors of his house, especially the entrance hall, take on an even more intense life of their own as they are shot from a variety of odd angles, impeding, confining or exposing the inhabitants. When Stephen and his former lover Francesca are dining together, we see them through a rain-streaked window, evoking a romanticism that is ironically undercut by their miserable interaction. This undercutting also dominates the scene in *Go-Between* where Leo is left to amuse himself in the cathedral. The camera moves dramatically from vaulted ceilings down along columns, emphasizing the great volume and grandeur of space. But, ironically, all this is just filler for both Leo and the camera; the real action between Marian and Ted is going on secretly offscreen. In this film especially, the dark, impinging interiors are frequently emphasized by contrast with light, open shots of idyllic countryside. We see a long shot of Leo going through a lush, green landscape. Then, in the next scene, he steps through an enclosing gate into the defined space of Ted's farmyard, marking his entry into the psychological confinement of the intrigue. Tight pans, deep focus, and expressionistic lighting characterize the interior scenes of all three films, rendering them dense and complicated in contrast to the sweeping pans and natural light of the simpler exteriors. In the *Remembrance* screenplay, the party scenes at the beginning and end start with Marcel opening doors to enter a scene of over-dressed, over-powdered old aristocrats who suggest the grotesquery he meets as he enters upon most of the experiences of a life spent peering at parts of people and events through doorways, windows, railings, gates and bushes. The romantic illusions that impede his successful engagement with life are suggested in two scenes where he uses a magic lantern to adore the image of a beautiful ancestress of the Guermantes. Throughout the screenplay, Marcel sees images of himself and of Albertine and Andrée reflected in mirrors, windows, and doors, emphasizing the ambiguity of his sexual education and his inability to locate himself in his own experience.

Extreme camera angles are unusually significant in Losey's films, frequently shifting the mode

of reality and accentuating the absurd tone of Pinter's dialogue. In *The Servant,* when Tony and Susan visit her parents' country manor, the "elevated perspective" on the oddly positioned characters makes them resemble the classical statues that decorate the estate; it also heightens their smug ignorance and the surreal humor.

Tony: We're going to Argentina.
Mrs. Monset: That's where the ponchos are, on the plain.
Susan: Ponchos?
Mr. Monset: South American cowboys.
Susan: Aren't they the things they wear with the holes in the middle?
Mrs. Monset: They're called cloaks, dear.

In *Accident,* an extreme downward angle distorts the dons and their environment, deflating their self-importance as they sit in the reading room discussing sex and American college students (Charlie: "70% did it in the evening . . . and 0.4% during a lecture on Aristotle." Provost: "I'm surprised to hear that Aristotle is on the syllabus in the state of Wisconsin.") At the baronial manor of William, Stephen's noble student, the absurd contrast between the brutal rugby-like game and the formal, aristocratic environment is emphasized by an overhead shot revealing the lovely design of the black and white marble floor and classical statuary. In *The Go-Between,* an overhead shot is used to create a story-book world of romantic mystery as the beautifully gowned adults stroll back and forth on the porch, music and voices drifting upstairs to Leo and Marcus, tucked in bed in their separate child's world.[13] In all three films, camera angle and framing are used to present fragments of bodies, especially legs, abdomens, and headless torsos. Occasionally we are even presented with a view of the action shot from between the legs of a character. The Proust screenplay suggests many possibilities for similar visual choices, as when Marcel ascends from floor to floor in an open elevator cage. These odd shots remind us that our knowledge is always incomplete.

Pinter's almost absurd reductionism in dialogue and characterization complements the dense mystery of Losey's visuals:

> We all have our function. The visitor will have his. There is no guarantee, however, that he will possess a visiting card with detailed information as to his last place of residence, last job, next job, number of dependents, etc. Nor, for the comfort of all, an identity card, nor a label on his chest. The desire for verification is understandable but cannot always be satisfied. There are no hard distinctions between what is real and what is unreal, nor between what is true and what is false. The thing is not necessarily either true or false; it can be both true and false.[14]

Despite the complexity of detail, motives and events are never fully explained. Though there is always something important to be discovered beneath the civilized surface, it can never be completely known.

GAMES

Ironically, this harmonious collaboration of playwright and director results in a series of works in which human interaction is dominated by competitive games. The goal is always survival, power, or control over one's own experience. The source of this power (and its rewards) may involve social ascendance, sex, superior knowledge, or aesthetic power. Each work emphasizes a different dimension of gaming, which is indicated by the title and the literal games being played, and which is developed both narratively and visually.

In *The Servant,* Tony and Hugo are the primary players in a sadomasochistic game in which they reverse their roles of master and servant. The women, Susan and Vera, may pose as players, but they are actually pawns, fluidly embodying a variety of roles depending on what is needed by the man who is "moving the piece." Like the

THE SERVANT: *Susan (Wendy Craig), Hugo (Dirk Bogarde) and Tony, the object of the game (James Fox).*

princess Anna in *Accident*. Tony is the desired object for the other three characters, who are trying to gain sexual control over him. Hugo, on the other hand, is the most skillful player, easily manipulating the other three. Just as the characters don't understand each other's behavior, we don't know anyone's full motivation. The audience is forced to play the same game as the characters—trying to make things out within a limited field of observation. Unlike the other films, *The Servant* is not dominated by one character's point of view. The power dynamics are laid out in the opening scene where Hugo catches the wealthy master asleep. When he awakens, Tony admits: "I'll need everything, general looking after, you know." He doesn't yet know he's in a game although he's the one with most to lose. In contrast, Hugo is aware of the game from the beginning; by freeing Tony from every menial task and anticipating every whim, he can feed his dependency and gain control of his house as well as his mind and body. Later, when Hugo gets rid of Susan and replaces her with Vera, Tony still thinks that he and Vera are playing hide and seek behind her brother's back, but Hugo is playing "Mister, you can do it to my sister for a price." Once the female decoys are out of the house and out of the picture, the male couple settles down to the real games and the actual stakes. Like an old married couple, Tony works on a crossword puzzle while Hugo nags him to get a job. Reversing the initial situation, Tony enters the room and finds Hugo asleep; they yell and wrestle, and the insults finally become a matter of social class:

Tony: You creep. You're a peasant.

Hugo: I'm a gentleman's gentleman, and you're no bloody gentleman.

In Losey's favorite scene, Tony and Hugo play ball on the stairs. They squabble about the rules, and Tony hits Hugo in the face with the ball, initiating the physical contact they have both desired. Their relationship grows more explicitly erotic in the final game of hide and seek. The scene opens with a profile shadow of Tony's face behind the shower curtain. Hugo creeps upstairs, calling "'Puss puss puss, here pussy." When the camera cuts back to the shadow of Tony's profile, his nose is longer and his face distorted, expressing his fear as he hides in the shower. Hugo approaches: "You've got a guilty secret . . . but you'll be caught . . . I'm coming to get you . . . I can smell a rat." When he finally exposes Tony, the faucet is dripping as it was in the earlier sex scene between Tony and Vera, who has been a sexual go-between for the two men. Even after Barrett has assumed the role of master, the women try to regain control over Tony, but they are no match for Barrett and the feelings he has aroused in Tony. The outcome of the power struggle is visually expressed in the shot from the top of the stairs where Tony's huge, wasted face is caged in by railings. Susan is running downstairs in the left midground, while Barrett, a small figure enclosed within the bannisters, waits to usher her out of the house. Although he is the winner, Hugo is also trapped in the game.

As the title suggests, in *Accident* the primary game is how to manipulate misfortune to serve one's own advantage, minimizing the risks and maximizing the gains. This time we watch the game of chance as if we were sitting behind Stephen at a poker table, seeing what he sees but not necessarily interpreting the moves as he does nor hoping that he wins the hand.

For Stephen, the desired payoff is to assert his masculine power in the face of encroaching middle age. His specific goals are to screw Anna and get on TV, both of which will allow him to compete successfully with Charlie. In pursuing these desires, Stephen runs the risk of losing his family, respectability, and self-esteem. His main adversary is his close friend Charlie, who desires the same payoff but is willing to assume the costs. Charlie is Stephen's equal in class, profession, age, and situation, but Charlie seems to be winning; he's the one who has the published book, the TV show, and the affair with Anna. Yet he is losing his wife and children; his feelings for Anna are out of control. Like Tony, he is childishly vulnerable because he is not fully aware of the nature of Stephen's game. Adversary of both Stephen and Charlie, William wants to marry the princess. Naturally superior in youth, beauty, class, wealth, physical strength, and innocence, he is nevertheless a vulnerable child victimized by everyone. While Anna is the object of the three-way competition among the men, she has an independent power struggle with each. It is impossible to tell

what her goals are. Perhaps she's merely interested in exercising her sexuality, which is the source of both her isolation and her power.

As in *The Servant,* the game is played with imperfect information for both participants and audience. The film begins with a random event—an accident—which is the climax of the game; Stephen knows this but we don't. This event will give Stephen his chance at Anna, and he knows how to take advantage of it. But it doesn't happen now. The structure of the film implies that before he can do it, and before we can understand it, we must be privy to the earlier moves. The game begins when Stephen learns that William is romantically interested in Anna, which makes him aware of his own attraction to her. While playing chaperone to the young couple on a romantic boat ride, Stephen is humiliated as he is knocked into the water while William maneuvers the boat (and the situation) with a long pole. Recovering from this defeat, Stephen makes his first move by inviting them to his house—maximizing his pleasure with Anna's presence on his home territory, yet minimizing the risk to his security by including William as a cover. At the Sunday party, the audience is also drawn into the game; when we see Anna lounging with Charlie, who has "accidentally" dropped by, we must consciously rearrange our sense of coupling and begin to suspect (perhaps before Stephen) that Charlie is his true rival. Later, at dinner, when Anna offers to drive home instead of drunken William, Charlie says: "You haven't got a licence," implying he knows her better than Stephen or William.

The Sunday luncheon provides the first battleground where all the adversaries are assembled and where the games become explicit. During this sequence, we get every possible grouping of the characters. At one moment Charlie, who is outside with Anna, throws a ball through the window to William, who is inside with Rosalind and Stephen. This challenging move seems to line up the insiders against the outsiders (Charlie and Anna), providing another clue to their secret connection. In the tennis game, the alliances shift before our eyes. The first pairing—William and Anna *vs.* Charlie and Stephen—presents the socially appropriate appearance. Then the sides

ACCIDENT: *William (Michael York) and Anna.*

change—Charlie and Anna *vs.* Stephen and William—strengthening our growing awareness of the underlying game reality. This shifting game of matched doubles ultimately leads to the final playoff between Stephen and Anna, which frames the film. But at the Sunday party, Charlie is the apparent victor, outdrinking William at the dinner table and outmaneuvering Stephen, who fearfully carries the passions aroused by Anna to the bed and bosom of his pregnant wife.

Once again, defeat rouses Stephen to cautious countermoves that fail to satisfy him, which are presented in modes of reality different from the rest of the film to emphasize their compensatory nature. He visits the TV producer, whom he fails to see, and is doubletalked by his assistant (played by Pinter himself); he then settles for substitute adultery with Francesca. The inadequacy is made all the more painful when he returns to discover Charlie and Anna in his house. At this low point, Stephen realizes Charlie's vulnerability and suddenly reverses the power positions. Revealing nothing of the day's failures, Stephen remains cool. He cooks himself an omelette and then goes upstairs for the vicarious pleasure of examining the bed. Embarrassed, Anna tries to smooth the covers; Stephen orders her to stop, revealing his first power over her in an intimate situation, and his underlying cruelty and vindictiveness. The discovery completes the identification which Charlie had initiated on the Sunday visit, and strengthens the alliance between the two rivals, who are now mutually dependent. The identification is also strengthened by the intercut visits to the wives; Stephen can vicariously enjoy Charlie's sin while

at the same time remain the faithful husband who talks against adultery. Meanwhile, his own infidelity with Francesca is minimized; all the guilt falls on Charlie.

Despite his devious victory over Charlie, Stephen is still reluctant to play explicit games. Although he feels confident enough to challenge William on his home turf, Stephen has to be forced into playing goalie in a brutal game, which exposes the gap between the civilized surface and the underlying violence. Finally, William is the one who is injured, foreshadowing his death, which Stephen will manipulate for his own advantage. Between the indoor scrim and the fatal accident, William has a brief victory in a cricket game, outplaying the puffing Charlie while Stephen watches comfortably from the sidelines. The love game seems to parallel the action on the field, for Anna tells Stephen she intends to marry William and asks him to tell Charlie the bad news. Stephen is pleased, preferring William, a born victim, to Charlie, Stephen's primary rival.

At this moment of Stephen's strength, we return to the accident, where we must apply our new knowledge. A true opportunist, Stephen hides Anna, anticipating some possible gain even before he knows his plans. Excited by her helpless shock, he rapes her. The next morning he visits his wife and new baby in the hospital, assuring her (and himself) that their security is intact. Anna has lost all three lovers, but we have no idea what this means to her. As Stephen predicted, the doomed William has lost the most. Charlie has risked more than Stephen and lost it all. Stephen has maximized his payoffs—triumph over Charlie, sex with Anna—and has minimized his losses, but in the process he has ruined three lives and shaken several others, his own included.

In *The Go-Between,* Leo is a naive child (literally, not figuratively like Tony, Charlie, and William) who, caught in games he does not understand, turns to magic and pretends to have powers that Marian pretends to envy. Years later, in trying to arrange her grandson's marriage, Marian continues to call on Leo's impotent magic while forcing him to resume the game of go-between.

Go-between is a favored game in all three films and the Proust screenplay. One male character acts as intermediary in a relationship between a woman (to whom he himself is attracted) and another man or woman who could be his friend, alter ego, or lover. Barrett is a go-between for Vera and Tony, but the heterosexual affair he creates is actually a cover for the men's homosexual relationship. Stephen plays a similar role between Anna and her two rival lovers, yet actually uses both of them to disguise and further his own desires. In *Remembrance,* Marcel is lover to Albertine but profess his love for Andrée, with whom he becomes "friends," thus functioning as a kind of sexual or romantic go-between for the two women.

In *The Go-Between,* Leo is an innocent version of Stephen, caught between two sets of opponents: the two rivals, Ted (Marian's lover and social inferior with whom Leo identifies) and Hugh (the aristocratic fiancé whom Leo greatly admires); the two women, Marian (to whom he is sexually attracted) and Mrs. Maudsley (whom he must obey like a surrogate mother). From Ted he hopes to learn about sex, and from Hugo about honor. This parallels a similar conflict between passion and convention represented by the women. Instead of an upper-class loser, as in *The Servant* and *Accident,* the main victims in this film are Ted the farmer and Leo the go-between, both social inferiors. But the conflict is also drawn sharply across sexual lines. Among the other men, Hugh's honor is wounded and the grandson's blood is tainted. It is the women who have all the victory, however hollow. When Leo asks the adults to explain a novel he's been reading where a man fights a duel to protect his wife's honor (he wonders why *she* doesn't fight the duel), Hugh informs him: "Nothing is ever the lady's fault."

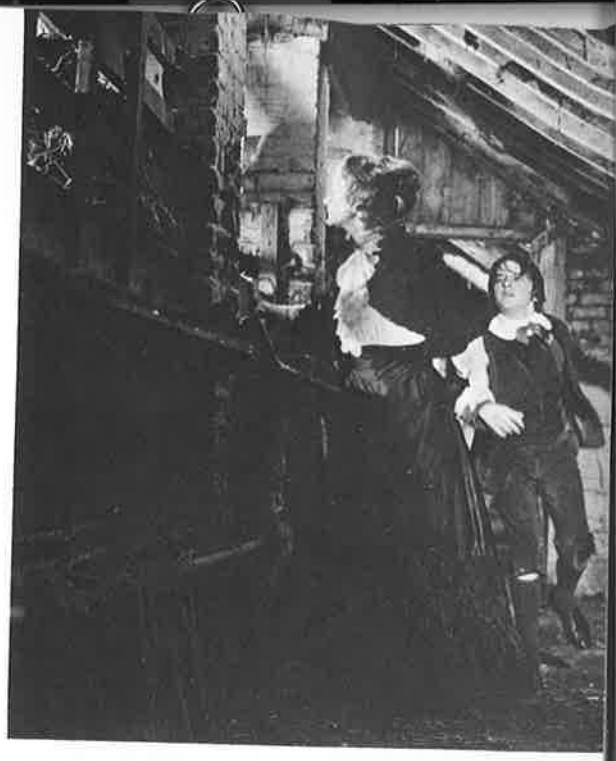
In Leo's first glimpse of the adult world, he sees elegantly dressed figures playing croquet on a finely trimmed lawn; meanwhile, he and young Marcus play a rough and tumble version of hide and seek on the stairs (like Tony and Hugo in *The Servant*). The contrast is thus immediately established between the apparent graces of conventional society and the natural energies and struggle of the human animal (as in the scrim in *Accident*). Later, in a cricket match, Leo observes the contrast between Ted's brutish strength and Hugo's "command and elegance." When he is called into the game, he puts Ted out and saves

the game for the aristocrats though he doesn't understand the significance of his action. All he knows is that he is momentarily a winner. But his triumph is short-lived, like William's in *Accident*. He is immediately confronted by Ted and Marian, who force him to resume his duties as go-between. Later, when Mrs. Maudsley forces him to lead her to the lovers' hiding place, once more he "catches Ted out" for the aristocratic team. This game is played within the broader rules of Edwardian society—rules so powerful that they can make a wild man like Ted Burgess commit suicide and a passionate girl like Marian give up the man she loves. Mrs. Maudsley, the evil parent, represents the conventions of society that deny emotional and psychological reality, assuring that things are never as they seem.

In *Remembrance of Things Past*, while the function of actual games is reduced, various lines of competition weave the basic tapestry of Marcel's life: between men and women, among social classes, among the men, and between youth (innocence) and age (experience/corruption). Though Marcel is at first loved and protected by his mother, grandmother, and Françoise, the old family servant, he develops a life-long dependency on them. His early romantic adoration of unattainable women also weakens his ability to choose or love the right women. Tormented all his life by his inability to see or understand their behavior, he is always vulnerable to women, who know this and victimize him with their infidelity, their social unattainability, and their lying. The competitive power of women is emphasized by the fact that the explicit games, such as golf, are assigned only to them; their version of "follow the leader" epitomizes Marcel's idea of their strength:

> The little band of GIRLS walking along the front. They keep to an absolutely straight, remorseless course, appearing not to see those in their path. Some people make way for them automatically, some with a slight panic. The GIRLS ignore them and proceed with an arrogant assurance, occasionally jumping over an obstacle. One of the GIRLS springs onto the platform of the bandstand and jumps over an old man, sitting underneath it in a deck chair. His cap is brushed by her feet. He looks up, terrified. The GIRLS laugh and applaud.[15]

Marcel's access to the women he really wants is also impeded by the social and sexual competition among the men. Twice he asks men—one older and successful, the other his age but of a higher social class—to introduce him to women and twice he is refused for no apparent reason.



THE GO-BETWEEN: *The discovery scene.*

Class competition pervades the screenplay. Almost every visit involves discussion of the relative status of the Queens, Barons, Dukes, Princes and lesser gentle persons at the gathering. Although powerful in other ways, women are often the victim of this hierarchy as actresses are scorned for their alleged promiscuity, Swann's wife is ostracized for lack of social standing and alleged sexual activity, and Francoise works against the marriage of Marcel and Albertine for these reasons. This vicious hierarchy is superbly parodied in a scene where Marcel's grandmother has to use the public bathroom in the park, which is presided over by an attendant named "La Marquise," who declares: "I choose my customers. I don't let everyone come into my little parlors."[16]

The exploitation and corruption of the young by the old, and of art and artists by their rich consumers, forms a subtle, important thread throughout the screenplay. The ancient composer

Vinteuil is made ridiculous in the eyes of the world by the lesbian affair between his daughter and her music teacher; his works become the means to social advancement for the Verdurins, who offer performances that draw aristocrats who would otherwise never enter their home. The Baron de Charlus tries to form a homosexual liaison with Marcel by promising him wonderful material for a book from his lifetime of social and sexual intrigue, and the old ambassador who wouldn't introduce Marcel to the Duchesse de Guermantes tries to teach him what kind of books will make it in the upper-class literary game.

But although Marcel suffers the emotional and sexual impediments of the other Losey/Pinter "heroes," his ability to make art from his experience, like Vinteuil's music and Vermeer's painting, successfully transcends these competitive, destructive games. Marcel's final triumph is to make a work of art in which his own baffled vulnerability provides the greatest source of strength and value. Similarly, Losey and Pinter use the subject matter of bewilderment and power lust to build the unique collaboration from which has emerged these subtle and powerful works of film art.

NOTES

1. (Grove Press). Pinter wrote the screenplay with the collaboration of Losey and Barbara Bray, a BBC script editor and Proust scholar. No film of this screenplay yet exists, of course, as Losey have not been able to fund the project. Thus we cannot know how it will be shaped through Losey's visuals. However, many indications do exist, and we will draw on these as well as thematic and structural similarities to other Losey/Pinter works.
2. Tom Milne, *Losey on Losey* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1968), pp. 107-108.
3. Richard McDonald as quoted in *Isis* (Feb., 1964), p. 18.
4. Reginald Mills, in *Isis*, p. 24.
5. Dirk Bogarde, in *Isis*, pp. 29-30.
6. Joseph Losey, as quoted in "Josephy Losey and *The Servant*," Jacques Brumus, *Film* (number 38), p. 28.
7. Harold Pinter, in *Isis*, p. 18.
8. Harold Pinter as quoted by John Russell Taylor, *"Accident,"* *Sight and Sound* (Autumn 1966), p. 183.
9. *The Proust Screenplay*, p. x.
10. *Losey on Losey*, p. 48.
11. Mel Gussow, "A Conversation (Pause): From an Interview with Harold Pinter," *Performing Arts*, VI, No. 6 (June 1972), 25-26.
12. *Losey on Losey*, pp. 118-119.
13. Few actual shots are indicated in the *Remembrance* screenplay, but in one scene the camera is directed to look down on Marcel as he bends over weeping after the death of Swann (although we are not sure this is the cause of his tears) as he earlier did at Balbec after drinking too much brandy because of his separation from his mother.
14. The program of the 1960 performance of *The Room* and *The Dumbwaiter*.
15. *The Proust Screenplay*, p. 41.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

KAREN JAEHNE

Istvan Szabo: Dreams of Memories

"Shall I carve on the tree 'I am here' or 'I was here'?

—Character, *Budapest Tales*

Istvan Szabo was born in 1939 into a Budapest family of doctors. As with many other Hungarians his age, memories of hunger and scavenging, bombing and hiding during the long siege of winter, 1944, provided the detonation point for later development. In 1956 Szabo began studying at the Academy of Theatre and Film Art and received his diploma in 1961. He made two shorts as a member of the Bela Balazs Studio after his diploma work. His first feature film was *The Age of Daydreaming* in 1964, a story of his own generation and their discontent. It is burdened with French Nouvelle Vague influence to the point of cinéma-manqué rather than -vérité. Andras Balint plays himself—or rather the self-image of Szabo—as a young man whose desire to travel, need for friends, difficulties with the opposite sex, etc. are very reminiscent of the teamwork of Truffaut and

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