YOUNG FRENCH CINEMA

Discover a New Generation of Directors



2018 FILM SELECTION







Foreword

"Sensuality & intellectual engagement", "thrilling vibrancy" of "a booming new generation", "emotional & carefree story-telling" distilling "a blend of style & intensity"... Contemporary French directors have consistently been singled out for praise by the international press in the last few years.

The YOUNG FRENCH CINEMA program is one of the most convenient entry points to their works. For the fourth year in a row, it offers a selection of today's best films and filmmakers. Most of the films selected in this program have premiered in 2017 in top international festivals. The program mainly focuses on rising talents, from high-profile independent works to quirky comedies, powerful documentaries on the world we live in today, and exciting shorts. The current selection highlights two specificities of French cinema today: its openness to gender diversity with more than half of the films directed by female filmmakers and its openness to the world with films depicting realities from France to Cambodia, from Algeria to Afghanistan, from Mali to Québec. After two successful years with over 100 bookings throughout the US in 2016 and 2017, the new selection indeed demonstrates that this young generation shares - more than ever - a global vision and an amazing capacity to combine cultural influences, which lead it to tackle an incredibly wide range of subject matters.

In this brochure, you will find information about the guidelines of the program as well as descriptions of the films selected for the 2018 program. Please note that the 2018 film selection is available until December 31, 2018 under the conditions mentioned in this brochure.

Young French Cinema has been set up by UniFrance and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, as a way to bring French films with no US distribution to art house cinemas, film societies, the Alliance Française network and American universities. Its scope has been widened since 2016 to include upcoming talents from Canada, in partnership with Telefilm Canada. We are also pleased to welcome for the second year in a row our partner l'ACID and have included one film from their recent Cannes selection in our new program.

We hope that you will be inspired by these films and we look forward to working with you all!

Serge Toubiana, President of UniFrance
Isabelle Giordano, Executive Director of UniFrance
Benedicte de Montlaur, Cultural Counselor of the French Embassy
Mathieu Fournet, Audiovisuel Attaché of the French Embassy



Image: Kiss Me! (Embrasse moi!)

YOUNG FRENCH CINEMA

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Guidelines

YOUNG FRENCH CINEMA is available to art house cinemas, film societies, the Alliance Française network and North American universities.

FILM SELECTION

The program includes 12 feature films (11 French, one Canadian) and 8 short films. All films can be booked "à la carte": there is no minimum or maximum number of films that you must choose. In the event that you are showing more than four films from the program as a festival or series, that festival/ series should be named YOUNG FRENCH CINEMA.

COST

Each feature film in the 2018 program is available for a \$300 booking fee for up to two screenings per film. Each short film is available for a \$40 booking fee for up to two screenings per short (shorts fees have to be paid via PayPal to avoid transfer fees).

This year, we also present a special double bill feature with the films *In Bed with Victoria & Boundaries*, in partnership with Telefilm Canada. The 2 films can be booked for a flat fee of \$500 for up to 2 screenings per film.

Please note that domestic shipping costs are not included: outgoing shipping costs are to be paid by each organization.

TIMELINE

All inquiries must be sent at least six weeks before the screening date and addressed to adeline.monzier@unifrance.org. UniFrance will be the third party between you and the rights holder in France.

FORMAT

All films are available on DCP and on Eclairplay in DCP-quality and the latter is our preferred method of delivery. Some films are available in DVD or Blu-ray if necessary. Please check the formats available before booking a film.

PUBLICITY

All publicity materials must include the following credit line: This Young French Cinema program was made possible with the support of UniFrance and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy.

TRAVEL GRANT

Venues that would like to organize a master class with the director/actor of one of the films shown can apply for a travel grant to fly the artist to the US. Please send us an email with your request and be as detailed as possible about your proposed master class, the venue, the number of students expected, the moderators of the discussion and explain why it's important for the screening to have the artist attend. UniFrance will consider your application and if positive, facilitate the contact with the artist.

CONTACT

For all requests and for access to screeners, please contact Adeline Monzier at adeline.monzier@unifrance.org

"There's something new afoot in French cinema these days."

-THE NEW YORKER

"More than 50 years on, French cinema is still part of the country's exception culturelle."

—THE GUARDIAN

"French cinema: a blend of style and intensity"

—THE NEW YORK TIMES

Before Summer Ends

(AVANT LA FIN DE L'ÉTÉ)



DIRECTOR

Maryam Goormaghtigh

SCREENPLAY

Maryam Goormaghtigh

CAST

Arash, Hossein, Ashkan

DETAILS

2017. France/ Switzerland. 80 min. Color. Documentary/ Comedy

Available in Canada.



As light as a feather yet anchored by the melancholy weight of approaching change, Before the Summer Ends is the bittersweet chronicle of a single summer in the life of three Iranian students living in France, an utterly unique, beguiling mixture of documentary and fiction in the perennial form of a road movie. When Hossein and Ashkan learn that their friend Arash has decided to return to Iran, they convince him to take a road trip to the south of France, secretly hoping he will meet a woman and decide not to leave. But their encounter with two young women in a punk rock band does not yield the expected results and the twin realities of living in exile or returning to a repressive society begin to dawn on them. Playing themselves, the three leading men are by turns hilarious and heartbreaking, clumsy and compelling. But the greatest feat belongs to fledgling director Maryam Goormaghtigh, who made the film on a shoestring budget, with little more than her camera, a borrowed car, her three friends Arash, Hossein, and Ashkan, and a wonderfully empathetic eye for life's quirks.

"If Jim Jarmusch's Stranger Than Paradise had been transplanted to the south of France then the result would be something like Before Summer Ends."—HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

Diamond Island



DIRECTOR Davy Chou

SCREENPLAY

Davy Chou, Claire Maugendre

CAST

Sobon Nuon, Cheanick Nov, Madeza Chhem

DETAILS

2016. France/ Cambodia. 103 min. Color. Drama.

Available in Canada.

Like many boys from the Cambodian countryside, Bora leaves his native village at eighteen to find work in Phnom Penh. He gets a job in construction on Diamond Island, a downtown island being turned into a luxury residence and playground for the city's rapidly rising one percent. Working by day and chasing girls at night, Bora runs into his long-lost older brother Solei, who is enjoying a suspiciously lavish lifestyle and introduces his brother to his world of high-end nightclubs and pie-in-the-sky dreams. Diamond Island is a stylized tour de force of sharp, telling contrasts, pitting the glorified shantytowns where the workers sleep against the glittering luxury developments where they work, the dusty construction sites against the cool, neon ambience of the Phnom Penh night. While writer-director Davy Chou's background in documentary serves him well in recording the complex realities of a rapidly developing but deeply unequal society, his eye is that of a masterful stylist, capturing nocturnal glimmer in blues and yellows. Most importantly, he never loses sight of the story, crafting a seductive coming-of-age tale for a constantly mutating world.

"A compassionate film with bittersweet tenderness."

- VARIETY

Heaven Will Wait

(LE CIEL ATTENDRA)



DIRECTOR

Marie-Castille Mention-Schaar

SCREENPLAY

Marie-Castille Mention-Schaar, Émilie Frèche

CAST

Noémie Merlant, Naomi Amarger, Sandrine Bonnaire, Clotilde Courau, Zinedine Soualem

DETAILS

2016. France. 105 min. Color. Drama.

Available in Canada. When 17-year-old Sonia is caught trying to leave France to join the jihad in Syria, her parents become her tormented jailers, forced by law to keep her at home, without internet or telephone. Meanwhile, Mélanie, a guiet, studious 15-year-old, makes a new friend on Facebook and begins to be drawn into radical Islam. This alarming but necessary drama thoughtfully tackles one of the most disturbing phenomena in contemporary French society: the indoctrination and radicalization of teenage girls by online predators recruiting jihadists. Writer-director Marie-Castille Mention-Schaar ably parallels the two young women's stories—one in the process of being radicalized, the other on the slow and painful road to recovery to make this unthinkable but increasingly common situation not only tangible but comprehensible, showing how terrorists prey on teenagers' personal insecurities and general sense of injustice to encourage them to embrace a backward version of Islam and leave France to join ISIS in Syria. Though it reaches the emotional heights of great drama, Heaven Can Wait has the granular detail of first-rate investigative journalism; its portrait of vulnerable young women and their helpless families is unforgettable.

"Remarkably performed by the two young actresses (...), a pedagogical and useful film that deserves to be discovered."

-POSITIE

In Bed With Victoria

(VICTORIA)



DIRECTOR

Justine Triet

SCREENPLAY

Justine Triet

CAST

Virginie Efira, Vincent Lacoste, Melvil Poupaud, Laurent Poitrenaux

DETAILS

2016. France. 98 min. Color. Comedy.

SPECIAL OFFER

Special double bill feature for In Bed with Victoria and Boundaries: the two films can be booked for a flat fee of \$500 for up to two screenings per film.

Making good on the promise of her hilarious and unsettling debut Age of Panic, writer-director Justine Triet rose to the top of the French box office in 2016 and wowed critics with In Bed with Victoria, a devastatingly funny romantic comedy that manages to capture the tensions and uncertainties of our era while charming the viewer. Much of the film's allure can be attributed to Virginie Efira's star-making turn as title character Victoria, a thirtysomething lawyer juggling a successful career, two young children, a busy online dating life, and a crazy ex-husband regularly posting internet updates of his tell-all memoir about their marriage. As if life weren't complicated enough, the overextended young woman reluctantly agrees to represent her close friend Vincent in a messy assault case and gets temporarily disbarred. Left with nothing but time on her hands, Victoria finds herself on the verge of a breakdown. By combining achingly familiar everyday problems with delightfully wacky premises like a dog serving as a witness in a criminal trial, Justine Triet has crafted a subtly feminist, constantly surprising gem that rivals the best comedies of Hollywood's golden age.

"Offers both the candor and the schmaltz of Trainwreck...

A hollywood style romantic comedy." —VARIETY

Boundaries

(PAYS) CANADIAN PICK



DIRECTOR

Chloé Robichaud

SCREENPLAY

Chloé Robichaud

CAST

Emily VanCamp, Macha Grenon, Nathalie Doummar.

DETAILS

2016. Canada. 98 min. Color. Drama.

SPECIAL OFFER

Special double bill feature for In Bed with Victoria and Boundaries: the two films can be booked for a flat fee of \$500 for up to two screenings per film.





Set in Besco, a fictional island state off the coast of Labrador, Boundaries takes a novel and revealing look at the inner workings of international politics, following the negotiations between a high-ranking delegation from Canada and the governors of the economically struggling island to reach an agreement for a leading Canadian company to mine Besco's iron. With her second feature film. Québécois writer-director Chloé Robichaud belies her youth with a nuanced, at times slyly humorous understanding of the ideals, frustrations, and outright machinations involved in governing. Yet Boundaries is more than an easily legible allegory for the unequal relations between overreaching superpowers and vulnerable nation states striving to enter the twenty-first century. It is also a deeply moving story of the personal cost of attempting to improve the world, told by focusing on three women at different points in their lives: Félixe, a freshly elected, twenty-five-year-old Canadian representative, Emily, a professional mediator whose home life is falling apart, and Danielle Richard, the steely president of Besco. Add in breathtaking 35 mm landscape photography, primarily shot in Newfoundland, and you have a stunningly assured film, confirming a major young talent.

"A political tale that keeps women at the fore."—INDIEWIRE

Montparnasse Bienvenue

(JEUNE FEMME)



DIRECTOR Léonor Serraille

SCREENPLAY

Léonor Serraille

CAST

Laetitia Dosch, Grégoire Monsaingeon, Souleymane Seye Ndiaye, Léonie Simaga, Nathalie Richard, Erika Sainte

DETAILS

2017. France. 97 min. Color. Drama. Montparnasse Bienvenue isn't the first French film to follow a young woman lost in the city, flirting with madness after the end of a relationship. But it may well be the most surprising—and the most honest—in its way of snapping in and out of a keenly-observed comedic tone to reveal a more unvarnished portrait of a person in genuine distress. This nonconformist gem begins with thirtysomething Paula arriving back in Paris after ten years, recently dumped by her rich and famous photographer boyfriend, and now totally adrift, alone with a suitcase and her cat. Paula has to fall back on her chameleon-like ability to adapt to circumstances, pretending to be a stranger's old school-friend to get a place to sleep for the night or claiming to be an art student to get an au pair job. Through these random encounters and haphazard situations, a picture takes shape of a generation faced with an unprecedentedly precarious future. And yet one walks away feeling uplifted, in no small part due to Laetitia Dosch's deliciously unhinged, fearless performance as Paula. Montparnasse Bienvenue won the Caméra d'Or at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival

"Montparnasse Bienvenue, the admirably free-flowing debut feature from writer-director Leonor Serraille."

-HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

Nothingwood



DIRECTOR Sonia Kronlund

CAST

Salim Shaheen

DETAILS 2016. France/

Germany/Qatar. 85 min. Color. Documentary.

Sonia Kronlund's exhilarating documentary is a portrait of Afghan filmmaker Salim Shaheen, a local legend who has directed and starred in 110 films despite lack of money, the constant Taliban threat, and the civil wars tearing his country apart. As Shaheen puts it, his film industry is Nothingwood, for there are no resources in Afghanistan to make films. Yet as we see time and time again in documentary footage from the production of his autobiographical 111th feature. he always finds a way to sweet-talk or bully his way to getting what he needs. Nothingwood wryly blends scenes from Shaheen's everyday life and his own super-low-budget productions, introducing us along the way to members of his entourage like a young actress who must be accompanied on set by her father; a family man who specializes in playing mature women on screen; and a battle-scarred screenwriter who doubles as cameraman and actor. While Shaheen's story has more than its fair share of traumatic events, Nothingwood is an uplifting and sometimes uproarious portrait of a larger-than-life figure—and a true believer in cinema

"A delightfully entertaining documentary."—SCREEN DAILY

Speak Up

(A VOIX HAUTE - LA FORCE DE LA PAROLE) EDUCATIONAL PICK



DIRECTOR

Stéphane de Freitas, Ladj Ly

SCREENPLAY

Stéphane de Freitas

CAST

Leila Alaouf, Eddy Moniot, Elhadj Toure, Souleila Mahiddin, Bertrand Périer, Loubaki Loussalat, Alexandra Henry, Pierre Derycke

DETAILS

2017. France. 99 min. Color. Documentary.

Available in Canada. Every year, hundreds of students from all over the department of Seine-Saint-Denis face off in Eloquentia, a contest to crown the best orator in this wildly diverse, sprawling suburb of Paris. Speak Up follows a group of college students preparing for Eloquentia through an intensive six weeks of workshops in classical rhetoric, acting, slam poetry, and breathing techniques, then into the tournament itself. Smoothly juxtaposing flyon-the-wall scenes of the group in the classroom and the amphitheater with interviews and solo scenes with a few participants (and the future winner!), directors de Freitas and Ly create an inspiring portrait, by turns riotous, by turns poignant, of a young generation of every creed and color brought together by a shared commitment to the French art of rhetoric. The viewer will not soon forget Elhadj, a formerly homeless young man now running an NGO in West Africa, Leïla, a shy Syrian-French woman who forces herself to become an orator to "redefine feminism." or Eddy. a fledgling actor from a tiny village who has to walk ten kilometers every day to catch a train to class.

"Uplifting and authentic."—HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

Paris Prestige

(LES DERNIERS PARISIENS)



DIRECTOR Hamé and Ekoué

SCREENPLAY

Hamé and Ekoué

Reda Kateb, Slimane Dazi, Mélanie Laurent

DETAILS

CAST

2016. France. 106 min. Color. Drama.

Available in Canada.

Out on parole, Nas has to toe the line and clock in to work at his older brother Arezki's bar Le Prestige to avoid being thrown back in prison. But Nas has other plans: he wants to get back into promoting parties and Le Prestige's location in Pigalle, the heart of Paris's bustling nightlife, is an ideal calling card. It soon becomes apparent that the brothers are on a collision course started long ago, with the death of their mother and Arezki's decision to leave Nas with their aunt. This gripping first feature by Hamé and Ekoué, two of the rappers in leading French rap group La Rumeur, is a Paris-by-night tour that stays a million miles away from the glimmer of the Eiffel Tower, offering instead an insider's portrait of a vibrant, quickly gentrifying urban neighborhood, with its African hairdressers, Algerian groceries, German tourists, neon sex shops, and every street scam known to man. But beneath its kinetic surface and groovy soundtrack, one finds a profound reflection on the struggles and disappointments of two generations of Algerian immigrants in France.

"Cassavetes of the French, filmed with a handheld camera, up to humanity, we will go see it to shum but we will leave the room overwhelmed." —ELLE

Until the Birds Return

(EN ATTENDANT LES HIRONDELLES)



DIRECTOR

Karim Moussaoui

SCREENPLAY

Karim Moussaoui, Maud Ameline

CAST

Mohamed Djourhi, Sonia Mekkiou, Mehdi Ramdani, Hania Amar

DETAILS

2017. France/ Germany/Algeria/ Qatar. 113 min. Color. Drama Karim Moussaoui's brilliant debut tells three loosely related stories set in a contemporary Algeria of abandoned construction sites, desert roads, and hospitals: a middle-aged businessman witnesses a brutal beating and fails to intervene; a young woman's father asks her former boyfriend to drive her to her wedding; a hardworking neurosurgeon is asked to adopt the son of a woman whose gang rape he witnessed during the civil war. Weaving these Chekovian tales together in a seamless threepart structure, Moussaoui reflects upon his country's past, present, and future, sketching in the challenges faced by several generations of Algerians while evoking universal moral dilemmas and disappointment. Through his carefully controlled vision of the happenstance of everyday life, Moussaoui recalls the understated rigor of masters such as Krzysztof Kieslowski and Abbas Kiarostami, yet also allows himself exhilarating flights of fancy such as an impromptu song and dance number on the side of a desert highway. Such formally ambitious, insightful films rarely come along, let alone in the hands of a first-time director. In a single feature, Karim Moussaoui has established himself as a major new voice on the international film scene.

"An intriguing first feature from writer-director Karim Moussaoui that explores the damaged emotional landscape of his homeland. At times recalls Abbas Kiarostami's Through the Olive Trees."—HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

Wùlu



DIRECTOR

Daouda Coulibaly

SCREENPLAY

Daouda Coulibaly

CAST

Ibrahim Koma, Inna Modja, Quim Gutiérrez, Olivier Rabourdin

DETAILS

2016. France/Mali/ Senegal. 95 min. Color. Drama.

Available in Canada When Ladji, a twenty-year-old minibus driver in Bamako, is unfairly passed over for a promotion, the young man turns to smuggling drugs between Mali and neighboring countries to provide for himself and save his sister from prostitution. While his rise in the drug trade is as meteoric as Tony Montana's in *Scarface, Wülu* is a more thoughtful, less violent take on the Brian De Palma classic—which doesn't make it any less gripping. This is cinema as immersion: diving deep into the bustling streets of Mali's capital, first-time writer-director Daouda Coulibaly moves his story along at breakneck speed, rarely letting the viewer come up for air. The result is an astonishingly assured, spine-tingling thriller, as well as a sobering picture of Mali in the period leading to the 2012 coup d'état, with the once-stable nation threatened by the intertwined evils of corruption, drug trafficking, and Al-Qaeda. Yet perhaps *Wùlu* lingers longest in the memory as a universal tale of a young generation forced to do whatever it takes to get by and find its place in society.

"Coulibaly is a talent to watch."—HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

Kiss Me!

(EMBRASSE MOI!)



DIRECTOR

Océanerosemarie and Cyprien Vial

SCREENPLAY

Océanemosemarie

CAST

Océanerosemarie, Alice Pol, Grégory Montel, Laure Calamy.

DETAILS

2017. France. 86 min. Color. Romantic comedy.

Available in Canada In this charming romantic comedy about the speed bumps along the way to accepting true love, acclaimed comedian and singer Océanerosemarie plays a fun-loving osteopath called Océanerosemarie. Fresh from yet another breakup, Océanerosemarie is jogging in the woods when she spies the beautiful Cécile doing gymnastics. All it takes is one failed headstand for Océanerosemarie to jump in and offer her healing touch. Before long, she is convinced she has met the woman of her life. But Cécile is the shy, quiet type, while Océanerosemarie is a boisterous party animal surrounded by ex-girlfriends, including Fantine, a supersuccessful architect who isn't ready to let anyone new take her place... While Kiss Me! winningly navigates the tried and true formulas of the romantic comedy, it is remarkable for introducing a lesbian love story to the genre without depicting homosexuality as a problem or a novelty. Here, the trials and tribulations, joy and hilarity faced by the characters are those of any two people in love, subtly but firmly driving home the point that love is love.

"Very, Very Funny. A sparkling comedy!" —LE PARISIEN

Short Films

Grandpa Walrus (pépé le morse)

DETAILS DIRECTOR Lucrèce Andreae

2017. France. SCREENPLAY Lucrèce Andreae

14min, Animation CAST Roman GARANCE, Emilie BION METZINGER, Chann AGLAL

On a dark and windy beach, Grandma prays, Mom screams, his sisters don't give a hoot, and Lucas is alone. Grandpa was a strange guy, now he's dead.

What Tears Us Apart (CE QUI NOUS ÉLOIGNE)

DETAILS DIRECTOR Hu Wei

2016. France. SCREENPLAY Gaelle Obiegly, Joel Curtz, Francois Peyroux

17 min. Live Action CAST Camille Debray, Isabelle Huppert, Nai An

After a long separation, an encounter. Two families. One child.

Les Misérables

DETAILS DIRECTOR Ladj Ly

2017. France. **SCREENPLAY** Ladj Ly

15 min. Fiction CAST Damien Bonnard, Djibril Zonga

With a gun at his belt and a truncheon in his hand, Pento has just joined the Seine-Saint-Denis anti-crime brigade. With his teammates, he develops specific methods.

You Will Be Fine (GROS CHAGRIN)

DETAILS DIRECTOR Céline Devaux 2017. France. **SCREENPLAY** Céline Devaux

15 min. Fiction. CAST Swann Arlaud, Victoire Du Bois

Give it time. You'll get over it. Jean celebrates his birthday, gets drunk and recalls the dreadful weekend that led to his break-up with Mathilde.

Short Films

A Gentle Night

DETAILS

DIRECTOR Qiu Yang

2017. France, China.15 min. SCREENPLAY Qiu Yang

CAST Shuxian Li, Zhongwei Sun, Yaning Ding

Drama

In a nameless Chinese city, a mother with her daughter missing, refuses to go gentle into this good night.

Martin Cries (MARTIN PLEURE)

DETAILS

DIRECTOR Jonathan Vinel

2017. France. 16 min. Animation. SCREENPLAY Jonathan Vinel

CAST VOICE: Paul Hamy, Clémence Diard, Sarah-Megan Allouch-Mainier

Imagine you wake up one day, all your friends have disappeared. The friends that should be there are gone. So you look. You look everywhere. Every hiding place, each inch of the city, all the marshes, all the rivers. You look, but cannot find them.

Marlon

DETAILS

DIRECTOR Jessica Palud

2017. France. 19 min. Drama. SCREENPLAY Jessica Palud, Clémence Madeleine-Perdrillat

CAST Flavie Delande, Anne Suarez, Jonathan Couzinié, Catherine Salée

Fourteen-year-old Marlon visits her mother in prison for the first time since she was jailed. Protected by her family and friends, Marlon persists, despite everything, in believing that her mother is her childhood heroine.

Just Before Losing Everything (AVANT QUE DE TOUT PERDRE)

DETAILS

DIRECTOR Xavier Legrand

2012. France.

SCREENPLAY Xavier Legrand

29 min. Drama. CAST Léa Drucker, Miljan Chatelain, Denis Menochet

While her children pretend to go to school, Miriam hurries to pick them up and take them to her work place. She explains to her boss that she has to leave the region in a rush.



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CONTACT

adeline.monzier@unifrance.org

Aude Hesbert, Head of Festivals, UniFrance
Adeline Monzier, US Representative, UniFrance
Mathieu Fournet, Audiovisual Attaché, Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S.
Amélie Garin-Davet, Program Officer Cinema, Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S.
A program of UniFrance and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S.



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