

Tournées Festival
Recent French Films from Around The World

September 28th and 29th
in Muhlenberg College's updated screening facility
Trumbower Hall Room 130

All films will be shown with English subtitles

Friday September 28th

7pm

Vers le sud (Heading South)

Laurent Cantet, France/Canada, 2005, 107 min.

In the late 1970's, Ellen, a 55-year-old college teacher of French literature, takes her annual vacation at an out-of-the-way Haitian resort. She is the queen bee among unattached middle-aged women from Europe and North America who come to Haiti to have sex with poor black boys whom they pay with both expensive gifts and money. The film explores the intersections of cultural imperialism, sexual tourism and women's liberation in a repressive dictatorship. Weighing the value of erotic pleasure and the emotional risks involved in its pursuit, the women address questions of sex, love, aging, loneliness and desire in blunt personal monologues. The film is a powerful reminder that individual behavior and attitudes are closely intertwined with global political issues.

"Heading South is a beautifully written, seamlessly directed film with award-worthy performances by Ms. Rampling and Ms. Young."

-- Stephen Holden, *The New York Times*

*Post-film discussion led by Dr. Chris Kovats-Bernat, author of *Sleeping Rough in Port-au-Prince: An Ethnography of Street Children and Violence in Haiti*

9:30pm

Moolaadé (Sanctuary)

Ousmane Sembene, Senegal, 2004, 134 min.

Moolaadé, legendary director Ousmane Sembene's last film before his death this past spring, takes on the explosive issue of female circumcision. Set in a small African village, four young girls face a ritual purification that involves genital mutilation. They flee to the house of Collé Ardo Gallo Sy, a strong-willed woman who once managed to shield her teenage daughter from circumcision. Collé invokes the time-honored custom of "moolaadé" (sanctuary) to protect the fugitives, creating a conflict in the community and forcing every villager to take sides. Sembene sets the action amidst a colorful, vibrant tapestry of village life. *Moolaadé* was the second of an intended trilogy of films about heroism in daily

life that were, to use Sembene's own words, about the "underground struggle" of people who are often overlooked by their governments and the rest of world.

"This film... is infused with a remarkable buoyancy of spirit... a rousingly political film."
-- A.O. Scott, *The New York Times*

Saturday, September 29th

4pm

De battre mon coeur s'est arrêté (The Beat That My Heart Skipped)

Jacques Audiard, France, 2005, 107 min.

Jacques Audiard has combined equal parts Bach and rock, in a groundbreaking Gallic transformation of a thoroughly American genre: the gangster-seeking-redemption film. Twenty-eight-year-old Thomas is a sleazy real estate manager who expels squatters from low-rent buildings. An unexpected encounter with the agent of his late mother who was a classical musician propels him back into his almost forgotten world of classical music, even as he continues to strong-arm deadbeats and other thugs under pressure from his slumlord father. As the conflict between his parents' widely disparate spheres intensifies, Tom feels his longing to be a musician undermining his place in the shadows of the Paris underworld. This City of Lights thriller has a richly orchestrated mélange of menace, yearning, and grace.

"A blistering film you feel in the pit of your stomach, a jumpy, edgy piece of work that thrust us into a personal maelstrom so tortured and intense, the emotions could be spread with a knife."
-- Kenneth Turan, *Los Angeles Times*.

6-7 pm

Dinner buffet reception

7pm

Indigènes (Days of Glory)

Rachid Bouchareb, France/Morocco/Algeria, 2006, 120 min.

Indigènes is the powerful story of four men who were among the 130 000 North Africans who helped liberate France during the Second World War, despite never having set eyes on the country before. With a reputation for endurance and great courage, the North African soldiers were sent to the front lines of the battlefields. Although they were fighting for the freedom of France, these soldiers faced tremendous racism in the military and in French society, forcing them to struggle for equality of treatment at every turn. A dramatic and moving war film, *Indigènes* highlights the struggles of these nearly forgotten liberators, and generated considerable controversy in France upon its release.

"A chronicle of courage and sacrifice, of danger and solidarity, of heroism and futility, told with power, grace and feeling and brought alive by first-rate acting. A damn good war movie."
-- A.O. Scott, *The New York Times*

*Post-film discussion led by Dr. Thomas Cragin, author of *Murder in Parisian Streets: Manufacturing Crime and Justice in the Popular Press, 1830-1900*

9:30pm

La Petite Jérusalem (Little Jerusalem)

Karin Albou, France, 2004, 96 min.

La Petite Jérusalem is the nickname of Sarcelles, a low-income housing neighborhood near Paris. Among the high number of Jewish immigrants who live there, a Tunisian family of eight shares a cramped apartment: Laura (a French-born, 18-year-old student), her sister Mathilde, their mother, Mathilde's husband Ariel, and the couple's four children. Independent and strong-willed, Laura refuses Ariel's orthodoxy and her mother's superstition. Instead, she throws herself into the study of Kant which leads her to take evening walks. On one such walk, she meets an Algerian-Muslim immigrant named Djamel, and their relationship develops while tensions between Muslim and Jewish communities are rising. In her first feature film, Karin Albou delicately depicts the intimate lives of two women while raising questions of religious interpretation, freedom, sexuality and family relationships.

"Very well-acted and directed, shot with great vigor, mostly in roaming closeups that plunge us right into the thick of things."

-- Michael Wilmington, *Chicago Tribune*