



JANUS FILMS *presents*

THE PASSION OF JOAN OF ARC

“You cannot know the history of silent film unless you know the face of Renée Maria Falconetti.”

—Roger Ebert

“Dreyer’s most universally acclaimed masterpiece remains one of the most staggeringly intense films ever made.”

—*Time Out*

Spiritual rapture and institutional hypocrisy are brought to stark, vivid life in one of the most transcendent achievements of the silent era. Chronicling the trial of Joan of Arc in the final hours leading up to her execution, Danish master Carl Theodor Dreyer depicts her torment with startling immediacy, employing an array of techniques—including expressionistic lighting, interconnected sets, and painfully intimate close-ups—to immerse viewers in her subjective experience. Anchoring Dreyer’s audacious formal experimentation is a legendary performance by Renée Falconetti, whose haunted face channels

both the agony and the ecstasy of martyrdom. Thought to have been lost to fire, the film’s original version was miraculously found in perfect condition in 1981 in a Norwegian mental institution, heightening the mythic status of this widely revered masterwork.

Long available only in rare prints that necessitated live accompaniment, *The Passion of Joan of Arc* returns to screens in a new restoration, partnered with Richard Einhorn’s acclaimed score *Voices of Light* for the first time theatrically.

ABOUT THE RESTORATION

The Passion of Joan of Arc was restored in 2015 by Gaumont, with funding from the Centre national du cinéma et de l’image animée.

The restoration was created from a 2K scan of a duplicate negative made from the Danish Film Institute’s nitrate copy of Carl Theodor Dreyer’s original cut.

France | 1928 | 82 minutes | Black & White | Silent | French intertitles with English subtitles | 1.33:1 aspect ratio | Screening format: DCP

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LOST AND FOUND: THE PASSION OF *THE PASSION OF JOAN OF ARC*

Despite only screening in butchered, incomplete versions, if at all, for much of the twentieth century, Carl Theodor Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928) was considered one of cinema's great masterpieces, regularly finding its way onto *Sight & Sound's* renowned list of the best films of all time. When a print of the original version was finally discovered in 1981, the film world breathed a sigh of relief, and archivists began to untangle the story of a film that seemed almost as doomed as its subject.

The Passion of Joan of Arc premiered in Copenhagen on April 21, 1928. Its French premiere was delayed by a campaign against the film by many on the nationalist right, who did not believe that a foreign director should be entrusted with the myth of Joan of Arc. The archbishop of Paris demanded several excisions, and further changes were made by government censors, before the film was finally screened in the city in October 1928.

Six weeks later, on December 6, a fire consumed the labs of the famous Ufa studio in Berlin, where *Passion's* cinematographer, Rudolph Maté, had developed the film stock. The original negative was destroyed, and Dreyer was devastated.

However, there was an available work-around. Famous for demanding repeated takes, Dreyer had enough outtakes to create a second version. Using one of the few remaining release prints for comparison, Dreyer and his editor, Marguerite Beaugé, created a new negative that matched the original almost shot for shot. Tragically, even this second negative was lost to fire, this time at the labs of G.M. de Boulogne-Billancourt in 1929.

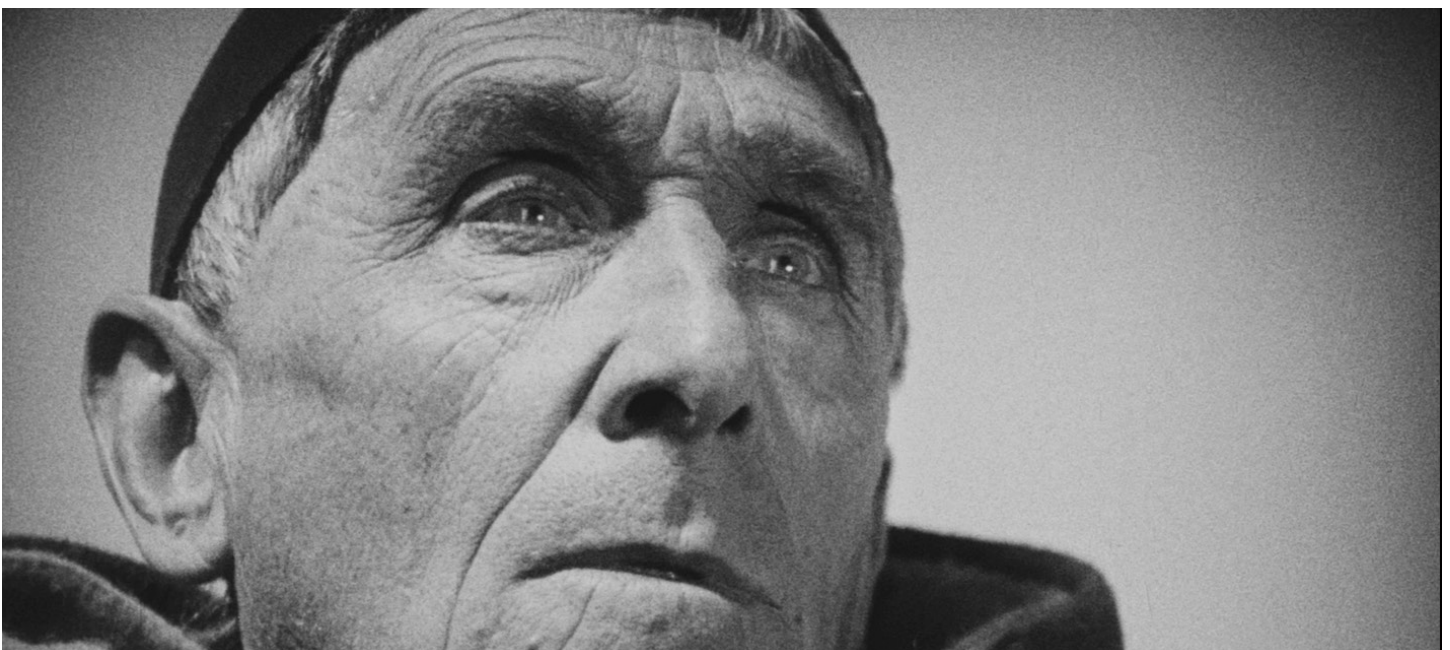
In 1951, the French film historian Joseph-Marie Lo Duca discovered an intact copy of the negative of Dreyer's second

version that had escaped destruction. Unfortunately, Lo Duca made significant changes. Wherever possible, he replaced intertitles with subtitles, and when that proved to be impossible, he replaced the original intertitles with text on images of stained-glass windows and church pews. The negative of Lo Duca's version was also lost, but prints of it endured for many years. This was the version of the film that most audiences saw over the next three decades, and the one that Anna Karina famously watches in Jean-Luc Godard's *Vivre sa vie* (1962).

Finally, in 1981, while cleaning out a closet in the Dikemark sykehus, a mental institution just outside Oslo, Norway, a worker found several film canisters, which were then sent to the Norwegian Film Institute. When they were opened, the canisters revealed not just a print of *The Passion of Joan of Arc* but wrapping paper bearing the Danish censor's stamp of approval, dated 1928. Dreyer's original version had finally been found.

How did the film end up in a closet? Harald Arnesen, the director of the institute at the time, may have wanted to screen it for staff and patients. (There are no records of it being screened in Oslo upon its release, but the print had been projected several times.) Regardless, the film was immediately preserved and new negatives created. Still, with very few 35 mm prints having been struck, the film remained difficult to see in a proper theatrical setting.

But no more. In 2015, Gaumont scanned a negative created from that fragile nitrate print discovered in Norway, creating a restored DCP for worldwide distribution and ensuring that Dreyer's original vision not only exists but can be seen in theaters, in public, once again.





RENÉE FALCONETTI

Despite only having appeared in two films, Renée Jeanne Falconetti—sometimes credited as Renée Maria Falconetti or Maria Falconetti—became and remains an icon of cinema thanks to her performance in *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. Born in France in 1892, Falconetti (who also became known by her surname) began acting onstage in Paris in the late 1910s, and was already a recognizable figure when Dreyer cast her in the role that would become her legacy. Working closely with Dreyer to find the ideal body language and facial expressions for each scene, Falconetti delivered a carefully modulated performance and earned worldwide critical acclaim for her portrayal of a woman persecuted. Despite this, she never again appeared on film, instead returning to the stage in France, where she remained until escaping to Argentina during World War II. Falconetti passed away in Brazil at the age of fifty-four, and was buried in the Montmartre Cemetery in Paris.

CARL TH. DREYER

The creator of many of cinema's most spiritual works, Danish master Carl Theodor Dreyer is one of the most influential filmmakers of all time, his spare and innovative approach echoed in the films of Ingmar Bergman, Robert Bresson, Andrei Tarkovsky, and Lars von Trier, among countless others. After making his mark in the silent era with titles like the provocative *Michael* (1924) and *Master of the House* (1925), Dreyer created *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928), which, though deemed a failure on its release, is now considered one of the great films of the twentieth century. For the next four decades, Dreyer would continue to explore the conflict between the spirit and the flesh, and to experiment technically with the form, in films such as *Vampyr* (1932) and *Ordet* (1955).



DREYER FILMOGRAPHY

1919	<i>The President (Præsidenten)</i>	1926	<i>The Bride of Glomdal (Glomdalsbruden)</i>
1920	<i>Leaves from Satan's Book (Blade af Satans bog)</i>	1928	<i>The Passion of Joan of Arc (La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc)</i>
1920	<i>The Parson's Widow (Præstänken)</i>	1932	<i>Vampyr</i>
1922	<i>Love One Another (Die Gezeichneten)</i>	1943	<i>Day of Wrath (Vredens dag)</i>
1922	<i>Once upon a Time (Der var engang)</i>	1945	<i>Two People (Två människor)</i>
1924	<i>Michael</i>	1955	<i>Ordet (a.k.a. The Word)</i>
1925	<i>Master of the House (a.k.a. Thou Shalt Honor Thy Wife) (Du skal ære din hustru)</i>	1964	<i>Gertrud</i>

NOTES ON THE SCORES

Unlike many other large-scale productions of the time, Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* was not released with a prewritten score for venues with live orchestras. Over the subsequent decades, many musicians and composers have filled that absence. For this release, Janus has offered two scores: Richard Einhorn's acclaimed, Joan-inspired operetta *Voices of Light*, and, in its first recording, a new score by Adrian Utley and Will Gregory.

RICHARD EINHORN'S *VOICES OF LIGHT*

Voices of Light is a work for voices and amplified instrumental ensemble, created in celebration of Joan of Arc. The libretto is a patchwork of visions, fantasies, and reflections assembled from various ancient sources, notably the writings of medieval female mystics. The texts may be thought of as representing the spiritual, political, and metaphorical womb in which Joan was conceived. The performance on this DCP dates from 1995 and features the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Steven Mercurio, with vocals by the Netherlands Radio Choir, Anonymous 4, Susan Narucki, Corrie Pronk, Frank Hameleers, and Henk van Heijnsbergen.

Born in 1952, Richard Einhorn graduated summa cum laude in music from Columbia University, and has written opera, orchestral and chamber music, song cycles, film music, and dance scores. Among many other projects, he composed the music for the Academy Award-winning documentary short *Educating Peter* (1992); the score for the New York City Ballet's wildly popular *Red Angels* (which premiered in 1994); and an opera/oratorio based on the work and life of Charles Darwin, *The Origin* (which premiered in 2009).

ADRIAN UTLEY & WILL GREGORY

Goldfrapp producer/multi-instrumentalist Will Gregory and Portishead founder Adrian Utley joined forces to create a new score for *The Passion of Joan of Arc* in 2010, utilizing a mix of electronic and acoustic instruments and incorporating extended techniques for guitar and voices. The performance on this DCP dates from 2016, and was recorded at Shakespeare's Globe in London under the musical direction of Charles Hazlewood.

In 1990, Utley formed the band Portishead, which has released three albums to date, and he has also played with artists including Art Blakey, Jeff Beck, and Marianne Faithful. Gregory is the keyboardist, producer, and composer in Goldfrapp, an ongoing collaboration with vocalist Alison Goldfrapp.

