

The Museum of Modern Art

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWEST FILMS AT FIRST-RUN PARIS THEATERS TO BE SHOWN CONCURRENTLY AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART'S PERSPECTIVES ON FRENCH CINEMA

For the first time, French films now showing at first-run Paris movie theaters will be concurrently on view in New York when The Museum of Modern Art presents PERSPECTIVES ON FRENCH CINEMA. This program begins its engagement on March 13 and continues until April 3. It will include showings of "La Gueule Ouverte," the latest critical success of Maurice Pialat, "La Femme de Jean," the story of a divorcée recently made by a woman director, Yannick Bellon, and "L'Important C'est d'Aimer," the just opened Romy Schneider film with Claude Dauphin. This last is the biggest grosser in Paris at the present time.

All the films in PERSPECTIVES ON FRENCH CINEMA were made in 1974 and opened the beginning of this year or are not yet in release. The only earlier film is the 1973 documentary "French People, If You Only Knew," made by Andre Harris and Alain de Sedouy who collaborated with Marcel Ophuls on "The Sorrow and the Pity." "French People, If You Only Knew," is the only documentary in the series, and concerns the life and times of Charles de Gaulle. Its release was delayed because of objections it encountered.

PERSPECTIVES ON FRENCH CINEMA was conceived by the Société des Réalistes de Films, the organization of French film directors whose objective is to focus attention on films non-conformist in nature, diverse in scope, independently made, and free of censorship. The directors' chief concern is for freedom from restriction of any kind, and for the enhancement of the quality of contemporary French cinema.

The Museum program was organized with the cooperation of the French Film Office in New York. As a rule it is only possible to see new French films abroad and at film festivals. The French Film Office is making it possible for prospective buyers of the American rights, film critics and the public to see the films almost immediately after the completion of production. The pictures have been subtitled for the Museum showings.

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The twelve pictures chosen by the Société des Réalistes de Films offer a varied program. Probably the most important film in the group is "La Gueule Ouverte," which Variety called "an instant classic." The work of Maurice Pialat deals with a difficult theme, the effect of one member's death on others in the family. It has been compared favorably with Ingmar Bergman's "Cries and Whispers."

The Pialat film according to Variety's correspondent, Gene Moskowitz, has a "muted but uncanny feel for people and character, the family, and the dying person, all revealed, caught in this circle with extraordinary insight, tact and emotional depth." He goes on to say that despite its theme it does not shatter or overwhelm or even move one too deeply. Rather, strangely, it gratifies.

The director of "La Gueule Ouverte" is considered one of the most private, personal and gifted filmmakers on the local scene. The author of "Nous Ne Vieillerons Pas Ensemble" ("We Will Not Grow Old Together"), published in 1972, he attended the Beaux Arts, prepared for a career in architecture, finally became a painter and exhibited before he was thirty. He also acted in the theater and on the screen prior to his career in television and in the film. His first feature was "L'Enfance Nue" ("Naked Childhood").

Yannick Bellon, whose background is documentary film, wrote and directed "La Femme de Jean," in which a married woman undergoes an identity crisis when she is suddenly abandoned. Receiving unexpected encouragement from her teen-age son, she embarks on a new career, finds new relations and adopts new values. This is a feminine liberation theme reputedly treated with insight and objectivity. According to the director, the film goes well beyond the problems of being female. "It's about a return to life, a rediscovery, a liberation. And in that respect it concerns men as much as women."

Director Jean-Daniel Simon attempts to alter the image of rural France. The

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people, he says, "are not comedy characters with thick accents and empty heads," as personified by Fernandel. In his film "Il Pleut Toujours Ou C'est Mouillé," the provincial characters are portrayed by actual citizens of Mas d'Agenais. They developed a strong camaraderie with the professional actors alongside whom they worked.

Less tolerant of provincial mores, "La Coupe A Dix Francs" concerns an adolescent growing up in the Midi in a rigid environment against which he rebels in a drastic and violent way. The director, Philippe Condroyer, based the original story on an actual event.

"L'Important C'est D'Aimer," another social parable made by the Polish filmmaker Andrej Zulawski, has Romy Schneider giving a "first rate" performance impersonating an unsuccessful actress. It is an unusual picture if it is "accepted on its own terms as an almost symbolical tale of human survival and love," reports the Variety correspondent. This is Zulawski's third picture; his second was banned in Poland.

Other perspectives are provided by the contribution of critic-writer Robert Benayoun responsible for the surrealist comedy of manners titled "Serieux Comme Le Plaisir"; by the theatrical group called the Café de la Gare with their first experimental film, "Along the Fango River," made in Corsica; by Jacques Doillon's "Les Doigts Dans La Tête," which has been called another "400 Blows." The picture has become a cinematic event in Paris.

Two films on the program, "Loulou" and "Une Femme Fatale" have not yet opened but like the others in the series they represent the latest trends among today's French filmmakers, including one program devoted to recent animated films.

PLEASE TURN OVER FOR THE SCHEDULE

Francais, Si Vous Saviez (French People, If You Only Knew). 1973. By André Harris, Alain De Sédouy. Three part documentary on the "meaning, career and times" of Charles De Gaulle. (New Yorker Films). 465 min.

Thursday, March 13: Noon-2:30, Part 1, Passing By Lorraine, 1914-1940
3:30-6:00, Part 2, General Here We Are 1940-1945
7:00-9:45, Part 3, I Understand You 1950s-1963

La Gueule Ouverte. 1974. By Maurice Pialat. 86 min.

Friday, March 14, 2:00 and Monday, March 17, 5:30

Une Femme Fatale. 1975. By Jacques Doniol-Valcroze. 110 min.

Saturday, March 15, 3:00 and Monday, March 17, 2:00

Serieux Comme Le Plaisir. 1975. By Robert Benayoun. 100 min.

Saturday, March 15, 5:30 and Friday, March 21, 2:00

Au Long de Riviere Fango. 1975. By Sotha. With members of the Café de la Gare. 110 min.

Sunday, March 16, 5:30 and Thursday, March 20, 8:00

Short animated films by Manuel Otero, Paul Dopff, Francis Masse, Gilles Baur, Daniel Suter, Claude Luyet, Bernard Palacio. 77 min.

Thursday, March 20, 5:30 and Saturday, March 22, 3:00

L'Important C'Est D'Aimer. 1974. By Andrei Zulawski. With Romy Schneider, Claude Dauphin. 113 min.

Saturday, March 22, 5:30 and Monday, March 24, 2:00

Les Doigts Dans La Tete. 1974. By Jacques Doillon. 100 min.

Sunday, March 23, 5:30 and Thursday, March 27, 8:00

La Femme de Jean. 1974. By Yannick Bellon. 95 min.

Monday, March 24, 5:30 and Tuesday, April 1, 5:30

La Coupe à Dix Francs. 1974. By Philippe Condroyer. 102 min.

Thursday, March 27, 5:30 and Saturday, March 29, 3:00

Loulou. 1975. By Edouard Luntz. 85 min.

Friday, March 28, 2:00 and Thursday, April 3, 5:30

Short films, program to be announced.

Saturday, March 29, 5:30 and Monday, March 31, 2:00

Il Pleut Toujours ou C'Est Mouille. 1974. By Jean-Daniel Simon. 95 min.

Sunday, March 30, 5:30 and Monday, March 31, 5:30

All feature films have English sub-titles.

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