

## **COSTA-GAVRAS (Director/Co-Writer)**

Born Konstantinos Gavras in 1933 at Klivia in the Peloponnese. During the War, his father had been a member of the Communist-dominated wing of the Resistance and, after the war, was repeatedly imprisoned; the resulting blacklist prevented Costa from attending university, holding a government post, getting a driver's license, or even a visa for the U.S.A. Emigrating to France, he studied at the Sorbonne and at IDHEC, France's top film school, and discovered the world of film at screenings at the Cinémathèque Française.

For six years he worked as an assistant director, becoming friends with Yves Montand and Simone Signoret, who then agreed to star in the neophyte director's first film, the gripping thriller *Sleeping Car Murders* – along with Jean-Louis Trintignant, Jacques Perrin, Michel Piccoli, and Signoret's daughter Catherine Allégret. This was a non-political work; the director felt he was too inexperienced to make a protest work. His next film *Un homme de trop*, an action- and star-packed Resistance drama, was retitled *Shock Troops*, dubbed and re-cut for U.S. release; Costa-Gavras vowed never again to eschew final cut.

His next film, *Z*, was at last the kind of political film he had wanted to make: it made him world famous. Having outraged the right, he then outraged the left by making *The Confession*, with Montand again, here as a Czech Communist victim of a Stalinist show trial, stylistically moving further into fast cutting, along with numerous flashbacks and flash-forwards. Completing a political trilogy, all starring Montand, Costa-Gavras now roused controversy in the U.S. with *State of Siege* (it was summarily yanked from the American Film Institute Theater's opening week at the Kennedy Center in Washington), a recounting of the kidnapping and eventual assassination of a U.S. AID worker in Uruguay by the Tupamoros, allegedly because he trained government torturers.

In 1975, he took on a French historical scandal in *Special Section*, on the judicial murder of six scapegoats by the Vichy regime, purportedly to avert massive reprisals after the killing of German officer by the Resistance. In 1979, he had his first outright flop with his only attempt at a conventional romance, *Clair de Femme*, with Montand and Romy Schneider. In his first English language film, *Missing* (1982), Jack Lemmon and Sissy Spacek

played real-life parents looking for their son, missing in the wake of Allende's coup in Chile, with a direct implication of the US embassy's complicity in his eventual murder and the coup overall, winning the Palme d'or at Cannes, an Oscar for adapted screenplay, and a libel suit by the actual U.S. ambassador and two of his aides. (The case was eventually dismissed.)

*Hanna K* (1983) proved in some ways his hottest potato, with Jill Clayburgh as a fictional Jewish-American Israeli lawyer, who, despite being married, gets involved in affairs with her Palestinian client, as well chief prosecutor Gabriel Byrne, garnering an accusation of "unconscious anti-Semitism" from critic David Denby.

After the change of pace crime comedy *Family Business* (1986), he returned to a political subject in English, *Betrayed* (1988), with FBI agent Debra Winger being distracted by love while infiltrating Tom Berenger's underground racist group in Middle America. In *Music Box* (1989), Hungarian-American lawyer Jessica Lange must defend her beloved immigrant father Armin Mueller-Stahl from an accusation of war crimes, keeping the audience guessing "is he or isn't he?" until the final scene, a story loosely based on the John Demjanjuk case. In *Mad City* (1997), he took on the media as journalist Dustin Hoffman breaks the story of disgruntled security guard John Travolta taking a museum hostage, complete with live Larry King interview. And in *Amen* (2005), he took on the Catholic Church, in this adaptation of Rolf Hochhuth's controversial play *The Deputy*, about the Vatican's silence on the Holocaust. In his latest film *The Ax* (2005), suddenly unemployed José Garcia turns to murder to eliminate competitors in his job search; it was adapted from a novel by the late mystery titan Donald E. Westlake (*Made in USA*, *The Hot Rock*, etc.)

The acknowledged master of the engagé political thriller, Costa-Gavras proved a dynamic president of the Cinémathèque française during his 1982-1987 tenure, championing film preservation and artistic freedom. The director's latest film, *Eden Is West*, was the closing night selection at this year's Berlin Film Festival and is featured in the current *Rendez-vous with French Cinema* festival at Lincoln Center. He is married to Michele Ray-Gavras, a distinguished journalist who was captured by Vietcong and interviewed German terrorist Ulrike Meinhof, and has produced some of his films.

### **JORGE SEMPRÙN (Co-Writer)**

Born 1923 in Madrid, Semprùn's family left Spain at the onset of the Spanish Civil War; his father would serve as the Republican ambassador to the Netherlands. At school in France in 1941, he placed second in the national philosophy competition, but soon traded in scholarly papers for a gun, joining the Communist Resistance in France. Caught by the Gestapo in 1943, he survived Buchenwald. After the war, he was an activist member of the Spanish Communist party, and in 1954 joined the anti-Franco underground, moving back and forth under the name of Federico Sanchez on missions between France and Spain, rising to membership of the Politburo. But growing increasingly anti-Stalinist, he went legal in 1963, as well as publishing his first, award-winning novel, about his experiences in the Resistance and in prison. (The party expelled him in 1964.) Around this time he became close friends with Yves Montand.

His first screenplay, *La Guerre est finie*, closely based on his own experiences, was directed by Alain Resnais and starred Montand; an international hit, it garnered Semprùn an Oscar nomination. His next was *Z*, also Oscar-nominated for screenplay. He also wrote *The Confession* and *Special Section* for Costa-Gavras, *Stavisky* for Resnais, and *Les Routes du sud* for Joseph Losey, as well as an acclaimed TV series on the Dreyfus Case, among his relatively few other scripts; he wrote mainly novels, plays, and essays in French, until finally writing his first novel in his native tongue Spanish in 2003 at the age of 79. He also served as Spain's Minister of Culture from 1988 to 1991.

### **YVES MONTAND (The Deputy)**

Born Ivo Livi near Milan in 1921 and raised in Marseilles when his Jewish family fled Mussolini, Montand had begun performing in Marseilles music halls and had started to become a success in Paris, when Edith Piaf made him her lover and protégé, casting him in *Etoile sans lumière*; that same year he was a last minute replacement for Jean Gabin in Marcel Carné's superproduction and postwar follow-up to his triumphant *Children of Paradise*, *Les Portes de la nuit*. While he introduced the song "Autumn Leaves" in the film, it was a massive flop, starting Carné's precipitous decline. Montand guested in a few films while conquering the music hall

post-breakup with Piaf, until Henri-Georges Clouzot cast him in the nerve-shredding trucking-the-nitroglycerine-over-the-mountains thriller *The Wages of Fear*, turning him into an international film star overnight.

On stage he toured the world with his one-man show, including a six-month run in Paris, and had a theatrical success in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, with Simone Signoret, whom he had married. In 1960 he made the move to Hollywood, starring in George Cukor's *Let's Make Love* with Marilyn Monroe (they did, as he later admitted.) But after several more dissatisfying films he returned to France, where he and Signoret co-starred for novice director—and their personal friend—Costa-Gavras in *Sleeping Car Murders*. And as the inspector who battles a cold and speaks with the accent of his native Midi, Montand achieved what he viewed as his real breakthrough as a film actor.

Alain Resnais' *La Guerre est Finie*, from a screenplay by Montand's friend Jorge Semprun, proved another triumph, and Montand returned briefly to English for Frankenheimer's *Grand Prix*, learning to drive a race car for the film.

After an even more overwhelming triumph in *Z*, Montand returned to English and the U.S. for Minnelli's *On a Clear Day You See Forever*, with Barbra Streisand --not a success—then topped himself with his incarnation of Stalinist victim Artur London in Costa-Gavras' *The Confession* (confining himself to an actual prison diet, he lost over 20 pounds in the course of shooting). And as a well-known Communist sympathizer throughout his life, although shaken by Khrushchev's secret speech on Stalin's crimes, this marked his courageous public break with the party; he remained a strong public voice for freedom around the world until the end of his life.

While periodically returning to smash runs in the music hall, on screen he notably appeared again for Costa-Gavras in *State of Siege* and *Clair de Femme*, for Claude Sautet in *César and Rosalie* and *Vincent, François, Paul and The Others*, for Jean-Pierre Melville in *Le Cercle Rouge*, and for Claude Berri in the Pagnol adaptations *Jean de Florette* and *Manon of the Spring* – a final triumph. Signoret died in 1985, and he remarried; his only child was born in 1988 when he was 67. Montand died of a heart attack in 1991.

## JEAN-LOUIS TRINTIGNANT (The Examining Magistrate)

Born in 1930 in Piolenc, France, Trintignant at first studied law but was a drama student in Paris by the time he was twenty. After stage roles, mainly in classic works, he began to make films, attaining stardom in his third, playing Brigitte Bardot's husband in *And God Created Woman*—and then he went off to fulfill his military service, partly in Algeria. Back after several years, he immediately reestablished himself with an acclaimed—if brief, only 15 performances--stage appearance as Hamlet, then murdered Gérard Phillippe in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. Two important films in Italy followed: *Violent Summer* for Valerio Zurlini and the smash hit *Il Sorpasso*, with Vittorio Gassman. He first appeared for Costa-Gavras in *Sleeping Car Murders*, then was the obvious choice as the race car driver hero in Lelouch's *A Man and A Woman* (two of his uncles were professional racers) a monstrous world-wide smash. Every other film he made during this time seems to have won an award or was a critical and/or commercial international hit: Chabrol's *Les Biches*, in the middle of a lesbian affair; *L'homme qui ment* for Alain Robbe-Grillet, author of *Last Year at Marienbad* (Best Actor, Berlin); *Z* (Best Actor, Cannes); Eric Rohmer's *My Night at Maude's*; Bertolucci's *The Conformist*; the Marseilles thriller *Without Apparent Motive*—even the cult Spaghetti Western *The Great Silence*, a wordless part, set amid mountain snowdrifts, and with the world's most downbeat ending.

If Trintignant never established the powerful, international star profiles of his rough contemporaries Jean-Paul Belmondo and Alain Delon -- perhaps because of his lighter, more relaxed, effortlessly charming style – he probably starred in more international hits than the two combined. Among the films he refused were Losey's *The Servant* in the James Fox part – he didn't speak English; and *Last Tango in Paris* – he didn't like all the nude scenes.

In the 80s he appeared in his first English-language film, *Under Fire*, with Gene Hackman; the last films of two great directors: Truffaut's *Confidentially Yours* and Kieslowski's *Red*. Subsequently less active, partly from injuries suffered in a car accident, he played, almost unrecognizably, in Chereau's *Those Who Love Me Can Take the Train* (1998). In recent years, he has specialized in stage work.

## IRENE PAPAS (Helene)

Born 1926 near Corinth, Greece, as Irini Lelekou (Papás comes from a brief teenage marriage; she has never remarried), Irene Papas has been, after Melina Mercouri, Greece's best-known actress internationally. She debuted in a Greek film in 1948, but after a supporting role in the Italian *Attila* with Anthony Quinn (the first of seven roles with him), her first major performance came in Hollywood, opposite James Cagney in Robert Wise's Western *Tribute to a Badman* (1956). In 1961 she appeared to great acclaim in the title role of *Antigone*, the first of four adaptations of classical tragedy over the years (the title role in *Electra*, Clytemnestra in *Iphigenia*, and Helen in *The Trojan Women* opposite Katharine Hepburn and an all-star international cast). Her career has ranged across continents: memorably blurting "I like you" to a nonplussed Quinn in *The Guns of Navarone*; and again with him in *Zorba the Greek*; opposite Kirk Douglas in *The Brotherhood*; twice for Francesco Rosi in *Eboli* and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*; as Katherine of Aragon in *Anne of the Thousand Days* opposite Richard Burton; and to Latin America for the adaptation of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' *Erendira*. In the 70s and 80s she emerged as a singing star, issuing a number of albums, one of which was censored in Greece during the colonels' regime.

Born in Poland in 1926, Charles Denner came to France at the age of four. He studied acting with Charles Dullin, then joined Jean Vilar's prestigious Théâtre National Populaire (TNP), where his colleagues included Gérard Philippe and Philippe Noiret. Louis Malle gave him one of his first screen roles as a cop in *Elevator to the Gallows* (1958) [re-released by Rialto in 2005] and later cast him in *The Thief* (1967).

His breakthrough came in Claude Chabrol's 1963 *Landru*, in which he delivered an astonishing impersonation of the infamous serial lady-killer. The following year he was the schizophrenic protagonist of Alain Jessua's *Life Upside Down*. François Truffaut was especially fond of Denner (and perhaps his trademark croaking voice), casting him in *The Bride Wore Black* (1968), *Such A Gorgeous Kid Like Me* (1972) and giving him the title role in *The Man Who Loved Women* (1977). Claude Lelouch used him in *The Crook* (1970), *Money, Money, Money* (1972), *And Now My Love* (1974), *Si c'était à refaire*

(1976) and *Robert & Robert* (1978). For director Claude Berri, he appeared in the autobiographical *The Two of Us* (re-released by Rialto Pictures in 2005) and *The First Time* (1976). He died in 1995 at age 69.

### **FRANÇOIS PERIER (The Public Prosecutor)**

Born François Pillu in Paris in 1919, the son of a wine shop manager. At 14, his letter to Louis Jouvet led to the legendary star aiding him to enter the Cours Simon and Le Conservatoire. Still in his teens, Perier's second film launched him decisively, in a major supporting role with superstars Jouvet and Arletty, plus Annabella, Jean-Pierre Aumont, and Bernard Blier, in Marcel Carné's *Hotel du Nord*. In Clair's *Le silence est d'or* (1947), he stole the girl from Maurice Chevalier, and on stage in 1948 he created the part of Hugo in Sartre's *Les Mains Sales*. In 1950 he appeared in Cocteau's *Orphée*, and in 1956 won the British Academy Award as Maria Schell's dipso husband in René Clément's acclaimed adaptation of Zola's *Gervaise*, observing patients in asylums in the grip of the DTs in the course of his research. He was originally imposed on Fellini for *Nights of Cabiria* (1957) by the French co-producers, but he agreed completely after only seeing a photo in a casting directory, adding a moustache, a toothpick, and sunglasses to provide the extra air of ingratiating menace. Before *Z* he first worked for Costa-Gavras in *Un homme de trop* in 1967, the same year he played the Inspector on the trail of Alain Delon in Jean-Pierre Melville's *Le Samourai*; he later appeared in Melville's classic heist film *Le Cercle Rouge*. Over the years he appeared several times for Claude Autant-Lara, and in Chabrol's *Just avant la nuit*, and Resnais' *Stavisky*, and as Cardinal Mazarin in a TV mini-series bio. He died in Paris in 2002.

### **JACQUES PERRIN (The Journalist/Co-Producer)**

Born 1941 in Paris, his father was a theater director and he trained at the Conservatoire National d'Art Dramatique de Paris and, resembling in youth a Botticelli angel, debuted at 16 in a series of small parts in French films. But he first attained stardom in Italian films, opposite Claudia Cardinale in *Girl with a Suitcase*, and as Marcello Mastroianni's younger brother in the intensely dramatic *Family Diary* (*Valerio Zurlini*, 1962) He won Best Actor at Venice for *Almost a Man* (1966) and appeared for Costa-Gavras in *Sleeping Car Murders* and *Un homme de trop*, as well as appearing opposite Catherine

Deneuve in Demy's *The Young Girls of Rochefort* and *Donkey Skin*. At 28, he produced—for the first time—as well as starred in *Z*, and shared in its Oscar for Best Foreign Film. And from then on, except for playing the adult Salvatore in *Cinema Paradiso*, acting played second fiddle to his distinguished producing career, including two Costa-Gavras films, *State of Siege* and *Special Section* and the Oscar-nominated *Himalaya*. He produced and directed the enormous worldwide hit *Winged Migration*, which was Oscar-nominated for Best Documentary of 2003.

### **RAOUL COUTARD (Cinematographer)**

"My friend Raoul Coutard, France's most brilliant cinematographer," says the hero of Godard's *Le Petit Soldat*. Between 1959 and 1967, Godard's friend shot all but one of his first 15 features and returned to shoot *Passion* and *Prénom Carmen* in the early 80s. The definitive New Wave cinematographer, Coutard began his career in photojournalism, first as part of his military service, then for such magazines as Paris-Match and Life. This experience and his early work in documentaries fed directly into his innovative use of hand-held camera and natural lighting techniques. He shot most of Truffaut's 60s classics, beginning with *Shoot the Piano Player* and *Jules and Jim*, along with Jacques Demy's debut feature, *Lola* (1960). With Pierre Schoendoerffer, he made the Indochinese War fiction feature, *La 317ème Section* (1964) and *Le Crabe-tambour*, for which he won a César in 1977. Other major credits include Jean Rouch's cinema vérité-style *Chronique d'un Été* (1961) and Costa-Gavras's *Z* (1969). Coutard directed three films: *Hoa Binh* (1970), an evocation of the Indochina War, and *La saute sur Kolwezi* (1979), a recreation of a paramilitary operation in Africa, and *SAS à San Salvador* (1982). In *Z*, Coutard has a cameo as the surgeon who operates unsuccessfully on Montand and utters the words "He's gone" to Montand's wife, played by Irene Papas.

### **MIKIS THEODORAKIS (Composer)**

Born in 1925 on the island of Chios, Theodorakis composed his first songs when he was a child, without access to musical instruments. (He eventually took formal music lessons.) During the Greek Civil War, he worked with the Communist insurgents, was arrested and sent into exile. During the 50s he studied in Athens and Paris, briefly under Olivier Messiaen, and began composing major, award-winning classical pieces. Returning to Greece in

1959, he began forming his own ensembles and composing what eventually became 1000 songs and song cycles; in 1964, he was elected to the Greek Parliament. His scores for *Electra* and notably for *Zorba the Greek* made him world famous. Under the junta he was arrested, banished into house arrest and finally sent to a concentration camp. Protests by international luminaries of music led to his release to exile in France, where he continued to agitate, via concerts around the world, against the junta. After its fall, he returned to Greece, was twice elected to Parliament, and for two years served as government minister, as well Music Director of the Orchestra and Chorus of Hellenic Radio and Television. His musical compositions include at least five symphonies, chamber music, cantatas and oratorios, ballets, five operas, music for the stage, and many film scores, among them Michael Powell's *Ill Met by Moonlight*, Jules Dassin's *Phaedra*, *Zorba the Greek*, Costa-Gavras' *Z* and *State of Siege*, *Electra*, *Iphigenia*, and Sidney Lumet's *Serpico*.

#### **FRANÇOISE BONNOT (Editor)**

Daughter of editor Monique Bonnot (Melville's *Bob le flambeur* and *Le Doulos*), Bonnot began her career as assistant editor on Melville's *Two Men in Manhattan*. A frequent collaborator of Costa-Gavras, she received an Academy Award for editing *Z*, which she worked on the same year she edited Melville's *Army of Shadows*. Other notable credits include Michael Cimino's *Year of the Dragon*, Polanski's *The Tenant*, Henri Verneuil's *Any Number Can Win*, and Costa-Gavras' *Missing*, for which she won a British Academy Award. She is a member of American Cinema Editors (ACE) and lives today in California, where she works frequently with director Julie Taymor.

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