

# The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release  
November 1994

## DENYS ARCAND

November 18 - December 2, 1994

An exhibition of works by Quebec writer/director Denys Arcand (b. 1941), one of the most consistently interesting and perceptive filmmakers working in North America, is on view at The Museum of Modern Art from November 18 to December 2, 1994. Including fifteen documentaries and fiction films, **DENYS ARCAND** provides a rare opportunity to see a range of the filmmaker's works, which, but for a few, have not been shown in this country.

Arcand's films are distinguished by a dry wit inflected by an unsentimental empathy. Although his documentaries involve the political and social realities of life in Quebec, their wry analyses and mock detachment transcend provincialism. Arcand's theatrical films concern the myriad forms of alienation -- sexual and economic, in particular -- that define contemporary life.

The exhibition features the two films for which Arcand may be best known in the United States: *Le déclin de l'empire américain* (*The Decline of the American Empire*, 1985), about a group of friends who gather one autumn day in a comfortable country house; and *Jésus de Montréal* (*Jesus of Montreal*, 1989), which details what happens when an updated Passion Play is staged with an excess of enthusiasm.

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Also presented in the series are two documentaries by Arcand -- *Québec: Duplessis et après...* (*Quebec: Duplessis and After*, 1972) and *Le confort et l'indifférence* (*Comfort and Indifference*, 1981) -- that are especially timely. These works address the issue of sovereignty for Quebec, which the recently elected Parti Québécois supports.

Additional highlights include *Rejéanne Padovani* (1972), a dark Montreal satire about power and corruption; *On est au coton* (*Cotton Mill: Treadmill*, 1969), an exposé of labor exploitation, which was originally banned by the National Film Board of Canada that commissioned the film; *La maudite galette* (*The Damned Loot*, 1971), the story of an in-family robbery gone wrong and Arcand's first theatrical feature; *Gina* (1974), a fictional work about a stripper based on acquaintances that the filmmaker and crew made while shooting *On est au coton*; *Le crime d'Ovide Plouffe* (*The Crime of Ovide Plouffe*, 1984), the story of a young man who resists his mother's wish to become a priest; and *Seul ou avec d'autres* (*Alone or with Others*, 1962), Quebec's first independent film, which Arcand collaborated on as a student at the University of Montreal.

**DENYS ARCAND** was organized by Laurence Kardish, Curator, Department of Film and Video, and is made possible through the collaboration of Telefilm Canada, Cinematheque Ontario, La Cinémathèque Québécoise, and the National Film Board of Canada. Support for this program is also given by Alliance Communications Corporation, the Canadian Consulate General, New York, and the Quebec Government House, New York.

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For further information or film stills, contact Christine Dietlin, Film Press Representative, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9752.

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### Exhibition Schedule

#### Friday, November 18

- 2:30 p.m. *La maudite galette (The Damned Loot)*. 1971. Canada. Denys Arcand. Written by Jacques Benoit. With Marcel Sabourin, René Caron, Luce Guilbeault. In French, English subtitles. 100 min.
- 6:00 p.m. *Réjeanne Padovani*. 1972. Canada. Denys Arcand. Written by Arcand and Jacques Benoit. With Luce Guibeault, Jean Lajeunesse, Roger Lebel. In French, English subtitles. 94 min. Filmmaker present.
- 8:15 p.m. *Gina*. 1974. Canada. Written and directed by Denys Arcand. With Céline Lomez, Claude Blanchard, Frédérique Collin. In French, English subtitles. 95 min.

#### Saturday, November 19

- 2:00 p.m. *Le déclin de l'empire américain (The Decline of the American Empire)*. 1985. Canada. Written and directed by Denys Arcand. With Dominique Michel, Dorothee Berryman, Pierre Curzi. In French, English subtitles. 95 min.
- 5:00 p.m. *On est au coton (Cotton Mill: Treadmill)*. 1969. Canada. Denys Arcand, Serge Beauchemin, Pierre Bernier, Guy L. Coté, Alain Dostie, Gérald Godin, Pierre Mignot. A collaborative documentary made for the National Film Board of Canada (and originally withheld from release) about labor and textile mills in Quebec. In French, English subtitles. 158 min.

#### Sunday, November 20

- 2:00 p.m. *Le crime d'Ovide Plouffe. (The Crime of Ovide Plouffe)*. 1984. Canada. Denys Arcand. Written by Arcand and Roger Lemelin, based on the novel by Lemelin. With Gabriel Arcand, Jean Carmet, Anne Létourneau. In French, English subtitles. 107 min.
- 5:00 p.m. *Love and Human Remains*. 1993. Canada. Denys Arcand. Adapted by Brad Fraser from his play *Love and Other Human Remains*. With Thomas Gibson, Ruth Marshall, Cameron Bancroft. 100 min.

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**Monday, November 21**

2:30 p.m. *Montréal vu par . . . (Montreal Sextet)*. 1991. Canada. Denys Arcand, Michel Brault, Atom Egoyan, Jacques Leduc, Léa Pool, and Patricia Rozema. In French and English, with English subtitles. 123 min.

6:00 p.m. *Le crime d'Ovide Plouffe (The Crime of Ovide Plouffe)*.  
See Sunday, November 20, at 2:00.

**Tuesday, November 22**

2:30 p.m. *On est au coton (Cotton Mill: Treadmill)*.  
See Saturday, November 19, at 5:00.

6:00 p.m. *La maudite galette (The Damned Loot)*.  
See Friday, November 18, at 2:30.

**Friday, November 25**

2:30 p.m. *Montréal vu par . . . (Montreal Sextet)*.  
See Monday, November 21, at 2:30.

6:00 p.m. *Jésus de Montréal (Jesus of Montreal)*. 1989. Canada. Written and directed by Denys Arcand. With Lothaire Bluteau, Catherine Wilkening, Johanne-Marie Tremblay. In French, English subtitles. 119 min.

8:30 p.m. *Le déclin de l'empire américain (The Decline of the American Empire)*.  
See Saturday, November 19, at 2:00.

**Saturday, November 26**

2:00 p.m. *Gina*.  
See Friday, November 18, at 8:15.

5:00 p.m. *Réjeanne Padovani*.  
See Friday, November 18, at 6:00.

**Sunday, November 27**

2:00 p.m. *Jésus de Montréal (Jesus of Montreal)*.  
See Friday, November 25, at 6:00.

5:00 p.m. *Montréal vu par . . . (Montreal Sextet)*.  
See Monday, November 21, at 2:30.

**Monday, November 28**

- 3:00 p.m. *Québec: Duplessis et après . . . (Quebec: Duplessis and After)*. 1970. Canada. Denys Arcand, Serge Beauchemin, Alain Dostie, Jacques Drouin, Réo Grégoire, Pierre Letarte, Pierre Maheu, Pierre Mignot, André Théberge. A collaborative documentary made for the National Film Board of Canada; about Quebec society in 1936 and 1970, and the failure of politicians' rhetoric to coincide with the people's needs. English version. 115 min.
- 6:00 p.m. Early Films by Denys Arcand, 1962-1967.  
*Les Montréalistes (Ville-Marie)*. 1964. Canada. Essay on the establishment of Montreal as a city for missionaries. English version. 28 min.  
*Montréal un jour d'été (Montreal on a Summer Day)*. 1966. Canada. Documentary made for the Quebec Pavilion, Montreal's Worlds Fair. English version. 12 min.  
*Volleyball*. 1967. Canada. In Montreal, Russian and American volleyball teams compete; the camera records the encounter as ballet. No narration. 10 min.  
*Seul ou avec d'autres (Alone or with Others)*. 1962. Canada. Denys Arcand, Denis Héroux, Stéphane Venne, Michel Brault, Gilles Groulx. Narrative film made by students of the University of Montreal. In French, no English subtitles. 63 min.  
 Total running time 113 min.

**Tuesday, November 29**

- 2:30 p.m. *Le confort et l'indifférence (Comfort and Indifference)*. 1981. Canada. Denys Arcand, Pierre Bernier, Alain Dostie, Serge Beauchemin. A collaborative documentary made for the National Film Board of Canada; a Machiavellian interpretation of the Quebec Referendum (on the issue of sovereignty for the province) of May 20, 1980. In French, English subtitles. 109 min.
- 6:00 p.m. *Québec: Duplessis et après . . . (Quebec: Duplessis and After)*.  
 See Monday, November 28, at 3:00.

**Friday, December 2**

- 2:30 p.m. Early Films by Denys Arcand, 1962-1967.  
 See Monday, November 28, at 6:00.
- 6:00 p.m. *Le confort et l'indifférence (Comfort and Indifference)*.  
 See Tuesday, November 29, at 2:30.

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