

# Time Out New York

27 Broadway, seventh floor,  
New York, NY 10012

November 7-14, 1996 Issue 59

## Paris Was a Woman

Dir. Greta Schiller. 1996. N/R.  
77mins. Documentary.

A brief but fascinating portrait of the female artists who converged upon Paris's Left Bank in the 1920s. *Paris Was a Woman* is a 77-minute ride back in time. Directed by Greta Schiller, the documentary provides penetrating sketches of such luminaries as Colette, Gertrude Stein and Gisele Freund, as well as the era's lesser-known figures, including Adrienne Monnier, Djuna Barnes and Marie Laurencin.

Wonderfully detailed—right down to its chronicling of Stein's haircuts—*Paris* is anything but stodgy. According to salon hostess Natalie Barney's house-

keeper, the ladies liked to feast on partridges at their rowdy receptions. In addition to recalling the time Djuna Barnes, a slick-tongued sensualist and pioneer of "the New Journalism," was rescued by a firefighter from the high-rise building she scaled for a story, the film also supports the women's generally held opinion that James Joyce was an ungrateful lout who betrayed his publisher, Sylvia Beach, the moment Random House came calling. Ernest Hemingway fares somewhat better. One might think the literary he-man would shy away from a crew of quirky lesbians, but according to Beach, he frequently accompanied them to sports outings in and around Paris.

Snippets of the present-day city are interspersed with archival footage of the cultural centers of the time: Beach's near-mythical English bookshop, Shakespeare & Co., and La Maison des Amis des Livres, her lover Adrienne Monnier's French counterpart across the street—not to mention the much-frequented home of Stein and Toklas.

Throughout the film, a narrator reads from Janet Flanner's "Letter from Paris," published regularly (under the pseudonym Genet) in the newly established *New Yorker*. As she chronicles the incipient crawl of fascism, Flanner registers her own impressions of this gaggle of revolutionary expats. It's enough to make you leave your spouse and move to Paris, as so many of these women did. Or at least stage a sit-in at the recently shuttered Shakespeare & Co. on the Upper West Side. (Opens Fri; Quad)

—Kristan Schiller



Café society: Ladies at lunch in Paris.

"WONDERFUL A WEALTH OF RARELY SEEN FOOTAGE AND INTERVIEWS."  
—VARIETY

# PARIS WAS A WOMAN

A film by Greta Schiller

Colette  
Gertrude Stein  
Alice B. Toklas  
Berenice Abbott  
Janet Flanner  
Gisele Freund



Sylvia Beach  
Djuna Barnes  
Adrienne Monnier  
Natalie Barney  
Romaine Brooks

A ZEITGEIST FILMS RELEASE

EXCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT QUAD CINEMA  
STARTS FRIDAY, NOV. 8th ON 13th ST. BET. 5th & 6th AVES. 255-8800  
1:00 3:15 6:00 8:00 10:00 11:55

## CRITICS' PICKS

1. *Breaking the Waves* (Angelika, Sony Lincoln Square) Von Trier's ode to Scottish seas and romantic martyrs will break your heart.
2. *The Champagne Safari* (Cinema Village) The diary of a madman whom F. Scott would have loved.
3. *Le Samourai* (MoMA) The gangster pic reduced to essentials. A must.
4. *Romeo & Juliet* (local theaters) Decadently revisionist, Luhrmann's pic turns the lovers' tragic tumble into an apocalyptic ride.
5. *Paris Was a Woman* (Quad) The City of Lights burns with female genius.
6. *Hypoc* (Sony Village) Sleepless in Seattle, the grungesters tell all.



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November 14-21 1996 Issue 60

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Andrea Weiss *Borders*, 5 World Trade Center at the corner of Church and Vesey Sts (839-8049). Subway: C, E to World Trade Center. 6pm. **11:30** Weiss appears in conjunction with the release of the film adaptation of her book, *Paris Was a Woman*.

"IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU LEAVE YOUR SPOUSE AND MOVE TO PARIS." —TIME OUT NEW YORK

# PARIS WAS A WOMAN

A film by Greta Schiller

"MAGNIFIQUE"

—NEW YORK POST

"FASCINATING"

—NEW YORK PRESS



"INTELLIGENT AND REVEALING"

—NEW YORK TIMES

A ZEITGEIST FILMS RELEASE

EXCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT QUAD CINEMA NOW PLAYING! ON 13th ST. BET. 5th & 6th AVES 255-8800  
Fri & Sat, November 15, 16  
1:00 3:15 6:00 8:00 10:00 11:55  
Sun-Thurs, November 17-21  
1:00 3:15 6:00 8:00 10:00