DENYS ARCAND

November 18 - December 2, 1994

An exhibition of works by Quebec writer/director Denys Arcand (b. 1941), one of the most consistently interesting and perceptive filmmakers working in North America, is on view at The Museum of Modern Art from November 18 to December 2, 1994. Including fifteen documentaries and fiction films, DENYS ARCAND provides a rare opportunity to see a range of the filmmaker's works, which, but for a few, have not been shown in this country.

Arcand's films are distinguished by a dry wit inflected by an unsentimental empathy. Although his documentaries involve the political and social realities of life in Quebec, their wry analyses and mock detachment transcend provincialism. Arcand's theatrical films concern the myriad forms of alienation -- sexual and economic, in particular -- that define contemporary life.

The exhibition features the two films for which Arcand may be best known in the United States: Le déclin de l'empire américain (The Decline of the American Empire, 1985), about a group of friends who gather one autumn day in a comfortable country house; and Jésus de Montréal (Jesus of Montreal, 1989), which details what happens when an updated Passion Play is staged with an excess of enthusiasm.

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Also presented in the series are two documentaries by Arcand -- Québec: Duplessis et après... (Quebec: Duplessis and After, 1972) and Le confort et l'indifference (Comfort and Indifference, 1981) -- that are especially timely. These works address the issue of sovereignty for Quebec, which the recently elected Parti Québécois supports.

Additional highlights include Rejéanne Padovani (1972), a dark Montreal satire about power and corruption; On est au coton (Cotton Mill: Treadmill, 1969), an exposé of labor exploitation, which was originally banned by the National Film Board of Canada that commissioned the film; La maudite galette (The Damned Loot, 1971), the story of an in-family robbery gone wrong and Arcand's first theatrical feature; Gina (1974), a fictional work about a stripper based on acquaintances that the filmmaker and crew made while shooting On est au coton; Le crime d'Ovide Plouffe (The Crime of Ovide Plouffe, 1984), the story of a young man who resists his mother's wish to become a priest; and Seul ou avec d'autres (Alone or with Others, 1962), Quebec's first independent film, which Arcand collaborated on as a student at the University of Montreal.

DENYS ARCAND was organized by Laurence Kardish, Curator, Department of Film and Video, and is made possible through the collaboration of Telefilm Canada, Cinematheque Ontario, La Cinémathèque Québécoise, and the National Film Board of Canada. Support for this program is also given by Alliance Communications Corporation, the Canadian Consulate General, New York, and the Quebec Government House, New York.

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For further information or film stills, contact Christine Dietlin, Film Press Representative, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9752.
Friday, November 18


Saturday, November 19


Sunday, November 20


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Monday, November 21

6:00 p.m.  Le crime d'Ovide Plouffe (The Crime of Ovide Plouffe).  
            See Sunday, November 20, at 2:00.

Tuesday, November 22
2:30 p.m.  On est au coton (Cotton Mill: Treadmill).  
            See Saturday, November 19, at 5:00.

6:00 p.m.  La maudite galette (The Damned Loot).  
            See Friday, November 18, at 2:30.

Friday, November 25
2:30 p.m.  Montreal vu par . . . (Montreal Sextet).  
            See Monday, November 21, at 2:30.


8:30 p.m.  Le déclin de l'empire américain (The Decline of the American Empire).  
            See Saturday, November 19, at 2:00.

Saturday, November 26
2:00 p.m.  Gina.  
            See Friday, November 18, at 8:15.

5:00 p.m.  Réjeanne Padovani.  
            See Friday, November 18, at 6:00.

Sunday, November 27
2:00 p.m.  Jésus de Montréal (Jesus of Montreal).  
            See Friday, November 25, at 6:00.

5:00 p.m.  Montreal vu par . . . (Montreal Sextet).  
            See Monday, November 21, at 2:30.

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Monday, November 28
3:00 p.m. Québec: Duplessis et après ... (Quebec: Duplessis and After). 1970. Canada. Denys Arcand, Serge Beauchemin, Alain Dostie, Jacques Drouin, Réo Grégoire, Pierre Letarte, Pierre Maheu, Pierre Mignot, André Théberge. A collaborative documentary made for the National Film Board of Canada; about Quebec society in 1936 and 1970, and the failure of politicians' rhetoric to coincide with the people's needs. English version. 115 min.

6:00 p.m. Early Films by Denys Arcand, 1962-1967.
Volleyball. 1967. Canada. In Montreal, Russian and American volleyball teams compete; the camera records the encounter as ballet. No narration. 10 min.
Total running time 113 min.

Tuesday, November 29

6:00 p.m. Québec: Duplessis et après ... (Quebec: Duplessis and After).
See Monday, November 28, at 3:00.

Friday, December 2
See Monday, November 28, at 6:00.

6:00 p.m. Le confort et l'indifference (Comfort and Indifference).
See Tuesday, November 29, at 2:30.

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