

## BAMcinématek presents *Booed at Cannes*, a 15-film series of controversial masterworks and *film maudits* from the French festival, May 8—12 & 16—23

### All films in 35mm

*The Wall Street Journal* is the title sponsor for BAM Rose Cinemas and BAMcinématek.

**Brooklyn, NY/Apr 12, 2013**—From Wednesday, May 8 through Thursday, May 23, BAMcinématek presents *Booed at Cannes*, a 15-film series of masterworks and *film maudits* subjected to the wrath of the French festival's fickle audiences, all presented in 35mm.

Since its inception in 1946, the Cannes Film Festival has courted a reputation as the film world's most reliable hotbed for scandal: scenes clipped by censors mere moments before a film's premiere, torrents of walk-outs, and endless volleys of vicious repartee among the droves of moguls, critics, starlets, and dignitaries who descend upon the Palais des Festival each year. Within the cavernous repository of Cannes controversies, there remains a place of honor for those films and directors that elicit that most visceral, ear-catching of hostile audience responses: the boo. Works by such titans as Antonioni, Bresson, Truffaut, now heralded as masterpieces, were first met with incomprehension, disdain, and deafening jeers.

Opening the series on Wednesday, May 8 is Carl Theodor Dreyer's *Gertrud* (1964), a meditative portrait of an ex-opera singer's search for fulfillment as she leaves her politico husband to take another lover. Set in Stockholm, Dreyer's final film premiered in Paris and Denmark to divisive reviews, and when the film was booed at its screening in Cannes, Dreyer reportedly gave the audience the finger. Yet many championed the film as one of the best of the year; both Andrew Sarris and *Cahiers du cinéma* gave it the number two spot in their top 10 lists (behind *Blowup* and *Band of Outsiders*, respectively), and in his seminal review for *Sight and Sound*, late film critic Elliott Stein called it "Dreyer's most supernatural film, glowing with a more secret magic than any previous work."

It's no coincidence that several of the films in *Booed at Cannes* were the directors' last. The venerated "patron saint of cinema" Robert Bresson was famously greeted with a chorus of boos when his final film *L'Argent* (1983—May 19) garnered him the Best Director award, presented by none other than Orson Welles. The 81-year-old auteur was absent from the closing ceremonies and would not direct another film. Thirty years after winning the Palme d'Or for *La Dolce Vita*, Federico Fellini's "stunning and unbearably sad" (Dave Kehr) *The Voice of the Moon* (1990—May 16) was met with a similarly hostile reaction from perplexed Cannes filmgoers. A sprawling fantasia about a vagrant (Roberto Benigni) wandering the Italian countryside, the film was never released in the US. Fellini died several years later.

The most vociferous boos have been reserved for what viewers consider the undeserving winners of the Palme d'Or and Grand Prix, bestowed on such masters as Pialat, Lynch, and Scorsese. Upon receiving the top prize for *Under the Sun of Satan* (1987—May 9) Maurice Pialat dismissed the raucous crowd, defiantly proclaiming "if you don't like me, I don't like you either" and promptly flashing the *bras d'honneur* ("up yours" gesture). But since then, Pialat's

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rural tale of a priest in spiritual crisis has been hailed as “uncompromisingly rigorous and harsh...a remarkable film...with one of Depardieu’s strongest performances” (Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Chicago Reader*). David Lynch’s **Wild at Heart** (1990—May 11), completed one day before its premiere at Cannes, was first greeted with cheers and applause. But according to David Ansen in *Newsweek*: “the black-tie crowd at the awards ceremony was more divided. When jury president Bernardo Bertolucci announced Lynch as the Palme d’Or winner, the boos almost drowned out the cheers.” Amused by the controversy, Lynch was soon reminded of the festival’s capricious audience just two years later when **Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me** (1992—May 11), the movie prequel to his cult TV drama, was booed.

Michelangelo Antonioni had a similar losing streak 30 years earlier in 1960 when the strikingly subversive *L’Avventura* was booed so mercilessly that the director and his star Monica Vitti fled the theater. The film made Antonioni an international sensation, but just two years later, **L’Eclisse** (1962—May 10) provoked the same indignation. He finally took home the Grand Prix for *Blowup* in 1966. In his autobiographical documentary *My Voyage to Italy*, Martin Scorsese recalls *L’Eclisse* as having had a profound affect on him as a young cinephile, calling it “liberating...the final seven minutes suggested that the possibilities in cinema were absolutely limitless.” But Scorsese would fare no better when his expressionist New York nightmare **Taxi Driver** (1976—May 18), now widely considered one of the best films of all time (it ranked #31 in *Sight and Sound’s* 2012 poll), was booed as jury chairman Tennessee Williams announced its Palme d’Or win.

The booing lives on in the 21st century, with such recent victims as Lars von Trier’s *Antichrist*, Terrence Malick’s *The Tree of Life*, and Apichatpong Weerasethakul’s lush, jungle-set romance **Tropical Malady** (2004), which closes the series on May 23. Other highlights of the series include Luis Buñuel’s rarely-screened **EI** (1953—May 20)—also known as *This Strange Passion*—a perverse portrait of a husband unhinged by jealousy; David Cronenberg’s car accident fetish horror **Crash** (1996—May 17); François Truffaut’s follow-up to *Jules and Jim*, **The Soft Skin** (1964—May 22); a 1966 double bill of John Frankenheimer’s chilling psychodrama **Seconds** (May 21) and Tony Richardson’s depraved adaptation of the Jean Genet story **Mademoiselle** (May 21); and Jean Eustache’s sexually frank debut feature, **The Mother and the Whore** (1973—May 12).

**Press screenings to be announced.**

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#### **Booed at Cannes Schedule**

##### **Wed, May 8**

4:30, 7, 9:30pm: *Gertrud*

##### **Thu, May 9**

4:30, 7, 9:30pm: *Under the Sun of Satan*

##### **Fri, May 10**

1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:45pm: *L’Eclisse*

##### **Sat, May 11**

1:30, 7pm: *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me*

4:15, 9:45pm: *Wild at Heart*

##### **Sun, May 12**

2:30, 7pm: *The Mother and the Whore*

##### **Thu, May 16**

4:30, 7, 9:30pm: *The Voice of the Moon*

**Fri, May 17**

2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm: *Crash*

**Sat, May 18**

2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm: *Taxi Driver*

**Sun, May 19**

2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm: *L'Argent*

**Mon, May 20**

7, 9:30pm: *El*

**Tue, May 21**

4:30, 9:30pm: *Mademoiselle*

7pm: *Seconds*

**Wed, May 22**

4:15, 7, 9:45pm: *The Soft Skin*

**Thu, May 23**

4:30, 7, 9:30pm: *Tropical Malady*

**Film Descriptions**

***L'Argent*** (1983) 85min

*Directed by Robert Bresson. With Christian Patey.*

Even the revered Robert Bresson took a boozing at the hands of the unsparing Cannes audience for his final film, an adaptation of a Tolstoy story that follows a forged 500 franc note as it changes hands and overturns lives—culminating in one of cinema's most shocking final scenes. "Bresson captures the moral weight of small gestures in brisk, graphically precise images, and conveys the cosmic evil of daily life through one of the all-time great soundtracks" (*The New Yorker*).

**Sun, May 19 at 2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm**

***Crash*** (1996) 100min

*Directed by David Cronenberg. With James Spader, Holly Hunter, Elias Koteas, Deborah Kara Unger.*

After a head-on collision, a TV director gets entangled in the kinky, scary underworld of car accident fetishism, in which twisted metal, shattered glass, and scars are erotic objects. Cronenberg's mind-bending exploration of the link between sex and technology—Roger Ebert called it "a porno movie made by a computer"—provoked one of the all-time great Cannes controversies.

**Fri, May 17 at 2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm \*NC-17 version**

***L'Eclisse*** (1962) 126min

*Directed by Michelangelo Antonioni. With Monica Vitti, Alain Delon.*

Antonioni ventured even further into non-narrative abstraction with this final installment of the trilogy he began with *L'Avventura*. Art-house siren Monica Vitti plays a literary translator who has a brief fling with a stockbroker (Delon)—but Antonioni's real interest lies in the urban landscape of modern Rome, which he renders as unfamiliar as the surface of Mars. *L'Eclisse* won the Special Jury Prize at Cannes, where it played to an alternately baffled and worshipful audience.

**Fri, May 10 at 1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:45pm**

***El*** (1953) 92min

*Directed by Luis Buñuel. With Arturo de Córdova, Delia Garcés.*

Hardly a stranger to controversy, Buñuel faced a particularly tough audience at the Cannes premiere of this Mexican production. According to Georges Sadoul, "the jury described it as a bad B-picture and it

was booed by 200 war veterans.” In truth, *El* is a perverse, sacred-cow-skewering portrait of a husband gripped by insane jealousy, a film so effective that Jacques Lacan screened it for his students as an exemplar of irrational paranoia. And *Slant* magazine called it “one of Buñuel’s crowning achievements.”  
**Mon, May 20 at 7, 9:30pm**

***Gertrud*** (1964) 119min

*Directed by Carl Theodor Dreyer. With Nina Pens Rode.*

After his final masterpiece was poorly received at Cannes, Dreyer allegedly gave the audience an up-yours. A chronicle of a woman’s conflicted relationships with the men in her life, it is “[Dreyer’s] most supernatural film, glowing with a more secret magic than any previous work” (Elliott Stein). *In Danish with English subtitles.*

**Wed, May 8 at 4:30, 7, 9:30pm**

***Mademoiselle*** (1966) 100min

*Directed by Tony Richardson. With Jeanne Moreau.*

A deliciously depraved portrait of sadomasochism in the French countryside, this Marguerite Duras adaptation of a Jean Genet story has a strong following today, rock goddess Patti Smith being a particularly ardent fan. But upon its release, it was derided for the casting of Moreau (against Genet’s wishes) and its depiction of libido-fueled arson and animal poisoning. *In French and Italian with English subtitles.*

**Tue, May 21 at 4:30, 9:30pm**

***The Mother and the Whore*** (1973) 217min

*Directed by Jean Eustache. With Bernadette Lafont, Jean-Pierre Léaud, Françoise Lebrun.*

Sex, sex, sex—that’s all anyone has on their mind in Eustache’s amazing, seemingly-improvised-but-not debut. Stars Léaud, Lafont, and Lebrun comprise a supposedly sexually enlightened *ménage à trois*, negotiating the perils, pitfalls, and endless confusion of modern romance. Initially met with suspicion for its frank handling of the subject at hand, *The Mother and the Whore* has since been recognized as the first great post-New Wave, post-May ’68 French masterwork.

**Sun, May 12 at 2:30, 7pm**

***Seconds*** (1966) 106min

*Directed by John Frankenheimer. With Rock Hudson.*

Seeking an escape from his white-bread suburban existence, a middle-aged banker is surgically transformed into a square-jawed hunk (Hudson) and begins a new life as a bohemian artist. But starting over isn’t easy. This chilling science-fiction nightmare—a flop upon its release and now a cult classic—imparts an ever-mounting sense of dread, heightened by Saul Bass’ ultra-creepy title sequence and psychedelic cinematography by James Wong Howe.

**Tue, May 21 at 7pm**

***The Soft Skin*** (1964) 133min

*Directed by François Truffaut. With Jean Desailly, Françoise Dorléac, Nelly Benedetti.*

Still unfairly overlooked, Truffaut’s follow-up to *Jules and Jim* had its premiere at Cannes, an event the director called a “complete fiasco.” This Hitchcockian domestic drama about a mild-mannered literary critic (Desailly) having an extramarital affair was heralded by J. Hoberman as “one of Truffaut’s best... He treats it like a crime film—low-key yet tense, filled with carefully planted potential ‘clues’ and an undercurrent of anxiety.”

**Wed, May 22 at 4:15, 7, 9:45pm**

***Taxi Driver*** (1976) 113min

*Directed by Martin Scorsese. With Robert De Niro, Jodie Foster, Cybill Shepherd.*

Between fares, increasingly unhinged cabbie Travis Bickle (De Niro) haunts 42nd St. porno houses, develops an infatuation with a nice-girl political aide (Shepherd), and vows to clean up the cesspool that is 1970s New York City. Scorsese’s expressionist urban nightmare courted controversy for its shocking violence (he was required to desaturate the blood-spattered climax) since its premiere at Cannes—which didn’t stop it from winning the Palme d’Or.

**Sat, May 18 at 2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm**

***Tropical Malady*** (2004) 118min

*Directed by Apichatpong Weerasethakul. With Banlop Lomnoi, Sakda Kaewbuadee.*

Though now regarded as an art-house darling of contemporary cinema, Apichatpong divided audiences with his Cannes debut, a lush, jungle-set romance—about a soldier's infatuation with a young man—that blossoms into an enigmatic, folkloric fable set in the spirit realm of Thai mythology. "One of the most rapturously original, mysteriously beautiful love stories ever told" (Scott Foundas, *LA Weekly*).

**Thu, May 23 at 4:30, 7, 9:30pm**

***Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me*** (1992) 135min

*Directed by David Lynch. With Sheryl Lee, Ray Wise, Moira Kelly.*

Lynch was anointed with his second boogie at Cannes, after *Wild at Heart*, with this prequel to the cult television show. It follows the final days of Laura Palmer (Lee), a seemingly all-American high-school student drawn into a hellish underworld of sex and drugs, before her murder. It remains one of Lynch's most underrated efforts in its evocation of the damaged psyche of a lost teenager with disturbing nightmare imagery.

**Sat, May 11 at 1:30, 7pm**

***Under the Sun of Satan*** (1987) 93min

*Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Gérard Depardieu, Sandrine Bonnaire.*

A priest (Depardieu) is plunged into a severe spiritual crisis brought on by an encounter with a horse trader—who may really be the devil—and a fixation with a teenage murderess (Bonnaire). Pialat's stark, ultra-intense rumination on faith—which Jonathan Rosenbaum called "a major work by a major filmmaker"—was greeted with boos upon winning the Palme d'Or.

**Thu, May 9 at 4:30, 7, 9:30pm**

***The Voice of the Moon*** (1990) 122min

*Directed by Federico Fellini. With Roberto Benigni, Paolo Villaggio.*

Fellini's seldom-seen final film (it was never released in America) is a sprawling fantasia that follows a wandering misfit (Benigni) who hears voices whispering from wells as he roams the Italian countryside of the director's youth. He encounters a host of oddball characters and phantasmagorical sights, including a striking scene in which an infernal disco is miraculously transformed into a dreamy waltz.

**Thu, May 16 at 4:30, 7, 9:30pm**

***Wild at Heart*** (1990) 125min

*Directed by David Lynch. With Nicolas Cage, Laura Dern.*

David Lynch throws Southern Gothic melodrama, *The Wizard of Oz*, surreal-kinky violence, and Elvis into a brewing cauldron for this nightmarish soap opera. Outlaw lovers Sailor (Cage) and Lula (Dern) go on the run through a menacing Deep South populated by the usual stable of unsettling Lynchian weirdos. The director received the Palme d'Or amid "the most violent chorus of boos and hisses to be heard in a decade" (Dave Kehr).

**Sat, May 11 at 4:15, 9:45pm \*R-rated version at 4:15, X-rated version at 9:45pm**

### **About BAMcinématek**

The four-screen BAM Rose Cinemas (BRC) opened in 1998 to offer Brooklyn audiences alternative and independent films that might not play in the borough otherwise, making BAM the only performing arts center in the country with two mainstage theaters and a multiplex cinema. In July 1999, beginning with a series celebrating the work of Spike Lee, BAMcinématek was born as Brooklyn's only daily, year-round repertory film program. BAMcinématek presents 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. BAMcinématek has not only presented major retrospectives by major filmmakers such as Michelangelo Antonioni, Manoel de Oliveira, Shohei Imamura, Vincente Minnelli (winning a National Film Critics' Circle Award prize for the retrospective), Kaneto Shindo, Luchino Visconti, , but it has also introduced New York audiences to contemporary artists such as Pedro Costa and Apichatpong Weerasethakul. In addition, BAMcinématek programmed the first US retrospectives of directors Arnaud Desplechin, Nicolas Winding Refn, Hong Sang-soo, and, most recently, Andrzej Zulawski. From 2006 to 2008, BAMcinématek

partnered with the Sundance Institute and in June 2009 launched BAMcinemaFest, a 16-day festival of new independent films and repertory favorites with 15 NY feature film premieres; the fifth annual BAMcinemaFest will run from June 19—28, 2013.

### Credits

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### General Information

Tickets:           General Admission: \$13  
                      BAM Cinema Club Members: \$8, BAM Cinema Club Movie Moguls: Free  
                      Seniors & Students (25 and under with a valid ID, Mon—Thu): \$9  
                      Bargain matinees (Mon—Thu before 5pm & Fri—Sun before 3pm no holidays): \$9

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, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn's only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, is open for dining prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances. BAMcafé also features an eclectic mix of spoken word and live music for BAMcafé Live on select Friday and Saturday nights with a special BAMcafé Live menu available starting at 8pm.

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  
Car:              Commercial parking lots are located adjacent to BAM

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