## Detroit Film Theatre showcases film as artwork

For Elliot Wilhelm, film is syn-

ror Edict Wilhelm, thin is synonymous with artwork.

"We treat the screen and theater as if it were a gallery," said Wilhelm, curator for the Detroit Institute of Art's department of film. "Everything presented is presented for a reason."

Wilhelm engalder the Detroit.

presented for a reason."
Withelm considers the Detroit
Film Theatre, which begins its
silver anniversary season on Friday, to be an integrated part of
the museum. The theater was
the first of its kind in the US.
devoted to showing film as a
form of art.

Films have been shown in the

nuditorium since it was built in 1927. But it wasn't until the 1970s that a true and lasting connection between film and art was made at the museum. At a time when commercial multiplexes replaced theaters that focused on independent or foreign films, the Detroit Film Theatre opened its doors in 1974 and became a haven for contemporary work, classics, and films from around the world.

According Wilhelm, Detroit was one city that continued to support such work. With a grant from the Regional Film Centers,

NP RUNAWAY BRIDE (PG) NP THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT

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n vel for PC No one under age 6 admitted for & it rated films after 6 pm

the DIA was able to support a film series that would transform the museum's auditorium into a place for artistic expression through the nedium of film.

By the mid-1980s cable television and videscassattes provided casier access to older films and classics. In response, the Detroit Film Theatre concentrated on contemporary, more eclectic films. Embarking on a silver anniversary, the theater's mission remains the same.

The films chosen this season, 43 works shown between August and December, were chosen



Tribute: Catherine Deneuve and Ger-Depardieu star in "The Metro" one of Francois Truffaut's will be shown, a part of a retrospecseason at The Detroit Film The atre.

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based upon a filmmakers passion to bring their stories to life. Wilhelm chose only films which showed evidence that "someone really wanted to make (the) movie," and those that expressed "there was a passion behind it."

We kind of look at the DFT as an ongoing film festival," said Wilhelm. One of the greatest compliments he has received, he said, occurred when a patron purchased a ticket and it a said, occurred when a patron purchased a ticket and it a said, occurred when a patron purchased a ticket and it a said of the said that instance demonstrat. "The films are all on screen for a reason," he said.

For the 1999 season, the DFT will feature a retrospective of the complete work of Francois Truffaut. Forty years ago, the filmmaker debuted his first featuro, "The 400 Blows," which marked a period referred to as the French New Wave. That period was marked by a group of French critics-turned-filmmakers who aimed to show life as it was through the lens of a movie camera. Shouting on location, rather than in a controlled studio environment, the end result spurred a rebirth of foreign films for American audiences. With 21 features and two short films, the DFT honors Truffaut as "one of our greatest filmmakers," said wilhelm.

"It's great to watch the development through the sem ovies," he added.

All showings at the Detroit Film Theatre are held in the

opment through these movies, he added.
All showings at the Detroit Film Theatre are held in the Detroit Institute of Arts 1,150 seat theatre. Films are presented Friday through Monday. Tickets cost \$5.50 and are available both

at the door and in advance. Senior citizens, full-time students and DIA members can purchase tickets for \$4.50 with identification. Films are recommended for adults. Children under 5 will not be admitted. To purchase tickets or receive complete schedule information, call (313) 833-2323.

A few highlights of the 1999 Detroit Film Theatre Series include:

August

August
Twin Falls Idaho (110 minutes) — 7 and 9:30 p.m. FridaySaturday Aug. 20-21; 4 and 7
p.m. Sunday, Aug. 22
The first feature film from
director Michael Polish, "Twin
Falls Idaho" is described as
contemporary urban fairy tale
about conjoined twins struggling
with dependence and loneliness.
Wilhelm described it as a combination of suspense and a love
story.

Santombos.

September

September

Stop Making Sense (88 minutes) — 7 and 9:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Sept. 17-18; 1p.m., 4 p.m., 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 19
Jonathan Demme directed this film in 1984 to feature the Talking Heads 1983 tour. Settling a new standard for performance films, the Detroit Film Theatre debuted the film 15 years ago and will now show the anniverancy release, which has been remastered under the supervision of Demme and Talking Head's own David Byrne.

"I was quite anxious to see what the reaction to the film would be 16 years later," said Wilhelm. "I've seen the film

recently and it's just as good as it ever was."

October

After Life (118 minutes) — 7 and 9:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Oct. 22-23; 4 and 7 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 24

Oct. 22-23; 4 and 7 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 24

Japanese Director Hirokazu Kore-eda's film introduces 22 people of various ages who have died and are now making the decision of their lives.

"They find themselves at the bureaucratic entrance to the next world and have three days to pick one memory of their lives to spend eternity with," said Wilhelm. The film follows a few characters and how they make that decision.

November

Last Night (93 minutes) — 7 and 9:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 12-13; 4 and 7 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 14

Nov. 14

Don McKellar's directorial debut asks the question: 'What would you do if this was the last night on Earth?' The sci.f feature explores human nature in the present. McKellar wrote, directed and acted in the film that shows how a group of people choose to spend those last hours.

December

The Apple (85 minutes) — 7 and 9:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Dec. 3-4; 4 and 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 5

Dec. 5
At age 17, Samira Makhmalbaf, takes his audiences into a Teheran with this feature film. He shows life in a neighborhood where one man, denounced by his fellow neighbors, has kept his daughters locked inside their home for their entire lives.

