

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****HIGH PRESENTS FRANCOPHONE FILM SERIES FEATURING  
AFRICA AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA***March 6 – 28, 2009*

**ATLANTA, March 2, 2009** – The High Museum of Art will host **Films from Africa and the African Diaspora** from March 6 through 28. From Benin, Haiti and Burkina Faso, the three-film series studies the cultural heritage of the former French colonies. “Africa Paradis,” “Dreams of Dust” and “Eat, For This Is My Body” are all recent releases; two have garnered nominations for awards. This festival is made possible with support from the Embassy of France Cultural Services and the Consulate of France in Atlanta, as well as Georgia Tech and Mahen & J M Petitbois.

“France’s former colonies in Africa and the Caribbean are closely tied to its rich cinematic tradition. Funding and artistic support have nurtured the production of Francophone films from Africa since the 1960s. Despite political and economic turmoil, Haiti has also made its mark, contributing its own directorial voices to the dialogue between Africa, the African Diaspora and France,” said Linda Dubler, the High’s Curator of Media Arts. “The featured filmmakers in this series see their medium as a vehicle not just for entertainment but for social critique, visual experimentation, and personal expression. All three films are unforgettable exemplars of film’s relevance and power.”

The series launches with the Friday, March 6, screening of “Africa Paradis,” a satire from Benin director Sylvestre Amoussou in which once-prosperous Westerners flock to the United States of Africa in search of freedom from social upheaval. By following the flight of an educated, middle-class French couple to the affluent U.S.A., Amoussou delivers a critique of the cultural and social interactions between Europe and Africa. *This film is in French with subtitles.*

On Saturday, March 14, the series will highlight Haitian writer and director Michelange Quay’s film, “Eat, For This Is My Body,” which creates a portrait of Haiti and its enduring colonial history. Filmed in Port-au-Prince, Quay communicates his fascination with the island’s legacy and culture through imagery rather than narrative. The avant garde “Eat, For This Is My Body” received the Grand Jury Prize in the Ibero-American Feature competition at the 2007 Miami Film Festival. *This film is in French with subtitles.*

The series ends on Saturday, March 28, with Laurent Salgues’s 2008 film “Dreams of Dust,” a stirring narrative of the life of a Nigerian peasant who travels to the gold mines of Burkina Faso to escape a haunting past. The drama establishes a shared conflict between its characters through the common struggle to survive and thrive in spite of economic and social downturn. Leaving his past behind, Mocktar travels to the mines of Essakane and meets Coumba, a young mother who inspires him to pursue future goals. Written and directed by Salgues, “Dreams of Dust” was nominated at the Sundance Film Festival. *This film is in French with subtitles.*

**Film Series Schedule**

Unless otherwise noted, all films begin at 8 p.m. and are screened in the Richard H. Rich Theatre. The theatre is located in the Memorial Arts Building, adjacent to the High at Peachtree and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets in midtown Atlanta. All films are in French with English subtitles.

“Africa Paradis”  
Friday, March 6  
(Benin/France, 2006, 86  
minutes.)

“Eat, For This Is My Body”  
Saturday, March 14  
(Haiti/France, 2007, 105  
minutes.)

“Dreams of Dust”  
Saturday, March 28  
(Burkina Faso/Canada/France,  
86 minutes.)

### **Support**

This program is co-sponsored by the Embassy of France Cultural Services and the Consulate of France in Atlanta, along with Georgia Tech and Mahen & J M Petitbois. 35mm projection facilities in the Rich Auditorium were provided by a gift from George Lefont.

### **Tickets**

To purchase tickets in advance, go to [www.High.org](http://www.High.org), visit the Woodruff Arts Center Box Office or call 404-733-5000. Tickets for all shows are \$7 general admission and \$6 for students, seniors and Museum members. Patron-level members enter free. Tickets may also be purchased at the door on the night of the screening.

### **Film Information**

The public may call the High’s film hotline at 404-733-4570 for up-to-the-minute information about visiting directors, receptions, changes or cancellations and for a free subscription to the quarterly film calendar. The Museum’s website is [www.High.org](http://www.High.org).

### **The High Museum of Art**

The High Museum of Art, founded in 1905 as the Atlanta Art Association, is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 11,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century American and decorative art; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists and is distinguished as the only major museum in North America to have a curatorial department specifically devoted to the field of folk and self-taught art. The High’s Media Arts department produces acclaimed annual film series and festivals of foreign, independent and classic cinema. In November 2005, the High opened three new buildings by architect Renzo Piano that more than doubled the Museum’s size, creating a vibrant “village for the arts” at the Woodruff Arts Center in midtown Atlanta. *For more information about the High, please visit [www.High.org](http://www.High.org).*

The High Museum of Art is a division of the Woodruff Arts Center in Atlanta, which also includes the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Young Audiences and the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Playhouse.

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**DIGITAL IMAGES FOR THE FILMS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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