Welcome
Philippe Lioret
2008 / 110 min.

Both a study of a budding friendship and a compassionate look at the perils faced by illegal immigrants, Philippe Lioret’s Welcome centers on Bilal, a 17-year-old Iraqi Kurd who is stuck in Calais, in Northern France, and Simon, a recently divorced swimming teacher. Desperate to join his girlfriend in London, Bilal vows to swim across the English Channel if he has to, setting the stage for his meeting with Simon. Unmistakably a condemnation of xenophobia in France, Welcome also features richly drawn, fully fleshed-out lead characters.

The Sleeping Beauty provocatively deconstructs a classic fairytale, upending conventional ideas about sex and gender. In this retelling, six-year-old Anastasia, cursed to sleep for 100 years, visits far-off lands in her slumber and renounces “the world of little girls.” She wakes up a teenager a century later and discovers carnal pleasures with both a man and a woman—as well as crushing heartbreak.

Boarding Gate
Olivier Assayas
2007 / 106 min.

Director Olivier Assayas has remarked that, with Boarding Gate, he was hoping to make a B movie in English. Far more than an exercise in genre tinkering, Boarding Gate shows Assayas’s unwavering commitment to the feral talents of his lead actress, Asia Argento. Like his 2002 film, Demonlover, Boarding Gate unspools as a high-energy international thriller.

35 Shots of Rum
Claire Denis
2008 / 100 min.

Films about families and their complications all too often pierce eardrums with shrieks of dysfunction. Amid the din, Claire Denis’s sublime 35 Shots of Rum stands out all the more for its soothing quiet, conveying the easy, frequently nonverbal intimacy between a widowed father and his university-student daughter.

Hadewijch
Bruno Dumont
2009 / 105 min.

20-year-old Céline is expelled from a nunnery for her over-zealous faith and returns to the secular world where she meets rebellious teenager Yassine and his older brother, Nassir, whose religious fervour mirror’s Céline’s own. Hadewijch explores the relentless pursuit of faith in both Christianity and Islam—and what drives certain believers to acts of extreme violence.

Opening Reception to follow Welcome in the Alumni Hall Auditorium Lobby

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