YOUNG FRENCH CINEMA

Discover a New Generation of Directors

2016 FILM SELECTION

A program of UniFrance films and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S.
For the second year in a row, YOUNG FRENCH CINEMA offers a selection of today’s best films and filmmakers. The program specifically focuses on rising talents - among them many women - from high-profile independent works to powerful documentaries, quirky discoveries and exciting shorts. After a successful first year, the upcoming selection demonstrates that this young generation is - more than ever - a genuine melting pot with a global vision and an amazing capacity to combine cultural influences. Across a wide range of subject matters, their work is innovative both in style and storytelling. Most of the films selected in this program have premiered in the US in 2015 in one of the top North-American festivals.

In this brochure, you will find information about the guidelines of the program as well as descriptions of the films selected for the 2016 program. Please note that the 2016 film selection is available until December 31, 2016 under the conditions mentioned in this brochure.

Young French Cinema has been set up by UniFrance films 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 this year to include upcoming talents from Canada, in partnership with Telefilm Canada.

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

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GUIDELINES

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

**FILM SELECTION:** The program includes 12 feature films (11 French, one Canadian) and eight short films. All films can be booked “à la carte”: there is no minimum or maximum number of films that you must choose, except for the shorts, which need to be booked together with a feature of your choice. 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 2016 program is available for a $300 booking fee for up to two screenings per film. There is no screening fee for the booking of short films. 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 two months before the screening date and addressed to adeline.monzier@unifrance.org. UniFrance Films will be the third party between you and the rights holder in France.

**FORMAT:** All films are available in DCP. Most of them are also available via CINECONDUCTOR in DCP-quality. 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 films 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 films will consider your application and if positive, facilitate the contact with the artist.

**For all requests and for access to screeners, please contact:** adeline.monzier@unifrance.org
An acute examination of pride, ego, and competition, Stéphane Demoustier’s first feature highlights an especially fraught father-son relationship. When the film opens, middle-aged Jérôme (Olivier Gourmet) has just lost his job as a chain-store sales manager; despite this setback, he’s convinced that he’ll be able to begin a new retail operation immediately, going to illegal lengths to do so.

At home, Jérôme grows more distant, paying little attention either to his tennis-prodigy son, Ugo (Charles Mérienne), or his wife, Laura (Valeria Bruni Tedeschi)—who soon leaves him for another man. When Jérôme fails to realize his professional dreams, he begins to focus more intensely on eleven-year-old Ugo’s extraordinary talents, burdening his only child with his own frustrated ambitions. The extent to which the son feels responsible for his dad’s happiness becomes painfully clear when Ugo tries to sabotage his opponent at a championship tennis match—behavior, it would seem, that he first learned from papa.

This remarkable debut set against world of French youth tennis serves as an extended volley back and forth between father and son. — VARIETY
This tart, frequently hilarious, multilayered mockumentary written and directed by Kaouther Ben Hania is rooted in an actual incident: In 2003, an assailant on a motorbike known as the Challat—or the “Slasher”—of Tunis slashed eleven women from behind with a knife. Ten years later, Ben Hania is on a fictional quest to find out the true identity of this attacker, following up a “lead” that the Challat is due to be released from prison. When that tip proves to be false, Ben Hania conducts auditions to find someone to play the slasher; in the process, she meets someone who claims that he is the real Challat. While fact and fiction, being and performing are continually destabilized in Ben Hania’s film, the focus of her project never wavers: revealing the troubling misogynist views held by many Tunisian men, who applaud the Challat for assaulting women deemed to have been dressed “immodestly.”

Backward attitudes toward women are sharply brought to the foreground of Kaouther Ben Hania’s audacious mockumentary. —Variety
As he did in his debut feature, *The Lord’s Ride* (2010), Jean-Charles Hue shapes *Eat Your Bones* as a remarkable hybrid of documentary and fiction to focus on a community rarely depicted in cinema—the Romany of northern France. Working once again with nonprofessional actors, Hue centers his film on eighteen-year-old Jason (Jason François), who is just days away from being baptized. His life is upended, however, by the return of his half-brother, Fred (Frédéric Dorkel), home after serving fifteen years in jail but already itching to put another criminal plan—a heist of copper wire—into action. Joined by a third brother and a cousin, Fred and Jason reveal themselves to be incompetent thieves, and constant squabbling among this quartet further undermines their mission. Shifting seamlessly from the long observational takes of Jason with his family and neighbors in their caravan encampments to the noir-like elements of its final scenes, *Eat Your Bones* is the work of a filmmaker firmly in control of both style and content.

*A gritty Gallic noir set among the slang-spouting trailer park gypsies of Northern France.*

—THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER
Astragal (L’Astragale)  
DIRECTED BY  
BRIGITTE SY

Brigitte Sy’s fiercely intelligent adaptation of the eponymous 1965 semi-autobiographical novel by Algerian-born Albertine Sarrazin—vividly brought to life by Leila Bekhti—depicts the life of a young woman defiantly on the margins. The title refers to the name for the anklebone, which Albertine broke while escaping from jail in 1957 at the age of twenty. Crawling along a French country road after her she injures herself, Albertine encounters Julien (Reda Kateb), a fellow criminal who takes her under his wing, providing housing for her in Paris. The two quickly become lovers, Albertine’s passion for Julien growing even stronger during his frequent absences. Working as a prostitute in Montmartre, Albertine is frequently shown recording her thoughts and observations on her conflicting desires: between total autonomy and a deepening need for Julien. Those notes, quickly jotted down in cahiers, and eloquently read by Bekhti in voice-over, would soon form the basis of a singular work in French literature.

In elegant black and white, sublimating historical re-enactment, the film reveals an astonishing modernity. —PREMIERE
Coproduced by the Centre Pompidou, Antoine Barraud’s spellbinding film concerns the labyrinthine quest of an auteur named Bertrand—played by the acclaimed French director Bertrand Bonello, whose slinky biopic Saint Laurent was released earlier this year—to find the artwork that best exemplifies the concept of the “monstrous,” the subject of his next movie. Guiding the filmmaker on his quest through the galleries of various institutions is Célia, an art historian who is incarnated in some scenes by Jeanne Balibar and in others by Géraldine Pailhas. The tactic of having two actresses inhabit the same role clearly nods to Luis Buñuel’s That Obscure Object of Desire (1977), which deploys a similar conceit; other cinephilic salutes include a film-within-the-film reimagining of Vertigo. These tributes, rather than appearing slavishly derivative, instead add to Portrait’s scene-by-scene unpredictability and sharpen its absorbing ideas about images, both moving and still.

A thorny, intangible and episodic cinematic dream. —EYE FOR FILM
Sense of Humor  (Le Sens de l’humour)

DIRECTED BY
MARILYNE CANTO

Best known in France as an actress, Marilyne Canto directed, cowrote, and stars in this richly detailed film (her first feature) about relationships. Recently widowed Elise (Canto), a guide at a museum in Paris and the mother of ten-year-old Léo (Samson Dajczman), finds herself pushing away her boyfriend, Paul (Antoine Chappey), an antiques specialist, who yearns for them to grow closer. Yet during one of his more tumultuous episodes with Elise, Paul and Léo slowly forge a tender bond. Keenly attuned to the contradictions and inconsistencies that all humans, no matter their age, exhibit, Sense of Humor is the rare movie that embraces the complexities of its characters rather than turn them into clichés. And as superb as Canto and Chappey are in their roles, it is Dajczman, in his only film to date, who gives the most astounding performance, as a boy at once vigilant and carefree, loving and withholding.

A subtle and nuanced story about a stepfamily in mourning. —TELERAMA
Silvered Water, Syria Self-Portrait  
*(Eau argentée, Syrie autoportrait)*

**DIRECTED BY**  
**OSSAMA MOHAMMED, WIAM SIMAV BEDIRXAN**

An extraordinary, at times excruciating documentary, *Silvered Water, Syria Self-Portrait* bears witness to the atrocities of the civil war that has raged in that country for nearly five years. Syrian filmmaker Ossama Mohammed, who has been living in exile in Paris since fighting broke out in his native land, began accumulating hundreds of online videos shot clandestinely by his compatriots via cell phones and other devices that expose the daily brutality of life under President Bashar al-Assad’s regime; these images became the starting point for this searing, visceral project. Mohammed was later contacted by activist Wiam Simav Bedirxan, a young Kurdish woman who had been working as schoolteacher in Homs and recorded the horrors after the uprising in that western Syrian city. Much of the footage of Homs’s destruction shot by Bedirxan, whom Mohammed would credit as his co-director, is included in *Silvered Water*—a courageous film that will leave no viewer unmoved.

*A necessary, often unbearable documentary that bears vital witness to the horrors of Syria’s civil war.* —VARIETY
A bold retelling of the saga of the most infamous of the twelve disciples, Rabah Ameur-Zaïmeche’s movie portrays Judas not as the betrayer of Jesus but as his most devoted and loving friend. Filming in starkly beautiful desert locations in his native Algeria, Ameur-Zaïmeche, who, in addition to directing, writing, and producing Story of Judas also stars in the title role, immediately establishes the unshakeable bond between the two men: In the opening scene, we witness Judas carry Jesus (Nabil Djedouani), weakened by a forty-day fast, on his back over hilly terrain. When Jesus’s teachings begin to attract large crowds in Judea, Judas assumes an even greater role as his friend’s protector, trying to shield him from Pontius Pilate’s Roman forces, who are growing ever more threatened by the prophet. In this graceful reimagining of one of the Bible’s best-known stories, Ameur-Zaïmeche presents both Jesus and Judas as victims of the occupying army’s power plays.

_A pleasingly nonconformist New Testament in the Pasolini tradition._ —THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER
Alix Delaporte’s impeccably observed drama tracks thirteen-year-old Victor (Romain Paul, here in his big-screen debut), a talented student and athlete growing up in grim circumstances: He and his single mother, Nadia (Clotilde Hesme), severely ill with cancer, live in a trailer home on the outskirts of Montpellier. Victor has never met his father, a famous conductor named Samuel Rovinski (Grégory Gadebois)—though the teenager hopes for some kind of reunion when he learns that his estranged dad will be in town to lead the local orchestra in a performance of Mahler’s Sixth Symphony. The title of the film refers to the “mighty strokes of fate” delivered by a percussionist at the end of this musical composition—a fitting motif for a teenager whose own life often hangs in the balance. Without a trace of sentimentality, The Last Hammer Blow presents an unforgettable young man bravely shouldering immense responsibilities.

A subtle French indie that resists hitting the obvious notes. —VARIETY
Director and cowriter Thomas Salvador stars in the title role of this modest, extremely charming superhero movie. Tall, lean, slightly awkward, and unassuming, Vincent leads a quiet life as a construction worker. But whenever he comes into contact with water, this beanpole of a man transforms into a being with unsurpassed strength and speed; after jumping into a lake, Vincent glides through the water like a dolphin. Though he tries to keep his spectacular gift hidden, he eventually shares his secret with his new love Lucie (Vimala Pons), who is utterly delighted by her boyfriend’s powers. After Vincent taps into his preternatural might to help a coworker at a building site, a police chase ensues—a pursuit more thrilling than any found in a recent comic-book blockbuster with a budget 100 times that of Salvador’s film. Vincent reminds us that the best special effects are ingenuity and imagination.

The film is charming, poetic, beautifully nonchalant. —TELERAMA
Cyprien Vial’s striking feature debut follows the travails of Punjabi teenager Many (impressive first-time actor Harmandeep Palminder), an illegal immigrant in France who must balance his wish to establish roots in his new country with the unyielding pressure to send money back home to his family in India. Two years after his arrival in France as a terrified fifteen-year-old, Many appears to be fully integrated: He’s living with a kind foster family, doing well in his racially diverse high school on the outskirts of Paris, and embarking on a romance with one of his West African classmates, Elisabeth (Elisabeth Lando). But succumbing to his parents’ pleas for more cash, Many assumes greater, more dangerous responsibilities in the construction business run by the man who smuggled him into France. With tremendous insight and empathy, Young Tiger not only lays bare the specific predicament of its protagonist but also points to the impossible, conflicting demands placed on immigrants everywhere.

"A touching and realistic immigrant drama from the Paris suburbs." —THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER
Chorus [Canadian Pick]

DIRECTED BY
FRANÇOIS DELISLE

Hugo was eight when he went missing. When searches turn up nothing, his parents, Christophe and Irène split under the excruciating pressure of waiting. He moves to Mexico. She goes back to her career as an alto in an early music choir. They live in their separate solitudes, haunted by Hugo’s disappearance, until one day they get the news that human remains have been found. Everything indicates they are those of their son Hugo. During their forced reunion in Montreal, they both handle the death of their child in their own way. Amid the guilt of losing a loved one, they haltingly move toward affirmation of life, acceptance of death and even the possibility of reconciliation. Chorus is a love story that emerges from mourning and leads to two survivors clinging to each other as if to heal the deepest cut of all.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

ABOUT TELEFILM CANADA—Inspired by talent. Viewed everywhere. Created in 1967, Telefilm is dedicated to the cultural, commercial and industrial success of Canada’s audiovisual industry. Through its various funding and promotion programs, Telefilm supports dynamic companies and creative talent here at home and around the world. Telefilm also makes recommendations regarding the certification of audiovisual treaty coproductions to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, and administers the programs of the Canada Media Fund and the Talent Fund, a private donation initiative. Visit telefilm.ca and follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/telefilmcanada and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/telefilmcanada.
Short Films

**Don’t Speak About Love** (Ne parlez pas d’amour)

**DIRECTED BY** Hadrien Bichet
**SCREENPLAY** Yves Bichet
**CAST** Manon Carrand, Christopher Yavau

Samir, a junior in high school, edgy and impulsive, is in love with Lea, a classmate in a wheelchair. After he is unjustly expelled from school, he is set upon revenge.

**The Wanderer** (Errance)

**DIRECTED BY** Peter Dourountzis
**SCREENPLAY** Peter Dourountzis
**CAST** Paul Hamy, Zita Hanrot, Sébastien Houbani

Djé has come to Paris for the weekend, and no one’s expecting him. He discreetly slips through the shadows, walking the streets in an attempt to remedy his boredom. A chameleon and outsider, he spends his time socializing, drinking or just wandering.

*Unifrance films Award for Short Film, 2015 (Grand Prix)*

**Breath** (Ses souffles)

**DIRECTED BY** Just Philippot
**SCREENPLAY** Just Philippot, Pierre Dejon
**CAST** Candela Cottis, Marie Kauffmann

Lizon has just attended her friend Marie’s birthday. The friends around the birthday cake, the candles to be blown, the wish to be made amazed her. For her ninth birthday, Lizon wants the same thing. A birthday with a cake, candles and her friends, at her home: in the car.

*Unifrance films Award for Short Film, 2015 (Prix Spécial)*
One, Two, Tree

DIRECTED BY YULIA ARONOVA
SCREENPLAY Yulia Aronova

It’s the story of a tree, a tree like any other. One day, it jumps into a pair of boots and goes off for a walk, inviting everyone it meets to follow. Boring everyday life fades as they all skip and dance along happily.

Uncanny Valley

DIRECTED BY PAUL WENNINGER
SCREENPLAY Paul Wenninger

In Uncanny Valley, we are at once bombarded by the psychological and physical intensity of a battle fought between desperate soldiers during the First World War. Within the horizon of a physiological apparatus and a gaze towards war, Uncanny Valley develops a dramaturgy of the image interrupted, a stuttering picture that interrupts the narrative structure of the scenic sequence.

Mother(s) (Maman(s))

DIRECTED BY MAÏMOUNA DOUCOURÉ
SCREENPLAY Maimouna Doucouré
CAST Eriq Ebouaney, Maimouna Gueye, Sokhna Diallo, Mareme N’Diaye

Aida, 8 years old, lives with her family in the Parisian suburbs. The day her father comes back from his trip to Senegal, their mother country, Aida’s daily life is completely upset: her father is not alone, he came back with a young Senegalese, Rama, whom he introduces as his second wife.

Winner Short Cuts Award for Best Film, TIFF 2015
No One Will Be Any Wiser *(Ni vu ni connu)*  
**DIRECTED** by **LYES SALEM**  
**SCREENPLAY** Jean-Armand Bougrelle  
**CAST** Marilou Malo, Alix Blumberg dit “Fleurmont”, Salim Laouar Fontaine, Philippe Ferhat  
A woman who thinks her husband is cheating on her hires a fumbling crook to kidnap and punish the mistress. With one of his friends, he sets up a scheme to easily pocket the money. But on the day of the confrontation, things take an unexpected turn.

Rewind *(A rebours)*  
**DIRECTED** by **FRÉDÉRIC MERMOUD**  
**SCREENPLAY** Paul Degout  
**CAST** Lou Granarolo, Audrey Bastien, François-Xavier Phan, Paul Granier  
While Sylvie is rushing to open the grocery store where she works, two customers burst in: Franck, a serious looking man Sylvie seems to know and Julie, a young woman who appears to be in a dire situation. An argument quickly breaks out between them, followed by a slap and Franck furiously leaving the store. While Sylvie helps Julie up, a bigger fight begins outside.
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