

A photograph of two young girls with long, curly, light brown hair. They are looking off-camera with serious, somewhat somber expressions. The girl on the left is wearing a dark blue jacket, and the girl on the right is wearing a red jacket over a white turtleneck. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a grey wall and some foliage.

Childhood & Youth in Contemporary European Cinema

John Marks

Programme

- **Introduction:** Lukas Dhont, *Close* (2022)
- **School:** Ilker Çatak, *The Teachers' Lounge* (2023); Laura Wandel, *Playground* (2021)
- **Supernatural powers:** Joachim Trier, *Thelma* (2017); Eskil Vogt, *The Innocents* (2021)
- **Parents & children:** Céline Sciamma, *Petite maman* (2021); Charlotte Wells, *Aftersun* (2022)
- **Children as observers:** Robin Campillo, *Red Island* (2023), Colm Bairéad, *The Quiet Girl* (2022)

Themes

- The child's perspective.
- The child and society.
- The 'otherness' of children.
- Mise-en-scène.
- Ourselves plus ...?



childhood
and
cinema



VICKY LEBEAU

LOCATIONS

Children & cinema

- Cinema has a fundamental connection with the child and childhood perception.
- François Truffaut, 'I never tire of filming with children. All that a child does on screen, he seems to do for the first time'.
- Mark Cousins, 'Children are movies – movies are children'.

The child's perspective

- Vittorio De Sica, *The Children Are Watching Us* (1943)
- Carol Reed, *Fallen Idol* (1948)
- Vittorio De Sica, *Bicycle Thieves* (1948)
- Victor Erice, *Spirit of the Beehive* (1973)





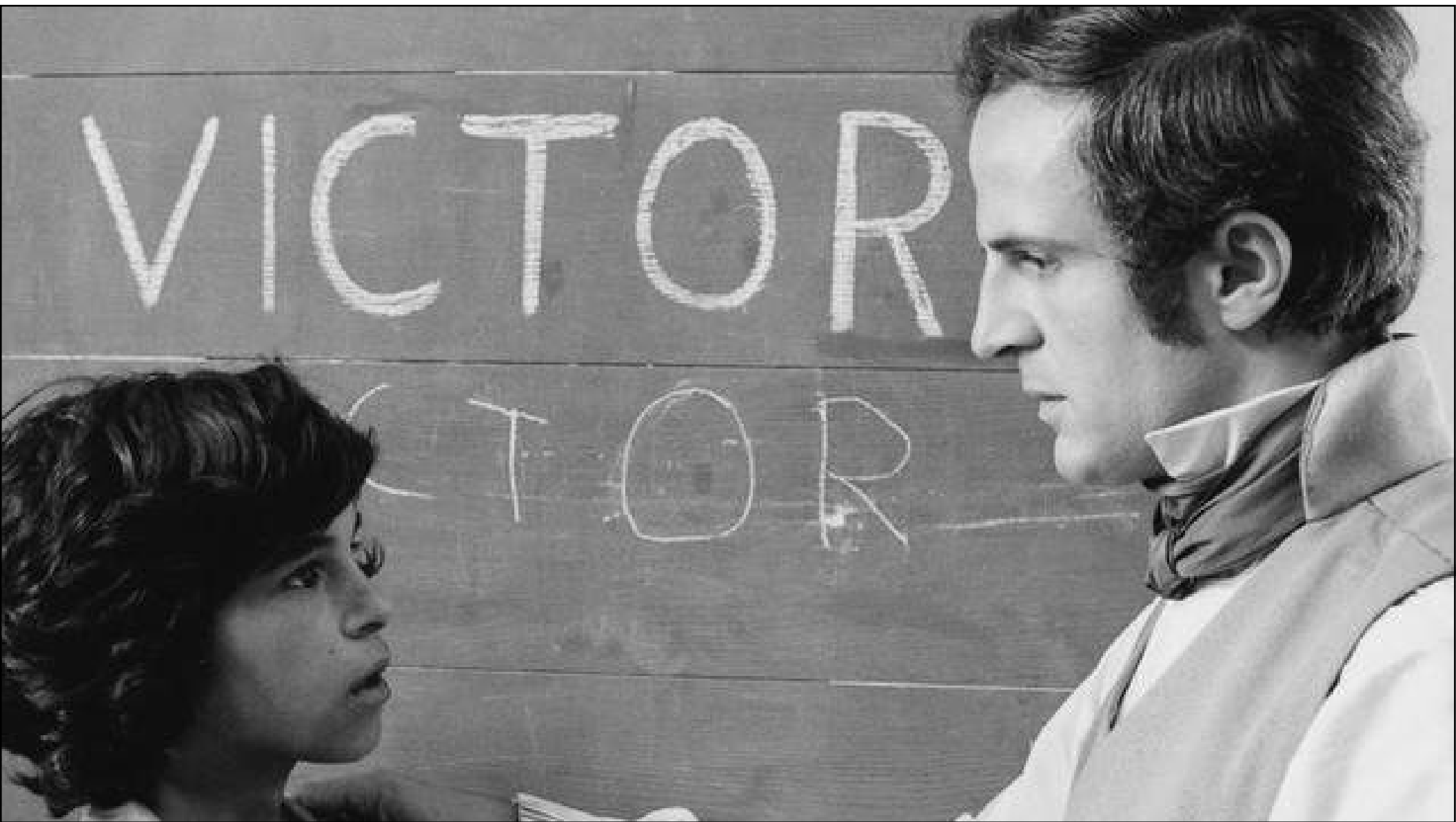


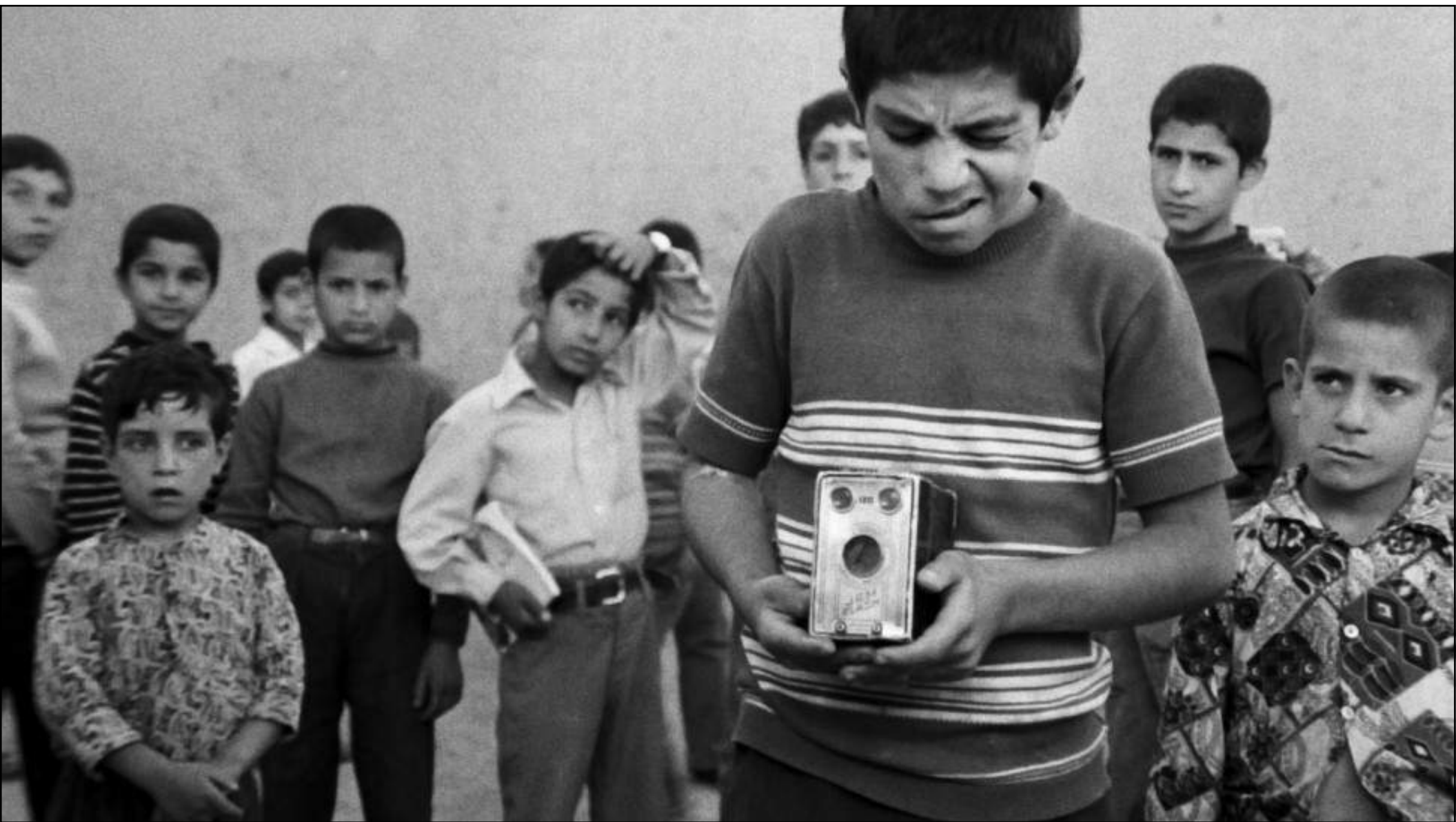
















The 'otherness' of childhood/youth

- Something that can't be easily interpreted or understood.
- A threat to established order.
- The supernatural.







Mise-en-scène

- 'The creative team creates an abundant, calming dramaturgy of space that allows for Clinch, Crowley and Bennett to embody their respective characters with full emotional power. This film is present for its actors, just as it's present for things like sunlight and late afternoon breezes, that allows one to breathe. I can trust this, you think. I can let this guide me forward'.
- Ben Riditch, *Reflections on a Silver Screen*











Children in films

- '[F]ilms have a way of reducing children's lives to formulas, replacing their strangeness and individuality with more comfortable notions of what children should be.[...] **If any overriding reason exists for filming children, it is to rediscover their complexity** – to give them the respect due to persons living in themselves rather than in our conceptions of them, and to put ourselves in a better position to learn from them'.



Ourselves plus ...?

- André Bazin, 'We demand of them [children] signs of complicity, and the audience quickly becomes enraptured and teary when children show feelings that are usually associated with grown-ups. We are thus seeking to contemplate ourselves in them: ourselves plus the innocence, awkwardness and naivete we lost. This kind of cinema moves us, but aren't we in fact just feeling sorry for ourselves?'



ANDRÉ BAZIN

Qu'est-ce que
le cinéma ?

