

VOLTAIRE IN LOVE

HE WANTS IT ALL,
MONEY, FAME AND WOMEN!





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How does a man become Voltaire – the Giant of Thought, the Master of Blasphemy — whose struggles will give birth to the French Revolution?

„Never has the subject matter of the most unruly of philosophers of the Enlightenment resonated as much as with our era; he stands against religious fanaticism, he fights against the arbitrary nature of the law, or that of politics, he is a man of today.“

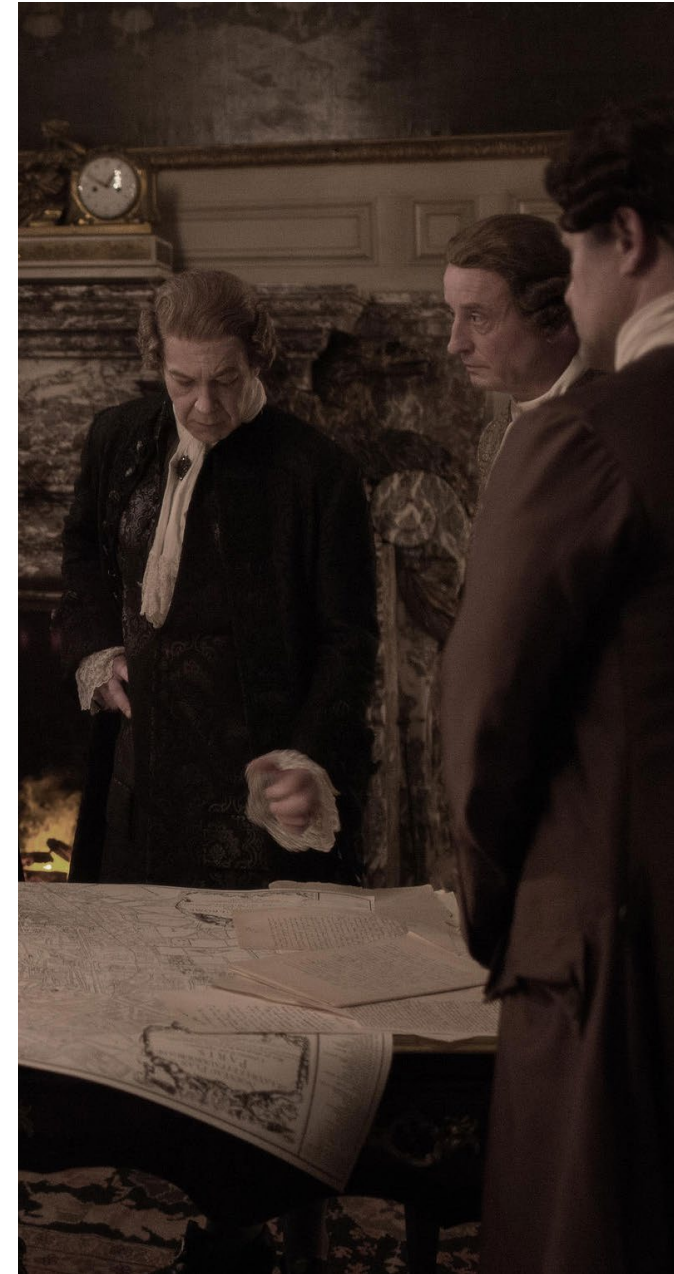
Georges-Marc Benamou and Alain Tasma

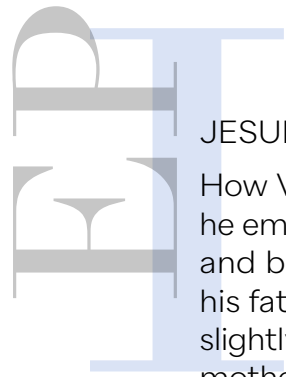


How did Voltaire become who he was? One of the world's greatest thinkers, known for his wit. An advocate of freedom of speech and religion, whose writings shaped the course of the French Revolution. *Voltaire in Love* is a four-part drama series that explores Voltaire's early life and evolution. It reveals aspects of the gifted philosopher's life that have received less attention: Voltaire the adventurer, lover, man of justice who had an ambiguous relationship with royalty.

In his permanent quest of questioning the status quo, he finds accomplices, loving women and friends, some of whom will not always be faithful. And he is dealt many blows including imprisonment and being exiled to England.

Voltaire in Love is a modern and timely series that depicts an outspoken advocate of civil liberties, a visionary, an influencer of his time. And still relevant today.





JESUIT AND LIBERTINE

How Voltaire is educated by the Jesuits, how he emerges, his time spent with the libertines, and becoming a disgrace in the eyes of his father. How he seduces the young and slightly wild Olympe, to the great fury of her mother, the journalist/pamphleteer, Dunoyer, and of the French ambassador at the Hague. How Voltaire is denied the first version of Oedipus by the troupe of the Comédie-Française, and how he is celebrated by the Duchesse du Maine at the court of the Château de Sceaux.

And finally, what happens to Voltaire, who chooses the wrong camp upon the death of Louis XIV.



IN THE BASTILLE AT THE AGE OF 20

How Voltaire is implicated, reluctantly, in a plot against the Régent. How, to avoid Bastille, he is confined in a beautiful chateau where he meets a beautiful, young, aspiring actress who gives him both love and sorrow.

The abduction of the Régent is organized at the Château de Sceaux, and what becomes of it. How and why Voltaire ends up incarcerated in the Bastille. How he ends up making his way out and how Oedipus, finally performed at the Comédie-Française, is both a success and a scandal.



LIBERTY AND EXILE

How Voltaire discovers, at his expense, what amounts to friendship among the great seigneurs whose company he keeps and how he is driven mad with sorrow and rage. To avoid Bastille yet again, he accepts a new exile and discovers English democracy.

How, upon his return to Paris, he becomes rich and no longer depends on the good will of the powerful. Where we discover Voltaire's sorrow when his lover, the actress, Adrienne Lecouvreur dies and when he sees her remains being thrown onto waste ground.

COURTIER OR REBEL?

The plot against the Régent backfires on the Duchesse du Maine. How Voltaire, naive and vain, almost gets killed by a police informer. How his love life is divided between an actress and a rich marquise. Death comes to his friend G  nonville... and how Voltaire comes dangerously close to his own end.

How he takes up writing again, returns into the favor of the court despite the hostility of the young Louis XV, and how he risks losing everything by defending a cause and a man at the same time. What becomes of Voltaire when he humiliates a conceited, arrogant noble.







Thomas Solivérès

Intouchables (2011), Les gorilles (2015) and Edmond (2018).

A commoner by birth, the future Voltaire would go on to shake up all the social and religious conventions of his time. Imprisoned in the Bastille twice, exiled to England, historian to Louis XV, despised by the French court, a millionaire at the age of 40 thanks to speculation.

It's in this way, confronted with arbitrariness, religious fanaticism and a short-sighted monarchy, that François Arouet becomes the great Voltaire.



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It's very exciting for an actor to play someone who is full of contradictions, ambivalent, a balancing act, who can sway from one side to another. Arouet seeks out the favors of power but sinks himself by his subversive writings. He is preoccupied only with his own glory – his brother tells him that: he is an egoist – he is greedy for money, women, pleasure, but at the same time he opens himself to the world and takes part. And he grows bit by bit by watching others and by taking interest in something other than himself. I also realize that it's the first time that I have been entrusted with such an active role. Until then, the majority of the characters that I had played were driven or carried along by the plot. Voltaire rebels, decides, gets angry, fights...

Thomas Soliveres

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ICHHELIEU

Victor Meutelet

*Les innocents (2018), Salaud, on t'aime. (2014),
Le Bazar de la charité (2019) and Emily in Paris (2020).*

*Close friend of Voltaire, the Duc was the grand nephew of Cardinal Richelieu.
He had been elected a member of the French Academy in 1720 and he entered
Parlement a year later, helping Voltaire in his social advancement.*





LE REGENT

Thibault de Montalembert

The Tunnel (2013), The King (2019) and Call My Agent! (2015)



ADRIENNE LECOUVREUR

Christa Thérét

Renoir (2012), LOL (Laughing Out Loud) (2008) and La fille du patron (2015)



DUCHESSE DU MAINE

Maud Wyler

La vie d'Adèle (2013), Vertige (2009) and Casse-tête chinois (2013)



MARQUISE DE BERNIERES

Valérie Bonneton

Fais pas ci, fais pas ça (2007), Les petits mouchoirs (2010) and Le bison (et sa voisine Dorine) (2003)

Press



quotes



„A dazzling and intelligent biopic, recounting the wild life of the poet, prior to his life as a philosopher, in the middle of the Age of Enlightenment, an era that aspired to win new freedoms.“

Premiere



“Three years after the powerful *Aux animaux la guerre*, **Alain Tasma** revisits the series by directing *Voltaire in Love*. Driven by an incredible energy, he has produced four episodes. Without ever seeming to crack under the burden of centuries, nor adopting an artificial, transgressive posture, the director invents something resembling a new form of historical fiction: classic pop. He thus summons the past to clarify the present. Religion, democracy, tolerance... for this director, Voltaire is completely essential today. „

Telerama

„**Thomas Solivérès** is perfect as the young **Voltaire**. Impetuous and energetic, as the philosopher in all likelihood was, this 30-year-old actor is best known for his role as **Spirou** in the comic book adaptation released in 2018. He also portrayed another literary great in *Edmond* by **Alexis Michalik**, released in theaters in 2019, playing the tempestuous artist **Cyrano de Bergerac**. The rest of the cast is also very convincing. **Thibault de Montalembert** – star of France Télévisions – is impeccable as the **Duc d'Orléans**, and **Hippolyte Girardot** as the **Duc de Sully**. We particularly like the brilliant **Constance Dollé** as **Mademoiselle Duclos**, and the irresistible **Valérie Bonneton** as the **Marquise de Bernières**. There are many women who are entertained by the dashing leading man **Thomas Solivérès/Voltaire** and his talent for gallantry.

He also seems to have seduced another woman - and not just any lady, but the First Lady of them all. Last July, **Brigitte Macron** turned up at filming at Senlis, to discover the impressive historical reconstruction work. Hailed by the most famous of literature professors, **Alain Tasma's** series could not have dreamed of better.“

Vanity Fair France

Te am



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SIÈCLEPRODUCTIONS

ZDF (STUDIOS)



Credits

Format:

4 x 52'

Commissioning channel:

France 2

Produced by:

Siècle Productions, Arrezo Film, with the participation of Media Production Services and France Télévisions

Producers:

Georges-Marc BENAMOU (Siècle Productions) and Frédéric BRUNEEL (Arrezo Film)

Co-Producer:

Bastien SIRODOT (Media Production Services)

Production Manager:

Sophie CASSE

Director:

Alain TASMA

Cast:

Thomas SOLIVÉRÈS (Voltaire)

Victor MEUTELET (Richelieu)

Victor LE BLOND (Nicolas Thieriot)

Christa THERET (Adrienne Lecouvreur)

Patrick D'ASSUMCAO (Lieutenant general)

Pascal DEMOLON (Beauregard)

Eugène MARCUSE (Villefond)

Tom PEZIER (Sauvigny)

Éric CARAVACA (Arouet, the father)

Maud WYLER (Duchesse du Maine)

Hippolyte GIRARDOT (Duc de Sully)

Valérie BONNETON (Marquise de Bernières)

Daniel HANSSENS (Paul Poisson)

Constance DOLLÉ (Mademoiselle Duclos)

Thibault de MONTALEMBERT (Duc d'Orléans / Régent)

François MARTHOURET (Cardinal de Fleury)

Gabriel ALMAER (Armand Arouet)

Bernard LE COQ (older Voltaire)...

