PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST:

FROM AWARD WINNERS TO A TIMELESS CLASSIC, THE 2017 TOURNÉES FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL RETURNS TO ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

Fifth Annual Program held in collaboration with Flickers’ Rhode Island International film Festival to feature Six Feature Films and French Shorts; free to the General Public

WHAT: The Fifth Annual RWU Tournées French Film Festival at Roger Williams University

WHEN: April 3-8, 2017

WHERE: Roger Williams University, 1 Old Ferry Road, Bristol, RI, www.RWU.edu

WHO: Roger Williams University in collaboration with Flickers’ Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF)

HOW MUCH: Free

THIS YEAR’S THEME: Connecting Through Storytelling

WHY: To Celebrate France and the Francophone World.

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BRISTOL, RI (March 10, 2017): Roger Williams University (RWU) and the Flickers’ Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF) are proud to collaborate in the presentation of the Fifth Annual RWU Tournées French Film Festival. The theme for this year’s Festival is “Connecting through Storytelling.” The Festival will take place over a six-day period, April 3-8, 2016 and will be free to the campus community and the general public. The RWU Tournées French Film Festival was made possible by a $2,200 grant from the French American Cultural Exchange, a New York-based nonprofit that promotes French culture through grants and special projects in arts and education.

The RWU Tournées French Film Festival will present six new and classic French feature films (all with English subtitles), along with a selection of shorts films that Flickers’ Rhode Island International Film Festival will premiere. The shorts program is presented through RIIFF’s partnership with UNIFRANCE and will round out the Festival on Saturday afternoon.

The Bristol, RI campus of Roger Williams University will serve as the host location for the Festival, with screenings to take place at the Global Heritage Hall, GHH01 and the Mary Tefft White Cultural Center in the Campus Library.

For the past few decades, an array of contemporary French filmmakers have sought to use film as a means to wrest us from the illusions provided by the narrative of global connectivity. Often focusing on protagonists who exist outside dominant culture, or who feel detached from it, these
filmmakers have tried to illuminate the realities of social oppression, isolation and alienation, while simultaneously foregrounding the powerful human desire for acceptance, intimacy and belonging.

The **Fifth Annual RWU Tournées French Film Festival** offers films that continue on in this vein. Each film centers on characters struggling to make social connections in a world that is often constructed to keep them apart.

Aesthetically, these films eschew Hollywood’s affinity for vibrant imagery, hyper-kinetic editing, broad characterizations and closed endings. Long-takes, hand-held-cameras, natural dialogue, complex characters and ambiguous narratives are used to create cinematic experiences that feel like life-as-it-is-lived; these are all films that invite the audience to engage with the world, rather than escape from it.

This year’s Festival selections and screening can be found below or at the following URL: [http://www.film-festival.org/TourneesFilm.php](http://www.film-festival.org/TourneesFilm.php)

The **Fifth Annual RWU Tournées French Film Festival** is made possible with the support of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, the Centre national du cinéma et de l’image animée (CNC), the Franco-American Cultural Fund (FACF), The Florence Gould Foundation, Campus France USA, and highbrow entertainment. The Festival is presented in collaboration with the Office of the Dean of Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences; the Department of Communications and Graphic Design; the Department of Theatre; Hillel; the Spiritual Life Program, the RWU Film Production Collaborative and the Flickers’ Rhode Island International Film Festival.

The Program Directors for the **Fifth Annual RWU Tournées French Film Festival** are Dr. Roberta Adams, Associate Dean- FCAS Academic Affairs; Dr. Jeffrey Martin, Professor of Theatre and Chair, Department of Performing Arts; and George T. Marshall, Executive Director, Flickers’ Rhode Island International Film Festival. The RWU Film Production Club has provided event technical support. For more information, please go to [www.RWU.edu](http://www.RWU.edu) or [www.RIFilmFest.org](http://www.RIFilmFest.org).

**FIFTH ANNUAL RWU TOURNEES FILM FESTIVAL SCREENING SCHEDULE:**

**DATE AND TIME:** **MONDAY, APRIL 3RD AT 6:00 P.M.**
**Location:** Global Heritage Hall, Room 01, RWU, Bristol, RI

**VALLEY OF LOVE,** Directed by Guillaume Nicloux, 91 min. France, 2015

Thirty-five years after playing a bourgeois woman and her thug lover in Maurice Pialat’s classic Loulou, Isabelle Huppert and Gérard Depardieu are finally reunited in Guillaume Nicloux’s deeply original Valley of Love. Here, France’s two leading stars play Gérard and Isabelle, a divorced couple of famous actors who meet in Death Valley after receiving a letter from their dead son, a recent suicide, promising that he will reappear in the desert at a specific time and place. While Nicloux, one of French cinema’s masters of the unexpected (his previous feature was The Kidnapping of Michel Houellebecq, with the controversial writer playing himself in a fictional story), fills Valley of Love with discordant visions worthy of David Lynch and wry observations of the inevitable culture clash between French and American guests in a odforsaken motel, the heart of the movie is simply the aura of its two stars and the collective memory they embody. Watching Isabelle Huppert’s marvelously nuanced expressions and Gérard Depardieu’s monumental presence—it is fair to say that he upstages the desert—the viewer is confronted with a wordless meditation on the passage of time and the extent to which moviegoers’ lives are enmeshed with those of the people on the screen. Drawing not only on its own gripping story, but on the history in its actors’ faces, Valley of Love reaches an emotional fever pitch in the heart of the desert.
DATE AND TIME: TUESDAY, APRIL 4TH AT 6:00 P.M.
Location: Mary Tefft White Culural Center, RWU Library

LOIN DES HOMMES / FAR FROM MEN, Directed by David Oelhoffen, 101 min. France, 2014
Algeria, 1954. The War of Independence is rumbling into being. In a remote oneroom schoolhouse in the Atlas Mountains, Daru (Viggo Mortensen), the son of Spanish settlers, teaches Algerian children French. One day, local French police officers appear with Mohamed (Reda Kateb), an Algerian accused of murder, and charge Daru with escorting him to trial in the closest city while they continue to fight the growing insurrection. David Oelhoffen's film starts off as an archetypal Western—two men thrown against each other as they traverse a barren landscape—but when Daru and Mohamed find themselves stuck between French troops and the rebel army, it turns into a gripping meditation on the fate of individuals tossed to and fro by sociopolitical forces beyond their control. Freely adapted from Albert Camus’s short story The Guest (from the collection Exile and the Kingdom), Far from Men has the classic sheen of the films of Hollywood’s Golden Age: big moral questions projected onto vast landscapes, steely performances from its two stars, and, most importantly, a universality grounded in the specific. While Far from Men is essential viewing for its insight into a conflict whose effects continue to be felt, it is first and foremost a universal story of civilians faced with the absurdity of war.

DATE AND TIME: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5TH AT 6:00 P.M.
Location: Global Heritage Hall, Room 01, RWU, Bristol, RI

DU RIFIFI CHEZ LES HOMMES / RIFIFI, Directed by Jules Dassin, 118 min. France, 1955
Along with Jacques Becker’s Touchez pas au grisbi and the films of Jean-Pierre Melville, Jules Dassin’s 1955 classic Rififi is one of the uncontested peaks of hardboiled French noir. It begins when Tony, an aging gangster fresh out of jail, agrees to pull a final big heist with his protégé Jo and the Italian specialists Mario and Cesare. The heist goes off without a hitch, but sets off an ugly gang war with Tony’s rival Pierre Grutter. Like the best noir films, Rififi transcends the coded world of the professional gangster to become an existential tragedy about love, loyalty, and the inexorable passage of time. Shot in black and white on the grimy streets of fifties Paris, the film oozes character and slangy authenticity and is full of unforgettable set pieces like a song and dance show in a louche nightclub, a practically wordless jewelry heist, and Tony’s quasi-expressionistic last drive through Paris with a bullet in his gut and a restless child in the passenger seat of his convertible. Rififi is also notable for its subtle reflection on gender roles: while the women initially appear to be accessories at best and betrayers at worst, they are eventually revealed to be the film’s moral core and the antidote to the deceptive masculine allure of the underworld. CLASSIC FILM SELECTION

DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 6TH AT 6:00 P.M.
Location: Global Heritage Hall, Room 01, RWU, Bristol, RI

QU’ALLAH BÉNISSE LA FRANCE! / MAY ALLAH BLESS FRANCE! Directed by Abd Al Malik, 96 min.
France, 2015
May Allah Bless France! is the invigorating first feature by acclaimed French rapper and novelist Abd Al Malik, a coming-of-age story and redemption tale based on the writer-director’s own youth in the beleaguered projects of Strasbourg. The film follows the struggles of Régis, a budding rapper who relies on petty crime to fund his passion for music. But as his fellow musicians get lured into drug dealing, teenage Régis finds salvation in the classics of French literature and his conversion to Sufi Islam. While Abd Al Malik’s edifying hymn to education and tolerance is first and foremost a boldly idealistic statement, it is also a profoundly satisfying cinematic experience, shot in high-contrast black and white and full of powerful stylistic devices that break with convention to heighten the impact of everyday violence and injustice. Fluidly...

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adapting his talents as a storyteller to the screen, Abd Al Malik revisits the “banlieue film”—the sub genre of films dealing with restless youth in France’s tough suburbs, launched by Mathieu Kassovitz’s La Haine in 1995—not only to give an insider’s update, but to break with the genre’s suffocating pessimism. In these challenging times for France, and particularly for French Muslims, this intelligent and accessible call for a potential way forward is nothing short of essential viewing.

DATE: FRIDAY, APRIL 7TH AT 6:00 P.M.  
Location: Global Heritage Hall, Room 01, RWU, Bristol, RI

EASTERN BOYS, Directed by Robin Campillo, 128 min. France, 2013  
When middle-aged gay professional Daniel spots the undocumented teenager Marek at a train station in Paris and invites him back to his place, he unwittingly makes himself the target of a home invasion by a gang of ruthless Eastern European youth. Despite this most unpromising of starts, Marek and Daniel continue to see each other and their relationship shifts from a sexual arrangement to a surrogate father-son bond. As Daniel learns more about Marek’s life in his native Chechnya, he decides to rescue him from the gang. Though Eastern Boys is only the second feature directed by veteran screenwriter Robin Campillo, it is a surprisingly assured effort, combining empathy and intellectual honesty with a formal rigor that allows the film to develop the breathless momentum of a thriller without sacrificing its complex approach to the hot-button topic of immigration. Through his unusual and thought-provoking way of handling his subject matter, Campillo develops a critical awareness of each of his characters’ positions in society. Whether by recognizing the continued vulnerability of the homosexual, dedicating screen time in a sparsely populated film to a cleaning lady and a hotel receptionist, or precisely describing the circumstances of undocumented youth in France today, Campillo has proved that he is a keen witness to his times, and one whose perspective will be valuable in the years ahead.

SATURDAY MATINEE PROGRAMMING:  
DATE: SATURDAY, APRIL 8TH AT 2:00 P.M.  
Location: Global Heritage Hall, Room 01, RWU, Bristol, RI

FRANCOPHONE FILM FESTIVAL  
New and Classic French Short Films  
A memorable collection of award-winning short films celebrating the Francophone experience across the globe. The program is curated from the archives of the Academy Award qualifying, Flickers’ Rhode Island International Film Festival.

Date: SATURDAY, April 8th at 4:00 p.m.  
Location: Global Heritage Hall, Room 01, RWU, Bristol, RI

PHANTOM BOY, Directed by Alain Gagnol, Jean-Loup Felicioli, 84 min. France, 2015  
Phantom Boy is the second animated feature from Alain Gagnol and Jean-Loup Felicioli, the team behind the Oscar-nominated smash A Cat in Paris. With Phantom Boy, Gagnol and Felicioli bring their charming style of handdrawn animation and whimsical narrative to New York to tell the story of the unlikely alliance between wheelchair-bound police officer Lieutenant Tanguy and Leo, a seriously ill eleven year-old. Thanks to Leo’s ability to send a ghost-like projection of himself flying through the city and some legwork from daredevil reporter Mary Delauney (voiced by Audrey Tautou), the duo are able to save New York from a disfigured maniac without ever leaving their hospital rooms. While Phantom Boy has enough action to appeal to the most hyperactive child, its serious core about childhood illness and its amusing play with the codes of the thriller and superhero genres, not to mention its winks at great local films and series such as Manhattan and The Sopranos, make for a sophisticated viewing experience. With drawings that literally pulse with life and a foreigner’s glee at depicting New York (the dialogue is in French), the film’s greatest assets are a tender blend of poetry and comedy and an idiosyncratic look in which the human touch is always apparent.
ABOUT ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY:
Roger Williams University, located on the coast of Bristol, R.I., is a forward-thinking private university with 45 undergraduate majors spanning the liberal arts and the professions, where students become community-minded citizens through project-based, experiential learning. With small classes, direct access to faculty and boundless opportunity for real-world projects, RWU students develop the ability to think critically while simultaneously building the practical skills that today’s employers demand. In the two years since launching its signature Affordable Excellence initiative, the University has established itself as a leader in American higher education by confronting the most pressing issues facing students and families – increasing costs that limit access to college, rising debt and the job readiness of graduates. In addition to its 4,000 undergraduates, RWU is home to more than a dozen graduate programs, a thriving School of Continuing Studies based in Providence as well as Rhode Island’s only law school.

ABOUT FLICKERS:
The Flickers’ Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIFF) has secured its place in the global community as the portal for the best in international independent cinema, earning the respect of domestic and foreign filmmakers, filmgoers and trend watchers. Ranked as one of the top 10 Festivals in the United States, RIFF is a qualifying festival for the Live Action, Documentary and Animation Short Film Academy Awards through its affiliation with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences®, the Canadian Screen Awards and the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA). There are only 6 film festivals worldwide that share this distinction and RIFF is the only festival in New England. The Festival takes place every August, please visit www.RIFilmFest.org or call 401.861.4445.

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