



Warrendale

1967 110m producer and director Allan King, cinematographer William Brayne, editor Peter Moseley

Warrendale is a documentary snapshot of a Toronto home for disturbed youth. Commissioned for television by the CBC, the film was never broadcast, largely because of its coarse language and unusual non-judgmental style. However, as Seth Feldman suggests in *Allan King: Filmmaker*, *Warrendale* quickly became a *cause célèbre* when it was released theatrically in 1967, not because King was voyeuristically exploiting his subject but because he was rendering it with such a rare combination of sensitivity and intelligence, quiet intimacy and bold aesthetic innovation. In fact, *Warrendale* showed us things most polite Canadians preferred to ignore—images of emotionally tormented adolescents raging against their social workers and themselves. King called *Warrendale* an actuality drama—“a shaping of spontaneous action into dramatic form to explore personal and social experience”—and the film arguably remains his masterpiece. With *Warrendale*, virtually overnight, King became Canada’s first internationally recognized auteur, and after its screening at Cannes, the French master Jean Renoir called it the work of a “great artist.”

AWARDS: Canadian Film Awards – Film of the Year, Best Feature Film, Direction; Cannes – International Critics Prize; National Society of Film Critics – Special Award; AV Trust – Masterwork

Christine Ramsay

Le Chat dans le sac

1964 74m director, script and editor Gilles Groulx, producer Jacques Bobet, cinematographer Jean-Claude Labrecque, music John Coltrane and Antonio Vivaldi; with Barbara Ulrich, Claude Godbout, Manon Blain, Jean-Paul Bernier, André Blanc and Véronique Vilbert

Le Chat dans le sac is still considered one of the most important works produced in French Canada. The reasons for this lasting admiration are historical, stylistic and cultural. Historically, it marks, as Peter Harcourt says “the beginning of a beginning” for modern Canadian fiction feature film. With *Le Chat*, and a few others, Canadian cinema found itself in synch with the contemporary new wave movements then emerging around the world. Like the works of Jean-Luc Godard, Nagisa Oshima and Richard Lester, Gilles Groulx’s first feature rejected traditional production practices and dealt with the political and social issues that were galvanizing young people everywhere. Stylistically, *Le Chat* gave Canadian film its own distinctive voice. Borrowing techniques from the homegrown practice of direct cinema, such as hand-held camera, live-sound recording and improvisation, Groulx fostered a hybrid mode of production that merged a loose narrative structure with an aesthetic of immediacy to form a unique blend of docufiction that would come to define much of Canadian cinema. Culturally, *Le Chat* mirrors the 1960s emergence of the Québécois character. As the main protagonist, Claude (Claude Godbout) seeks to shed his colonized French-Canadian identity, questions his rapport with the Canadian “other” (embodied by his English-speaking girlfriend), and tries to understand his connection to the territory he inhabits.

AWARDS: AV Trust – Masterwork

André Loiselle

