

Mise-en-scène: The Providence French Film Festival's 21st annual event is prepared for the big screen

In its 21st year, the 2019 Providence French Film Festival, Feb 21-Mar 1, for the first time will screen all of its events on the Brown University campus at the Granoff Center for the Arts, 154 Angell St, PVD, according to Daniel Kamil, festival programming director, because its traditional venue, the Cable Car Cinema, closed. All screenings remain open to the public, he emphasized. There are a total of 14 films, all but one screened twice.

Highlights



The Competition, dir. Claire Simon

Director Claire Simon is scheduled to attend the Sunday, Feb 24, showing of her *Le concours* (“*The Competition*”) and conduct a Q&A session afterward. The documentary follows the students of the famous and prestigious school for filmmakers in Paris, [La fémis](#) (a kind of acronym for “École Nationale Supérieure des Métiers de l’Image et du Son”), from the admissions process, through hard work, to graduation. Simon is a graduate of the school.



The Image Book, dir. Jean-Luc Godard

Legendary director Jean-Luc Godard has a new film, *Le livre d’image* (“*The Image Book*”), described as “a poetic essay in five parts. An exploration in dualities. Light and darkness. War and paradise. The intersection between word and image.” Now 88 years old and still actively working since his first film in 1960, Godard makes almost every list of the five or 10 best directors of all time, and no living filmmaker has less to prove. Reportedly intended to be suited to a small screen, the film deals with the digital revolution where everyone with a cellular handset can be a filmmaker, and examines whether this will prevent the world from missing atrocities such as the Holocaust until it is too late.



Non-Fiction, dir. Olivier Assayas

In *Doubles vies* (literally “*Double Lives*” but listed as “*Non-Fiction*”), widely acclaimed director Olivier Assayas sets his story about the blurring of fiction and non-fiction in the publishing business of Paris, where an established writer uses people and events from his own life as source material for his novel, displeasing his editor. As the women surrounding the two men - one played by Juliette Binoche - become enmeshed in numerous infidelities with them, a parallel conflict develops between advocates of newfangled digital publishing as opposed to old-fashioned paper publishing.



At War, dir. Stephane Brize

En guerre (“*At War*”) from director Stephane Brize is a gritty story about 1,100 unionized laborers trying to prevent the closure of their factory that Kamil described as focusing on the negotiations between the adversarial parties in a war of attrition. The workers made sacrifices that resulted in record profits for the company, a French subsidiary of a German conglomerate, and the workers perceive the factory closure as a betrayal of promises.



The Freshmen, dir. Thomas Lilti

Première année (literally “*First Year*” but listed as “*The Freshmen*”) from director Thomas Lilti follows two aspirants for extremely competitive places in medical school and their sacrifices in order to study for the all-or-nothing high stakes entrance examination.



Knife + Heart, dir. Yann Gonzales



Sorry Angel, dir. Christophe Honore

Two films explore LGBTQ themes, *Un couteau dans le coeur* (literally “A Knife in the Heart” but listed as “Knife + Heart”) by director Yann Gonzales and *Plaire, aimer et courir vite* (literally, “Pleasure, Love and Run Fast” but listed as “Sorry Angel”) by director Christophe Honore. The former is about a lesbian couple who make disposable gay porn films in the 1970s. The latter is about two men, a writer in his 30s and a filmmaker in his 20s, who become involved.

2019 Providence French Film Festival, Brown University Granoff Center for the Arts, 154 Angell St, PVD. Feb 21–Mar 1. Web: brown.edu/campus-life/events/french-film-festival Facebook: fb.com/providencefrenchfilmfestival Tickets: eventbrite.com/o/the-providence-center-for-media-culture-providence-french-film-festival-17835160274 Tickets may be purchased at the door, if available, with credit/debit cards, but cash is not accepted. On-street parking only, meters apply Monday through Saturday until 9pm.