

Faces Places

Cert 12A

France 2017

94 mins

Crew

Directors	Agnès Varda JR
Screenplay	Agnès Varda
Cinematography	Romain Le Bonniec, Claire Duguet, & others
Film Editing	Maxime Pozzi Garcia
Original music	Matthieu Chedid ("M")

Cast

Agnès Varda	herself
JR	himself
Many inhabitants of towns & villages in rural France.)) themselves)

(But not Jean-Luc Godard!)

Synopsis

France, 2017. In the year of her 90th birthday, iconic film-maker Agnès Varda forges an unexpected collaboration with artist/photographer JR, and the pair embark on a road trip in JR's truck.

Together they explore the villages and small towns of rural France and meet its residents - all the while creating large-scale portraits plastered across unconventional locations. What follows is a heart-warming insight into unnamed communities, documented here in Varda's typically playful and tender manner.

Agnès Varda 1928 - 2019

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Booking Information

Distributor: Curzon/Artificial Eye

DVD bookings:

via **BFI Film Distribution**

bookings.films@bfi.org.uk

www.bfi.org.uk/distribution

Available: now



Reviews

There's a wonderful warmth and playful indirectness to this essay/road movie in the classic nouvelle vague spirit, conjuring a semi-accidental narrative in the midst of what is ostensibly a documentary.

It is a collaboration between the 90-year-old director Agnès Varda and a 35-year-old French street artist who styles himself simply JR and always wears a hat and dark glasses, indoors and out - an opaque mannerism, almost a disguise, which Varda compares to her old comrade Jean-Luc Godard, and which irritates her a little bit.

Our odd but evenly-matched couple go on the road all over France in JR's specially adapted van, which is like a mobile photo booth. They arrive in villages and towns and get locals to have their portrait pictures taken in the back of his vehicle, which he can then print out at gigantic size, sometimes doing a whole body shot printed out piecemeal, and which he then plasters on to the sides of buildings, matching the sections up with a wallpaperer's skill, though we never see this tricky manoeuvre. The results are utterly spectacular, and often unbearably moving...

Peter Bradshaw, The Guardian, September 2018

... Still, they make for an odd couple. He's in his thirties, she's half a century older. He's tall and jumpy, she's small and struggles to climb staircases. He never allows himself to be photographed without his shades, while she has eyes as beady, mysterious and wise as those of her cats. It's easy to imagine arts broadcasting commissioners bringing them together for an intergenerational powwow, an opposites-attract road movie. Both, however, are shrewd about characterisation: JR laughs at the idea of Varda as a "wise grandma"; she describes him as a "spirited young man". What unites them is their shared passion, expressed in different ways, for trying to represent the kind of people who tend, even in a visually saturated era, not to be represented.

... *Faces Places* is a wonderful exercise in memory and merriment, in instinct and improvisation. "The idea of you directing my toes delights me," Varda tells JR as he photographs her feet. "I'll play along." No film-maker alive today plays as delightfully as Varda does.

Sukhdev Sandhu, Sight and Sound, December 2018

Film Facts

- ★ The film premiered out of competition at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival where it won the L'Œil d'Or award.
- ★ Varda was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature for this film, making her the oldest person to be nominated for a competitive Oscar. However, she apparently didn't place the nomination too high in her list of achievements, saying that she has been making films for decades now, and does so out of love for the art itself.