

## LES REALISATRICES : – LA NOUVELLE NOUVELLE VAGUE DU CINEMA FRANÇAIS



It is evident to anyone who has been following world cinema that the French film industry is in full blown transformation, due mainly to a new generation of women filmmakers who are questioning traditional norms and re-defining narratives.

These women Directors are revolutionizing the French film industry, traditionally dominated by men, by re-inventing the way women are portrayed on the screen, following in the footsteps of such pioneers as **Alice Guy**, forgotten for quite some time now, and of course, **Agnes Varda**, known as “the Godmother of the New Wave.” Agnes Varda was among the first to question the cinematographic conventions of the time, influencing countless generations of filmmakers the world over.

Decidedly different from the New Wave of yesteryear, this generation’s films are boldly tackling difficult social issues such as abortion, immigration, LGBTQ identity and domestic violence. More a reflection of society than an escapist cinema, the films of today’s women filmmakers have had a certain popular success, in addition to being recognized at various prestigious film festivals.

<b>L'AVENIR (THINGS TO COME) – MIA HANSEN-LOVE (2016)</b>
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Nathalie and Heinz, both professors of philosophy at universities in Paris, have been married for 25 years. They have two adult children. No tension swirls beneath the surface. One day, Heinz tells Nathalie that he has met someone else and will be moving in with her.

Life is not just one thing; life is made up of many parts. Hansen-Løve's narratives are about the many parts. During the year of time *L'Avenir* takes place, Nathalie, played by the ever-brilliant **Isabelle Huppert**, experiences the dissolution of her marriage, the dawning realization that her high-maintenance mother can no longer take care of herself, the changing of the guard at her publishing house, and a new friendship with Fabien, a writer of great promise now living in an anarchists' collective in the countryside.

In each of her films, Hansen-Løve has the patience to wait for what Henri Cartier-Bresson called "**the decisive moment**," the moment where something "small," something detailed and specific, reveals the universal. *L'Avenir* is full of such moments, depicting the detailed tapestry of one woman's life, as she moves through an important transition.

<b>LA BELLE SAISON (SUMMERTIME) – CATHERINE CORSINI (2015)</b>
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This simple and admirable film, directed by **Catherine Corsini**, looks back at the early 1970s in France, beginning with a scene of rural life at its most sun-dappled and sweaty.

The story is partly autobiographical for Corsini (born 1956) who discovered late in life that she could fall in love with a woman. She says it was partly inspired by watching a French documentary called *Les Invisibles* from 2012, by Sebastien Lifshitz, in which elderly gay couples, male and female, talk about their lives in a country that was once much more hostile to homosexuality than now.

It's a film with two distinct halves: Paris, then the countryside. On one side there is freedom and excitement to change the world, personified by Carole (**Cecile de France**); on the other, for Delphine, portrayed by **Izia Higelin**, there is duty and family and the solid, implacable needs of the farm. Modernism versus tradition, the self or the collective need, love or duty.

Corsini is an experienced and subtle film-maker. It is a film of quiet virtues based on old-fashioned ideas: take time to build the narrative, observe your characters closely, judge not, and go deep with the emotions.

**LES ENFANTS DES AUTRES (OTHER PEOPLE'S CHILDREN) - REBECCA ZLOTOWSKI  
(2023)**



Rachel is 40 years old, with no children. When she falls in love with Ali, she becomes attached to Leila, his 4-year-old daughter. She tucks her into bed, cares for her, loves her like her own. But to love other people's children is risky.

The writer-director, **Rebecca Zlotowski** has a gift for investing familiar formulas with freshness and charm, smarts, and sexiness.

*"There was a kind of gap between comic book representations on one hand – the evil 'Disney' stepmother from a world in which women died in childbirth and were replaced by young women unwilling and ill-equipped to love children who weren't their own, burdens that came with marriage, and on the other hand overwhelmed stepmothers in reconstituted families in unevenly successful romantic comedies,"* says Zlotowski.

**Les Enfants des Autres** is beautifully acted with tender performances all round. The moving drama has light touches of comedy while never losing sight of what is an important, and for many, painful issue.

Come join us beginning **Monday, November 3rd at 6 pm**, as we discuss our 3 films in **French**, in the following order:

- **L'Avenir**, Mia Hansen-Love (2016) ;
- **La Belle Saison**, Catherine Corsini (2015) ;
- **Les Enfants des Autres**, Rebecca Zlotowski (2023).

You will be expected to see the three films on your own before each discussion. All four films are available with English subtitles for a nominal rental fee on Amazon Prime or other free platforms (see links below). 1 week in advance of each showing, we will provide vocabulary lists, and suggest possible discussion topics prior to the session, all designed to inspire a lively debate.

## **LINKS TO STREAMING ON AMAZON PRIME**

### **L'AVENIR, MIA HANSEN-LOVE (2016)**

[https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B07253TR8W/ref=atv\\_sr\\_fle\\_c\\_sr4e8ffb\\_2\\_1\\_2?sr=1-2&pageTypeldSource=ASIN&pageTypeld=B0718XBKCW&qid=1752941144143](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B07253TR8W/ref=atv_sr_fle_c_sr4e8ffb_2_1_2?sr=1-2&pageTypeldSource=ASIN&pageTypeld=B0718XBKCW&qid=1752941144143)

### **LA BELLE SAISON, CATHERINE CORSINI (2015)**

[https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B01N03CG75/ref=atv\\_sr\\_fle\\_c\\_sr4e8ffb\\_1\\_1\\_1?sr=1-1&pageTypeldSource=ASIN&pageTypeld=B01MTLER99&qid=1752941026878](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B01N03CG75/ref=atv_sr_fle_c_sr4e8ffb_1_1_1?sr=1-1&pageTypeldSource=ASIN&pageTypeld=B01MTLER99&qid=1752941026878)

### **LES ENFANTS DES AUTRES, REBECCA ZLOTOWSKI (2023)**

[https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B0B8LD1B9S/ref=atv\\_sr\\_fle\\_c\\_sr796bd2\\_3\\_1\\_3?sr=1-3&pageTypeldSource=ASIN&pageTypeld=B0B8LCZTL8&qid=1752942381848](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B0B8LD1B9S/ref=atv_sr_fle_c_sr796bd2_3_1_3?sr=1-3&pageTypeldSource=ASIN&pageTypeld=B0B8LCZTL8&qid=1752942381848)