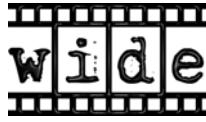


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## Synopsis

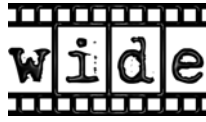
John Locke, an art historian in his forties, has a passion for orientalist painting, and particularly the theme of woman as an object: object of art, erotic object, object of infatuation – so at the same time the young slave that one cruelly punishes out of pleasure, and the unreachable goddess that one does not dare to approach.

He has taken up residence in the remains of an ancient palace in ruins in the Atlas Mountains, near Marrakech. There he is following the footsteps of the work Delacroix did in Morocco. The painter being both the subject of his studies, and a source of his fantasies — under the jealous scrutiny of Belkis, his very young and enigmatic servant-mistress.

Trapped by a bogus blind man, he falls into the clutches of Anatoli, a forger and coordinator of Orientalism exhibitions for perverse amateurs. Under the false promise of getting him some real sketches drawn by Delacroix in Morocco, Anatoli traps him, and passes the responsibility for a sexual crime committed by someone else onto him.

Despite Belkis' desperate objections, John is drawn further and further into this web of sado-erotic phantasms by Anatoli and his mistress Claudine. John stumbles into a series of recurring, elusive encounters with Hermione, a willowy, evanescent woman in the medina, who lures him through a labyrinth of Marrakech alleyways and then vanishes into thin air. Is she a ghost, the victim of the plot, or the manipulator of all this?

What John fails to see, is the fact that his servant Belkis, with whom he spends his nights, is in love with him, but does not dare to admit it. He loves her too, but is too lost in his dreams to realize it, and to understand that he is dragging her into a tragic ending.



## **Alain Robbe-Grillet**

Alain Robbe-Grillet was born in Brest in 1922. After initially studying literature in high school, he then studied mathematics and biology. He graduated from the Paris-based "Institut National Agronomique" (National Institute of Agronomy) in 1945, and embarked on a career of scientific research in the French Caribbean and in France.

Then at age thirty, he abruptly stopped, and decided to write books and direct movies. His novels were at first heavily criticized by the critics of the time. But after working for 25 years as a literary consultant for the French publishing house "Les Editions de Minuit", he succeeded in winning, (along with such now famous friends as Samuel Beckett, Nathalie Sarraute, Claude Simon, Marguerite Duras), worldwide recognition and wide readership for the last literary movement in France known as "Le Nouveau Roman" or "New Novel".

He is still teaching modern literature and film to graduate students in several American Universities nowadays.

### **Bibliography**

#### **Novels (Editions de Minuit)**

Les Gommages (1953)  
Le Voyeur (1955)  
La Jalousie (1957)  
Dans le labyrinthe (1959)  
La Maison de rendez-vous (1965)  
Projet pour une révolution à New-York (1970)  
Topologie d'une cité fantôme (1976)  
Souvenirs du Triangle d'Or (1978)  
Un régicide (1978)  
Djinn (1981)  
La reprise (2001)

#### **Short story collection (Editions de Minuit)**

Instantanés (1962)

#### **Cine-novels**

L'Année dernière à Marienbad (1961)  
L'Immortelle (1963)  
Glissements progressifs du plaisir (1974)  
C'est Gradiva qui vous appelle (2002)

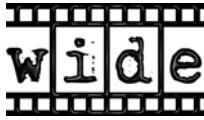
#### **Imaginary autobiographies (Editions de Minuit)**

Les Romanesques : Le Miroir qui revient (1985)  
Angélique ou l'enchantement (1988)  
Les derniers jours de Corinthe (1994)

#### **Essays**

Pour un Nouveau Roman (1963, Editions de Minuit)  
Le voyageur, essais et entretiens (2001, Editions Christian Bourgois)  
Prefaces à une vie d'écrivain (2005, Editions du Seuil)

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#### **Books in collaboration/about others artists**

Rêves de Jeunes filles (photographies de David Hamilton, 1971, Robert Laffont)  
Les Demoiselles d'Hamilton (photographies de David Hamilton, 1972, Robert Laffont)  
Construction d'un temple en ruines à la déesse Vanadé (avec Paul Delvaux, 1975, le Bateau-Lavoir)  
La Belle Captive (sur des peintures de Magritte, Bibliothèque des arts, 1976)  
Traces suspectes en surface (avec Robert Rauschenberg, 1978)

#### **Filmography**

L'année dernière à Marienbad (Last Year at Marienbad) (1961, screenplay)  
L'Immortelle (1963)  
Trans-Europe-Express (1966)  
L'homme qui ment (The Man who Lies) (1968)  
L'Eden et après (Eden and Afterwards) (1970)  
Glissements progressifs du plaisir (The Slow Slidings of Pleasure) (1974)  
Le jeu avec le feu (Playing with Fire) (1975)  
N'a pris les dés (1975, TV)  
La belle captive (The Beautiful Captive) (1986)  
Un Bruit Qui Rend Fou (1995)  
C'est Gradiva qui vous appelle (2006)