

The Alliance Française French Film Festival announces 2017 Festival dates, and reveals four titles from the 2017 line-up

National Press Release: Alliance Française French Film Festival 2017

Press release for 2nd December 2016

The Alliance Française French Film Festival will return to New Zealand screens from 1 March- 12 April, 2017, inviting audiences to experience one language, and a world of emotions.

Following the success of the 2016 Festival, which marked 10 years of celebrating the best of French cinema, the 2017 Festival will feature over 30 of the finest films from France and French-speaking regions. As New Zealand's premier event celebrating French culture, the 2017 Alliance Française French Film Festival will continue to bring scintillating French cinema to an audience spanning 12 cities around the country.

From more intimate films to big entertainment, the 2017 Festival will offer a wide range of genres and themes, showcasing many talents.

Ahead of the full programme launch in February, the Alliance Française French Film Festival is delighted to reveal four titles from the upcoming 2017 line-up.

Baden Baden

France/Belgium 2016

Director: Rachel Lang

Starring: Salomé Richard, Claude Gensac, Zabour Breitman, Swann Arlaud

26-year-old Ana (Salomé Richard), leaves a job she detests, and upon returning to her hometown of Strasbourg, engages herself in a DIY reconstruction of the bathroom of her indisposed Grandmother. From this simple concept, director Rachel Lang's sparklingly humorous debut explores complex ideas of love lost, and the pursuit of personal transformation.

Monsieur Chocolat

France 2015

Director: Roschdy Zem

Starring: Omar Sy, James Thiérrée, Noémie Lvovsky, Clothilde Hesme

Based on a true story, Omar Sy excels as Chocolat the clown, the first black performer in French circus. Joined by James Thiérrée (grandson of Charlie Chaplin) as the white clown George Footit, the two form an unforgettable performance partnership, and journey through the challenges of gaining success in the 1890s. The film deftly mixes incredible feats and uplifting moments with thought provoking themes of racism and the corrupting power of fame.

It's Only the End of the World (Juste la Fin du Monde)

France/Canada 2015

Director: Xavier Dolan

Starring: Gaspard Ulliel, Nathalie Baye, Léa Seydoux, Vincent Cassel, Marion Cotillard

Derived from the play *Juste la fin du monde*, by Jean-Luc Lagarce, *It's Only the End of the World* introduces Louis (Gaspard Ulliel), a writer suffering from a fatal illness, who returns to his family to inform them of his inevitable demise. Familial divisions, personal conflict, and past grievances are capably treated by director Xavier Dolan, as we follow Louis's poignant story.

Dark Diamond (Diamant Noir)

France/Belgium 2015

Director: Arthur Harari

Starring: Niels Schneider, August Diehl, Hans Peter Cloos, Abdel-Hafed Benotman

Arthur Harari's film opens with the death of Pier Ulmann's father; poverty stricken and ousted by his family after a fatal accident. Pier's (Niels Schneider) desire to avenge his father leads him to infiltrate the ranks of his affluent diamond-dealing extended family. Considering the family culpable for his father's loss, Pier plans a heist under the guise of carrying out construction work on the diamond firm. This polished *film noir* challenges the distinction between right and wrong, and is a master class in the effective building of tension.

The full AF FFF 2017 programme will be available online and in print from Thursday 2 February 2017.

The Alliance Française French Film Festival will run from 1 March - 12 April 2017 in 12 cities across New Zealand. For dates and venues information, visit www.frenchfilmfestival.co.nz

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