

Jean-Pierre Melville's

ARMY OF shadows

**U.S. PREMIERE OF FRENCH RESISTANCE EPIC
STARRING LINO VENTURA & SIMONE SIGNORET
OPENING IN CITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY
A RIALTO PICTURES RELEASE**

ARMY OF SHADOWS (1969), Jean-Melville's epic of the French Resistance during World War II starring Lino Ventura and Simone Signoret, will be released for the first time ever in the United States by Rialto Pictures. Opening across the country, **ARMY OF SHADOWS** will be shown in a new restoration supervised by the film's cinematographer, Pierre Lhomme, with a new translation and subtitles commissioned by Rialto.

France, 1943: an escape from the Gestapo, so sudden and hairsbreadth as to leave the toughest of tough guys gasping with the icy sweat of terror and relief; two brothers remain unaware, to the end, of each other's clandestine activities; patriots who, in relentless pursuit of traitors, must steel themselves to the most brutal face-to-face violence. In a typically laconic and understated performance, Lino Ventura (*Elevator to the Gallows*, *Classe Tous Risques*) stars as an ordinary man in the center of extraordinary events, as he and his compatriots (including *maîtresse* of disguise Simone Signoret) go underground in the face of the German Occupation – but the traitors in their own midst can be equally treacherous.

Precursor of the New Wave and legend of the French gangster film Jean-Pierre Melville (*Bob Le Flambeur*, *Le Cercle Rouge*, *Le Samourai*) realized the dream of a quarter century when he adapted “the book of the Resistance,” written by Joseph Kessel (*Belle de Jour*) in the white heat of immediacy. Melville turned the detached, unblinking gaze of his film noir classics on these memories of his youth – he himself served for years underground – adding a jarring finale of his own, so stoically uncompromising as to reduce Kessel himself to sobs on his first viewing.

But **ARMY OF SHADOWS** shared in the general U.S. indifference to Melville's now-acclaimed-as-classic oeuvre and was never released here – until now. Original cinematographer Pierre Lhomme personally supervised this superb new 35mm color restoration.

“STUNNING...COMPLEX AND GRIPPING... A LOST MASTERPIECE.”

– *The Guardian* (London, March 2006)

“SUPERB... Boasts a startling visual quality and is laced with moments of dry, sardonic wit that serve only to emphasize its devastating emotional core even more.” – *Time Out* (London, March 2006)

“GRIPS TIGHTER THAN A GESTAPO HANDCUFF... A film of noirish compositions and fantastic cool.”
– *The Independent* (London, March 2006)

“The restored print of a Jean-Pierre Melville classic easily beats its modern competition.”

– *The Times* (London, March 2006)

1969 France 145 minutes In French with English subtitles Color 1.85:1

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