



April In Paris 2024.  
April in Paris Francophone Film Festival

**THE WEDDING MARCH (113min. NR)**  
1928 Erich von Stroheim, director  
Saturday matinée, April 6 - 1:30 pm

Fans of the masterful accompaniment of pianist *Patrick Miller* of the Hartt School – mark your calendars! Miller’s music is an essential part of experiencing this classic silent film, Erich von Stroheim’s *The Wedding March*. Please join us for the Festival’s *Opening Reception* following the film, sponsored by the *Alliance Française of Hartford*.



A demanding film star and director, Erich von Stroheim was revered by casts and crews, and reviled by producers and distributors. His relentless quest for realism, and keen attention to details of characterization and gesture, quickly and firmly established von Stroheim as a distinguished filmmaker of sophisticated and compelling adult dramas. *The Wedding March* is a magnificent culmination to von Stroheim's turbulent and complex Hollywood silent film career. Recreating the opulent and romantic splendor of Vienna, prior to the Great War, the film is a startling yet sympathetic critique, of the sharp contrasts between the decaying aristocracy and the struggling lower classes. A radiant Fay Wray, in a memorable co-starring role, gives a powerful performance, brilliantly conveying the film's primary narrative theme of love and sorrow. This special screening of *The Wedding March* is a new DCP restoration, by Paramount Film Archives - in collaboration with the Library of Congress and Kevin Brownlow--of the film's reconstruction undertaken in 1954, by von Stroheim and Renée Lichtig, at La Cinémathèque française in Paris. Presented with new piano accompaniment prepared and performed by Patrick Miller, Professor Emeritus The Hartt School, University of Hartford

**LA NOIRE DE.... / BLACK GIRL (59min.)**  
(1966) Ousmane Sembène, director  
Monday evening, April 8 - 7:00 pm



Ousmane Sembène, one of the greatest and most groundbreaking filmmakers who ever lived and the most internationally renowned African director of the twentieth century, made his feature debut in 1966 with the brilliant and stirring *Black Girl (La noire de . . .)*. Sembène, who was also an acclaimed novelist in his native Senegal, portrays the story of a young Senegalese woman who moves to France to work for a wealthy white couple and finds that life in their small apartment becomes a figurative and literal prison. Sembène's film is a complex, layered critique on the lingering colonialist mindset of a supposedly postcolonial world. Featuring a moving central performance by M'passane Thérèse Diop, *Black Girl* is a harrowing human drama as well as a radical political statement—and an essential film of the 1960s. Join us for a post-screening discussion with Doyle Calhoun, Language and Culture Studies, Trinity College.

**COLETTE ET JUSTIN (87min.)**  
(2022) Alain Kassanda, director  
Tuesday evening, April 9- 7:00 pm

Proving once again that the personal is political, French-Congolese documentary filmmaker Alain Kassanda set about to uncover a tumultuous time in his native Congo's history. His method is both brilliant and unconventional: filming his grandparents as they look back on their lives under Belgian rule, rebellion, and the unavoidable complications of freedom. Kassanda juxtaposes interviews with his family with exploitative Belgian propaganda materials, that were intent on convincing the world – and the Congolese – that the Belgians were the intrinsically superior. Perhaps the most fascinating part of this eye-opening film are the difficult stories of the early days of liberation, and where Kassanda's grandfather stood on the rise to power of Congo's first prime minister Patrick Lumumba, a progressive African nationalist who would face a military coup and execution. The result is a brave reckoning not only for the past, but for the present generation and how colonialism continues to shape identities. Discussion following film.

**TOUKI BOUKI (89 min.)**  
(1973) Djibril Diop Mabéty, director  
Wednesday evening, April- 7:00 pm

Today, as thousands of young Africans are caught up in emigration to flee poverty and war, Mabéty's 1973 film is timely, magical, and fierce. To Mabéty, his homeland of Sénégal – and particularly the slums of Dakar – was still damaged by its years of French rule, plagued with a new ruling class and its own stultifying injustice. Mory (Magaye Niang) is a zebu herder, whose restless dreams sweep him and his moped (adorned with a zebu's skull and antlers) to the capital city. There he meets a young student named Anta (Marème Niang) who shares his ambition for a stimulating new life in Paris, that "little piece of heaven," as Josephine Baker sings on the soundtrack. Of course, tickets are expensive, and the couple's schemes are unsuccessful, until Mory strikes gold by stealing money from an unsuspecting gay man. Even with the treasured tickets in hand, last minute complications threaten to prevent either one – or both – of the dreamers' chance of escape. *Touki Bouki*, now recognized as an inspiration to generations of African filmmakers has been restored by the World Cinema Project of Martin Scorsese, who calls it "a cinematic poem made with a raw, wild energy... it explodes one image at a time." Join us for a discussion afterwards.

**SAINT OMER (102 min. NR)**  
(2023) Written and directed by Alice Diop  
Thursday evening, April 11 - 7:00 pm



The first feature film by Alice Diop is based on an actual 2015 murder trial in Saint Omer that she attended as a journalist, and would ultimately transform into an award-winning movie. Laurence Coly is played by the enigmatic Guslagie Malanda. Standing in for the director is Rama, an accomplished journalist sent to cover the trial. Attending every day, Rama discovers a mirror image of herself in the killer. Both share Senegalese heritage, have difficult relationships with their mothers, are educated, and have French white partners. When Coly calmly reveals that she is not guilty - it is a curse by witches in her tribal village that led her to murder. Where the French secular court sees a flimsy excuse, Rama feels deep in her soul the war between the culture that one grows up with, and the whole new world presented by former colonizers. "Brilliant! Diop explores the nature of personal and national identity, the multigenerational trauma of migration, and France's ongoing failures to reflect its ethnic and racial diversity." – Richard Brody, New Yorker magazine. Post-screening discussion led by Blase Provitola- Program in Women, Gender, and Sexuality and Language and Culture Studies, Trinity College.



**OUVVERTURES (132min. NR)**  
(2020) Louis Henderson and Olivier Marboeuf, directors

Friday finale, April 1 -7:30 pm closing reception

At a time of violent political upheaval in Haiti, April in Paris presents an extraordinary film that explores the conflicted heart of the first country to win independence from their European colonizers in 1803. The inspired collaboration is the work of directors Louis Henderson and Olivier Marboeuf and a group of Haitian artists, actors and poets called The Living and the Dead Ensemble. *Ouvvertures* opens in Paris, where a young man is researching the legendary revolutionary Toussaint Louverture: a former slave who owned slaves himself, who thought of himself as a "free Frenchman," although he died in a French prison. The film moves to Haiti, where a group of young performers (The Living and the Dead Ensemble) stage the play *Monsieur Toussaint* by Édouard Glissant, and translate it into Creole. In the play, ghosts from Haiti's past put the dying Toussaint on trial, while illuminating his rare ability both to terrify slave owning countries (including the U.S.), and to inspire enslaved black people to imagine – and fight for - freedom. "A mediation of how the pain and triumphs of a nation's history are eternal. It is alive, breathing and evolving through the people they influence."- Gabrielle Pascal, Haitian Times. 7:00-7:30- Join us for the closing reception for the 7:30 pm showing of *Ouvvertures*, Louis Henderson and Olivier Marboeuf (2019) 132 min. Join us for a Discussion afterwards with Indira Karamcheti, Global South Asian Studies, Wesleyan University.



## Histoires d'histoire: Storied Histories in Francophone Cinema

Many, many thanks to the following people, departments, programs, and offices that make April in Paris possible:

The Office of the Dean, Trinity College

The Alliance Française of Hartford

Program in Film Studies, Trinity College  
 Department of English, Trinity College  
 Department of History, Trinity College  
 Department of Language and Culture Studies, Trinity College

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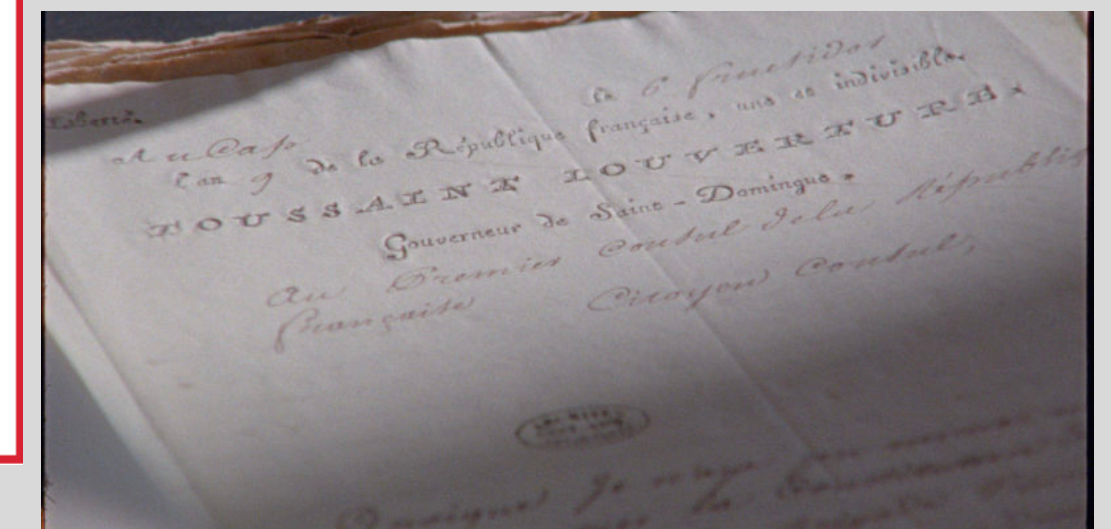


### FESTIVAL SPONSORS



## OUVERTURES The Living and the Dead Ensemble

## Histoires d'histoire: Storied Histories in Francophone Cinema: April 6 - April 12, 2024



Saturday matinée, April 6 - 1:30 pm, note early start time- The Wedding March, Erich von Stroheim, starring Stroheim and Faye Wray (1928) 113 min. Live piano accompaniment by Patrick Miller, Professor Emeritus at the Hartt School, University of Hartford. Opening reception following the performance sponsored by the Alliance Française of Hartford.

Monday, April 8 - 7:00 pm, Black Girl (La Noire de...), Ousmane Sembène (1966) 59 min. Join us for a post-screening discussion with Doyle Calhoun, Language and Culture Studies, Trinity College.

Tuesday, April 9 - 7:00 pm, Colette et Justin,, Alain Kassanda (2022) 87 min. 87 min. Join us for a discussion after the film led by Karen Humphreys, Language and Culture Studies, Trinity College.

Wednesday, April 10 - 7:00 pm, Touki Bouki, by Djibril Diop Mabéty (1973) 89 min. Please join us for a discussion following the film.

Thursday, April 11--7:00 pm, Saint Omer, Alice Diop (2022) 102 min. Join us for a discussion following the film led by Blase Provitola- Program in Women, Gender, and Sexuality and Language and Culture Studies, Trinity College.

Friday finale, April 12 - 7:00-7:30- Join us for the closing reception for the 7:30 pm showing of Ouvertures, Louis Henderson and Olivier Marboeuf (2019) 132 min. Join us for a Discussion afterwards with Indira Karamcheti, Global South Asian Studies, Wesleyan University.