



FILM FORUM

Recognizing that film as an artistic medium presents not only questions of technique and style, but also raises timely issues in a penetrating manner, the **FILM FORUM**, now in its 30th year, is devoted to showing significant motion pictures on campus. Set in a discussion-oriented context, the showing and critique of these films is intended to encourage the development of critical standards of cinematic achievement and artistic merit.

COURAGE

Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.
(C.S. Lewis)

For the ancient Greeks, courage was one of the cardinal virtues along with wisdom, justice, and temperance. Christian tradition emphasizes the virtue of courage, and Ben Franklin included “resolution” in his list. Courage is essential to the good life in these traditions, for it fortifies all the other virtues and, perhaps most importantly, creates a unified self. Portrayals of courage are multiple, from the heroes of myth to comic book characters battling evil forces. What exactly is courage, though? Is it a single trait, manifested in the same way by all who possess it? Is it gendered? In what contexts is virtue developed, and how? Is war the preeminent site for virtue, or is it equally well nurtured in domestic life? Is there such a thing as too much courage? How can it be distinguished from its counterfeits? The films in this year’s series raise and address these questions, offering images of virtue that we may well take to heart in our own pursuit of the virtue of courage.



THE DARK KNIGHT

United States, 2008
Tuesday, September 15

Not just another movie based on a comic book, Christopher Nolan’s sequel to *Batman Begins* is a probing exploration of the nature of evil and its effects on community. Batman (Christian Bale) embodies our ambivalent expectations of the hero, and the Joker (Heath Ledger) exudes amorality. How the good, personified by the District Attorney (Aaron Eckhard), are corrupted by the desire for revenge adds another layer to the film. While a superb action movie, *The Dark Knight* transcends this genre through the artistry of filmmaking, enabling us to reflect on forces beneath the surface of our lives. What does courage require of us? (153 minutes)

thedarkknight.warnerbros.com/dvdsite

“Pitched at the divide between art and industry, poetry and entertainment, it goes darker and deeper than any Hollywood movie of its comic-book kind.” (Manohla Dargis, *New York Times*)

“Nolan...saw a chance to go deeper into familiar characters and mythology, a chance to meditate on darker-than-usual themes that have implications for the way we live now.” (Kenneth Turan, *LA Times*)

WALTZ WITH BASHIR

Israel, 2008
Tuesday, October 13

In reflecting upon his time spent in the Israeli army, filmmaker Ari Folman has created a profoundly moving antiwar meditation that is equal parts personal memoir, history lesson, and animated fever dream. In order to remember, he tracks down several of his friends and soldiers who were there with him to find out what really happened. This is a film that can be classified as animation, documentary, history, and fiction. Folman uses a combination of Flash animation, 3D, and classic animation to bring his film to visual life. As *Waltz With Bashir* unfolds in dreamlike waves, Folman understands that guilt is a dangerous

thing, and war is even worse. (90 minutes)

waltzwithbashir.com

“A memoir, a history lesson, a combat picture, a piece of investigative journalism and an altogether amazing film.” (A.O. Scott, *New York Times*)

“The best movie of 2008? The most revealing war film ever made? The greatest animated feature to come out of Israel? All these descriptions could apply to *Waltz With Bashir*.” (Jonathan Curiel, *San Francisco Chronicle*)

EVERLASTING MOMENTS

Sweden, 2008
Tuesday, November 10

Jan Troell, the widely respected Swedish director, returns to the early 1900s—an era of social change and unrest, war and poverty. A young working class woman, Maria, wins a camera in a lottery. The camera grants her the eyes to view the world, and empowers her over several decades to raise and nurture her family of six children as well as an alcoholic, womanizing, and sometimes violent, although ultimately loving, husband. The film itself exemplifies the power of images it extols. (132 minutes)

ifcfilms.com/films/everlasting-moments

“...an extraordinary film about a brave and creative working-class housewife who keeps her soul alive through learning the art of photography... The drama charts her resiliency in the face of staggering odds and setbacks as her creativity shines and gives her a keen sense of personal satisfaction and fulfillment.” (Frederic and Maryann Brussat, *Spirituality & Practice*)

“Beholding Troell’s exquisite images is like having your eyes washed, the better to behold moving pictures of uncorrupted purity and clarity.” (Todd McCarthy, *Variety*)

GOODBYE SOLO

United States, 2008

Tuesday, February 9

On the lonely roads of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, two men forge an improbable friendship that will change their lives forever. Solo is a Senegalese cab driver working to provide a better life for his young family. William is a tough Southern good ol' boy with a lifetime of regrets. One man's American dream is just beginning, while the other's is quickly winding down. Despite their differences, both men soon realize they need each other more than either is willing to admit. Director Ramin Bahrani deftly explores the passing of a generation as well as the rapidly changing face of America. (91 minutes)

goodbyesolomovie.com/news.html

"Bahrani is the new great American director. He never steps wrong. In *Goodbye Solo*, he begins with a situation that might unfold in a dozen different ways and makes of it something original and profound." (Roger Ebert)

"The story told in *Goodbye Solo* is moving and mysterious, and you may find yourself pondering its implications for a long time after the film's simple and haunting final images have faded." (A.O. Scott, *New York Times*)

SÉRAPHINE

France, 2008

Tuesday, March 9

Winner of seven Césars from the French Academy, this is the story of Séraphine Louis, a simple and profoundly devout housekeeper who, at age 41, began painting brilliantly colorful canvases—without any instruction but at the instigation of her guardian angel. In 1912, Wilhelm Uhde, a German art critic and collector, discovered her paintings while she was working for him as a maid in his house outside Paris. A moving and unexpected relationship develops between the avant-garde art dealer and the visionary cleaning lady leading to Séraphine's work being grouped with other naïve painters—the so-called "Sacred Heart Painters." The result was acclaimed shows in both Europe and New York. Martin Provost's poignant portrait of this now largely forgotten painter is a testament to the mysteries of creativity and the resilience of one woman's spirit. (121 minutes)

seraphinemovie.com

"...a picture that is almost biblical in its simplicity and its passion." (Stanley Kaufmann, *New Republic*)

"One of the loveliest and most sombre fables of a lonely artist's ecstasy." (David Denby, *New Yorker*)

THE HURT LOCKER

United States, 2008

Tuesday, April 6

The Hurt Locker opens with a statement presented as fact: "War is a drug." Under enemy fire in Iraq, Staff Sgt. William James defuses bombs. It is a terrifyingly dangerous job, but he addresses it like a daily pleasure. Inspired by real events screenwriter Mark Boal reported on in Iraq, director Kathryn Bigelow has created a thrilling and heart-pounding look at the psychology of bomb technicians and the effects of risk and danger on the human psyche. (131 minutes)

thehurtlocker-movie.com

"*The Hurt Locker* is a small classic of tension, bravery, and fear, which will be studied twenty years from now when people want to understand something of what happened to American soldiers in Iraq." (David Denby, *New Yorker*)

"Psychologically acute and thrillingly dramatic, *The Hurt Locker* blows every other Iraq war movie off the screen." (Colin Covert, *StarTribune*)

All films will be shown at 7 p.m. in Benson Great Hall (Community Life Center). Introductory comments preface each showing to provide background and context for the film; refreshments and discussion are available afterward for those who wish to explore the meanings of the film. You are cordially invited to attend and to make the **FILM FORUM** a regular part of your cultural life.

There is no admission charge. **FILM FORUM** is made possible by the generous financial support of the College of Arts & Sciences Dean's Office, and the ongoing direction of faculty in the Departments of Philosophy and English.

BETHEL UNIVERSITY

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FILM FORUM
2009-2010

30th Year!