



## A Bout de Souffle: French Film Guide

*Ramona Fotiade*

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One of the most charismatic feature films of the New Wave, *À Bout de souffle* (1960) has retained its appeal not only as the emphatic statement of a generational break with tradition, but also as Godard's earliest rendition of a set of thematic and stylistic motifs that would become his trademark. *À Bout de souffle* is now a cult film, propelled in part by the memorable coupling of its leading actors, Jean-Paul Belmondo and Jean Seberg, whose story on screen seemed to portray the troubled love affair between French cinema and Hollywood.

In this original guide to the film, Ramona Fotiade analyses in depth its production and reception, as well as its mise-en-scène and editing. She situates *À Bout de souffle* in relation to Godard's filmography and critical writings up to 1960, focusing on a narrative and visual discourse that is now identified with a distinctive strand in postmodern French cinema. She also explores the impact of Godard's early counter-narrative and visual strategies on the independent American filmmakers and the French Cinéma du Look during the 1980s and 1990s.

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