

## films

The films we recommend are on youth social problems, they are all French, we are still wondering why...

***L'esquive*** (*Games of Love and Chance*) directed by A. Bechiche, 2003, represents deprived, violated adolescents living on the outskirts of Paris, a tight-knit community with their own destructive language and a hatred of those who do not belong to their group. Some of them are chosen as leading actors of a school play; they experience moments of creative expression and freedom, an interval in a hard, hostile world.

***Entre les murs*** (*The Class*), directed by L. Cantet, 2008. A teacher spends a year with resistant students of a multi-ethnic class. Though he tries his best to do his job and the students are not borderline cases, he does not succeed in communicating and arousing their interest. Inside the walls of a school, as schools are today, conflict is unavoidable and the teacher cannot help being both protagonist and victim at the same time. What new meaning should be given to this profession? This seems to be the question the director leaves us with.

***Les choristes*** (*The Choir*), directed by C. Barratier, 2004. Set in 1994 in a French wayward boys' boarding school severely administered by a neurotic director, a new assistant teacher faces a world of hostility, suspicions and violence. Music is his resource as he is a musician and he decides to teach students to sing in a choir and through music he succeeds in making them well disposed to one another in a climate of reciprocal respect. Can the metaphor of the choir be useful for today's school?

***Etre et avoir*** (*To be and to have*) directed by N. Philibert (2002). A teacher is working in a school in the mountains with a class of children aged from 3 to 10 years of age. It is his last working year before retirement. Without being sentimental the film, a docudrama, tells a universal story: the relationship between a teacher and his students. The hard work of growing, learning, having a community life, alternating school with play and work (work too, because in a peasant society even children work) represents students' existential universe looked at sympathetically by the teacher; listening and observation are deep, his guide authoritative. "To be" is finally something that can be learnt, beyond "having", we can "be", we must "be". That is true for the students, and also true for the teacher.