



## BAM presents *Strange Desire: The Films of Claire Denis*, Mar 29—Apr 9, the largest-ever US retrospective dedicated to the celebrated French filmmaker

**February 20, 2019/Brooklyn, NY**—From Friday, March 29 through Tuesday, April 9, BAM presents *Strange Desire: The Films of Claire Denis*, the most extensive retrospective ever presented in the US dedicated to Denis, a filmmaker consistently counted among the greatest living directors by filmmakers and critics alike. Denis' work is a delicate balance of contradictions: her films are beloved, yet elusive; influential, yet singular; grounded in corporeality, but with a shifting relationship with time. Born in France, raised in colonial Africa where her father was a civil servant, and eventually returning to France as a teenager, Denis subtly explores race and colonial relationships, love and eroticism, the texture of bodies and environments, and the elasticity of time. Following the retrospective, BAM will screen Denis' critically acclaimed new feature, the poetic science fiction film *High Life* (2019), starring Robert Pattinson, Juliette Binoche, Mia Goth, and André Benjamin. Denis will appear in person at BAM for a sneak preview show on April 3. The film opens in New York and Los Angeles on April 5.

The series begins with *Beau Travail* (1999), Denis' masterful update of Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*, starring Denis Lavant and regular collaborator Grégoire Colin. A study of jealousy and obsession set among the existential ennui and empty rituals of the French Foreign Legion in Djibouti, *Beau Travail* captures Denis' signature elliptical style and hypnotic rhythms. A balletic study of bodies in motion with an unforgettable final scene, *Beau Travail* is Denis' most iconic and influential work.

Denis' interest in colonial legacies pulses through much of the work featured in the series, including her feature debut *Chocolat* (1988), a semi-autobiographical work about a white French woman's complex relationship with a Cameroonian man, her family's household servant; *No Fear, No Die* (1990), a cockfighting drama set among Caribbean immigrants, screening with the short *For Ushari Ahmed Mahmoud* (1991); and *White Material* (2009), in which Isabelle Huppert, in an unnamed African country, stubbornly refuses to abandon her coffee plantation as civil war erupts around her.

The series also spotlights Denis' elastic approach to genre, as in *Let the Sunshine In* (2017), starring Juliette Binoche, a romantic comedy of sorts that deftly vacillates between modes of high romance, ironic detachment, anti-bourgeois satire, and melancholic drama, featuring a deep stable of great French actors, including Gerard Depardieu, Xavier Beauvois, and Alex Descas; the controversial *Trouble Every Day* (2001), starring Vincent Gallo and Beatrice Dalle, a work of shocking cannibal body horror, elevated by dreamy, elliptical rhythms and a heart of pained erotic longing; and the dark, political noir *Bastards* (2013).

Other films in the retrospective highlight Denis' deft portrayals human interaction, both emotional and physical, including the bonds between fathers and children in the delicately observed *35 Shots of Rum* (2008), a riff on Ozu's *Late Spring* starring Denis regular Alex Descas and actress-filmmaker Mati Diop; and families bound by blood and disrupted by violence in *I Can't Sleep* (1994) and *Nenette and Boni* (1996).

The series will also include lesser-known works—including a TV documentary chronicling the life of the great French filmmaker in *Jacques Rivette, le veilleur* (1990); the semi-autobiographical television film *US Go Home* (1994); a program of rare shorts; and more—and ends with *The Intruder* (2004), starring Michel Subor, the film that is perhaps the ultimate expression of Denis' elliptical filmmaking.

**For further press information, please contact:**  
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***Strange Desire: The Films of Claire Denis* Schedule:**



# Film

## **Fri, Mar 29**

7pm: *Beau Travail*

9:15pm: *Trouble Every Day*

## **Sat, Mar 30**

None

## **Sun, Mar 31**

4pm: *Chocolat*

7pm: *35 Shots of Rum*

9:30pm: *White Material*

## **Mon, Apr 1**

7pm: *Jacques Rivette, le veilleur*

## **Tue, Apr 2**

7pm: *Nenette and Boni*

9:30pm: *Shorts Program*

## **Wed, Apr 3**

7pm: *High Life*

## **Thu, Apr 4**

7pm: *Bastards*

9:15pm: *The Breidjing Camp*

## **Fri, Apr 5**

9:15pm: *Chocolat*

## **Sat, Apr 6**

2pm: *Towards Mathilde + Vers Nancy*

4:15pm: *US Go Home + Claire Denis, The Vagabond*

6:45pm: *35 Shots of Rum*

9:15pm: *Trouble Every Day*

## **Sun, Apr 7**

4:15pm: *Let the Sunshine In*

6:30pm: *I Can't Sleep*

9pm: *White Material*

## **Mon, Apr 8**

7pm: *No Fear, No Die + For Ushari Ahmed Mahmoud*

## **Tue, Apr 9**

7pm: *The Intruder*

## **About BAM Film**

Since 1998 BAM Rose Cinemas has been Brooklyn's home for alternative, documentary, art-house, and independent films. Combining new releases with year-round repertory program, the four-screen venue hosts new and rarely seen contemporary films, classics, work by local artists, and festivals of films from around the world, often with special appearances by directors, actors, and other guests. BAM has hosted major retrospectives of filmmakers like Spike Lee, Chantal Akerman, John Carpenter, Manoel de Oliveira, Luis Buñuel, King Hu, and Vincente Minnelli (winning a National Film Critics' Circle Award prize for the retrospective), and hosted the first US retrospectives of directors Arnaud Desplechin, Hong Sang-soo, Andrzej Zulawski, and Jiang Wen. Since 2009 the program has also produced BAMcinemaFest, New York's home for American independent film, and has championed the work of filmmakers like



# Film

Janicza Bravo, Andrew Dosunmu, Lena Dunham, and Alex Ross Perry. The 12-day festival of New York premieres, now in its 11th year, runs from June 12—23, 2019.

## Credits:

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## General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place (between Lafayette Ave and Hanson Place), houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas features first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey Theater) D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue

Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center

Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit [BAM.org](http://BAM.org).