

French Cinema every second Wednesday from 6:45-8pm

Wednesday, September 6; 20

Wednesday, October 4; 18

Wednesday, November 1; 15; 29

French Cinema-

The fall semester will focus on **Agnes Varda** and **Jacques Demy** films.

In addition to having been partnered and married, they were both part of the new wave movement and were among the directors who left their mark on the period.

About Agnes Varda:

Agnès Varda (French: 30 May 1928 – 29 March 2019) was a Belgian-born French film director, photographer and artist. Her work was pioneering for, and central to, the development of the widely influential French New Wave film movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Her films focused on achieving documentary realism, addressing feminist issues, and/or producing other social commentary, with a distinctive experimental style.

Varda's work employed location shooting in an era when the limitations of sound technology made it easier and more common to film indoors, with constructed sets and painted backdrops of landscapes, rather than the real thing. Her use of non- professional actors was also unconventional in the context of 1950s French cinema. Among other awards and nominations, she received an honorary Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival, a Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival, an Academy Honorary Award, and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature. Director Martin Scorsese described Varda as "one of the Gods of Cinema ».

About Jacques Demy:

Jacques Demy 5 June 1931 – 27 October 1990) was a French director, lyricist, and screenwriter. He appeared at the height of the French New Wave alongside contemporaries like Jean-Luc Godard and François Truffaut. Demy's films are celebrated for their visual style, which drew upon diverse sources such as classic Hollywood musicals, the plein-air realism of his French New Wave colleagues, fairy tales, jazz, Japanese manga, and the opera. His films contain overlapping continuity (i.e., characters cross over from film to film), lush musical scores (typically composed by Michel Legrand) and motifs like teenage love, labor rights, chance encounters, incest, and the intersection between dreams and reality. **He was married to Agnès Varda**, another prominent director of the French New Wave. Demy is best known for the two musicals he directed in the mid-1960s: *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* (1964) and *The Young Girls of Rochefort* (1967).

Lites of the films and dates:

Week ONE

Wednesday, September 6

Cleo de 5-7

Directed by Agnès Varda • 1962 • France

Starring Corinne Marchand, Antoine Bourseiller, Dominique Davray

Agnès Varda eloquently captures Paris in the sixties with this real-time portrait of a singer (Corinne Marchand) set adrift in the city as she awaits test results of a biopsy. A chronicle of the

minutes of one woman's life, CLÉO FROM 5 TO 7 is a spirited mix of vivid vérité and melodrama, featuring a score by Michel Legrand (THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG) and cameos by Jean-Luc Godard and Anna Karina.

Week TWO

Wednesday, September 20

Faces, Places

Directed by Agnès Varda • 2017 • France

An unlikely duo, 89-year-old Agnes Varda, one of the leading figures of the French New Wave, and acclaimed 33-year-old French photographer and muralist JR teamed up to co-direct this enchanting documentary/road movie. Kindred spirits, Varda and JR share a lifelong passion for images and how they are created, displayed, and shared. Together they travel around the villages of France in JR's photo truck meeting locals, learning their stories, and producing epic-size portraits of them. The photos are prominently displayed on houses, barns, storefronts, and trains revealing the humanity in their subjects, and themselves. FACES PLACES documents these heart-warming encounters as well as the unlikely, tender friendship they formed along the way.

Week THREE

Wednesday, October 4

Black Panthers

Directed by Agnès Varda • 1970 • United States

Agnès Varda turns her camera on an Oakland demonstration against the imprisonment of activist and Black Panthers cofounder Huey P. Newton. In addition to evincing Varda's fascination with her adopted surroundings and her empathy, this perceptive short is also a powerful political statement. Restored by the Cineteca di Bologna at L'Immagine Ritrovata in association with Ciné-Tamaris and The Film Foundation. Restoration funding provided by the Annenberg Foundation, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and The Film Foundation.

Week FOUR

Wednesday, October 18

The Gleaners and I: Two Years Later

Directed by Agnès Varda • 2002 • France

Starring Agnès Varda

Agnès Varda's charming follow-up to her acclaimed documentary THE GLEANERS AND I is a deceptively unassuming grace note that takes us deeper into the world of those who find purpose and beauty in the refuse of society. Revisiting many of the original film's subjects to explore the often unexpected effects that their participation in the project has had on their lives, this wonderfully warm and human epilogue once again takes gleaning as the starting point from which to explore what most interests Varda: the richness, complexity, and poignancy of life outside the mainstream. What emerges is a crazy-quilt tapestry of the personal, the political, and the esoteric that celebrates the spirit and creativity of those who forge their own path.

Week FIVE

Wednesday, November 1

The World of Jacques Demy

Directed by Agnès Varda • 1995 • France, Belgium, Spain

Hollywood has had its fair share of power couples; husband and wife duos that have each enjoyed illustrious careers in the film industry. In France, one of the most noteworthy marital unions occurred when Jacques Demy and Agnès Varda tied the knot in 1962. Distinguished filmmakers in their own right, the couple enjoyed nearly 30 years together until Demy died in 1990. Following his death, Varda constructed a documentary paying tribute to the work of her husband and highlighting his place in the history of film.

Week SIX

Wednesday, November 15

The Umbrellas of Cherbourg

Directed by Jacques Demy • 1964 • France

Starring Catherine Deneuve, Nino Castelnuovo

The angelically beautiful Catherine Deneuve was launched to stardom by this dazzling musical heart-tugger from Jacques Demy. She plays an umbrella-shop owner's delicate daughter, glowing with first love for a handsome garage mechanic, played by Nino Castelnuovo. When the boy is shipped off to fight in Algeria, the two lovers must grow up quickly. Exquisitely designed in a kaleidoscope of colors, and told entirely through lilting songs by the great composer Michel Legrand, *THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG* is one of the most revered and unorthodox movie musicals of all time.

Week SEVEN

Wednesday, November 29

Donkey Skin

Directed by Jacques Demy • 1970 • France

Starring Catherine Deneuve, Jean Marais, Delphine Seyrig

In this lovingly crafted, wildly eccentric adaptation of a classic French fairy tale, Jacques Demy casts Catherine Deneuve as a princess who must go into hiding as a scullery maid in order to fend off an unwanted marriage proposal—from her own father, the king (Jean Marais). A topsy-turvy riches-to-rags fable with songs by Michel Legrand, *DONKEY SKIN* creates a tactile fantasy world that's perched on the border between the earnest and the satiric, and features Delphine Seyrig in a delicious supporting role as a fashionable fairy godmother.