

goings on

november 20-30

picks

Critics' choices for
the coming week

film 455



Paris Was A Woman: The lives of Stein, Toklas, Beach, and others.



Café, mademoiselles? Greta Schiller's documentary looks at the women of 1920s Paris.

La femme Paris

**FILM
PICK**

Paris Was A Woman is Greta Schiller's girl's-eye-view of 1920s Left Bank culture. Schiller reclaims some of the Picasso/Joyce/Hemingway glory for the women who made the scene as well: *New Yorker* correspondent Janet Flanner, Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas, novelist Djuna Barnes, Shakespeare & Co.'s Sylvia Beach, among many other Parisiennes. The film suffers from typical documentary problems, especially the director's inability to resist including rare, archival footage that disrupts the narrative flow. Still, it's truly enthralling to see these eminences on film, and there are some delightfully homespun sessions with a woman who was the housekeeper to a literary salon. She was the only one, she claims, who could keep Gertrude Stein in line; the two mostly talked about clothes. The film concentrates on the lesbian relationships among these women; they lived quite openly and formed what would later be known, unfortunately, as a "support group." Nicely narrated by Juliet Stevenson. Varsity Theater, 4329 University Wy, 632-3131. 11/22-11/25.

Claire Dederer