

The Girl at the Monceau Bakery

La boulangere de Monceau

France/1963/16mm/B&W/23'/French/Short

Direction, Screenplay: Eric Rohmer

Producers: G. Derocles, Barbet Schroeder

Cinematography: Bruno Barbey,
Jean-Michel Meurice

Editing: Jackie Raynal, Eric Rohmer

Cast: Barbet Schroeder, Claudine Soubrier, Michèle Girardon,
Bertrand Tavernier

This short film is the first of his “Six Moral Tales,” with the dilemma of choosing between two women as the core theme. A young man is caught between two women: one of whom he wants and the other of whom he can have. Rohmer sets it up as a classic moral predicament in which the young man can either risk chasing an enigma that may end in failure or settle for something that is assured, but less desirable. If this sounds vaguely misogynistic, with the women as little more than pawns of male desire, that is only on the surface. Rohmer is most interested in the dilemma itself—what decision the young man will make and, even more importantly, how he will justify it as a moral one.