NEWS RELEASE

1280 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E. • ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30309

Press Office
TEL 404-733-4437
FAX 404-733-4529
prinfo@woodruffcenter.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TWO GREEK FILM SERIES IN MARCH TO COMPLEMENT LOUVRE ATLANTA EXHIBITIONS

March 1–29: Passport to Greek Film March 7–28: Muses and Mortals, Greek Myths on Film

ATLANTA, February 15, 2008 – Eight provocative films visit the High in March as part of two new film series, Passport to Greek Film and Muses and Mortals, Greek Myths on Film. Comprising four films each, the two series will take turns exploring contemporary Greek filmmaking and interpreting ancient Greek myths in a variety of unusual landscapes. Films like the 1960 Palme d'Or winner "Black Orpheus," Grammy-award winning "O Brother Where Art Thou?" and "A Touch of Spice," winner of the 2003 Greek Competition Award for Best Fiction Film, celebrate the Aegean world of past and present.

"The High has a long history of presenting the best of European cinema, but we have never before done a series devoted to contemporary Greek film. The opportunity to tie this exciting showcase of new cinema from Greece to a series of classic movies based on Greek mythology seemed too good to pass up," said the High's Curator of Media Arts, Linda Dubler. "This is particularly true because Greek myths are central to many of the masterpieces in the current 'Louvre Atlanta' exhibition, 'The Louvre and the Ancient World."

Passport to Greek Film

"Brides" swept up five awards at the Thessaloniki Film Festival in 2004 and will open the Passport to Greek Film Festival on Saturday, March 1. In this exquisitely realized period film, director Pantelis Voulgaris transports viewers to the 1920s, when thousands of Greek women followed unknown destinies as mail-order brides. Set largely onboard the SS King Alexander, "Brides" introduces a nervous Greek bride-to-be and an unhappy American photographer, estranged from his wife, who find love together along their journey.

On Saturday, March 8, join the slacker Stephanos as he finds his way in the dramatic comedy "The Heart of the Beast." Recently orphaned and just out of university, he finds himself destitute and without direction. He turns to a college friend, Tsakiris, who has made a life for himself outside the law and wants Stephanos to help rob a bank. Directed by and starring Renos Haralambidis, the film follows the young philosopher as he embarks on a surprising coming-of-age journey.

"A Touch of Spice" will be presented on Saturday, March 15. This bittersweet coming-of-age story is peppered with love, loss, nostalgia and wry humor. The semi-autobiographical story was written and directed by Tassos Boulmetic and centers on his alter-ego, Fanis, as he looks back on his life in Turkey. Flashbacks reveal his first crush, his early days as a kitchen prodigy and the constant embrace of family. The film won the Audience Award (among nine other awards) at the Thessaloniki Film Festival in 2003.

Passport to Greek Film closes Saturday, March 29, with "Sugartown: The Bridegrooms," a witty documentary that introduces the viewer to a sleepy Greek village that is facing a shortage of women. The new mayor, whose platform promised wives and companions for lonely farmers, facilitates a trip to Klin, Russia, where 300 potential brides await the villagers. The film explores relationships and the differences in the men and women's expectations for married life. The Sugartown men are the soul of the film; as *Variety* reviewer Jay Weissberg observes, "[audiences] will latch on to favorites and root for them all the way through."

Muses and Mortals: Greek Myths on Film

This series begins on Friday, March 7, with "Orphée," the myth of Orpheus re-imagined by director Jean Cocteau, an icon of surrealist film. Death's motorcycle-riding minions have seized Orphée's wife, and he must travel to the underworld to rescue her. Boldly merging cinema and poetry, Cocteau pits the bored, pampered Left Bank poet Orphée against a corseted, black-clad and endlessly elegant Death in what Jamie Russell (*BBC Films*) called "a breathlessly sexy film, charged with the lyrical eroticism of a fairy tale."

On Friday, March 14, join us for "Phaedra," the 1962 film written and directed by Jules Dassin and starring his wife and international film star Melina Mercouri. Set largely on the Greek island of Hydra, Mercouri plays the wife of a shipping tycoon who must travel to Paris to retrieve his estranged son (Anthony Perkins). In keeping with the myth of Phaedra, passions are ignited and tragedy ensues.

"Black Orpheus," a retelling of the Orpheus myth directed by French director Marcel Camus, hits the screen on Friday, March 21. During Carnival in Rio de Janeiro, a streetcar driver named Orpheus meets Eurydice, a naïve country girl on the run from a jealously homicidal suitor. In 1959, "Black Orpheus" won both the Palme d'Or award at Cannes and the Oscar for Best Foreign Film.

Muses and Mortals: Greek Myths on Film wraps up on Friday, March 28, with "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" This celebrated Coen Brothers film follows three escaped prisoners on their Odyssean adventure through a fantastical Depression-era Deep South. A star-studded cast featuring George Clooney, Holly Hunter, John Goodman and others rounds out the film, and its award-winning soundtrack comprises American "old-time" music performed by the likes of the Stanley Brothers, Alison Krauss, Gillian Welch, the Fairfield Five and other acclaimed Americana artists.

Film Series Schedule

All films are screened at 8 p.m. (unless otherwise noted) in the Richard H. Rich Theatre, located in the Memorial Arts Building, adjacent to the High at Peachtree and 15th Streets in midtown Atlanta.

Passport to Greek Film

"Brides"
Saturday, March 1
8 p.m., Rich Theatre
(Greece, 2004, 128 minutes)
In Greek and English with subtitles

"The Heart of the Beast"
Saturday, March 8
8 p.m., Rich Theatre
(Greece, 2005, 80 minutes)
In Greek with subtitles

"A Touch of Spice"
Saturday, March 15
8 p.m., Rich Theatre
(Greece/Turkey, 2003, 108 minutes)
In Greek and Turkish with subtitles

"Sugartown: The Bridegrooms"
Saturday, March 29
8 p.m., Rich Theatre
(Greece/Germany, 2006, 82 minutes)
In Greek, Russian and English with subtitles

Muses and Mortals: Greek Myths on Film

"Orphée"
Friday, March 7
8 p.m., Rich Theatre
(France, 1950, 95 minutes)
In French with subtitles

"Phaedra"
Friday, March 14
8 p.m., Rich Theatre
(France/Greece/U.S., 1962, 115 minutes)
In Greek and English with subtitles

"Black Orpheus"
Friday, March 21
8 p.m., Rich Theatre
(France/Brazil, 1959, 107 minutes)
In Portuguese with subtitles

"O Brother, Where Art Thou?" Friday, March 28 8 p.m., Rich Theatre (U.S., 2000, 106 minutes) In English

Support

Passport to Greek Film is made possible with the support of the Consulate General of Greece in Atlanta, the Greek Film Centre and Lykion Ton Ellinidon. "Muses and Mortals: Greek Myths on Film" is presented in coordination with the exhibition "The Louvre and the Ancient World," on view through September 7, 2008. 35mm projection facilities in the Rich Auditorium were provided by a gift from George Lefont.

Tickets

Tickets can be purchased in advance by visiting the Woodruff Arts Center Box Office, calling 404-733-5000 or going online to www.High.org. Admission prices are \$5 for the public and \$4 for Museum members, students and seniors. 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 a free subscription to the quarterly film calendar. The Museum's website is www.High.org.

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 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. In October 2006, the High launched an unprecedented three-year partnership with the Louvre Museum in Paris to bring hundreds of works of art to Atlanta. For more information about the High, please visit www.High.org.

The Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is ranked among the top four arts centers in the nation. A not-for-profit center for performing and visual arts, its campus comprises the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art, Young Audiences and the 14th Street Playhouse.

#

DIGITAL IMAGES FOR THE FILMS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Media Contact:

Emily Beard Communications Assistant, High Museum of Art

Tel: 404-733-4437 | E-mail: emily.beard@woodruffcenter.org