

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
December 1994

JULES DASSIN

January 20 - 31, 1995

Selections from the forty-year career of the influential film director, Jules Dassin (b. 1911), are on view at The Museum of Modern Art from January 20 to 31, 1995. A native of New York, Dassin has worked in the United States, England, France, Italy, and Greece, his adopted country. Such an international career has allowed the innovative and audacious filmmaker to develop a visual style usually associated with European cinema, giving his narratives a unique blend of lyricism and realism. **JULES DASSIN** includes twelve feature-length works; Mr. Dassin will appear at the Museum to introduce the evening screenings of *Du Rififi chez les hommes* (*Rififi*, 1956) on January 20 and *Night and the City* (1950) on January 21.

Dassin's filmography includes pivotal works in a variety of genres. Highlights include three postwar film noirs that render the mythic struggle between good and evil: *Brute Force* (1947); *The Naked City* (1948), in which the urban landscape of New York plays a major role; and *Night and the City*, shot in London. Also presented are *Du Rififi chez les hommes*, Dassin's prototype for the French *policier*, which earned him the Best Director Award at the 1955 Cannes Film Festival and which features a famous robbery sequence shot without dialogue or music; and *Celui qui doit mourir* (*He Who Must Die*, 1956), his astonishing version of the Passion Play. *Phaedra* (1962) and *A Dream of*

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Passion (1978), modern reinterpretations of Euripides' *Hippolytus* and *Medea*, respectively, are also featured.

Born in Connecticut on December 12, 1911, Dassin was raised and educated in Harlem. He began his career as a stage actor and director and, in 1939, was invited by RKO Studios to Hollywood to observe Alfred Hitchcock and Garson Kanin. In 1940 he moved to MGM where he soon began directing features and, in 1947, at Universal made the groundbreaking film *Brute Force*. A powerful prison drama starring Burt Lancaster and Hume Cronyn, its provocative and realistic approach set the standard for its day. This work was followed by the crime drama, *The Naked City*, which was shot entirely on location in New York City and was hailed by many as a masterpiece of realism.

Dassin's American career was interrupted in the early 1950s by the blacklist; a target of McCarthyism, he relocated to Europe where he directed and starred in the award-winning *Du Rififi chez les hommes*. Dassin continued to work in Europe for the next twenty-five years, often collaborating with his wife, actress Melina Mercouri, on such films as *Celui qui doit mourir*, *Pote tin Kiriaki* (*Never on Sunday*, 1960), *Phaedra* (1962), *Topkapi* (1964), and *La promesse de l'aube* (*Promise at Dawn*, 1970). Dassin returned to the States in 1968 to direct *Uptight!*, a remake of *The Informer* (1935). Set in a black ghetto, this was one of the first films to feature an all-black cast. He continued to make films on both continents until 1980.

JULES DASSIN was organized by Jytte Jensen, Assistant Curator,
Department of Film and Video.

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For further information or film stills, contact the Department of Public
Information, 212/708-9752.

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JULES DASSIN
January 20 - 31, 1995

Exhibition Schedule

Friday, January 20

- 2:30 p.m. *Thieves' Highway*. 1949. USA. Jules Dassin. With Richard Conte, Valentina Cortese, Lee J. Cobb. 94 min.
7:00 p.m. *Du Rififi chez les hommes (Rififi)*. 1956. France. Jules Dassin. With Dassin, Jean Servais, Carl Mohner. In French, English subtitles. 113 min. Introduced by the filmmaker.

Saturday, January 21

- 2:00 p.m. *Brute Force*. 1947. USA. Jules Dassin. With Burt Lancaster, Hume Cronyn, Charles Bickford. 98 min.
5:00 p.m. *Night and the City*. 1950. USA/Great Britain. Jules Dassin. With Richard Widmark, Gene Tierney, Googie Withers. 101 min. Introduced by the filmmaker.

Sunday, January 22

- 2:00 p.m. *Thieves' Highway*.
See Friday, January 20, at 2:30.
5:00 p.m. *The Naked City*. 1948. USA. Jules Dassin. With Barry Fitzgerald, Howard Duff, Dorothy Hart. 96 min.

Monday, January 23

- 2:30 p.m. *A Dream of Passion*. 1978. USA/Greece. Jules Dassin. With Melina Mercouri, Ellen Burstyn, Andreas Voutsinas. In Greek and English, English subtitles. 110 min.
6:00 p.m. *Celui qui doit mourir (He Who Must Die)*. 1956. France/Italy/Greece. Jules Dassin. With Jean Servais, Melina Mercouri, Peter Vaneck. In French, English subtitles. 122 min.

Tuesday, January 24

- 2:30 p.m. *Topkapi*. 1964. USA. Jules Dassin. With Melina Mercouri, Peter Ustinov, Maximilian Schell. 120 min.
6:00 p.m. *Brute Force*.
See Saturday, January 21, at 2:00.

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Thursday, January 26

- 2:30 p.m. *Phaedra*. 1962. USA/Greece. Jules Dassin. With Melina Mercouri, Anthony Perkins, Raf Vallone. 115 min.
- 6:00 p.m. *Du Rififi chez les hommes (Rififi)*.
See Friday, January 20, at 7:00.
- 8:15 p.m. *La promesse de l'aube (Promise at Dawn)*. 1970. USA/France. Written, produced, and directed by Jules Dassin. With Melina Mercouri, Didier Haudepin, Assaf Dayan. In French, English subtitles. 100 min.

Friday, January 27

- 2:30 p.m. *Night and the City*.
See Saturday, January 21, at 5:00.
- 6:00 p.m. *A Dream of Passion*.
See Monday, January 23, at 2:30.
- 8:15 p.m. *Pote tin Kiriaki (Never on Sunday)*. 1960. USA/Greece. Jules Dassin. With Dassin, Melina Mercouri, Giorgos Foundas. In Greek and English, English subtitles. 92 min.

Saturday, January 28

- 2:00 p.m. *Celui qui doit mourir (He Who Must Die)*.
See Monday, January 23, at 6:00.
- 5:00 p.m. *Topkapi*.
See Tuesday, January 24, at 2:30.

Sunday, January 29

- 2:00 p.m. *Phaedra*.
See Thursday, January 26, at 2:30.
- 5:00 p.m. *10:30 P.M. Summer*. 1966. USA. Jules Dassin. With Melina Mercouri, Romy Schneider, Peter Finch. 85 min.

Monday, January 30

- 2:30 p.m. *The Naked City*.
See Sunday, January 22, at 5:00.
- 6:00 p.m. *La promesse de l'aube (Promise at Dawn)*.
See Thursday, January 26, at 8:15.

Tuesday, January 31

- 2:30 p.m. *10:30 P.M. Summer*.
See Sunday, January 29, at 5:00.
- 6:00 p.m. *Pote tin Kiriaki (Never on Sunday)*.
See Friday, January 27, at 8:15.