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COLCOA FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL DISHES OUT TOP PRIZES

by Sarah Dunn

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ColCoa, the French film festival that takes place in Los Angeles every year came to a close last night. The festival, which stands for City of Lights City of Angels, was first created in 1996 and is organized by the Franco-American Culture Fund. Originally aimed solely at California Francophiles, the festival has quickly blossomed into a key film festival for Hollywood big-wigs. Past films that have premiered at Colcoa include *La Vie en Rose* and *Bienvenue Chez Les Ch'tis*.

This year, the festival's selection of thirty feature films included *OSS 117*, *Rio ne répond plus* (*Lost in Rio*), *Louise Michel*, and *Welcome*, as well as two of the big winners at the 2009 French Cesar Awards, *Séraphine* and *Mesrine*. *Eden à l'Ouest*, the latest production from Costa-Gavras, received the Critic's Award this past weekend—one of the top awards in the entire festival. The film focuses on the plight of an illegal immigrant living in the EU. The other top prize, the Public's Award, went to *Welcome*, a film produced by famed director Philippe Liore, that recounts the meeting between an illegal Kurdish immigrant and a Frenchman.

For a list of all films that premiered at the festival check out: www.colcoa.org

