

📖 Topic Page: [Godard, Jean-Luc \(1930 - \)](#)

Definition: **Godard, Jean-Luc** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

French film director. His contributions to *Cahiers du Cinéma* established him as a leader of the *nouvelle vague*. Godard's debut feature *A Bout de Souffle* (1960) revolutionized film-making with its jump cuts and shaky hand-held shots. After making *Alphaville* (1965), *La Chinoise* (1967), and *Weekend* (1965), Godard collaborated on propaganda films such as *Tout va bien* (1972). Other films include *Bande à Part* (1964).

Summary Article: **Godard, Jean-Luc**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(zhän-lük gôdär'), 1930–, French film director and scriptwriter, b. Paris. He wrote criticism for a number of Parisian cinema journals in the early 1950s before embarking on his filmmaking career. Godard is probably the most influential of the French New Wave directors. His highly personal films are marked by a freewheeling approach to style, content, genre, continuity in time, and story structure, and he initiated techniques that broke with traditional film narrative. In his first feature film, *Breathless* (1959), he introduced a number of innovative features. These include the jump cut, editing scenes so that only the beginning and end of an action are shown; the use of written material, interviews, and other documentarylike techniques to confuse the boundary between fiction and fact; and the introduction of himself as a character and commentator. Films of the next decade, such as *Contempt* (1963), *Pierre le Fou* (1965), *La Chinoise*, and *Weekend* (both: 1967), are openly essayistic in form and less concerned with character and story than with ideas and analysis of social issues. The 15 films made from 1959 to 1967 form the main basis of his reputation as one of the late 20th-century's great filmmakers.

Increasingly interested in and devoted to Marxist and Maoist philosophies, Godard for a period subsumed his identity into that of a filmmaking collective. After some years of inactivity, he returned in 1980 with *Every Man for Himself* and has since directed such films as *Hail Mary* (1985) and *Hélas pour Moi* (1994), both of which explore the possibility of the divine playing a role in everyday contemporary life, and *Forever Mozart* (1996). His eight-part *Histoire(s) du Cinéma* (1988–98) is an extremely personal meditation on the history and nature of cinematic art. Godard's 21st-century films include *In Praise of Love* (2001), a mournful study of the precarious nature of historical memory in a mass-media age, the three-part *Notre Musique* (2004), which uses the structure of Dante's *Divine Comedy* to examine humanity's thirst for destruction and document the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the 3-D *Goodbye to Language* (2014), a beautiful, evocative visual essay that defies meaning.

See his autobiographical film, *JLG/JLG* (1994), and *Godard on Godard* (1968; tr. 1972, repr. 1986), a collection of early writings;.

Brody, R. , *Everything Is Cinema: The Working Life of Jean-Luc Godard* (2008);.

MacCabe, C. , *Godard: A Portrait of the Artist at Seventy* (2004);.

studies by T. Mussman, ed. (1968), C. Barr (1970), R. Roud (1980), C. MacCabe (1981), Y.

Loshitzky (1995), W. W. Dixon (1997), K. Silverman and H. Farocki (1998), and D. Sterritt (1999);.

Two in the Wave (documentary, dir. by Laurent, E. , 2009).

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