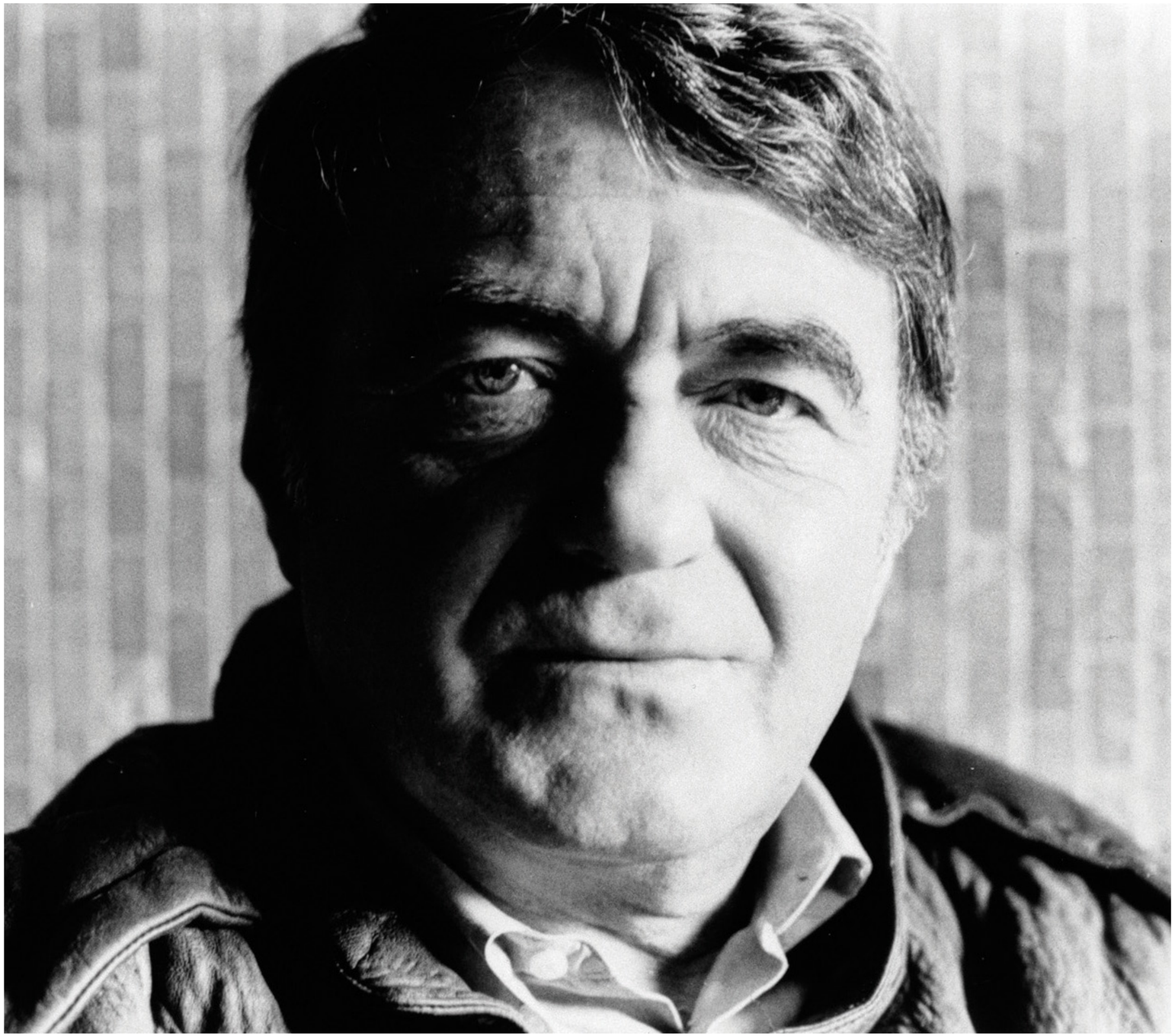

CLAUDE LANZMANN
COLLECTION
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FILMS



"CLAUDE LANZMANN IS ONE OF THE GREATEST FILMMAKERS EVER."
– New York Magazine

"HIS IMPACT WAS FELT FAR AND WIDE." – The Guardian

"THE GREAT FILMMAKER OF MEMORY." – El País

"A MAJOR FILMMAKER, ONE OF THOSE WHO LEFT AN INDELIBLE MARK ON THE HISTORY OF CINEMA." – Le Monde

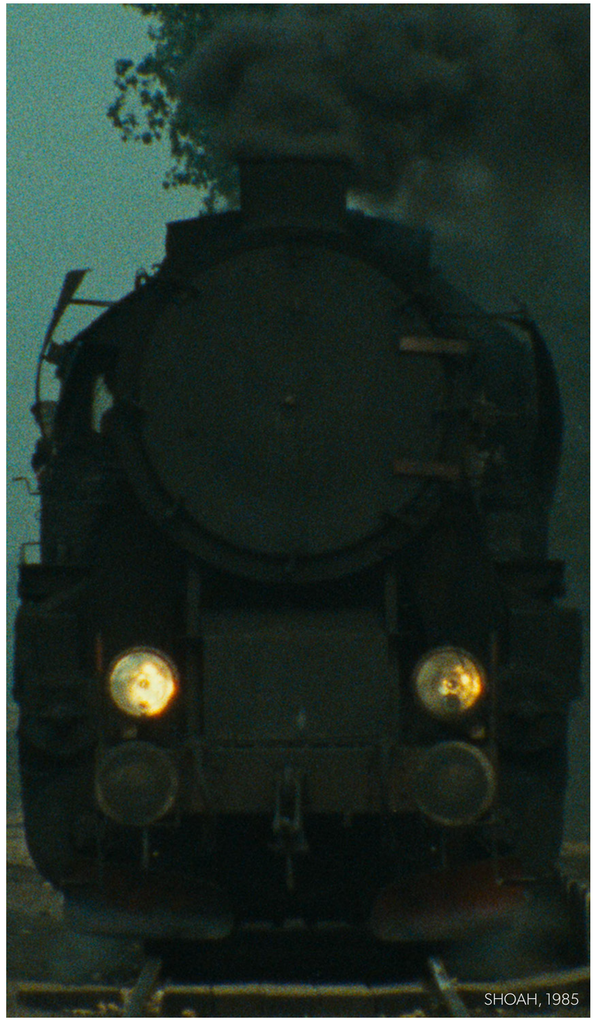
"It is a tremendous honour to be entrusted with Claude Lanzmann's work. His vital work, the result of a lifetime of commitment, must be restored, preserved, and passed on as widely as possible to new generations. This is what we will energetically strive to achieve, in line with our company's philosophy."

– Nathanaël Karmitz

INTRODUCTION TO CLAUDE LANZMANN'S CINEMA

Claude Lanzmann's film won the Honorary César in 1986 and was exceptional both in its scope and historical accuracy. It was the first on-the-ground investigation, using personal accounts, recounting the Nazi genocide of the Jews. SHOAH is the cornerstone of Lanzmann's work, built around 'places and words' (also the working title of the film).

"*If I could have avoided naming the film, I would have done so*", Claude Lanzmann told *Le Monde* in 2005 about his epic work. How do you name something that does not yet exist in human consciousness, how do you bring out of the shadows what is still unspeakable? This is where Shoah's aporia lies. When the film was released in 1985, the persecution and extermination of European Jews during the Second World War had only just started becoming a collective reality. Since the post-war period, the work of remembrance had been partially neglected. It really begun with the publication of *The Destruction of the European Jews*, in which the American historian Paul Hilberg, dissects the mechanisms of Nazi ideology, and the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem in 1961. The impact of SHOAH was explosive. Claude Lanzmann managed to establish the horror of the genocide. He didn't just tell the story, he brought it back to life, he portrayed it with a brutal sense of immediacy. So much so that the title of his film (which in Hebrew means storm, disaster) was instantly adopted in many countries. It named an event that, until then, had been devoid of semantic reality, and was therefore in danger of being forgotten. In many ways, SHOAH is a monumental film. Crucial because it confronts and exposes the mass murders that its perpetrators tried in vain to erase.


SHOAH, 1985

HORROR MADE PRESENT

In his autobiography *The Patagonian Hare: A Memoir* (2009), Claude Lanzmann recalls what the driving force behind the film was: "*It'll be death itself, death and not survival*". The ambition of this uncompromising film is to tell the story of Nazi crimes in the present, not to make a film about the Shoah, but a film that is the Shoah. Claude Lanzmann was from an Ashkenazi Jewish family, and a former member of the Resistance. He studied philosophy before turning to journalism. He wrote for *Le Monde* in the 50s, *Elle* and the magazine *Les Temps Modernes*. He was used to political reporting, harsh environments and raw images. He used no archives, no reconstructions and no psychologising voice-overs for SHOAH. He went back to the scene of the genocide. Between 1974 and 1981, the filmmaker carried out research in fourteen countries, in Poland, in the Warsaw ghetto, the Chełmno, Treblinka and Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camps. He shot 230 hours of rushes, which took him five years to edit down to 9.5 hours of film.

This context makes SHOAH a modern piece. It is more than just an explanatory historical film. It offers a concrete journey, a topological study. It opens with a statement in the present ("*The action begins today in Chelmno on the Ner, Poland*"), which grants us access to the event through physical locations. Each element of staging creates an effect of immediacy. A tracking point of view shot takes the viewer into the Chełmno clearing: shaky panoramas inside the gas chambers and Birkenau crematoriums, an aerial shot reveals the ruthless geography of Auschwitz, conceived as a death factory, and a half-lit death train. Lanzmann does not shy away from unbearable images. The experience would be impossible, intolerable, if it weren't told by the victims, the witnesses and even perpetrators of the Jewish genocide. At the heart of this bare setting, Lanzmann shines a blinding, painful but necessary light on the survivors' accounts.


SHOAH, 1985


SHOAH, 1985

INTRODUCTION TO CLAUDE LANZMANN'S CINEMA

VOICES AND FACES

"*This is not a story where people dressed in ties tell you about their memories from behind their desks. Memories are weak. I chose people who could relive it, and to relive it, they had to pay a high price. They suffered to tell me this story.*"
To those who might detect a form of sadism in his sharp, unemotional interviews, Lanzmann speaks of a 'fraternal birth-giving'. Aware of the pain caused by the act of bearing witness, he chose people who were able to transform themselves into actors, while telling their own story. In the film, this precarious balancing act, between fiction and reality, leads to dizzying sequences. In particular, the deeply moving sequence involving Abraham Bomba, the prisoner in charge of shaving the women at Treblinka. Lanzmann interviewed him in a Tel Aviv hairdressing salon, where the gesture of cutting a client's hair acts as a vivid reminder and brings tears to his eyes.
The testimonies of survivors (Lanzmann prefers to call them 'revenants') met before making the film, are set in contrast with the rare voices of Nazis. The technique used is different here: the interviews are always carefully prepared, often with a hidden camera. As in the case of SS Franz Suchomel, who cold-bloodedly talks of the system of industrial extermination at Treblinka. The bodies, faces and voices are crucial. They resolutely reveal details of the Holocaust that were previously unknown to the public. They make the viewer see the torturers as beings of flesh and blood. Evil is no longer foreign, no longer comfortable because devoid of abstraction. It is embodied in their features.


TSAHAL, 1994

Where the film hits hard, is in attacking the denialist logic of the Nazi regime. Because the Holocaust was also about destroying images, evidence and witnesses. The perpetrators wanted to annihilate and conceal their crimes. In SHOAH, the filmmaker replaces historical denial with radical images, restoring the truth of testimonies. He establishes the absolute necessity to acknowledge the Shoah, so that it no longer remains unthinkable.
SHOAH is Claude Lanzmann's second film. It is entirely in keeping with the ethos of a reparation work, in the service of memory. It was listed in the UNESCO's Memory of the World Register in 2023, alongside Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* and Ingmar Bergman's entire filmography. His first feature film, ISRAEL WHY (1973), then TSAHAL (1994), together with SHOAH, form an invaluable trilogy that uses philosophical and metaphysical tools to explore the identity and future of Israel, a state born in war and riddled with contradiction. Lanzmann then questions our own passivity or complicity in the face of history. He does it without being our prosecutor or judge. In A VISITOR FROM THE LIVING (1997), he talks to Dr Rossel, a Red Cross missionary who visited the Theresienstadt ghetto, oblivious to what went on there, blinded by anti-Semitism. In *The Last of the Unjust* (2013), he speaks to Rabbi Benjamin Murmelstein, the last president of the Jewish Council of Theresienstadt, in order to understand his involvement in designing Eichmann's ghetto. He also takes a close look at those who spoke out: THE KARSKI REPORT (2010) is a portrait of the Polish resistance fighter Jan Karski, a witness to the Warsaw Ghetto, who alerted the Allies to the 'Final Solution' in 1943. While SHOAH is at the heart of Claude Lanzmann's cinematographic work, this film also informs the rest of his filmography. A VISITOR FROM THE LIVING and THE KARSKI REPORT were taken from rushes initially shot for SHOAH, a source which Lanzmann draws endlessly from. THE KARSKI REPORT combines the recording of voices with the discovery of places in a unique style. His film *Sobibór, October 14, 1943, 4 p.m.* (2001), about the uprising and escape of prisoners from the Sobibór camp, is a Sartrian essay on the intrinsic human value of freedom.


TSAHAL, 1994

INTRODUCTION TO CLAUDE LANZMANN'S CINEMA

To make sure barbarity would be forever etched into the collective consciousness, he met four Jewish survivors, Ruth Elias, Ada Lichtman, Paula Biren and Hanna Marton. Their stories are captured in *The Four Sisters* (2018), which Lanzmann described as a 'tetralogy on guilt' (more info here). "*The power of their presence on screen, their beauty, the different voices of each of them, lively at times, dead at others, full of ghosts and fear and alive with such profound intelligence, shed light as never before on the fate of women caught up in the Nazi extermination of the Jewish people*", he explained. All these films, in their own way, transcend genres and categories. They investigate, almost like thrillers sometimes, and are tinged with adventure. The raw material is always reality, infinite and frightening. On the 27th November 2025, we will be celebrating the director's centenary. Like a great political continuum, his filmography continues to make the past echo today. Contemporary auteur cinema bears traces of his work, which is at once contemplative, empathetic and dry. The Chinese director Wang Bing comes to mind, whose political depictions (*The Three Sisters*, *Youth*) examine the painful changes taking place in his country. In *Dead Souls* (2018), for example, Wang Bing collected the testimonies of former Communist prisoners from a 're-education' camp in the Gobi Desert in north-west China. In the form of a collage, he juxtaposed these valuable voices with insights into these death camps, still covered with bones. A way of bringing the missing back to life, a reminder of the extent to which Lanzmann's 'technique' and sensibility have influenced documentary and cinematographic legacy.


TSAHAL, 1994


TSAHAL, 1994


LIGHTS AND SHADOWS, 2008

Léa André-Sarreau, TROISCOULEURS

MK2 FILMS & CLAUDE LANZMANN

A COLLECTION OF 6 MAJOR FILMS

AROUND THE FILM ‘SHOAH’

These films are from the 230 hours of footage shot by Claude Lanzmann for SHOAH.

1985	SHOAH (542’) - **NEW 2K FROM A 4K SCAN**
1997	A VISITOR FROM THE LIVING (65’)
2010	THE KARSKI REPORT (48’)

OTHER MAJOR HISTORICAL WORKS

This trilogy documents the multiple aspects of Israeli society.

1973	ISRAEL WHY (185’)
1994	TSAHAL (316’)
2008	LIGHTS AND SHADOWS (40’)



SHOAH, 1985







SHOAH

unesco
Inscribed on the International Register Memory of the World

BAFTA WINNER BEST DOCUMENTARY

CÉSAR WINNER HONORARY CÉSAR

"ONE OF THE GREATEST DOCUMENTARIES IN THE HISTORY OF CINEMA." – The New York Times

"WHEN WE SEE CLAUDE LANZMANN'S EXTRAORDINARY FILM TODAY, WE REALISE THAT WE KNEW NOTHING."
– Simone de Beauvoir, Le Monde

Edited over five years from 230 hours of footage and virtually no archival images, SHOAH is considered one of the most important works in world cinema. After 12 years of research, Claude Lanzmann gives voice to the protagonists of the concentration camps to tell the unspeakable story of the European Jews' genocide by the Nazis during World War II. This essential historical and memorial work is inscribed in UNESCO's Memory of the World register.

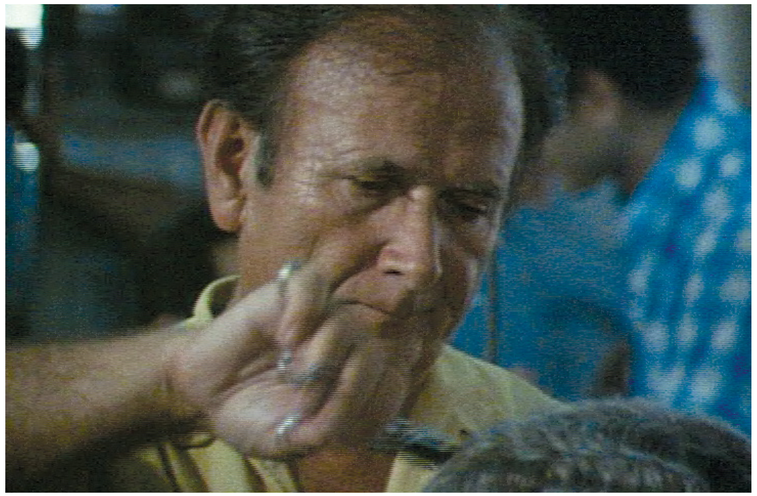
SHOAH is a unique life experience for cinema-goers, ranked among the 50 greatest documentaries in the history of cinema. The film tells the story of the extermination of six million Jews during the World War II and gave the name to the event itself: the Shoah.

1985 / 542' & NEW APPROX 10x 52' VERSION / 2K FROM A 4K SCAN



"A MOVIE OF EXEMPLARY MODERNISM, AN ADVANCED, EXISTENTIAL CINEMA OF THE HIGHEST ORDER." – The New Yorker

"AN INDELIBLE MARK ON THE HISTORY OF CINEMA."
– The Washington Post





This digital print of SHOAH was produced by Why Not Productions in 2012, with the support of La Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah and the Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, as well as the participation of IFC Films and The Criterion Collection. The entire digitization process of and restoration was supervised by Caroline Champetier, afc. The original 16mm negative was scanned at 4K resolution and digitally restored at 2K at L'Immagine Ritrovata laboratory in Bologna. Digital grading was completed at Éclair Laboratories. The 35mm optical sound was scanned and restored at L'Immagine Ritrovata.



A VISITOR FROM THE LIVING

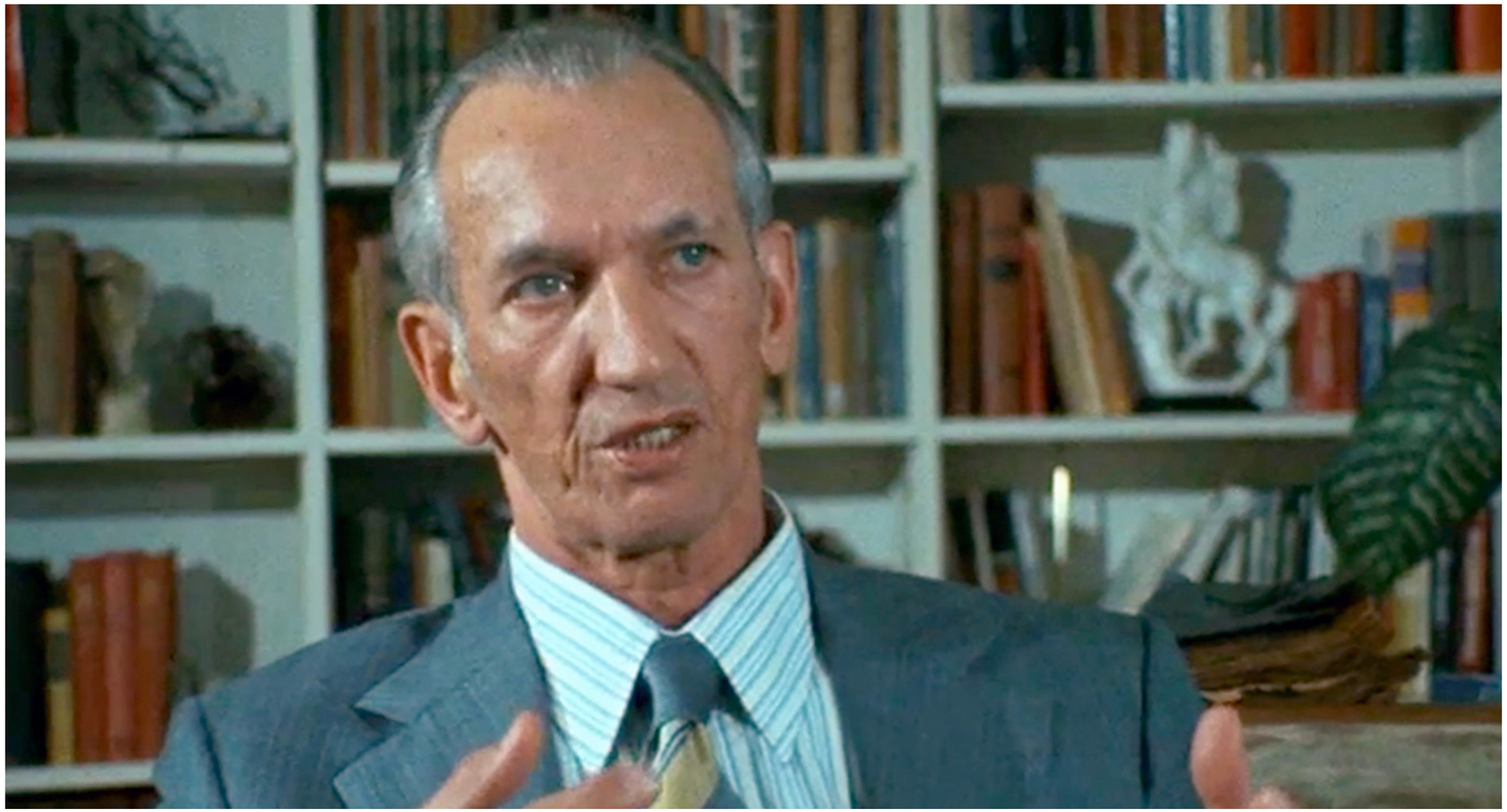
"THIS FILM HAS THE IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF RECALLING CLAUDE LANZMANN'S MAJOR WORK."
– Le Monde

"ABOUT THE DIFFICULTY OF WITNESSING HISTORY WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN THE VICTIM OF YOUR OWN BLINDNESS." – Les Inrocks

Based on rushes of an interview Maurice Rossel gave to Claude Lanzmann, during the filming of SHOAH, the film is a powerful and haunting exploration of denial and complicity. It gradually delves into the mind of a man who, despite being immersed in the Nazi extermination system on two occasions, claims to have seen nothing of it.
A VISITOR FROM THE LIVING shows the power of propaganda and the disturbing ease with which truth can be obscured.

A VISITOR FROM THE LIVING is based on a 1979 interview between Claude Lanzmann and Maurice Rossel, a delegate from the International Committee of the Red Cross, who visited Eichman's model ghetto, Theresienstadt, in June 1944. In his report on the visit, Maurice Rossel described conditions in the camp as 'satisfactory'. This is the portrait of a rare witness to the Shoah: neither victim nor executioner, but living among the dead.

1997 / 65'



THE KARSKI REPORT

“A BRIEF AND BRUTALLY DIRECT ESSAY ON THE FRONTIERS OF BELIEF.” – Film Comment





This unique documentary brings to life key moments in diplomatic history through the presence of Jan Karski himself. Gain an exclusive perspective on his important 1944 meetings with President Roosevelt and Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter. This raw document is a powerful historical account, with meticulous details and great dignity and depth in its testimony. THE KARSKI REPORT offers an experience far more immersive than any reenactment.

Based on the rushes of SHOAH, this documentary is about the Polish resistance fighter Jan Karski, a witness to the Warsaw ghetto and former courier for the Polish government. Exiled in London, Jan Karski alerted the Allies, particularly President Roosevelt in Washington on 28 July 1943, to the atrocities being perpetrated against the Jews of Europe. In 1978, Claude Lanzmann filmed Jan Karski at his home in Washington. He tells the story.

2010 / 48’



ISRAEL WHY

OTHER MAJOR HISTORICAL WORKS

OFFICIAL SELECTION
CANNES CLASSICS
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

"DEEPLY ENGROSSING AND MOVING, WITH VERY FINE CAMERA WORK TO BOOT."
– The New York Times

"THROUGHOUT THE FILM, WE NEVER CEASE TO PAY PASSIONATE ATTENTION: AN EXCEPTIONAL WORK." – Le Monde





Over 20 years of research and writing, the very first film of Claude Lanzmann highlights with empathy, intelligence, and humour the achievements and contradictions of the Israeli nation in the making. It transcends traditional reportage or historical film by getting as close as possible to the reality of Israelis.

ISRAEL WHY traces the creation of the State of Israel and exposes the contradiction between normality and abnormality in the existence of a Jewish state. Whether at Yad Vashem, the Israeli memorial to murdered Jews, in supermarkets, in Jerusalem, in the desert or the Mediterranean, he explores normality in this 'abnormal' country. Lanzmann asks the question necessary for the proper functioning of a Jewish state, a question without answer perhaps: "Who is a Jew?"

1973 / 185'

TSAHAL



"A THOUGHTFUL EXEGESIS OF A TROUBLING, COMPLEX SUBJECT." – The New York Times





TSAHAL raises the question of peace between Israel and its former enemies and explores the Israeli people's relationship with their land and national identity. Claude Lanzmann portrays a unique army driven by the fear of destruction, focusing on the survival of its nation. The film delves into the Israeli Defense Force, revealing its operations and military strategies through 45 years of conflict (1949-1994).

In Claude Lanzmann's own words, "*this work is not based on current events, but on the long history of Israel. It provides an in-depth understanding of what, on the Israeli side, prepared and made possible today's events. It tells the story of Israel's long march towards recognition.*"

For the first time, the Israeli Army opens its doors and allows some officers and soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces to reveal some of its secrets.

1994 / 316'

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS







Ehud Barak (Israeli Chief Minister of Defence from 2007 to 2013) recounts the 'surgical precision' required to exercise the professions of Chief of Staff and Minister of Defence of the State of Israel. When asked about the possibility of peace in the future, he stressed the importance of remaining hopeful, and referred to the national anthem of the State of Israel: "Hatikvah", meaning hope.

Ehud Barak, Chief of Staff, then Minister of Defence, granted Claude Lanzmann this exclusive interview on the first March 2008.

1997 / 40'

CLAUDE LANZMANN
BIOGRAPHY

Born in Paris on November 27, 1925, Claude Lanzmann was one of the organisers of the Resistance at Blaise Pascal Lycee in Clermont-Ferrand in 1943. He took part in the undercover urban struggle, then joined the "maquis" Resistance fighters in the Auvergne region. Holder of the Resistance Medal with Rosette, Commander of the Legion of Honour, Grand Officer of the National Order of Merit, and Doctor Philosophiae Honoris Causa of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the University of Amsterdam, Adelphi University, USA, and the European Graduate School.

Claude Lanzmann worked as a lecturer in literature and philosophy at the Freie Universität Berlin during the Berlin blockade (1948-1949). In 1952, he met French philosophers Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. This began his lifelong involvement with the famous monthly magazine *Les Temps Modernes*, of which he later became the Director. Until 1970, he divided his time between *Les Temps Modernes* and journalism, writing numerous articles and first-hand reports.

In 1970, Claude Lanzmann gave up journalism and turned to filmmaking. He prepared and shot the film ISRAEL WHY, which depicted Israel in its true colours and gained critical acclaim and reached a considerable audience. The premiere was held in the USA at the New York Film Festival on October 7, 1973, just a few hours after the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War.

Claude Lanzmann started working on SHOAH at the end of 1973. Making the film was a full-time occupation for twelve years. When it was released worldwide from 1985 onwards, it was hailed as a major event, both historically and cinematographically. Since then, the impact of the film has grown continuously, generating thousands of articles, papers, books, and university seminars. SHOAH won numerous festival awards.

TSAHAL, a film about fear and courage, and the re-appropriation of power and violence by the Jews, was the third long-feature of Claude Lanzmann. This film highlights his vision of the Israeli collective unconscious and the security imperative felt by an entire people who have not forgotten the tragedy of the Holocaust.

A VISITOR FROM THE LIVING, his fourth film, was released in 1997. Claude Lanzmann constructed this extraordinary, complex, and powerful documentary around an interview he conducted with the Swiss Maurice Rossel, a delegate from the International Committee of the Red Cross during the Holocaust.

THE KARSKI REPORT is Claude Lanzmann's most recent film in this collection. Jan Karski's testimony is without a doubt one of the climaxes of the monumental masterpiece SHOAH. Claude Lanzmann uses 49 unreleased minutes from the full testimony to create a chilling historical document.

In March 2009, Claude Lanzmann published his 540 - page memoir, *The Patagonian Hare*, which spans the history of the 20th century with sumptuous writing and became a bestseller in two weeks. It was awarded several prizes in France (Prix des Editeurs, Prix Saint-Simon, Prix Henri Gal de l'Institut de France) and in Germany (WELT-Literatur Preis). It has been published in Spain, Poland, Italy, Brazil, Israel, Great Britain, and the USA, and it is universally praised as a masterpiece of modern literature.

La Tombe du Divin Plongeur, a collection of articles and essays by Claude Lanzmann, was successfully published by Gallimard in 2012.

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