

# THE 3<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL FRENCH AND FRANCOPHONE TOURNÉES FILM FESTIVAL AT UC DAVIS

*The Tournées Festival* was made possible with the support of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy and the French Ministry of Culture (CNC).

Sponsored at UC Davis by Film Studies and TechnoCultural Studies and with the kind support of The Friends of Annaïck Blanchet in honor of Annaïck.

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**WHEN:** Five film screenings over the weekend of May 29, 30, and 31, 2009

**May 29<sup>th</sup>: 7 p.m.**  
**May 30<sup>th</sup>: 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.**  
**May 31<sup>st</sup>: 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.**

**WHERE:** TechnoCultural Studies Building (Art Annex).  
*Visitors can park in Parking Lot 10 on A street and should walk towards Shields Library. The Art Annex is on your left, behind the Art Building.*

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**All screenings are open to the public, free, and post-film discussions will be held.**

**Co-organizers:**

Joy Li, Peer Advisor, Film Studies; Sylvie Bissonnette, Performance Studies; Anca Popescu, French; Daphne Potts, Comparative Literature; and Kristin Koster, French.

## FILM SCREENINGS

**FRIDAY**  
**MAY 29, 2009**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Film: *Elle S'Appelle Sabine* [Her Name is Sabine]**

Directed by: Sandrine Bonnaire, 2008 (85 minutes)

An intelligent, moving and beautiful portrait of Sabine, a 38-year-old autistic woman, filmed by her closest sister, French actress Sandrine Bonnaire. The film tells her story through personal footage filmed by the actress over a period of 25 years, and her life today. A terrible gap exists between her as a teenager, an endearing and artistic young woman, and her today. What happened? After the departure of her brother and sisters, Sabine felt isolated and she became extremely panicky and violent. Her mother, who was taking care of her, was not able to cope with Sabine's outbursts and sent her to a psychiatric hospital. A tragic five-year stay there crushed her intellectual growth and many talents. Today, because of her sister's fame, Sabine has the privilege of living in better conditions, even if her mental capacities remain altered. She lives in a home in the Charente region with other young people, who have similar mental and emotional illnesses. This very intimate film exposes an inadequate care structure, the penury of specialized institutions and the dramatic consequences they can lead to. It sends an urgent message to a society that still does not know how to properly take care of its citizens with physical and psychological disabilities.

**Review:**

*"The rage of the director can be felt in each frame and clearly shapes the pamphlet-like narrative, though the film is still a compelling examination of autism and the way the outside world tries -- and, more often, fails -- to deal with it."* (Boyd van Hoeij, **European-films.net**)

**SATURDAY**  
**MAY 30, 2009**  
**2:00 p.m.**

**Film: *Reves de Poussière* [Dreams of Dust]**

Directed by: Laurent Salgues, France/Canada/Burkina Faso

Mocktar, a Nigerian peasant who lost his entire family in a terrible accident, tries to rebuild his life. He goes to Essakane, a dusty gold mine in Northeast Burkina Faso, to look for work and to forget the past that haunts him. He is quickly introduced to the small community of miners and begins working in the dangerous tunnels of the mine. Little by little, Mocktar discovers that the gold rush ended twenty years before, and the inhabitants of this wasteland manage to exist simply from force of habit. In Essakane, the life of the

whole population revolves around the irrational expectation of finding gold. Hope makes them surpass the threat of the mines. Among the inhabitants, the beautiful Coumba is still courageously struggling to raise her daughter. She takes care of her alone as her husband died in the mine. As he falls in love with Coumba, he fights not only to survive, but also to provide a better future for her and her child. He puts together enough money to prepare for their departure for France where Coumba's daughter will get a proper education and a chance of becoming someone.

**Review:**

*“Depicting an African hell on Earth where ant-like men burrow deep into the desert and risk their lives to mine gold, ‘Dreams of Dust’ relies on hypnotic widescreen photography to bind viewers to its grim drama. In its unexpected horror and absurdity (...), when a gold nugget is found, the whole team becomes rich. When a tunnel collapses, everyone dies. The asphyxiating sand makes rescue impossible. Salgues’ screenplay is perfectly crafted in the Western tradition, while Crystel Fournier’s striking cinematography connects the film to a broad African vision. Mathieu Vanasse and Jean Massicotte’s music track matches the rest of the film in being extremely refined. The French and Canadian post-prod work is top quality.”* (Deborah Young, **Variety**)

**SATURDAY**  
**MAY 30, 2009**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Film: Lili et le Baobab [Lili and the Baobab]**

Directed: Chantal Richard, 2006 (90 minutes)

Lili, a thirty-three-year-old French photographer, accepts an assignment to photograph the remote village of Agnam, in the Senegalese desert. It is the first time she's set foot in Africa. Although she arouses the immediate affection and curiosity of the inhabitants, Lili does not really stop to take stock. The photos she takes protect her from facing the questions she is asked about her life as a single woman. She hardly notices that Aminata, an unmarried and lonely woman of her age, lays the foundations of an improbable and powerful friendship. When Lili returns to Normandy, something has shifted or cracked and she has a hard time resuming her past life. In her own awkward and impulsive way, Lili deals with the unsettling sensation that Africa has left her. She often visits Moussa, an immigrant worker from Agnam who works at the nearby power plant. One day, Moussa tells Lili that Aminata has given birth to a son. Because the child is fatherless, they will probably be chased away from the village. With sheer determination and compassion, Lili manages to alter local customs and help her friend find her own path in the process.

**Review:**

*“Faithful to reality, without pathos or political posturing, ‘Lili and the Baobab’ lets its images and its story do the talking. In the director’s seat, Chantal Richard was largely*

*inspired by autobiographical events. She knows her subject well, and it shows. At her side, Romane Bohringer plays the part without effort, perfect for the role, probably because she has so much in common with her character. She is open, natural, sensitive, committed, perhaps a tad clumsy. (...) The depictions are finely honed and authentic, the journey enriching.” (Julie Deh, **Fluctuat.net**)*

**SUNDAY**  
**MAY 31, 2009**  
**2:00 p.m.**

**Film: Frantz Fanon: Sa vie, son combat, son travail [Fanon: His Life, His Struggle, His Work]**

Directed by: Cheikh Djemai, 2004

Frantz Fanon was a psychiatrist, originally from Martinique, who became a spokesman for the Algerian revolution against French colonialism. During the Second World War, he volunteered as a soldier to help France, “the Mother Country,” against the Nazis. Embittered by his experience with racism in the French Army, he gravitated to radical politics, Sartrean existentialism and the philosophy of black consciousness known as *négritude*. His 1952 book, "Black Skin, White Masks," offers a penetrating analysis of racism and oppression in colonized countries and of the ways in which it is internalised by its victims. While secretly aiding the rebels of the Algerian anti-colonial war as a doctor in Algeria, Fanon cared for victims and perpetrators alike, producing case notes that shed invaluable light on the psychic traumas of colonial war. Expelled from Algeria in 1956, Fanon moved to Tunis where he wrote for *El Moudjahid*, the rebel newspaper, founded Africa's first psychiatric clinic, and wrote several influential books on decolonization. *Frantz Fanon, His Life, His Struggle, His Work* reunites testimonies of friends, family and colleagues that he met during the different steps of his life and traces the short and intense life of one of the great thinkers of the 20th century.

**Review:**

*"Cheikh Djemai, French-Algerian filmmaker, is one of the creators who claim the right to 'Remembrance' on behalf of their contemporaries who were crushed by the wheels of 'History'. His movies help us better reach the humanity that is coiled inside each of us. This demanding director, a man of fury and passion, is like a breath of hope and gives new meaning to the word solidarity.” (G. Ginsberg, **RFO**)*

**SUNDAY**  
**May 31, 2009**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Film: La Faute à Fidel [Blame it on Fidel]**  
Directed by: Julie Gavras, France/Italy, 2006 (99 minutes)

Anna is a nine-year old precocious girl. Her life is rather simple and comfortable, regulated by habits and order. Her family is wealthy; she goes to a private religious school and often visits her grandparents who have a wine estate in Bordeaux. One day, her father's sister is forced to leave Spain - her husband has just been killed by Franco's police force. This event is experienced as an electroshock by Anna's parents and they change their political views radically. Both become left-wing revolutionaries and Anna's stable life goes awry. Women's rights, freedom of speech, democracy and demonstration are now at the forefront of Anna's parents lives. At first, Anna is not interested in any of it. She strives to hold on to the comfort she is used to and she is very unhappy when the family moves to a smaller apartment. She also has to adapt to her parents' new lifestyle as they have less time to take care of her. Yet, she also tries to make sense of the larger political events that shake her life and she does not settle for the simplistic answers that adults give children.

**Review:**

“One of those rare films that maintain unwavering fidelity to a child's view of the world (a lineage that includes 'The 400 Blows' and 'Lukas Moodysson's Together'). It's not [merely] a snapshot of the revolutionary politics of 1970-71; it's about the upheavals of childhood, which are timeless and universal.” (Tom Beer, **Time Out New York**)