

**The Alliance Française French Film Festival Highlights Female Filmmakers in the  
2017 Programme**

**National Press Release: Alliance Française French Film Festival 2017**

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The Alliance Française French Film Festival is proud to shine a spotlight on the brightest female stars of the directing world. This is reflected in the numerous works featured in this year's line-up which have been crafted by supremely talented female directors.

In the Festival programme section *Women to the Fore*, viewers are invited to experience a diverse selection of stunning cinema, focussing on the ubiquitous presence of strong female voices in French cinema today. Outside of this section, the programme features a further six films by women, from rising talents such as Rebecca Zlotowski (*Planetarium*) to Festival favourite Emmanuelle Bercot (*150 Milligrams, Standing Tall*).

**Planetarium (Planétarium)**

Director: Rebecca Zlotowski

Rebecca Zlotowski's *Planetarium* tells the story of two young mediums in Paris in the 1930s. Zlotowski, famed for visually striking and intricately presented films such as *Grand Central*, creates another cinematic delight with *Planetarium*. Deservedly being screened out of competition at the Venice International Film Festival in 2016, Zlotowski's directing crafts a masterful film of emotional depth and vivid imagination.

**Ogres (Les Ogres)**

Director: Léa Fehner

*Ogres* follows the highs and lows of the eccentric life of a travelling troupe of performers. Léa Fehner's unique personal voice is obvious in this big-hearted and energetic offering, and she features several members of her own family in the cast. Inspired by her own background in her family's circus troupe, *Ogres* is a magnificent example of a talented female director bringing her past to life.

**From the Land of the Moon (Mal de pierres)**

Director: Nicole Garcia

Nicole Garcia presents a gripping tale of repressed femininity and personal liberation in *From the Land of the Moon*. Featuring a dazzling performance by Marion Cotillard, the film screened in competition at Cannes in 2016. A clear choice for the Festival's *Women to the Fore* programme section, Garcia creates a razor-sharp portrayal of societal constraints on the romantic and emotional development of a young woman.

### **150 Milligrams (La fille de Brest)**

Director: Emmanuelle Bercot

Arguably one of the line-up's most suspenseful thrillers, Emmanuelle Bercot delivers a forceful masterpiece in *150 Milligrams*. One of Festival Patron Peter Calder's top picks, *150 Milligrams* was featured in the Official Competition of the San Sebastian International Film Festival 2016. This tale of one woman's struggle to take on a Pharmaceutical giant is a stunning directorial work from Bercot, focussing on feminine courage and the capacity for change.

### **Standing Tall (La tête haute)**

Director: Emmanuelle Bercot

Bercot's second offering of the Festival is also a top pick from Peter Calder. Confronting and thought provoking, *Standing Tall* draws on Bercot's own experiences with her family's interaction with the juvenile court system. Bercot's audacious juxtaposition of gritty reality and moments of true joy highlights her astounding ability to vividly connect to a viewer and retain tension and suspense for the entire span of a film.

### **In Bed with Victoria (Victoria)**

Director: Justine Triet

Justine Triet's *In Bed with Victoria* is a true example of the ability of a female director to subvert expectations and make her unique mark on a genre. Due to Triet's assured and sophisticated directing, romantic comedy is refined in this side splitting comedy. Featured as the Critics' Week opening night film at Cannes in 2016, *In Bed with Victoria* is a true delight.

### **Baden Baden**

Director: Rachel Lang

It is not often that a directorial debut is simultaneously hilarious and beautifully complex, but Rachel Lang achieves this in *Baden Baden* with the assurance of a seasoned director. Following a young woman's journey through the ups and downs of one unforgettable summer, Lang's treatment of themes of love lost and the desire for identity elevate this simple tale to a true example of free spirited and confident directing.

### **Just to be Sure (Ôtez-moi d'un doute)**

Director: Carine Tardieu

Following such gems as *The Bélier Family* and *Rosalie Blum*, the Festival is thrilled to feature a World Premiere within its line-up. Carine Tardieu's delightful romantic comedy *Just to be Sure* is a touching and humorous exploration of family tension and the search for identity, convincingly directed and charmingly performed. Tardieu is also responsible for *The Dandelions* which featured in the 2013 line-up, making her one to watch in the directorial field.

## **The Woods Dreams are Made of (Le bois dont les rêves sont faits)**

Director: Claire Simon

In this superb documentary, Claire Simon observes the stories of the people she encounters in a huge park outside Paris. She invites us to see what she sees as openly and non judgementally as she does. Simon demonstrates a unique and thought provoking view of our industrial world and commercialised society, reinforcing the strength of feminine perspectives in French cinema.

## **Things to Come (L'avenir)**

Director: Mia Hansen-Løve

Mia Hansen-Løve's *Things to Come* is a moving illustration of new identity and rebirth after loss. Inspired by her relationship with her own mother, Hansen-Løve boldly treats the complexity of mature life as a woman, and skilfully navigates themes of feminine self-fulfilment and self-knowledge. Hansen-Løve deservedly gained the Silver Bear for Best Director at the Berlin International Film Festival 2016, making her a key role model for future female directors, and a sign of the strong female presence among film accolades today.

The Alliance Française French Film Festival will run from 1 March - 12 April 2017 in 12 cities across New Zealand. For full programme information, including dates and venues, visit [www.frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://www.frenchfilmfestival.co.nz)

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