



Mon Oncle

SEVENTH ANNUAL ROBERT CLASSIC FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL

Presented by **TV5MONDE** HD

March 13 - 29, 2015

Sponsored by the Jane M. & Bruce P. Robert Charitable Foundation
A co-production of Cinema St. Louis and Webster University Film Series

VIVE LA FRANCE!

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Alliance Française de St. Louis

A member-supported nonprofit center engaging the St. Louis community in French language and culture.

Contact info: 314-432-0734, bonjour@alliancestl.org, alliancestl.org



American Association of Teachers of French

The only professional association devoted exclusively to the needs of French teachers at all levels, with the mission of advancing the study of the French language and French-speaking literatures and cultures both in schools and in the general public.

Contact info: Anna Amelung, president, Greater St. Louis Chapter, annaamelung51@gmail.com, www.frenchteachers.org



Centre Francophone at Webster University

An organization dedicated to promoting Francophone culture and helping French educators.

Contact info: Lionel Cuillé, Ph.D., Jane and Bruce Robert Chair in French and Francophone Studies, Webster University, 314-246-8619, francophone@webster.edu, facebook.com/centrefrancophoneinstlouis



Les Amis

A support group for the French heritage programs of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, with the mission of promoting the preservation, interpretation, and purchase of historic property in Missouri's unique French colonial region.

Contact info: 314-454-3160, info@les-amis.org, www.les-amis.org



La Société Française de Saint Louis

An organization dedicated to the survival of the language, culture, and traditions of the French in St. Louis.

Contact info: sfinfo@societefrancaisestl.org, societefrancaisestl.org



St. Louis-Lyon Sister Cities

St. Louis-Saint-Louis, Sénégal Sister Cities

The Sister Cities program encourages meaningful and mutually satisfying personal contact between the people of the two cities.

Contact info: Susan Powers at smplyon@yahoo.com (Lyon) and Renee Franklin at renee.franklin@slam.org (Saint-Louis)



The Jane M. &
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Cinema St. Louis offers French programming at the annual **Robert Classic French Film Festival** and the Robert French and French-Language Focus at the **Whitaker St. Louis International Film Festival**.



The Seventh Annual Robert Classic French Film Festival -- presented by TV5MONDE -- celebrates St. Louis' Gallic heritage and France's cinematic legacy. The featured films span the decades from the 1930s through the early 1990s, offering a comprehensive overview of French cinema.

The fest is annually highlighted by significant restorations. This year features recent restorations of eight works, including an extended director's cut of Patrice Chéreau's historical epic "Queen Margot"; a New York-set *film noir* ("Two Men in Manhattan") by crime-film maestro Jean-Pierre Melville, who also co-stars; a short feature ("A Day in the Country") by Jean Renoir; on a double bill with the 2006 restoration of his masterpiece, "The Rules of the Game"; and the wild comic adventure "That Man from Rio" with New Wave icon Jean-Paul Belmondo and the tragically short-lived Françoise Dorléac. The fest also features a quartet of other newly restored films -- Robert Bresson's "A Man Escaped," Leos Carax's "Boy Meets Girl," Jacques Tati's "Mon Oncle," and Eric Rohmer's "A Tale of Winter" -- and the 2002 restoration of Jean Cocteau's timeless version of "Beauty and the Beast."

Every program features introductions and discussions by film scholars and critics. The discussions will place the works in the contexts of both film and French history and provide close analyses.

All films are in French with English subtitles.

Venue

Webster University's Winifred Moore Auditorium
 470 E. Lockwood Ave.



Admission

\$12 general admission; \$10 for students, Cinema St. Louis members, and Alliance Française members; free for Webster U. students. Advance tickets can be purchased through Brown Paper Tickets at brownpapertickets.com. In the "Find an Event" search box, type "Classic French." A service charge will apply, and only full-price \$12 tickets are available in advance.

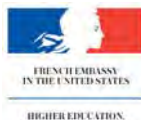
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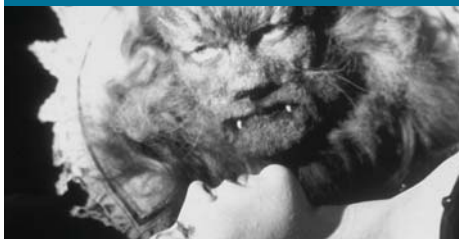
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Sponsors



FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 7:30 P.M.



Beauty and the Beast/ La belle et la bête

Jean Cocteau, 1946, 93 min.

B&W, 2002 restoration

Jean Cocteau's sublime adaptation of Mme. Leprince de Beaumont's fairytale masterpiece -- in which the pure love of a beautiful girl melts the heart of a feral but gentle beast -- is a landmark of motion-picture fantasy, with unforgettably romantic performances by Jean Marais and Josette Day. The spectacular visions of enchantment, desire, and death in "Beauty and the Beast" have become timeless icons of cinematic wonder.

New Times critic Jean Oppenheimer enthuses: "So enchanting it takes your breath away, Jean Cocteau's 1946 live-action version of the famous fairytale remains one of the most magical films ever made.... The exquisite costumes and sets were by Christian Bérard, Georges Auric contributed the score and cinematographer Henri Alekan was the wizard on camera. His use of trick photography and hand-crafted special effects puts all of today's digitally generated, effects-laden movies to shame." Britain's the Observer asserts that "Beauty and the Beast" "does not look so much imported from the 1940s as blown in from another world.... Cocteau's film is antic and playful, but there is real pain (and genuine eroticism) behind its flamboyant façade. 'La belle et la bête' is full of wonder and mystery. It's cinema's ultimate love story, dressed up as a monster."

With an introduction and post-film discussion by Andrew Wyatt, film critic for St. Louis Magazine's Look/Listen arts-and-entertainment blog and the Gateway Cinephile film blog.

Sponsored by Alliance Française de St. Louis

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 7:30 P.M.



Double Bill:

A Day in the Country/ Partie de campagne

Jean Renoir, 1936/1946, 41 min.

B&W, new restoration

The Rules of the Game/ La règle du jeu

Jean Renoir, 1939, 106 min.

B&W, 2006 restoration

This double bill by one of cinema's true masters, Jean Renoir, co-stars the French countryside. Based on a story by Guy de Maupassant, "A Day in the Country" -- begun in 1936 but not released until 1946 -- is a tenderly comic idyll about a city family's picnic and the romancing of the mother and grown daughter by two local men. The short accompanies "The Rules of the Game," a scathing critique of corrupt French society cloaked in a comedy of manners. Widely considered one of the greatest films ever made, "The Rules of the Game" lays bare some ugly truths about a group of *haut bourgeois* acquaintances during a weekend at a marquis' country château. Subjected to cuts after its premiere, the film was reconstructed in 1959 and is presented here in its 2006 restoration.

Time Out London says of "A Day in the Country": "It may be only a featurette, but this masterly adaptation of a Maupassant story is rich in both poetry and thematic content.... Witty and sensuous, it's pure magic." And critics hail "The Rules of the Game" with even more enthusiasm: "There are about a dozen genuine miracles in the history of cinema, and one of them is Jean Renoir's supreme 1939 tragi-comedy 'The Rules of the Game,'" writes Michael Wilmington in the Chicago Tribune. "Renoir's masterpiece -- whose echoes can be seen in films from Ingmar Bergman's 'Smiles of a Summer Night' to Robert Altman's 'Gosford Park' -- is a love roundelay that's also the most complex, astonishingly varied and brilliant of all ensemble comedy-drama films, a tale of frantically crisscrossing amours."

With an introduction and post-film discussion by Diane Carson, professor emeritus of film at St. Louis Community College at Meramec and film critic at KDHX.

Sponsored by the Jane M. & Bruce P. Robert Charitable Foundation

SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 7:30 P.M.



That Man from Rio/ L'Homme de Rio

Philippe de Broca, 1964, 110 min.

color, new restoration

Though best known for the 1970s rep-house fave "King of Hearts" (1966), director Philippe de Broca first established his reputation with this spectacularly entertaining spoof of the Bond-style adventure film. Beginning when a blow-dart-wielding thug steals a rare statuette from the Musée de l'Homme and kidnaps an anthropologist (Jean Servais of "Riffi"), "That Man from Rio" kick-starts its nonstop action and never eases off the throttle. Following the theft, serviceman Adrien (Jean-Paul Belmondo) arrives in Paris on an eight-day leave just in time to see fiancée Agnès (Françoise Dorléac, Catherine Deneuve's sister) similarly snatched from the streets. Adrien follows in frantic pursuit, and a globe-spanning chase ensues -- moving first to Rio and then to Brasilia and involving motorcycle, airport baggage carrier, cable car, Amazon riverboat, seaplane, and jungle vine -- with Belmondo performing his own heart-stopping stunts.

The Village Voice's Stephanie Zacharek raves: "'That Man from Rio' is a crazy delight, a stylish, early-'60s pastiche that folds in every adventure-movie cliché you've ever seen, and possibly invents a few new ones. De Broca ... orchestrates all this *mishegas* with verve and wicked wit, and in vibrant, wide-screen color, no less. The too-muchness is the fun, though de Broca still finds ways to let the charm of his actors shine through: A scene in which the very proper Parisian Agnès dances barefoot with a group of adorable Brazilian kids makes the most of Dorléac's dazzling, impish energy. And you haven't lived until you've seen Belmondo's Adrien come thisclose to parachuting into the jaws of a peckish, waiting crocodile."

With an introduction and post-film discussion by Renée Hirshfield, adjunct professor of film studies at Southwestern Illinois College.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 7:30 P.M.



Two Men in Manhattan/ Deux hommes dans Manhattan

Jean-Pierre Melville, 1959, 84 min.

B&W, new restoration

Although Jean-Pierre Melville occasionally contributed cameo performances in others' films, "Two Men in Manhattan" features the only starring role for the director of such crime classics as "Bob le Flambeur." When a French UN delegate disappears into thin air, reporter Moreau (Melville) and hard-drinking photographer Delmas (Pierre Grasset) are sent on an assignment to New York City to find him. Their only lead is a picture of three women. Employing a smoky jazz score and featuring stunning black-and-white cinematography that beautifully captures the gritty streets at night, "Two Men in Manhattan" is both a love letter to NYC and an homage to the American *film noir*.

The LA Times writes: "Melville got to exercise his vision stateside only twice. Among his 13 features, none was shot entirely on U.S. soil. The closest he came to a full-blooded American production was 'Two Men in Manhattan,' a jazz-infused nocturne in which the director, in his only starring role, plays a journalist on a quest that's not quite credible but always intriguing.... In a filmography that includes such triumphs as 'Le Samourai,' 'Le Cercle Rouge' and 'Army of Shadows' -- all greeted rapturously by critics in their recently restored versions -- 'Two Men' is, without question, a lesser work. But though it lacks the urgency of Melville's better-known films, his mastery of mood, informed by his singular synthesis of Gallic existentialism and B-movie grit, invigorates every frame."

With an introduction and post-film discussion by Robert Garrick, attorney, board member of the French-preservation nonprofit Les Amis, and former contributor to the davekehr.com film blog.

Sponsored by Les Amis

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 7:30 P.M.



Queen Margot/ La reine Margot

Patrice Chéreau, 1994, 159 min.

color, new restoration and director's cut

Marguerite of Valois -- known as Margot (Isabelle Adjani) -- is sister to King Charles IX. In a political move to reconcile France, a country ripped apart by the Wars of Religion, the Catholic Margot is forced to marry the Protestant King Henri of Navarre (Daniel Auteuil) in a wedding engineered by Margot's mother, Catherine de Medici (Verna Lisi). But the marriage is just scheming Catherine's opening gambit: She intends to cut off the heads of the warring factions, killing their leaders and neutralizing the Protestants, and six days after the couple's wedding, the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre is carried out. As thousands are murdered in the streets of Paris, a wounded Protestant, La Môle (Vincent Perez), desperately knocks on Margot's door. Margot not only hides the young man and tends to his wounds, she eventually falls in love with him and switches her allegiances. Based on Alexandre Dumas' novel, "Queen Margot" was awarded the Cannes Film Festival Jury Prize and won five César Awards.

"Plenty of blood is spilled in the late Patrice Chéreau's masterful 1994 wars of religion epic 'Queen Margot,'" observes the LA Times. "But more important, blood also courses through the movie's veins like a beautiful, dangerous and twisty river.... Chéreau's and screenwriter Danièle Thompson's lively adaptation of Alexandre Dumas' novel remains a model of heaving, combustible history, in which period lavishness and performance energy aren't mutually exclusive. Splendidly acted and tautly executed, with the restoration of Chéreau's 2007 director's cut stressing Philippe Rousselot's kinetic, beautifully florid cinematography, 'Queen Margot' depicts the perversity of rule and the bitter grace of hard-won compassion with the most assured of brush strokes."

With an introduction and post-film discussion by Cate Marquis, film critic for the St. Louis Jewish Light and co-founder of the St. Louis Film Critics professional association.

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 7:30 P.M.



Boy Meets Girl

Leos Carax, 1984, 110 min.

B&W, new restoration

In this debut feature by Leos Carax ("Holy Motors," "Pola X"), Alex (Denis Lavant) has just been dumped by his girlfriend in favor of his best friend. Fascinated by first times -- first break-up, first attempted murder -- Alex decides to strangle his friend but gives up before finishing the deed. Wandering the evening streets, Alex overhears another romantic uncoupling when Mireille (Mireille Perrier), a girl from provincial France who has come up to Paris to make commercials, is left by her boyfriend. When these two tormented souls run into each other at a party, they're fated to begin a doomed relationship.

The Village Voice describes "Boy Meets Girl" as "a debut feature of extraordinary passion and vigor. It premiered at the International Critics' Week at the Cannes film festival, and it hit the French cinema like a lightning bolt -- sudden and electrifying." And the New Yorker's Richard Brody writes: "The meteoric first film by Leos Carax -- which he made at the age of twenty-three, in 1984 -- hurls Alex (Denis Lavant), an aspiring filmmaker, through a permanently nocturnal Parisian atmosphere of poetic coincidences and crazy risks, out of one desperately romantic relationship and into another.... Ecstatic cinema and ecstatic living are joined in a pressurized promise of glory and misery, a flameout waiting to happen -- and to be filmed."

With an introduction and post-film discussion by Lionel Cuillé, the Jane and Bruce Robert professor of French and Francophone studies at Webster University.

Sponsored by Centre Francophone at Webster University

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 7:30 P.M.



Mon Oncle

*Jacques Tati, 1958, 116 min.
color, new restoration*

Slapstick prevails again when Jacques Tati's eccentric, old-fashioned hero, Monsieur Hulot, is set loose in Villa Arpel, the geometric, oppressively ultramodern home of his brother-in-law, and in the antiseptic plastic-hose factory where he gets a job. The second Hulot movie and Tati's first color film, "Mon Oncle" is a supremely amusing satire of mechanized living and consumer society that earned the director the Academy Award for best foreign-language film.

Describing "Mon Oncle" as "pure, abstract slapstick, full of delightful visual wit, droll physical humor, and Gallic irony," critic and programmer James Quandt writes: "In this hyperdesigned satire about the impersonality, tedium, and sterility of modern life, Tati plays the uncle of the title, whose sister is married to Monsieur Arpel, a plastics manufacturer. The Arpels live in a white horror of hygienic perfection, with a pristine yard, an arsenal of gadgets, and a fountain shaped like a fish that reminds one not of nature but of the factory that produced it. Importing disorder into this cold, soulless place, with its forbidding gate and garden, Hulot delights his nephew with his aptitude for accidents."

With an introduction and post-film discussion by Jean-Louis Pautrot, professor of French and international studies at St. Louis University.

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SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 7:30 P.M.



A Tale of Winter/ Conte d'hiver

*Eric Rohmer, 1992, 114 min.
color, new restoration*

Eric Rohmer was unsurpassed at creating intelligent romantic comedies and intelligent female characters. "A Tale of Winter," one of his most genial and audacious films, offers superb examples of both. With Rohmer's characteristic delight in surprise and paradox, winter, not spring, is seen as the season of rebirth and renewal, and its tale begins on a sunny beach. A young couple, Félicie and Charles, meet while on holiday and fall deeply in love. In a fatal slip, she gives him the wrong address, and, as a result, he disappears from her life. Five years later, at Christmas time, Félicie is a hairdresser in the Paris suburbs with a daughter (by Charles) and two lovers: the successful Maxence and the intellectual Loïc. She loves them both, but, as she says, "There's love and love," and the love that counts is the one she still holds for the long-lost Charles.

"This is Rohmer at his very best," says Time Out London, "effortlessly and unsentimentally charting the absurd complexities of human psychology, while creating a compelling contemporary fairytale firmly rooted in the banality of everyday existence. It has, as ever, enormous compassion, wit and insight, and its ending is exquisitely affecting." And the Chicago Reader's Jonathan Rosenbaum concludes: "Rohmer has become such a master of his chosen classic genre -- the crystalline philosophical tale of character and romantic choice -- that this is a nearly perfect work, in performance as well as execution."

With an introduction and post-film discussion by Robert Hunt, former film critic for the Riverfront Times and former adjunct professor of film studies at Webster University.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 7:30 P.M.



A Man Escaped/ Un condamné à mort s'est échappé

*Robert Bresson, 1956, 101 min.
B&W, new restoration*

With the simplest of concepts and sparest of techniques, Robert Bresson made one of the most suspenseful jailbreak films of all time in "A Man Escaped." Based on the account of an imprisoned French Resistance leader, this unbelievably taut and methodical marvel follows the fictional Fontaine's single-minded pursuit of freedom, detailing the planning and execution of his escape with gripping precision. But Bresson's film is not merely about process -- it's also a work of intense spirituality and humanity.

David Denby writes in the New Yorker: "Robert Bresson's 'A Man Escaped,' from 1956, begins with a shot of a young man's hands as he is taken to a prison in Lyon during the German Occupation of France, and it returns to those hands as they scrape, cut, twist, bend, climb, kill, and, finally, release a rope that leads to freedom. It is not only the greatest of all prison-break movies but also an astoundingly detailed account of the activities of homo faber -- man the toolmaker, or, in this case, man the escape artist, who begins with only a heavy spoon and, piece by piece, creates the means of his physical and spiritual liberation.... The prisoner's lonely ardor is enhanced by Mozart's Mass in C Minor; the ending of the movie, as the music wells up, is pure elation."

With an introduction and post-film discussion by Pier Marton, video artist and self-designated unlearning specialist at the School of No Media.



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LES·AMIS

Les Amis

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