
Mapping Rohmer - A Video Essay

By Richard Misek

[Mapping Rohmer](#) from [Richard Misek](#) on [Vimeo](#).

'Mapping Rohmer' explores representations of urban space in the films of Eric Rohmer. Rohmer was the quintessential Parisian filmmaker: he lived in Paris, worked in Paris, and died in Paris. Between the late 1950s and mid-2000s, he shot over twenty short films, feature films, and documentaries on location in Paris. Situated in the space between mash-up, experimental film, and digital film criticism, 'Mapping Rohmer' journeys through Rohmer's Paris using only footage from his films. It looks through Rohmer's lens, and follows the various paths that he, his actors, and his camera together traced through the city.

As François Penz notes,[\[1\]](#) within his films, Rohmer maintained spatial continuity – shot by shot, his characters travel through contiguous locations; they stick to the map. By contrast, the lifelong path traced by Rohmer encompasses unconnected *arrondissements* at discontinuous times, stops and starts, loops and repeats. Its logic is more psychogeographic than topographic, and provides insight into the nature of Rohmer's relationship with, and perception of, Paris. 'Mapping Rohmer' argues that individually and collectively, Rohmer's films constitute a complex cinematic cartography, in which narrative, moving image, and urban form map onto each other. By creating new connections between Rohmer's films, 'Mapping Rohmer' accents this complexity.

Endnotes:

[\[1\]](#) François Penz, 'From Topographical Coherence to Creative Geography: Rohmer's *The Aviator's Wife* and Rivette's *Pont du Nord*'. In Andrew Webber and Emma Wilson (eds), *Cities in Transition: the moving image and the modern metropolis* (London: Wallflower Press, 2008), 130.

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