

[Film] **Eclectic And Jewish**
by Paul Dearing
Photo courtesy of Jewish Film South
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With its typically eclectic selection of films by Jewish talent, the fifth season of the Jackson Jewish Film Festival commences this weekend, from Sat., Nov. 5 through Tues., Nov. 8 at Millsaps College, as part of the school's Homecoming festivities.

The opening night selection is "Monsieur Batignole," a French film (subtitled in English) set during the German occupation of Paris. The film's namesake character, a butcher, unwittingly helps the Gestapo deport a Jewish family living in his neighborhood. Realizing his mistake, and confronted by one of the family's children on his doorstep, he decides to help them hide and make their way to the Swiss border. Though the film examines a serious subject (it is the only film of the festival that would not be suitable for all audiences, as it contains some violence), it manages a frequently lighthearted look at one of history's darkest hours. "Monsieur Batignole" shows at 7 p.m., with an opening night wine and cheese reception at 6 p.m. in the Lewis Art Gallery, one floor up from the Recital Hall.

The following afternoon, the moving drama "All I've Got," from Israel, plays. This unique story follows the spirit of a 72-year-old woman on a ship to the afterlife. On the ship, she encounters the spirit of her 22-year-old lover from five decades earlier. "All I've Got" thus asks the question: Would you return to the world of the living next to your first love, tragically taken from you, only to abandon all memories of the life you've led? Described as a "Ghost" for the new millennium, "All I've Got" shows at 2 p.m. on Sunday, preceded by the "Bagels and Grits" art exhibition at 1 p.m. in the Lewis Art Gallery.

The festival's Monday evening showing is "Go for Zucker," a hilarious German comedy about Jacky Zuckermann, a miserable drunkard, compulsive gambler, lousy husband and irresponsible father. When his mother dies suddenly, her will makes a most unusual stipulation: Zuckermann must sit shiva with his estranged family and reconcile their differences, or forfeit their inheritance. "Go for Zucker" was a monstrous box-office hit in Germany, where it won six German Film Awards (including Best Film and Best Director). This black comedy shows at 7 p.m. on Monday (no additional special event).

The closing night film, "Hitmakers: The Teens Who Stole Pop Music," is a documentary on Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller, a pair of young Jewish songwriters who penned some of the 1960s' best-known and beloved hits, including Elvis Presley's "Hound Dog." This revealing film provides an engaging, enlightening look at one of rock 'n' roll's most memorable periods. Composer Mike Stoller, one of the 'Hitmakers,' will be speaking and answering questions at the screening, which begins at 7 p.m. on Tuesday. The evening will also feature opening music by Lisa Palmer, Nina Mabry and Josh Wiener.

Jewish Cinema South, the organizer of the festival, also screens a film the day before opening night at St. Andrew's North Campus (the film, "Marion's Triumph: Surviving History's Nightmare" is being shown at 9 a.m. on Friday as a school presentation).

The festival is held in the Recital Hall (second floor) of the Gertrude C. Ford Academic Complex (parking is accessible by turning onto Park Avenue from State Street). Tickets to any of the films of the Jackson Jewish Film Festival cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for students. A festival pass, which covers admission to all four films, costs \$35 for adults and \$20 for students. Tickets will be sold outside the Millsaps Recital Hall beginning 30 minutes prior to each showing. (Because many tickets were sold in advance of the festival, unpurchased seats may be limited.)