



Ambassador's Activities

2012

Distributor: French Embassy in the UK
- Press and Communications Services -
58 Knightsbridge, SW1X 7JT London
E-Mail: press@ambafrance-uk.org
Web: www.ambafrance-uk.org

Speech by HE Bernard Emié,
French Ambassador to the United Kingdom

for the 20th edition of the French Film Festival
Glasgow Film Theatre

Glasgow, 16 November 2012

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends, enthusiasts of French and Francophone cinema,

I'm delighted to be here in Glasgow with you tonight to celebrate the 20th edition of the French Film Festival.

First of all I'd like to thank the management and staff of this superb venue, the Glasgow Film Theatre, for hosting us tonight and helping make the French Film Festival a success again this year.

I'm deeply moved to be standing in this very auditorium in the former "Cosmo" cinema, where French cult classics were first shown to the Scottish public. This was the case for the world-famous masterpiece [*La Grande Illusion*](#), shown as early as 1939 in the Theatre's first summer season programme, and [*Les Enfants du Paradis*](#), shot during the dark hours of the German occupation of France and shown here in 1945.

There really couldn't be a better venue in Scotland for this festival than here in the Glasgow Film Theatre.

If you'll allow me, on behalf of the whole audience I'd like to say a very special thank you to the organizers of the festival, Richard Mowe and Ilona Morison, and their team of volunteers, who have managed to make this extraordinary event a reality. They really are the heart and soul of this festival.

I'm also grateful to the sponsors and partners who made the festival possible: Total, Renault, the *Institut Français*, and the Alliance Française de Glasgow, which this year celebrates its 30th anniversary. And I'd like to mention Creative Scotland, the Caledonian Hotel, *Wallonie Bruxelles Images*, the *Délégation générale du Québec* in London and finally TV5 Monde.

Thanks to you all, the French Film Festival UK has become an unrivalled showcase for contemporary and classic titles encompassing début films, titles by established directors, popular hits, shorts, documentaries and animation as well as a superb array of guests and debates.

The organizers wanted to make this milestone year a celebration of the diversity of French and Francophone cinema. Indeed, the French Film Festival is not only about France but about Francophone cinema as a whole. There will be several works by the Belgian director Chantal Akerman, films from Quebec and many others such as animations for children and adults, classics from the French New Wave, and films celebrating Marseille, Glasgow's twin city.

I can't finish without mentioning a comedy that promises to be a must-see for both Britons who love France and vice versa: *Astérix et Obélix au service de Sa Majesté* (in the English version "Astérix and Obélix: God Save Britannia"). The cast is astounding: Edouard Baer, Gérard Depardieu, Fabrice Luchini, Catherine Deneuve, Jean Rochefort and more.

And tonight, Pierre Jolivet will tell you about his own creation, *Les Mains Armées*, a thriller which will take you into the uncharted territory of gangs.

I wish you all an excellent evening and a great festival!

Thank you very much./