**Swann in Love**

Swann in Love, directed by Volker Schlondorff, starring Jeremy Irons and Ornella Muti, at Copely Place.

Proust on the screen: a long-standing challenge has finally been taken up. Un Amour de Swann, the source for the film, is a separate part of Marcel Proust’s seven-volume film, is a separate part of Marcel Proust’s A la Recherche du Temps Perdu. The novel, the wealthy bachelor Charles Swann, is a respected member of the Verdurin clan (of which Odette forms part) struck in a concise and elegant way. But in general, if you are looking for Proust in this movie, you are likely to be disappointed.

Much care has been bestowed on the background of the action, and setting, scenery and costumes produce a visual image which is mostly agreeable, and delightful in places. I found the acting mostly extraordinary, but Alain Delon does a good job in portraying the outwardly polished, internally passionate Baron de Charlus. The film is more or less self-contained, although details may elude someone unfamiliar with its cultural setting. Some points disappear in the noise of the translation (the film is in French, subtitled), as when Odette’s characteristic of an antique interior as “mystique-duper” is rendered simply as “medieval.”

The translator reproduced what Odette meant, not what she said. In dealing with Proust, the movie as a whole does exactly the opposite. It seems that the challenge remains open.

Michael Bas