

La Promesse de l'Aube

("Promise at Dawn")

France / US : 1969/70 : dir. Jules Dassin : Avco / Nathalie : 102 min

prod: Jules Dassin : scr: Jules Dassin : dir.ph.: Jean Badal

[François Raffoul](#)

Melina Mercouri; Assaf Dayan; Fernand Gravey; Despo Diamatidou; Jacqueline Porel;

Didier Haudepin; Carole Cole; Christian Duvaliex; Jean Martin; Perlo Vita (= Jules Dassin)

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	KBytes	Ω □ ≠ Z ∞	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5276	1½	5	0		- - - - -	No	Unseen

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001 review:

"Seventh teaming of Mercouri and husband Dassin, who produced, directed, wrote, and also does a bit role as Russian silent-film star Ivan Mousjoukine. It's mostly Mercouri's show, an uneven but well-acted chronicle of the life of writer Romain Gary and his resourceful actress mother. Dayan is good as the young adult Gary. **½ "

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

"Romain Gary is the illegitimate child of Russian film idol Mosjukine and a second-rate actress who, on her son's account, works her way up the social ladder and even wangles a visa for France. As an adolescent and young man it costs him a great deal of trouble to break free of her possessiveness. The autobiographical novel is turned by Dassin (who himself plays the fun caricature of Mosjukine) into a vehicle for Mercouri, who snatches so hungrily at the dramatic potential of the part that not only her film son, but the viewer too, feels swamped. ** "

Halliwell's Film Guide review

"The boyhood of novelist Romain Gary and the last years of his fearsome Russian Jewish actress mother with whom he traipses around Europe. Scrappy star vehicle and unnecessary biopic in a variety of indulgent styles. Wr: Jules Dassin, from the play "First Love" by Samuel Taylor."

The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television review:

"Melina Mercouri unwatchably histrionic as the actress mother of novelist Romain Gary (three actors at various ages). As usual, director-husband Jules Dassin permits her to over-act to an embarrassing degree. 77 "

Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89 review:

"Entertaining if slightly hokey melodrama based on Romain Gary's remembrances of life with Mother. Mama was a larger-than-life actress who provides young Romain with a globe-trotting upbringing. If only Mercouri didn't ham it up until you want to put her in restraints. **½ "

[no listing in "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Nothing else is known of François Raffoul, who presumably plays the adolescent Gary. Also among the cast is Didier Haudepin, who played the younger of the two boys in "**LES AMITIÉS PARTICULIERES**" (64). He's 18 here. Somewhat similar – at any rate in terms of a stifling mother-son relationship (which in that case verged upon the incestuous) - was Bertolucci's "**LA LUNA**", where the mother was an opera diva and the son of 14/15 dabbling with drugs.

See subject index under **AUTOBIOGRAPHY / VIDEO DIARIES**.