

**For Immediate Release**

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## **WEXNER CENTER SHOWCASES FILMS OF OLIVIER ASSAYAS**

***RETROSPECTIVE ORGANIZED BY THE WEXNER CENTER INCLUDES VISIT BY THE FRENCH DIRECTOR AND OHIO PREMIERE OF HIS LATEST FILM, DEMONLOVER***

**“‘Reality is always magic,’ Renoir once said, and Assayas embodies that dictum more fully than any other modern director.”—Kent Jones, *Film Comment***

In one of the major film events of the season, the Wexner Center showcases the films of one of France’s most gifted directors, **Olivier Assayas**. Assayas is increasingly a filmmaker of international repute, with each of his films an eagerly awaited addition to his already impressive body of work. The Wexner Center’s complete retrospective of his work begins **October 3 and runs through October 25**. Assayas will introduce his latest film, the genre-defying ***demonlover***, starring Connie Nielson and Chloe Sevigny, Saturday, October 4 (the film will be screened again later in the month).

Most nights, Assayas’s films will be screened as double features with his favorite films by other directors. A special **commemorative booklet**, including an essay by Kent Jones of the Film Society of Lincoln Center, will be handed out at the October 4 screening. All films are screened in the Wexner Center Film/Video Theater. Unless otherwise noted in the schedule, tickets are \$6 general public; \$4 Wexner Center members, students, and senior citizens; \$2 children under 12.

Born in 1955, his father a screenwriter, Assayas grew up around film studios. After five years as a contributor and editor with the influential journal *Cahiers du Cinema*, he directed his first feature, *Disorder*, in 1986. The film went on to win a top prize at the Venice Film Festival, and the global success of the delightful *Irma Vep* (1996) (shown at the Wex in 1997) confirmed his status as a filmmaker’s filmmaker.

**The retrospective schedule:**

**Friday, October 3 / 7 pm**

*Irma Vep* (1996)

*Beware of a Holy Whore* (Rainer Werner Fassbinder, 1971)

Assayas's most celebrated film, *Irma Vep* (96 minutes) is a dazzlingly witty look at how movies are made, with a remake of the silent classic *Les Vampires* starring Hong Kong action diva Maggie Cheung and New Wave icon Jean-Pierre Léaud as the burned-out auteur attempting to direct the wreckage. *Beware of a Holy Whore* (103 minutes) is Fassbinder's autobiographical and appallingly entertaining account of how the filmmaking process can spiral out of control. With Eddie Constantine.

**Saturday, October 4 / 7 pm**

*demonlover* (2002)

**Introduced by the director**

**\$7 general public; \$5 Wexner Center members, students, and senior citizens**

Director Olivier Assayas visits to introduce the area premiere of his latest film, *demonlover* (117 minutes). Called "one of the year's top 10 films" by *Film Comment*, the film takes a mind-bending look at high-level corporate espionage and intrigue when an American Internet company attempts to acquire a Japanese anime production house that specializes in 3-D manga. With Connie Nielsen, Chloë Sevigny, Gina Gershon, and Charles Berling.

**Wednesday, October 8 / 7 pm**

*Disorder* (1986)

*J'entends plus la guitare* (Philippe Garrel, 1991)

Assayas's debut feature, *Disorder* (91 minutes) begins with three young friends breaking into a music store to steal instruments for their 80s new wave band, then follows the consequences of their impulsive, panic-driven murder of the store owner. Little known in this country, Philippe Garrel is one of France's most highly esteemed filmmakers. The typically autobiographical *J'entends plus la guitare* (I No Longer Hear the Guitar, 98 minutes) is Garrel's homage to pop icon Nico, with whom the director lived for 10 years.

**Friday, October 10 / 7 pm**

***Winter's Child*** (1989)

***The Soft Skin*** (François Truffaut, 1964)

*Winter's Child* (84 minutes) coolly observes the emotional and romantic attachments among two men and two women as they face the despair of attempted suicide and the hope of childbirth. Truffaut's Hitchcockian *The Soft Skin* (120 minutes) examines an unhappily married man intoxicated by a beautiful flight attendant. With Françoise Dorléac and Jean Desailly.

**Sunday, October 12 / 2 pm**

***Paris Awakens*** (1991)

***The Devil, Probably*** (Robert Bresson, 1977)

*Paris Awakens* (95 minutes) spins an unsettling variation on the classic love triangle, here involving a sensual, down-on-her-luck 18-year-old, her much older boyfriend (Jean-Pierre Léaud), and his shady son arriving on the lam. One of Robert Bresson's most controversial films, *The Devil, Probably* (95 minutes) follows a group of young people who are in every way at odds with the money-obsessed Parisian society that surrounds them.

**Wednesday, October 15 / 7 pm**

***HHH: A Portrait of Hou Hsiao-hsien*** (1997)

***Flowers of Shanghai*** (Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1998)

Assayas pays homage to the great Taiwanese filmmaker Hou Hsiao-hsien in *HHH* (93 minutes). The screening is followed by Hou's exquisite *Flowers of Shanghai* (120 minutes), which unfolds in a 19th-century brothel where flower girls and their "callers" practice elaborate rituals of social intercourse and consumerism.

**Friday, October 17 / 7 pm**

***A New Life*** (1993)

***Marnie*** (Alfred Hitchcock, 1964)

One of Assayas's most daring films, *A New Life* (117 minutes) follows two young half-sisters hooked by blood or addiction to brutish older men. *Film Comment* editor Kent Jones describes the film as "so tenderly attuned to the becoming of its characters, it has the odd feel of an early Seventies road movie that takes place entirely indoors." Hitchcock's *Marnie* (129 minutes) stars Tippi Hedren as a frigid con woman thawed by the heat of romance, which shows up in the form of Sean Connery.

**Sunday, October 19 / 4:30 pm**

***Les Destinées*** (2000)

***Laissé inachevé à Tokyo*** (1982)

***Winston Tong en studio*** (1984)

*Les Destinées* (180 minutes) is Assayas's first historical film, an adaptation of an acclaimed French novel exploring the society of the Charente region of southwest France, center of cognac and porcelain production. Spanning over 30 years, it's a tale of spiritual and romantic love being tested by family loyalties. With Isabelle Huppert, Emmanuelle Béart, and Charles Berling. The screening is followed by the early Assayas shorts *Laissé inachevé à Tokyo* (22 minutes) and *Winston Tong en studio* (12 minutes).

**Wednesday, October 22 / 7 pm**

***Late August, Early September*** (1998)

***Basquiat*** (Julian Schnabel, 1996)

*Late August, Early September* (112 minutes) compassionately focuses on a group of urban middle-class friends whose group dynamics change irrevocably with the illness and death of one of them, a writer. Julian Schnabel's directing debut, *Basquiat* (108 minutes) is a moving depiction of the brief life of graffiti artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. With Jeffrey Wright, David Bowie as Andy Warhol, Dennis Hopper, and Courtney Love.

**Friday, October 24 / 7 pm**

***demonlover*** (2002)

***Videodrome*** (David Cronenberg, 1983)

***Lucifer Rising*** (Kenneth Anger, 1973)

This encore presentation of *demonlover* is followed by two of Assayas's favorites. David Cronenberg's *Videodrome* (90 minutes) is a nightmare treatise on the increasing blur between television and reality. With James Woods and Debbie Harry. Avant-garde master Kenneth Anger's *Lucifer Rising* (30 minutes) features, among others, Marianne Faithfull and Manson family member Bobby Beausoleil, who also wrote the music (along with an uncredited Mick Jagger and Jimmy Page).

**Saturday, October 25 / 7 pm**

***Cold Water*** (1994)

***Summer with Monika*** (Ingmar Bergman, 1953)

Part of a French television series for which various directors were asked to make films about times when they were 16 years old, *Cold Water* (92 minutes) is a ruefully observed tale of teenage love and lust set to a soundtrack of early '70s' rock. With Virginie Ledoyen. An early masterpiece from Ingmar Bergman, *Summer with Monika* (96 minutes) focuses on a young couple who return from a sensual summer only to have their relationship crushed by the harshness of modern Stockholm. With Harriet Anderson.

**FILM AND VIDEO AT THE WEXNER CENTER**

Every year the Wexner Center screens more than 100 film and video works from around the world, including award-winning independent international and American films, documentaries, and Hollywood classics. The center often brings in directors to introduce their own films as part of retrospectives; previous filmmakers who have participated in retrospectives have included Todd Haynes, Allison Anders, Philip Kaufman, Jim Jarmusch, and Gus Van Sant.

**EVENT SUPPORT**

The 2003-04 film/video season is presented with support from the **Rohauer Collection Foundation** and the **Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation**.

Visiting filmmaker presentations are presented with support from the **Ohio Arts Council**.

**WEXNER CENTER**

The Wexner Center for the Arts is The Ohio State University's multidisciplinary, international laboratory for the exploration and advancement of contemporary art. Through exhibitions, screenings, performances, artist residencies, and educational programs, the Wexner Center acts as a forum where established and emerging artists can test ideas and where diverse audiences can participate in cultural experiences that enhance understanding of the art of our time. In its programs, the Wexner Center balances a commitment to experimentation with a commitment to traditions of innovation and affirms the university's mission of education, research, and community service.

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