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REDISCOVERING FRENCH FILM: 1930-1960

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A RARE SCREENING OF ROBERT BRESSON'S

LES DAMES DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE (1944-45)

7:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 12th in Wheeler Auditorium on the U. C. Berkeley campus

Robert Bresson's LES DAMES DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE (1944-45), a film which many critics consider to be one of the greatest ever made, will be screened at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 12th in Wheeler Auditorium on the U. C. Berkeley campus. Though highly acclaimed, LES DAMES DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE is infrequently screened in this country. The special Wheeler screening is part of the Pacific Film Archive's 45-film retrospective, REDISCOVERING FRENCH FILM: 1930-1960. This series, which continues through July, will present the largest number of French films of that era ever brought to the United States. Many of these films were never distributed in this country, or have long been unavailable. Complete series schedules and booklets of detailed program notes may be obtained at the Pacific Film Archive, which is located at 2625 Durant Avenue in Berkeley.

Bresson's second film, LES DAMES DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE has dialogue by Jean Cocteau and a script which Bresson based on a tale by the 18th-century novelist Jacques Diderot. Working under very difficult conditions at the end of the Second World War, Bresson updated the story, setting it in contemporary Paris, and created a work of extraordinary grace and impact.

Maria Casarès, renowned for her performances in Marcel Carné's THE CHILDREN OF PARADISE and Cocteau's ORPHEUS, had her first starring role in LES DAMES DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE. She plays a woman seeking revenge on her former lover by arranging for his marriage to a prostitute.

Decor, lighting, composition, camera movement and sound are distilled to an exquisite simplicity in LES DAMES DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE, allowing the subtle acting to convey a depth of emotion rarely captured on screen. Bresson has commented: "As far as I could, I have eliminated anything which might distract from the interior drama. For me, the cinema is an exploration within."

For further information on the REDISCOVERING FRENCH FILM series, please phone 642-1412.

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