

Four French Films

The New Wave, Clouzot, and Romy July 16–August 1, 2010

French films and summer make a perfect combination! This series features restored prints of two classics and a pair of fascinating historical documentaries about several key personalities of 1960s French cinema.

Generous support has been received from the Cultural Offices of the French Embassy and the Consulate General of France in Houston. Special thanks to Dominique Chastres, cultural attaché at the Consulate General of France in Houston, and the Texan-French Alliance for the Arts.



Admission

General admission is \$7. MFAH members, senior adults, and students with ID receive a \$1 discount. The MFAH Films box office accepts payment by cash, check, and credit card. Purchase tickets in advance online at www.mfah.org/film, in the museum lobbies, or at the box office. The box office opens one hour prior to each screening.

Le combat dans l'île

Directed by Alain Cavalier
(France, 1962, 104 min., subtitled)
Friday, July 16, 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, July 17, 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, July 18, 5:00 p.m.

Clément (Jean-Louis Trintignant) has abandoned his middle-class family to join a radical right-wing terrorist group. When his mentor (Pierre Asso) betrays him as the author of a failed assassination attempt, he goes on the run, reluctantly taking his wife Anne (Romy Schneider) with him. They take temporary shelter with Paul (Henri Serre), an old friend, and a pacifist and leftist to boot. Then Clément abandons his wife too, and runs off to South America seeking revenge for his betrayal. Anne is drawn to Paul and begins a new life with him, all in Clément's absence. His return is inevitable, but Anne's choice is not so straightforward. Alain Cavalier's – a protégé of Louis Malle – first major feature is a subtle, politically committed film. —www.film4.com/reviews

L'enfer d'Henri-Georges Clouzot (Henri-Georges Clouzot's Inferno)

Directed by Serge Bromberg and Ruxandra Medrea
(France, 2009, 102 min., subtitled)
Friday, July 23, 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, July 24, 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, July 25, 5:00 p.m.

A documentary detailing the attempts of legendary French director Henri-Georges Clouzot (*Les Diaboliques*, *The Wages of Fear*) to film his long-planned project *Inferno*. A study of jealousy starring Romy Schneider and Serge Reggiani and granted an unlimited budget by Columbia Pictures, Clouzot began an unprecedented process of technical experimentation, with the intention of creating an innovative film language based on the sonic and visual art of the period. But when filming commenced, the production started to unravel; the director was difficult and indecisive, causing delays in the shooting schedule; Reggiani walked off set, and the final blow came when Clouzot had a heart attack. The project never reached fruition. This documentary traces its history through interviews with key collaborators, and re-creates some scenes using archive footage and contemporary reenactments. —*Sight & Sound* magazine

Go to clouzotsinferno.com to visit the film's Web site.

Breathless (À bout de souffle)

Directed by Jean-Luc Godard
(France, 1960, 90 min., subtitled)
Thursday, July 29, 5:00 p.m.
Friday, July 30, 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, July 31, 3:00 p.m.
Sunday, August 1, 5:00 p.m.
50th Anniversary Restored 35mm Print

Director Jean-Luc Godard's (b. 1930) debut film heralded the French New Wave movement not only with its unorthodox editing and handheld photography, but also its nonjudgmental portrayal of amoral youth. Godard paid homage to the 1940s American gangster B-movies and developed the plot from a news item supplied by François Truffaut. Jean-Paul Belmondo and Jean Seberg play two young lovers on the run after Belmondo has killed a cop and stolen a car. Seberg gained a cult following with her portrayal of a guileless newspaper delivery girl.

"*Breathless* still seems very much a live influence; it has remained continuously available... The iconic images of Jean-Paul Belmondo in hat and shades and Jean Seberg in *New York Herald Tribune* t-shirt have never gone away make it easy to pretend it was all the day before yesterday." —*Film Comment* magazine

Two in the Wave (Deux de la vague)

Directed by Emmanuel Laurent
(France, 2009, 91 min., subtitled)
Thursday, July 29, 7:00 p.m.
Friday, July 30, 8:45 p.m.
Saturday, July 31, 1:00 p.m.
Sunday, August 1, 6:45 p.m.

Two in the Wave is about the friendship between French New Wave filmmakers Jean-Luc Godard and François Truffaut (1932–1984). When Truffaut became a successful filmmaker with *The 400 Blows* in 1959, he helped Godard shift from writing to directing, offering him a screenplay which was already titled, *À bout de souffle* (*Breathless*.) Through the 1960s the two loyally supported each other until history and politics separated them in 1968. The directors' friendship and breakup is explored through archives and films; *Two in the Wave* revisits a remarkable decade that transformed world cinema. —www.widemanagement.com