

Marie Tussaud

The reluctant revolutionary



WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
Nina Barbier

WRITTEN IN COLLABORATION WITH
Lindsay Shapero
Emmy awarded for Enid Blyton BBC4

SHOOTING LOCATIONS
France (Paris, Versailles, Strasbourg...)
England (London...)
Switzerland (Berne)

PRODUCTION PLANNING
Shooting : Spring 2015
Postproduction : Autumn 2015
Delivery : December 2015

COPRODUCTION
GEDEON Programmes
Oxford Film and Television (UK)
Arte

FORMATS
90', 52'
Full treatment available upon request.

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A Nina Barbier documentary fiction

Marie Tussaud



The reluctant revolutionary



A woman caught up in the storm of History

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HD | 90' 52'

Marie Tussaud, the Reluctant Revolutionary

The incredible life saga of a woman ahead of her time caught up in the storm of History and its Revolutions

Mrs Tussaud against the backdrop of Revolutionary Europe



Marie Tussaud, a character rooted in the 18th revolutionary century, had a front row seat at two Revolutions: a political revolution in France and the industrial revolution in Britain. Following in her footsteps, we will meet great characters like Voltaire, Rousseau, Marie-Antoinette...

We will also revisit the history of wax portraiture and popular entertainment in full bloom in the early 19th century when Great Britain was undergoing an unprecedented industrial and economic boom.

The story of the first self-made woman to set her mark in the history of popular entertainment

Marie Tussaud was a talented wax artist, as well as an entrepreneur, but also a marketing pioneer... what a challenge for a woman in those times !

She toured Ireland, Scotland and England with a travelling museum, before ending her life in London at the head of a colossal empire : the "Madame Tussaud's" wax museum.

How did a woman survive such dangerous times, and rise to the status of National Treasure in a country whose language she could barely master?



The drama documentary is divided into **five key chapters**:

Birth of a Myth – Marie's childhood and family background. From her birth as Marie Grossholtz in Strasbourg in 1761, her move to Bern in 1763, then arriving in Paris with her mother and 'uncle' Philippe Curtius, a wax sculptor.

Revolution! – through Curtius, she met many revolutionaries and managed to survive the terror of the 1780s and the French Revolution.

Love and Loss – the death of Curtius in 1794, her subsequent marriage to François at the late age of 34, leaving Paris and her younger son to tour Great Britain with Philipstal in 1802. The difference between Great Britain – a rapidly industrialising country - and France, old-fashioned and still rural.

A Self-Made Woman – how Philipstal exploited her and she was forced to tour for 27 years, while the Industrial Revolution exploded around her in England. Marie took advantage of the advancements in printing and transport.

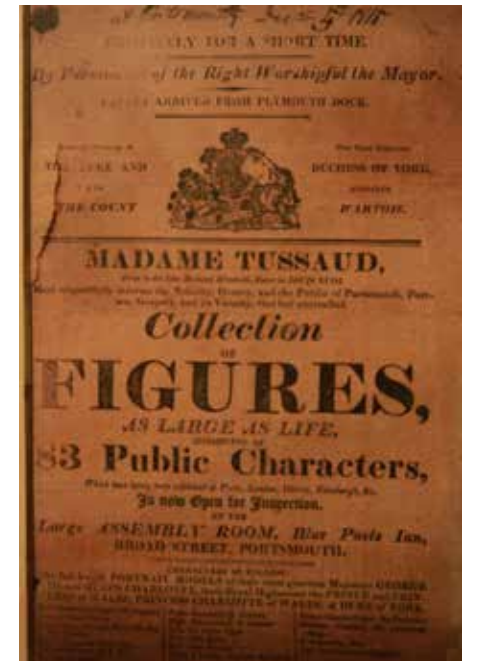
La Grande Dame – by 1837 Marie had escaped Philipstal and bought a permanent exhibition site in Baker Street, where she made her fortune until her death in 1850. Thanks to Queen Victoria, Britain was falling in love with the monarchy again and Marie could cash in on being a Royalist.

Full treatment available on request

An investigation

Structured as an investigation, the film combines interviews with Tussaud's family heirs, historians and dramatized sequences. Archives and personal items belonging to Marie Tussaud will give precious insights into the Historical context.

Visiting today the places Madame Tussaud lived in, we will be looking for clues about her life and work guided by her own Mémoires published in 1838 (*Memories and souvenirs from the French revolution*) and the books by British historians Pamela Pilbeam and Kate Berridge.



Expert contributors



Anthony Tussaud

Marie's great-great-grandson



Pamela Pilbeam

Historian, Author of the book *Madame Tussaud: and the History of Waxworks*



Kate Berridge

Author of *Waxing Mythical the Life and Legend of Madame Tussaud*



Steve Mansfield

Principal sculptor at the Madame Tussaud's wax museum

Tussaud's Empire in 2014: museums all around the world

