

## Document Citation

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Olivier Assayas Irma Vep 1997

◆ October 25 (Monday) 9:15 pm

The Rules of the Game (*La règle du jeu*)

Directed by Jean Renoir

France 1939, 35mm, b/w, 113 min.

With Marcel Dalio, Nora Grégor,  
Jean Renoir

French with English subtitles

IN HIS STINGING APPRAISAL of the erotic charades of the French leisure class before World War I, Jean Renoir satirizes the manners and mores of a society near collapse. Banned on its initial release as "too demoralizing" and made available again in its original form only in 1956, *The Rules of the Game* has come to be regarded by many as one of the greatest films ever made. Centering on a lavish country-house party given by the Marquis de la Chesnaye (Dalio) and his wife (Grégor), the film follows the complicated intrigues of the upper-class guests, which are mirrored by the activities of the servants. Alternating between farce and melodrama, realism and tragedy, Renoir's masterpiece was described by director Alain Resnais as "the single most overwhelming experience I have ever had in the cinema."

◆ November 8 (Monday) 9:15 pm

Irma Vep

Directed by Olivier Assayas

France 1997, 35mm, color, 97 min.

With Maggie Cheung, Jean-Pierre Léaud,  
Nathalie Richard

French with English subtitles

IN THIS CLEVER, SELF-REFLEXIVE WORK, a neurotic, idealistic director (Léaud) attempts to remake Feuillade's *Les Vampires*, but his plans quickly unravel. Assayas partly improvises the film, which charts the experiences of Hong Kong actress Cheung (playing herself) who arrives in Paris to take the lead role of Irma Vep in the doomed project. Crew members come on to her, journalists lecture her on the future of cinema, Léaud cracks up and Cheung starts having strange dreams. This delightfully nonchalant yet sharply satirical film takes direct shots at contemporary French film culture and features fine performances throughout.

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