

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**HIGH TO HOST 11th ANNUAL FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL***Festival Highlights Four Recent French Releases**February 6–27, 2010*

ATLANTA, January 28, 2010 – The High Museum of Art will host the 11th annual film series “French Film Yesterday and Today” from Saturday, February 6, through Saturday, February 27. This year’s series presents the classic French thriller “Diabolique” alongside the contemporary films “Summer Hours,” “Angel of Mine” and “The Beaches of Agnès.” This annual program is made possible with support from the Embassy of France Cultural Services department and the Consulate of France in Atlanta.

“Devotees of French film admire its sophistication, stylishness and the complexity of character that typifies the nation’s cinema. And this year’s ‘French Film Yesterday and Today’ has those qualities in spades,” says Linda Dubler, curator of media arts for the High Museum of Art. “Few thrillers are as stylish as ‘Diabolique’; the subtle, multi-dimensional characters in ‘Summer Hours’ and ‘Angel of Mine’ make for engrossing, poignant and suspenseful viewing; and Agnès Varda is a sophisticated visionary whose dramatic and documentary films have broken ground for generations of female artists.”

The festival begins Saturday, February 6, with Henri-Georges Clouzot’s “Diabolique,” the suspense film credited with having a strong influence on the thriller genre, often noted as one of the greatest films of the 1950s. Set in a French boarding school, “Diabolique” follows Christina, the frail wife of a tyrannical headmaster, and his mistress Nicole as they are driven to commit murder. It seems that their plot is successful until the headmaster’s body goes missing and his spirit begins to haunt the two women.

On Saturday, February 13, the series continues with “Summer Hours” from director Olivier Assayas, which centers on three siblings. Jérémie (Jérémy Renier) works for an international company in China, Adrienne (Juliette Binoche) is a designer based in New York, and Frédéric (Charles Berling) is an economist and academic who remained in France. The three have gathered with their children to celebrate their self-possessed and still vigorous mother’s 75th birthday. On this festive occasion, she chooses to announce that the house and its contents must be disposed of after her death. Jérémie and Adrienne readily agree, but Frédéric resists, holding tightly to his roots and to all the family history contained within the house. *New York Times* critic A. O. Scott notes one of the central themes of this 2008 family drama as being “the way that inanimate things accrue value, sentimental and otherwise—the curious alchemy that transforms certain objects into art.”

Safy Nebbou’s “Angel of Mine” weighs the price of maternal love on Saturday, February 20. Reviewed by Jennie Kermode as being “a character-based thriller in the manner of Hitchcock

classics ‘Marnie’ and ‘Vertigo,’” and “a fine example of two great actresses getting to show what they’re made of,” the film centers on Elsa (Catherine Frot), a distraught mother struggling to accept the death of her infant daughter. On the brink of losing custody of her son in her divorce, she encounters Lola, the younger sister of her son’s friend, and immediately becomes convinced that Lola is, in fact, her daughter. Elsa is soon following Lola’s mother Claire (Sandrine Bonnaire) and inventing reasons to get inside their house. Is Elsa deluded, or simply attuned to her most primal instincts?

The series closes on Saturday, February 27, with Agnès Varda’s “The Beaches of Agnès.” The writer and director’s most recent work is an autobiographical documentary about memory, love, friendship and art-making. Varda juxtaposes visits to her childhood home in Belgium and the Parisian courtyard that housed her first film studio with clips from many of her films, including “Cleo From 5 to 7” and “Vagabond.” Friends and lovers make their appearances, some disguised—filmmaker Chris Marker is represented by his trademark cartoon cat—and some revealed, as is her husband and greatest love, Jacques Demy, the director most famous for “The Umbrellas of Cherbourg.” Her continual fascination is evidence of Agnès’s gift for finding the language of love in the humblest places, and the gift of beauty wherever she turns her antic vision.

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 15th Streets in midtown Atlanta. All films are in French with English subtitles.

“Diabolique”

Saturday, February 6
(France, 1955, 107 minutes.)

“Summer Hours”

Saturday, February 13
(France, 2008, 103 minutes.)

“Angel of Mine”

Saturday, February 20
(France, 2008, 95 minutes.)

“The Beaches of Agnès”

Saturday, February 27
(France, 2008, 110 minutes.)

Support

This program is made possible with support from the Embassy of France Cultural Services department and the Consulate of France in Atlanta. 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, 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. The Rich Theatre of the Woodruff Arts Center is located at 15th and Peachtree Streets, next to the High Museum of Art at MARTA stop N5.

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 a free subscription to the quarterly film calendar. The Museum's website is 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 12,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-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.*

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 14th Street Playhouse.

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DIGITAL IMAGES FOR THE FILMS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**Media Contact:**

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