French Club Film Series / Fall 2017
All films shown in Stafford Auditorium (Rector) at 7pm

Wednesday, October 11th
*Bienvenue chez les Ch’tis / Welcome to the Sticks*
Directed by Dany Boon, 2008
The manager of the postal service in Provence wants to move to the sunny seaside but is instead sent by the management to northern France for two years. He moves north without his family, unhappy at the prospect of living in this inhospitable place. But, he is surprised to discover that it is better than he had imagined.

Wednesday, November 8th
*OSS 117 : Le Caire, nid d’espions / OSS 117: Cairo, Nest of Spies*
Directed by Michel Hazanavicius, 2006
In this spy comedy film, Hubert Bonisseur de la Bath (secret agent OSS 117) goes to Cairo in 1955 to investigate the disappearance of his friend Jack Jefferson, another agent, and a Soviet cargo ship.

Wednesday, November 29th
*À la folie… pas du tout / He Loves Me… He Loves Me Not*
Directed by Laetitia Colombani, 2003
Angélique, an art student, falls in love with a married doctor and attempts to persuade him to leave his wife. When seen from the doctor's perspective, however, things are not as they initially seemed.

French Club Wine & Cheese Night
Thursday, November 16, 7-8pm in Hartman House
RSVP only!

Tournées Film festival    Spring 2018

January 25, 2018: *Ma Vie de courgette / My Life as a Zucchini* (2016)
Reception at 5:30 in collaboration with Trout Gallery to promote their exhibit of William Kentridge’s work, including an animated short inspired by Georges Méliès’s Voyage dans la lune. Méliès film will be running in the lounge area during the reception; and guests can visit the gallery to see Kentridge’s work.
Screening at 7pm in Weiss 235
Though bravely realistic, Swiss director Claude Barras’s charming stopmotion animated film is an unexpectedly uplifting look at childhood tragedy. After his alcoholic mother’s death, nine-year-old Icare—known to his friends as Zucchini—is placed in a group home where he soon forms alliances and rivalries with a group of kids in equally difficult circumstances, including the son of drug addicts and the daughter of a deported refugee. But it takes the arrival of the recently orphaned Camille for Zucchini to know he has found a friend for life. Which means that when Camille’s nasty aunt appears to take her away, the kids band together to find a way to keep her at the home. Though Barras and screenwriter Céline Sciamma (a powerhouse of contemporary French cinema as the writer/director of international hit Girlhood) never pull punches in describing the challenges faced by their characters, *My Life as a Zucchini* is imbued with a real-life sense of childhood wonder, both through its inventive animation and its commitment to exclusively telling the story from the children’s perspective. The result is a marvelously nuanced, finely crafted depiction of childhood, as appealing to young people as adults. Following a triumphant premiere at the Director’s Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival, *My Life as a Zucchini* wooed general audiences in France with its idiosyncratic style and bold treatment of its subject. It has since been nominated for a 2017 Academy Award for Best Animated Feature.

**February 1, 2018:** *Bande à part / Band of Outsiders* (1964)
*Screening in Althouse 106 at 7pm*

*Band of Outsiders* serves as the perfect introduction to the work of the seminal artist credited here as “Jean-Luc Cinéma Godard.” The film puts the leading New Wave director’s love of B-movies and detective novels front and center, with the story of a heist carried off by the unlikely trio of two shiftless Paris guys and the moony au pair they both love, but is at its most exhilarating with its famous “digressions”: the legendary line dance in a Paris café or the whirlwind
trip to the Louvre, in which the trio break the record for the fastest museum visit. Along with this constant playfulness, the film’s mix of youthful ebullience and romantic tragedy, its interplay between the gritty black and white images of Paris and Godard’s poetic voiceover, and the thrilling moments in which the camera seems to break with the narrative to capture the young actors’ very essence create a particularly enjoyable primer in the art of the New Wave, as well as Godard’s most accessible film. Made as a gift to his wife and muse Anna Karina to help her out of a period of depression, Band of Outsiders has a buoyancy that would soon be replaced by the sharper critique and harder edges of Godard’s political films of the late sixties. Also starring the boisterous Claude Brasseur and intense Sami Frey, Band of Outsiders is an unforgettable ode to youth, Paris, and cinema.

February 8, 2018: *Examen d’état / National Diploma (2014)*
*Screening in Althouse 106 at 7pm*

**Director:** DIEUDO HAMADI    Not Rated    92 minutes

In the Congo, passing the national baccalaureate exam can save a young person from a life of manual labor and open the doors to university and a career. To fail the exam is to be fated to struggle for survival through menial work. As Congolese filmmaker Dieudo Hamadi’s documentary *National Diploma* so powerfully shows, the path to success in the national exam is full of challenges. We see a school principal come into a prep classroom and summon those students who have not paid their fees to pay up now or leave. Those who stay aren’t much better off: the teachers are striking because they haven’t been paid. So an enterprising group of students rents a house to cram for the exam. Yet Hamadi’s fly-on-the-wall camera reveals study methods that are as surprising to Western eyes as they are endemic in the Congo: students visit marabouts for medicinal plants, get preachers to bless their pens or exorcize them, and, most importantly, pay recent graduates for cheat sheets. Working in classic cinema vérité style, Hamadi follows the group of students through the exam to the nerve-wracking announcement of the results, providing an indelible portrait of the role of education in Congolese society.

February 15, 2018: *L’avenir / Things to come (2016)*
*Screening in Althouse 106 at 7pm*
Director: MIA HANSEN-LØVE   PG-13   102 minutes
Though only thirty-five years old, writer-director Mia Hansen-Løve has already made five features and established herself as one of contemporary French cinema’s brightest talents. With the stunningly mature Things to Come, she remains faithful to her calling as a chronicler of the lives and loves of today’s educated Parisians, continuing to observe both the milestones in her characters’ lives and the everyday minutia that make her films so convincing and familiar. Working with Isabelle Huppert, the first major star cast in one of her features, Hansen-Løve creates a surprisingly luminous portrait of a woman facing difficult changes in late middle-age: in the span of a few months, high school philosophy professor Nathalie (Huppert) is left by her husband of twenty-five years, buries her mother, and learns that the publishing imprint she edits is being terminated. Though her future might look bleak, Nathalie remains committed to her intellectual values and her personal mission to pass them on to her pupils. Set against a backdrop of student unrest, Things to Come is both an energizing reminder of the crucial role played by ideas in French public life and an inspiring view of the fortitude found in the life of the mind, powerfully channeled through Isabelle Huppert’s intelligence, vitality, and unexpected flashes of humor.

Screening in Althouse 106 at 7pm

DIRECTOR: André Téchiné   not rated   116 minutes
With Being 17, the great French writer-director André Téchiné returns to the subject matter of his masterpiece Wild Reeds, a 1994 feature about the sexual awakening of a handful of teenagers in the rural southwest of France during the Algerian war, and a landmark in the representation of gay youth in French cinema. In this new film, the time is the present and the setting the majestic landscape of the Pyrenees. Seventeen-year-old Damien lives alone with his mother, a doctor, while his father is deployed overseas with the French army. At school, he is a good student but an outsider. He is frequently bullied by Thomas, a biracial boy who must commute several hours a day from his
adoptive family’s remote farm high in the mountains. When Damien’s mother meets Thomas through an emergency house-call to his mother, she discovers the hardships the boy must face to go to school and eventually invites him to move in with her family to be close to the classroom. The relationship between Damien and Thomas only gets worse and the two boys soon come to blows. Yet as both their families face major upheavals, Damien realizes he is in love with Thomas. With *Being 17*, Téchiné has made his best film in years, returning to his winning mix of subtly observed naturalism and narrative developments worthy of the great melodramas to give us another memorable depiction of the trials and triumphs of coming of age and coming out.

**March 1, 2018: A peine j’ouvre les yeux / As I open my eyes (2015)**

*Screening in Althouse 106 at 7pm*

![Image](image_url)

**DIRECTOR:** Leyla Bouzid  
**not rated**  
**102 minutes**

Tunis, 2010. Fresh out of high school, eighteen-year-old Farah is butting heads with her mother over her all-night, beer-fueled outings with a new boyfriend and her refusal to enroll at medical school so she can pursue her dream of singing in a band. All this would be chalked up to growing pains if the setting were not Tunisia in the last months of the Ben Ali dictatorship and Farah’s irrepressible thirst for life and justice did not come out in politically charged concerts that draw the attention of the country’s notoriously corrupt authorities. As such, Leyla Bouzid’s powerful debut feature is not only a striking portrait of a young woman on the cusp of adulthood, but a deeply insightful, complex look at life under a repressive political regime, with its compromises, commitments, and corrosive effects on personal relationships. While the film does not directly refer to the events of the Tunisian revolution of December 2010, Farah clearly embodies the spirit of youthful revolt that drove the Arab Spring. As portrayed by beginner Baya Medhaffar, who performs her own vocals in several riveting concert sequences, Farah is utterly relatable, a fragile but seemingly unbreakable young woman as eager for fun as she is committed to honesty.