**DAFilms.com Presents: CLAIRE SIMON RETROSPECTIVE**

**The retrospective of French director Claire Simon, renowned for her truthful approach to reality and personal approach to the protagonists, will be held from April 23 to May 6, 2018 exclusively at DAFilms.com. The viewers will have a unique chance to watch her documentaries and fiction films, including** [***God’s Offices***](https://dafilms.com/film/10399-god-s-offices) ***(Les Bureaux de Dieu),* a mosaic of stories of women and girls from a planned parenthood centre. The film was screened at Cannes IFF. The retrospective further includes for example** [***Gare du Nord***](https://dafilms.com/film/10400-gare-du-nord) **or** [***800 Kilometers of Difference***](https://dafilms.com/film/10403-800-km-de-difference)**. The online retrospective is presented in collaboration with the Swiss festival** [**Visions du Réel**](https://www.visionsdureel.ch/en/) **and ECAL university.**

Claire Simon is a French director, cinematographer and actor whose films often straddle documentary and fiction. She often works on her films as script writer and editor as well. The protagonists of her films are mostly women, teenagers and immigrants whose stories she brings to the foreground. Due to her effort at exploring reality in detail and from all perspectives, Claire Simon is often linked with the tradition of cinéma vérité. For several years, she has taught at the prestigious French film school La Fémis as head of the directing department. This experience gave rise to her film *The Graduation (Le Concours)* which shows the almost frustrating multiple-round entrance examination of young adepts of film studies from close up. The film was premiered at Venice IFF in 2016.

*“Claire Simon is a filmmaker who has spent her entire career exploring the boundaries of human geography between documentary and fiction,”* says Emilie Bujès, artistic director of [Visions du Réel](https://www.visionsdureel.ch/en/), the festival co-organizing the retrospective with DAFilms. Claire Simon has discussed her approach to documentary and fiction film in an interview for [Film Comment](https://www.filmcomment.com/): *“I like both, but I think I admire documentary more. It is just a question of money and time, but it is also the question of being free. When you are making a documentary, you are improvising all the time. The difficult thing about fiction is that you have to plan all the time, and I hate that. I love fiction but I don’t love all the people that you have to push around in order to be in a real artistic relationship to what you are doing. But both are difficult. But documentary costs less money, so you are freer.”*

Claire Simon was born in 1955 in London. She spent her childhood in France in an artistic family, surrounded by painters and writers. The director often likens her work to literature and visual arts. She studied ethnology, Arabic and Berber in Algeria where she got into film for the first time. She worked as an intern and helped edit the films; later she started making short amateur films herself. Her documentaries and fiction films were screened at prestigious festivals, her fiction debut *A Foreign Body* (1997) was shown at the Directors’ Fortnight section at Cannes IFF. The section has further featured *On Fire* (2006) and [*God’s Offices*](https://dafilms.com/film/10399-god-s-offices)(2008). At this year’s Berlinale, Simon introduced her latest film *Young Solitude* (2018).

The online retrospective directly follows the director’s film retrospective held at this year’s edition of Visions du Réel (April 13 – 21, 2018). Simon received The Sesterce d’or Prix Raiffeisen Maître du Réel award at the festival.

**Films included in the retrospective on DAFilms:**

[Human Geography](https://dafilms.com/film/10401-human-geography) (Géographie humaine, 2013)

The documentary portrays the Gare du Nord train station in Paris through which thousands of people pass every day on their way from the suburbs, small villages, foreign countries... Claire Simon presents a mosaic of human stories between the platforms.

[Gare du Nord](https://dafilms.com/film/10400-gare-du-nord) (2013)

Fiction film about Paris train station. Ismaël sees Mathilde for the first time on a suburban train platform. They gradually fall in love. They meet Sacha and Joan. Sacha is looking for her missing daughter while Joan spends her life in the station between Lille, London and Paris.

[God’s Offices](https://dafilms.com/film/10399-god-s-offices) (Les Bureaux de Dieu, 2008)

A planned parenthood centre, or God’s offices. A fiction film based on recordings of authentic interviews presents mothers to be and women wondering if they want to have a child at all.

[800 Kilometers of Difference](https://dafilms.com/film/10403-800-km-de-difference) (800 km de différence – Romance, 2002)

Manon and Greg fell in love with each other. He is from the south of France, from Claviers village, she is from Paris. She is fifteen, he is seventeen. Will their love last until the summer holiday when they are to meet again?

[That’s Just Like You](https://dafilms.com/film/10402-that-s-just-like-you) (Ça, c’est vraiment toi, 2000)

The television docu-drama is set at the European Parliament. Young Antoine sets out to Strasbourg to find a job and his old love Cléo. The director cast 11 actors from a local theatre as the two main characters.

[At All Costs](https://dafilms.com/film/10398-at-all-costs) (Coûte Que Coûte, 1995)

One has to produce, make profit, and most importantly, not go bankrupt at all costs – coûte que coûte! The director spent six months at a small company and became a companion of the managers and secretaries with her camera.

[Histoire de Marie](https://dafilms.com/film/10405-histoire-de-marie) (1993)

A short documentary film about Maria and her blurred memories. The more the director asks about the details of the story, the less sure Maria is about what happened.

[Recreations](https://dafilms.com/film/10397-recreations) (Récreations, 1993)

Little stories and micro-relationships are born at the school yard, reflecting the world of adults. The camera is set at children’s eye level so the viewers can get closer to them.

[Claire Simon Retrospective](https://dafilms.com/program/656-claire-simon-fr) now online at DAFilms.com.

About DAFilms.com

DAFilms.com is one of the oldest online VOD platforms in the world as it was founded already in 2006. Its mission is to promote Czech and international documentary cinema and create a unique publicly accessible video library which now includes over 1700 hand-picked films. The portal is programmed by seven prestigious European documentary festivals. The Czech representative is Ji.hlava IDFF which founded the portal more than 10 years ago.

Doc Alliance includes seven documentary film festivals:

[CPH:DOX](https://cphdox.dk/en/), [Doclisboa](http://www.doclisboa.org/2017/en/), [Docs Against Gravity FF](http://docsag.pl/en/), [DOK Leipzig](http://www.dok-leipzig.de/en/), [FIDMarseille](https://www.fidmarseille.org/index.php/en/), [Ji.hlava IDFF](http://www.ji-hlava.com/), [Visions du Réel](https://www.visionsdureel.ch/en)

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