

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY FILM STUDIES &
WORLD CINEMA FORUM PRESENT**

THE INDOCILE IMAGE

**A RETROSPECTIVE AND A SYMPOSIUM ON THE
CINEMA OF MED HONDO**

**6 DAYS - 6 FILMS & A TWO-DAY SYMPOSIUM
MED HONDO IN ATTENDANCE**

FEBRUARY 22- 27, 2016

Soleil O (1970) - West Indies (1979) - Sarraounia (1986)
Lumière Noire (1994) - Watani, A World without Evil (1998)
Fatima, the Algerian Woman of Dakar (2004)



The Indocile Image: A Retrospective and a Symposium on the Cinema of Med Hondo, a Pioneer of African Cinema.

Carleton University's Film Studies Program and World Cinema Forum are pleased to invite you to a weeklong retrospective and a two-day symposium on the cinema of Med Hondo, from February 22 to February 27, 2016.

Without a doubt one of the most important film directors in Africa and in the world today, Med Hondo is not only one of the foundational figures of African cinema along with Ousmane Sembene and others, but also one of the most talented, radically versatile and profoundly influential directors from the continent. With a career spanning more than five decades, several professions (dubbing, acting, directing and producing for the theater and the cinema) and yielding twelve films set on three continents (Africa, Europe, the Americas), Med Hondo has played an indispensable role in the establishment of some of the most important and enduring institutions of the continent's cinema, including the Pan-African Film Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO) and the Pan-African Federation of Filmmakers (FEPACI). He has also produced important written texts outlining significant axes of the project of African cinema including the need to "avoid copying the European and American cinema".

In this very first Canadian homage to this world-class film director, and in celebration of Black History Month, legendary director Med Hondo will be with us in Ottawa to introduce all his films and to participate in the international symposium on his cinema involving some of the most distinguished film scholars in the fields of African cinema, cinema and history and film theory from around the world. An extremely rare occasion not to be missed!

Film Screenings: All films will be introduced and discussed by Director Med Hondo

Monday, February 22, 5.30pm-8pm - National Gallery of Canada Lecture Hall-Official Opening- *Soleil O* (1970) (105 min)

Tuesday, February 23, 6pm - SP 435- *Lumière Noire* (1994) - (107 min)

Wednesday, February 24 - 6.30pm - Dunton Tower 2017-*Watani, A World without Evil* (1998) (103 min)

Thursday, February 25, 6pm - SP 100- *Sarraounia, An African Queen* (1986) (121 min)

Friday, February 26, 6pm - SP 100- *West Indies: The Fugitive Slaves of Liberty* (1979) (113 min)

Saturday, February 27, 7pm - River Building 2200 - *Fatima the Algerian Woman of Dakar* (2004) (89 min)

International Symposium on the Cinema of Med Hondo

Friday, February 26,

3pm - SP 100 - Opening and Keynote Lecture by Dr. Robert Rosenstone

4pm - Carleton University Art Gallery - **Opening Reception**

Saturday, February 27, 9am-5pm - SP 100-All-Day Symposium

Participants: Robert Rosenstone (California Institute of Technology), Philip Rosen (Brown University), Mbye Cham (Howard University), Frank Ukadike (Tulane University), Sheila Petty (University of Regina), Jude Akudinobi (University of Santa Barbara), Mourad El Fahli (Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University), Aboubakar Sanogo (Carleton University).

Admission is Free

No registration required

All are welcome

Organized by:

Film Studies

World Cinema Forum

Sponsored by:

Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

Migration and Diaspora Studies

Institute for Comparative Studies in Literature, Art and Culture

Carleton University Art Gallery

School for Studies in Art and Culture

Institute of African Studies

Department of History

In collaboration with

Center for Transnational Cultural Analysis (CTCA)
National Gallery of Canada / Musée des beaux-arts du Canada

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Parking: Parking is available for visitors on campus for a fee and is available in several on-street locations, open lots, and parking garages. See the [Parking map](#)

All visitor and permit parking areas are enforced for payment compliance from 7 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., Monday to Sunday.

The Indocile Image: A Retrospective and a Symposium on the Cinema of Med Hondo-February 22-27, 2016)

Screening Schedule:

Mon, Feb 22nd - *Soleil O* (1969- 1970) – 105 min - National Art Gallery of Canada - Lecture Hall -5:30pm

Soleil O is Med Hondo's inaugural masterpiece, garnering him the Golden Leopard at the Locarno International Film Festival in 1970, and instantly securing his place as one of the giants of African and world cinema. Following a loosely constructed narrative of the travails of an accountant confidently arriving in Paris to pursue his dreams, the film meticulously uncovers the challenges he faces including racial, housing and employment discrimination along with sexual objectification. For Med Hondo, filming the migrant condition entails going beyond consequences and analyzing, with caustic humor and imagination, causalities (which include colonialism, the structures of capitalism and the implications of neocolonialism) in order to effect change.



The film announces the arrival of a maverick director intent on taking on the very form of the medium through his use of digression, communicative symbolism, cinema verite, and Eisensteinian montage. This is a film that immediately partakes in the modernist pantheon of the cinema.

“The greatest African film to date” (Jeune Afrique)

“*Soleil O* imposes itself: rarely has a first film felt so powerful, so effervescent and so rich as testimony.” Bernard Cohn (Positif)

“One of the most original films selected at the Semaine de la Critique at Cannes 1970 is without doubt *Soleil O* by Mauritanian director Med Hondo.” (Lettres Françaises).

Tues, Feb 23rd - *Lumière Noire* (1994)- 107 min - SP 435 - 6pm



Lumière Noire tells the story of a police blunder which takes place in a French airport. The victim's friend, an engineer at Air France, learns that the only witness to the crime is a young Malian man detained on the top floor of a hotel, expecting his imminent deportation by chartered plane alongside hundreds of companions of misfortune. The friend takes off to Bamako in search of the one hundredth and first Malian.

Med Hondo experiments with the crime thriller to explore the reality of the deportation of African migrants back to their countries of origin. The director faced endless instances of “preventive censorship” (refusal of permits to shoot at Charles de Gaulle airport and surrounding hotels). Ultimately only the direct intervention of the French President François Mitterrand himself unlocked the situation.

“From time to time one sees on Parisian screens unusual meteors. This is one such film.” (Positif).

Wed, Feb 24th – Watani, A World without Evil (1998) – 103 min - Dunton Tower 2017 - 6:30pm

Shot in black and white on a shoestring budget, in a minimalist mode and with winks toward silent cinema, Fellini and hip hop culture, *Watani* was inspired by news of daily humiliation of migrants and a general context of fear. The film contrasts the lives two characters who lose their job the same day: Patrick Clement, a married bank clerk with two daughters and a wife consigned to a wheel chair as a result of a terrorist attack and Mamadou Sylla an African immigrant, also a father of two, who is a garbage collector. While the latter seeks employment in vain (in a situation reminiscent of *Soleil O*), the former drifts slowly into the hands of extremist right wing groups who attack and kill black and Arab migrants in the dark of the night. Offers food for thought in our troubled contemporary historical context.



Thurs, Feb 25th - Sarraounia, an African Queen (1986) - 121 min - SP 100 - 6:00pm



By adapting Abdoulaye Mamani’s eponymous book, Med Hondo chose to make an epic of one page of the great encyclopedia of African resistance against colonialism. Following the notorious 1884-5 Berlin conference, European countries engaged in a collective and systematic assault on the African continent in order

to take over its lands and resources, lord over the lives of its inhabitants, and impose their culture and modes of thought. Headed for Lake Chad in Central Africa, the infamous and bloodthirsty Voulet-Chanoine French military expedition meets on its path the indomitable and incomparable strategist Queen Sarraounia, leader of the Azna, who bravely resists their incursion. Shot in glorious Techniscope, with luxuriant colors and exquisitely staged actions and battle scenes across multiple planes, the film won the 1987 Yennenga Stallion at FESPACO and contributed , along with the book, to the rehabilitation of this major figure of African history who had heretofore been written out of history books but kept alive in orature.

“Best film. It deserves wider release.” Mike Hunter, *The Herald Tribune*

“A hymn to dignity.” Francoise Balogun, *West Africa*

“The first major African epic film.” Claude Wauthier, *Le Monde*.

“Swirling battle scenes are powerful, emotional.” Philip French, *The Observer*

Friday Feb 26th - West Indies: The Fugitive Slaves of Liberty (1979) - 113 min – SP100- 6 pm

By all measures one of Med Hondo’s lasting masterpieces, *West Indies* is a visually and aurally stunning musical appropriately set on a giant slave ship symbolizing the triangular relationship between Africa, Europe and the Caribbean. The film explores parallels between the forced



migration of the Atlantic slave trade and the more recent migration of Afro-Caribbean subjects to former colonial metropolises. In this explosive demonstration of virtuosity, Med Hondo deftly takes advantage of the staging, framing and montage possibilities of filming in one location and in widescreen format, four centuries of history through genial tracking shots, vertical mise-en-scene, well-crafted long takes, changes in temporality through camera movement, lush colors and poignant lyrics and choreographies which invite the spectator to join in the struggle to transform the world. One of the most vertiginous closing sequences in cinema.”

Dixit Med Hondo: "I wanted to free the very concept of musical comedy from its American trade mark. I wanted to show that each people on earth had its own musical comedy, its own musical tragedy and its own thought shaped through its own history."

“Med Hondo’s musical is a revolutionary musical in both senses of the word...” (Janet Maslin, New York Times)

Saturday Feb 27th - Fatima, the Algerian Woman of Dakar (2004) - 89 min - RB 2200 – 7pm

Fatima the Algerian Woman of Dakar is Med Hondo's adaptation of a short story by the late Tahar Cheriaa, founder the Carthage Film Festival in 1966. Exploring the legacies of decolonization and as a testimony to the director's profound investment in the historical, the film tells the



story of Fatima, an Algerian woman who is raped during her country's liberation war in 1957 by Souleymane Fall, a young Senegalese officer heading a column of the occupying French colonial army. Upon his return to Senegal, Souleymane is summoned by his father to return to Algeria and repair the harm he caused Fatima, who, meanwhile has been the object of unspeakable racism for carrying a black son. Souleymane, Fatima and their son Abdelkader ultimately return to Senegal to start a new life potentially full of promise. A brilliant hymn to the Pan-African project and a beautiful homage to the figure of Frantz Fanon.