On the occasion of World Refugee Day (20 June), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) works to commemorate the strength, of millions of refugees and raise awareness on their issues. Behind this humanitarian crisis, and beyond the statistics, there are individual lives and stories to be told.

It is what the Institut français aims to underline with its series of debates and screenings presented as part of Refugee Week. This programme, organised with leading British and French organisations, NGOs and associations, will also pay tribute to the commitment of the women and men – activists, students, artists or citizens – who help refugees rebuild a decent life in our societies.

Film: Grisgris

Sun 16 June 4.10pm

Dir. Mahamet-Saleh Haroun

Despite a paralysed leg that could have barred most avenues, Grigris, 25 years old, dreams of being a professional dancer. But his dreams are dashed when his step father falls critically ill. **Presented in competition in Cannes in 2013** and never released in the UK, Grisgris was directed by Mahamet-Saleh Haroun, the award winning director of *A Screaming Man* (Jury Prize, Cannes Film Festival 2010).

Film + Talk: The Rest

Tue 18 June 6.30pm

Dir. Ai Weiwei

Ai Weiwei’s follow-up to *Human Flow* is a sharp and moving account of today’s refugee situation. *The Rest* focuses on Europe, the world’s defender of human rights, as it closed its borders to thousands of refugees from Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan.

Followed by a discussion with RBKC Refugees Welcome Committee
Film: Midnight Traveler
Thu 20 June 8.15pm
Dir. Hassan Fazili and Emilie Mahdavian
In 2015, a death threat from the Taliban saw Afghan director Hassan Fazili, his wife Fatima Hussaini, and their two daughters, flee from their homeland to distant Europe in search of safety. En route, during long and uncertain stays in various refugee camps, they draw strength from documenting their difficult situation on mobile phones.

Debate: Migration and Emotions
Thu 20 June 3pm
The issue of immigration is too often reduced to a political controversy or a litany of figures, obscuring the reality of individual lives. Philosophers Fabienne Brugère and Miguel de Beistegui, geographer Aija Lulle, activists Maddy Robinson (STAR) and Claire Plidjian (MigrENS) reflect on the emotions created by migration among refugees and in host societies, to help fight generalisations and come closer to the everyday experience of displacement.

Debate: Women Refugees
Thu 20 June 6.45pm
Violence, harassment, discrimination, trafficking, marginalisation are the challenges of everyday life for many women refugees seeking asylum in Europe. What solutions exist to protect their rights? Join Gambian refugee Debby Karem, active campaigner for Women for Refugee Women, writer-director Sophie Besse, founder of PSYCHEdelight, artist Kate Daudy, presenting her immersive art installation about home and identity, and Laura Padoan, spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

Film: Amin
21-27 June
Dir. Philippe Faucon
Premiered at the Director’s Fortnight in Cannes and London Film Festival in 2018, Philippe Faucon’s film follows Amin (Moustapha Mbengue), a Senegalese immigrant who works as a hired hand for a building company based in a Paris suburb. He sends the little money he earns to his wife and family he had to leave behind. When he encounters Gabrielle (Emmanuelle Devos), an intimacy develops between the two.

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