

Nicolas Sarkozy Sworn in as President of France

France's Fifth Republic announced the results of its presidential election May 6. Former minister of the Interior Nicolas Sarkozy was elected *Président de la République* following the second round of a run-off election between Mr. Sarkozy and Ségolène Royal. Mr. Sarkozy of the *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire*, France's center-right political party, received 53.06% of votes, while Ms. Royal of the *Parti Socialiste* received 46.94%, according to figures from the Interior Ministry validated by the *Conseil Constitutionnel*.

The campaign season in France began February 22 when the *Journal Officiel de la République Française* published a decree convocating the election. On March 19, the Constitutional Council announced a list of 12 official candidates. The first round of voting took place April 22 and 83.77% of registered voters in France participated. Of the 12 candidates who presented themselves in the first round, the two who received the highest

percentage of votes were eligible to move on to the second round: Nicolas Sarkozy, who received 31.18% of the vote, and Ségolène Royal, who received 25.87%. During the latter round, which took place May 6, 83.97% of France's 44.5 million registered voters participated in the election, representing an increase of four percentage points from the 2002 election.

"Since I was very young I have felt an indescribable pride by belonging to a great, old and beautiful nation: France," Mr. Sarkozy declared upon the announcement of his victory. "I love France as one loves someone dear who has given everything to me. Now, it is my turn to give to France what France has given to me." Mr. Sarkozy was accompanied at his acceptance speech by two of his sons and two stepdaughters, after which a celebration took place outside at the *Place de la Concorde* attended by over 30,000 persons.

In his acceptance speech Mr. Sarkozy also underlined the importance of maintaining strong transatlantic ties between France and the United States. "I want to reach out to our American friends to tell them they can count on our friendship, which was forged in the tragedies of history that we have braved together," said Mr. Sarkozy.

The new president-elect finished his address by underlining France's commitment to human rights and democratic values. "I want to issue a call to everyone in the world who believes in the values of tolerance, freedom, democracy and humanism..." he declared, "to tell them that France will be at their side, that they can count on us."

On the other side of the Atlantic, U.S. President George Bush congratulated Mr. Sarkozy on his victory and said the friendship between the U.S. and France would continue, according to White House spokesman Gordon Johndroe, the press secretary for the National Security Council.

On May 16, president-elect Sarkozy replaced Jacques Chirac, who held the position of *Président de la République* since 1995. During an official ceremony at the Elysée Palace, the seat of the French presidency, Mr. Sarkozy signed an oath of office, after which he was officially inaugurated as the *Président de la République*. During the Ceremony, President Sarkozy delivered a speech and was bestowed with several military honors, accompanied by the "Marseillaise," the French national anthem, followed by a 21-gun salute. High-level officials, including the prime minister, the presidents of the French National Assembly and Senate, and members of the diplomatic corps, among others, attended.



Jacques Chirac shakes hands with president elect Nicholas Sarkozy during presidential inauguration ceremony

French Ambassador to U.S. Jean-David Levitte Appointed Diplomatic Advisor to New French President

Jean-David Levitte has been appointed diplomatic adviser to the new French President, Nicolas Sarkozy. He brings to his position an in-depth knowledge of the United States, where he has lived these past seven years. He was until now the French Ambassador to Washington.

A career diplomat, Jean-David Levitte is no stranger to high-profile positions on the President's staff. As early as 1975, he was a junior adviser to President Giscard d'Estaing and helped organize the first G7 meeting in Rambouillet. More recently, he was President Chirac's diplomatic adviser between 1995 and 1999, working hand in hand with the U.S. administration on such hot topics as Bosnia and Kosovo.

Throughout his career, he has held the most diverse positions, from deputy-assistant secretary on Africa to assistant secretary on Asia and under-secretary for cultural relations and development. Abroad, he was assigned to China and Hong Kong, as he speaks fluent Mandarin as well as Bahasa Indonesia. His particular knowledge and appreciation of the United Nations sent him to Geneva as the French representative and then to New York, where he served as France's Ambassador to the U.N. from 1999 to 2002.

In Paris as well as in New York, he had already woven a close network of friendships with the members of various American circles. These networks were a precious asset when he came to Washington in December 2002 to serve as the French Ambassador to the United States. During his four and a half intense years in Washington, Jean-David Levitte strengthened cooperation between France and the United States on every front: cultural, with the creation of several foundations supporting artistic and university exchanges; economic at

both the federal and state levels, especially in Louisiana after the Katrina disaster; and of course political, working closely both with the Administration and the Congress on all the important issues on which we are close allies, be it Iran, Lebanon or the fight against terrorism. During his tenure, a French Caucus was created in the Congress—a first in more than 200 years of friendship between our two nations. Naturally, our disagreement on the necessity of the war in Iraq put this friendship to a test. Fortunately, however, a better understanding of our respective positions has emerged and French-bashing has ebbed, thanks in part to Ambassador Levitte's relentless efforts to reach out to our American friends and tirelessly explain that one could disagree without being disagreeable.

In his new position, Jean-David Levitte will remain a precious and dedicated advocate of better understanding between the United States and France.



Jean-David Levitte

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USMC COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE OFFICERS VISIT FRENCH EMBASSY

On March 30, 2007, a group of 49 United States Marine Corps Officers and 8 staff members of the USMC Command and Staff College located in Quantico, Virginia, visited the Embassy of France in Washington for a half day of briefings and sampling of French food. They received presentations by the deputy Head of Mission, Mr. Francois Rivasseau, on the current French-U.S. bilateral relations, as well as briefs on France's presence in Africa by Colonel Eric Fournier, international fellow at the National Defense University, and Colonel Philippe Susnjara, French Liaison Officer to Quantico U.S. Marine Corps Base; finally, Colonel Minjoulat-Rey, French Army Attaché in Washington, presented the French military deployments throughout the world. This first visit to the Embassy by USMC Command and Staff College students was most informative and will be conducive to furthering the French-U.S. military cooperation.

BIPARTISAN AMERICAN DELEGATION VISITS FRANCE TO STUDY ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

A bipartisan delegation of seven legislators from the U.S. House of Representatives' Science and Technology Committee visited France from May 4 to 7. Led by committee chairman Bart Gordon, Democrat from Tennessee, the delegation's visit allowed committee members to learn more about French initiatives pertaining to energy and climate change issues. The legislators met with Brice Lalonde, chair of the OECD roundtable on sustainable development. Additional meetings with the director of the International Energy Agency and representatives of SAFRAN and AREVA provided an opportunity to address questions relating to energy efficiency and security, the environment, air propulsion and waste reprocessing. Representative Gordon and three other members of the Science and Technology Committee delegation are members of the Congressional French Caucus. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French-American Foundation hosted a reception in their honor on May 4.

French and American Joint Military Training on Land and at Sea

French and American military forces participated in a series of joint training exercises in March and April. Forty French soldiers of the 3rd Marine Infantry Regiment headquartered in Vannes, France, trained alongside U.S. Marines of the 1st Battalion/8th Regiment on American soil in areas of urban combat, fire, and convoy escort. Arriving March 17 at Camp Lejeune, South Carolina, the French unit joined the training camp at Fort Pickett, Virginia, for a two-week series of joint training exercises. The soldiers were divided into four groups, one for each of the battalion's four companies.



French and US soldiers training in urban zone combat

Representatives of the Military Mission at the Embassy of France in Washington along with a team of French television journalists visited the soldiers during the exercises, at which time Lieutenant Colonel Gros, the current

French Assistant Military Attaché, presented France's National Defense Medal to an American captain who had previously served in Haiti.

In addition to this two-week joint training venture, the French and U.S. navies participated in a series of "touch and go" operations between April 15 and May 15 in the Indian Ocean involving air missions in support of U.S. and ISAF forces in Afghanistan. Pilots from each navy performed cross-deckings on the other's aircraft carrier. One F-18 performed a "touch and go" on the deck of the French nuclear aircraft carrier "Charles de Gaulle" while a French Rafale repeated the same exercise on the deck of the U.S. aircraft carrier "Stennis." While these exercises were to enhance the interoperability between the carrier groups of both navies, they demonstrate the mastery of these complex procedures, as well as the trust developed between the pilots and sailors of the two nations.

Europe on the Potomac

Go to Europe for Free? It almost sounds like an Internet scam, but on Saturday, May 12, Twenty-three European Member embassies in Washington, D.C. as well as the Washington Delegation of the European Commission, opened their premises to the public for a day-long open house in celebration of 50th anniversary of the European Union. From 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., visitors were able to travel from France to Germany, Sweden and Romania, all in the course of one day —no passport needed—as part of the "Take Metro to Europe" program. Co-sponsored by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, the one day function featured a free shuttle service to all participating embassies, providing guests with an opportunity to experience first hand the diversity of the European Union and its member states. Over 4,000 persons visited the Embassy of France alone.

"Take Metro to Europe" offered a colorful program in celebration of the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, which launched the process of European integration. Participants were able to get a rare "behind-the-gates" look at the European embassies, many of which are among Washington's historic and architectural highlights. The open house was designed to put both the diversity of Europe and the unity of Europe on display, as well as to stress the importance of transatlantic relations. "Sixty years ago, following two terrible World Wars that began in Europe, a handful of visionaries decided to combine forces to create a new, peaceful, prosperous, democratic and united Europe. Among the founding fathers of what would become the European Union were two exceptional Frenchmen: Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman," said French Ambassador to the U.S. Jean-David Levitte. "Thus it is only natural for France to enthusiastically join in the celebration of Europe in Washington. I am delighted to open the doors of the French Embassy to the general public so that together we may *fête* France, Europe and our friendship with the United States. I hope

the residents of Washington, DC, will come *en masse* to enjoy everything French at the Embassy, and I extend to them all a heartfelt *Bienvenue*," the French Ambassador stated before the event.

The event, indeed, provided visitors with a taste of Europe by showcasing various national highlights such as music, art and food, as well as the opportunity to meet with representatives from various offices within the embassies who discussed the roles of their services. Guests at the French Embassy, for example, were able to discuss French military strategy and actions with members from the Military



Visitor to the Embassy of France discusses with members of the Military Mission during the event

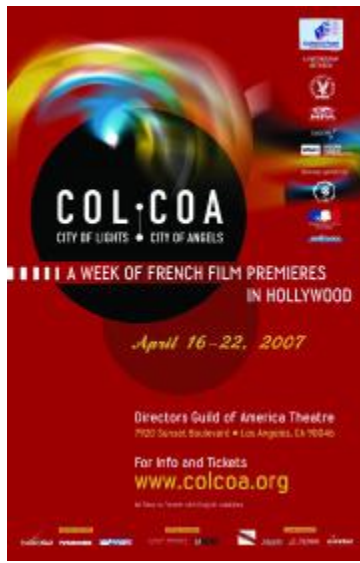
Mission, then explore everything from advancements in research and technology with the Office of Science and Technology, as well as receive information on any questions they might have about France, be it the last presidential elections or tips on travel...all before whetting their palettes to a full course French meal or while basking in the sun at a *café parisien* to the soft background of *musette de Paris*.

Held on the eve of Mother's Day, "Take Metro to Europe" provided an informal and educational opportunity that all members of the family could enjoy. Many native Washingtonians commented that this was their first opportunity to visit these embassies, even though they might have lived next to them their whole lives. For others, it was the first time experiencing anything that related to that respective country. "This is a wonderful opportunity for me to get a sneak-peak at the country before I go there for the first time ever," remarked an enthusiastic visitor to the French Embassy. "There are several countries I've always wanted to visit ever since I studied abroad 30 some years ago, but never got a chance to. This [open house] is a great way to study up ahead of time so that I can fully appreciate the experience when I get there." Although the gates of the embassies may have closed at the conclusion of the open house, the spirit of transatlantic friendship between the European Union member states and the United States will continue to remain as open as ever.

Foreign Film Festival Enchants Hollywood

The 11th Annual City of Lights, City of Angels (COL-COA) film festival, the largest film event in Hollywood dedicated to foreign cinema, took place in Los Angeles April 16 to 22. Presented by the Franco-American Cultural Fund, the weeklong festival presented a selection of 40 new films, including 20 features and 20 shorts.

Writer-director Olivier Dahan's "La Vie En Rose," a masterful biopic of the beloved artist Edith Piaf starring Marion Cotillard and Gérard Depardieu, opened the festival. Thomas Gilou's "Michou d'Auber," also starring Depardieu, concluded the festival on April 21. Beginning with six films in 1997, COL-COA has expanded over ten years to showcase between 18 to 20 features each year. One hundred films and 60 shorts have been presented since the festival's inception a decade ago.



of Directors and Producers) and Unifrance also contributed.

"Following the goal of its producer, the Franco-American Cultural Fund, COL-COA is now a well-established event which facilitates exchange among American and French filmmakers. It has become an important showcase for the promotion of talent and new films, not only in Hollywood but also in the U.S.," said Festival Director and Programmer François Truffaut. The Franco-American Cultural Fund represents a unique collaboration between the Directors Guild of America, the Motion Picture Association of America, the Writers Guild of America, West, and France's Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers of Music. The Los Angeles Film and TV Office of the French Embassy, L'ARP (France's association

Paris and San Francisco: Digital Sister Cities

Paris and San Francisco have long been committed to strengthening transatlantic ties through technology, and most recently, the visit of a group of French interns to the City by the Bay is the latest example of cooperation between the two cities.

Fifteen French interns from Paris between the ages of 18 and 30 traveled from France to San Francisco May 2 to 13 to present a collectively produced music video of the French singer Sinclair at the San Francisco International Film Festival. Produced as part of the Digital Pathway Program, an initiative which offers professional training in digital technology to youth from disadvantaged neighborhoods, the video was designed to be viewed on and distributed by cellphones.

Technologies provided by "Cap Digital," a public-private cluster-based economic initiative that promotes French competitiveness in the digital industry, will enable the French interns to remain in close contact with their American counterparts even after the closing of the Film Festival. With continued discussion and cooperation, the youth will exchange ideas and assist San Francisco participants in launching a similar project of their own.

The Digital Pathway Program was developed as part of the Digital Sister Cities Act signed by Mayor of Paris Bertrand Delanoë and San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom on April 4, 2006, to promote increased technological exchange between both sides of the Atlantic.

French Actress Fanny Ardant Tours the United States

Acclaimed French actress Fanny Ardant delighted audiences in the United States with a series of six performances of "The Malady of Death," the Parisian stage adaptation of Marguerite Duras's celebrated novel of love and alienation. In Washington, D.C., Ardant graced the stage at the *Maison Française* April 27, 28, and 30, after which she traveled to New York, where she



French actress Fanny Ardant

performed at the *Alliance Française* on May 4 and 5. The play was performed in French with English subtitles.

In the stage adaptation of "The Malady of Death," Ardant portrays the relationship between a woman who cannot be loved and a man who is incapable of loving. Ardant's performance was so powerful, even non-French speakers left the show mesmerized by her incomparable dramatic talents. "Despite the fact that I didn't understand French," said one audience member in Washington, "I was still able to emotionally connect with the character. Ardant's raspy voice and physical poise held my attention throughout, and I had to remind myself to continue to read the English subtitles."

Fanny Ardant grew up in Monaco before moving to Aix-en-Provence at the age of 17 where she studied political science at the *Institut d'études politiques*. She began her acting career on the stage in her early twenties. Ardant's appearance in François Truffaut's "La Femme d'à côté" (The Woman Next Door) in 1981 won her a nomination for Best Actress at the 1982 *Césars*, the French equivalent of the Academy Awards.



Amb. Levitte (left) addresses Auster while Karen Rispal, French Cultural Counselor in N.Y., bestows the award

On April 24, French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte conferred upon Paul Auster the insignia of Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters for his contributions to literature and to the dissemination of French culture. Born in Newark, New Jersey, and now based in Brooklyn, Paul Auster spent four years in France after his graduation from Columbia University in 1970, during which time he translated French literature. Since his return to the United States, he has become a critically acclaimed writer, and also continues to translate French writers, such as Stéphane Mallarmé and Joseph Joubert.

The ceremony took place during the opening night of PEN's World Voices, a major event celebrating international literature, which is sponsored by the Embassy of France. Seven French-speaking authors are participating in this year's edition: Marguerite Abouet, Yasmina Khadra, Koffi Kwahulé, Dany Laferrière, Laila Lalami, Alain Mabanckou and Michel Vinaver. To learn more about World Voices, visit: www.pen.org/festival.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED FOR FRENCH COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE LAUNCH

French-based satellite company Arianespace placed two communications satellites into geostationary transfer orbit from Kourou, French Guiana, on May 4: Astra 1L for the European operator SES Astra, and Galaxy 17 for the international operator Intelsat. The Astra 1L satellite was built by Lockheed Martin Commercial Space Systems (LMCSS) and will provide high-power satellite services across Europe. The Galaxy 17 satellite, built by Thales Alenia Space using a Spacebus 3000 B3 platform, is designed to provide television and telephony services for North America. Both have a design life of approximately 15 years. Friday's mission marks the second Ariane 5 launch of the year and its 32nd flight overall. Among those watching the launch in Kourou included NASA Administrator Dr. Mike Griffin and a French delegation led by the French Nation Center for Space Studies (CNES) President Yannick d'Escatha. Headquartered in France, Arianespace is a leading global commercial-launch services company, holding more than 50 percent of the world market for satellites placed in geostationary transfer orbit.

Lights, Camera, Action: Celebrating 60 Years at Cannes

...And action! Stardust has once again showered the Côte d'Azur as the film universe descends upon the French Riviera to commemorate the 60th *Festival de Cannes*, one of the world's largest and most glamorous cinematic events. From May 16 to 27, the festival will showcase a selection of the year's best films, including several international premieres. Film industry VIPs, ecstatic fans, and media from around the globe will partake in the event to celebrate the magic of movies.

As filmmakers and celebrities enjoy screenings and *soirées*, a number of awards will recognize top achievements. The *Palme d'Or*, Cannes's highest honor, will be bestowed upon the winner from the "In Competition" category, consisting of an eclectic group of 21 films. This year's official jury is led by Stephen Frears, the British director of Academy Award-winning "The Queen" about the life of Queen Elizabeth II. President of the Festival since 1978, Gilles Jacob said that organizers had wanted a blend of "heritage and modernity," and thus a group of up-and-coming filmmakers are facing off against seasoned veterans like 2003 winner Gus Van Sant ("Paranoid Park"), 1994 winner Quentin Tarantino ("Death Proof"), and two-time winner Emir Kusturica ("Promise Me This").

A diverse mix of directors, including French, South Korean, Iranian, Bosnian, Mexican, and Romanian filmmakers, among others, promise an exciting battle of talent from around the world for films "In Competition." Chinese Director Wong Kar Wai's "My Blueberry Nights," his first English production, will screen opening night, starring singer Norah Jones and featuring Rachel Weisz, Jude Law, and Natalie Portman. The film, a charming romance, chronicles a woman's (Jones) road trip as she travels the country, meeting strange and eccentric people everywhere she turns. Three French directors—Christophe Honoré ("Les chansons d'amour"), Catherine Breillat ("Une vieille maîtresse"), and Julian Schnabel ("Le scaphandre et le papillon")—will be making their Festival debut during the competition.



(L-r) Matt Damon, George Clooney and Brad Pitt star in "Ocean's Thirteen." The film will participate in the "Out of Competition" category

Entrants in the "Out of Competition" category do not compete for the *Palme* but are still screened for their outstanding merit. For this section, expect possible appearances by Brad Pitt, George Clooney, Matt Damon, Bernie Mac and Al Pacino to dazzle the red carpet for the highly anticipated premiere of "Ocean's Thirteen," a fast-paced adventure about a daring casino heist. Bringing the Festival back to its political origins, some films in this category offer social commentary, such as Michael Moore's new documentary, "Sicko," about the American healthcare system and British Director Michael Winterbottom's film, "A Mighty Heart," about the kidnapping and murder of Daniel Pearl, a U.S. journalist.

Other sections screen independent works. Jacob introduced these contests in addition to the other selections to promote new faces and young talent, including the *Caméra d'Or* prize for best first film and the *Cinéfondation* initiative for film students. This year, the Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Voluntary Organizations has chosen seven young Europeans to sit on the panel for the *Jury-Jeunes* (Youth Panel). Charged with awarding the *Prix de la Jeunesse* (Youth Award), they will view all the films that are the first or second work of a young filmmaker and distribute honors accordingly.

Well over 3,000 companies from 80 countries will also be participating in Cannes's *Marché du Film* (Film Market), welcoming producers, actors, exporters, distributors, and financiers, providing them with a valuable opportunity to network within the industry.

THE PALME D'OR

The *Palme d'Or*, or Golden Palm, awarded at the closing of the festival, is one of the most prestigious awards in the film industry. Each year, approximately 20 films vie for the honor. In 1955, American director Delbert Mann won the festival's first *Palme*, for his film "Marty"—the only film to have won the the *Palme d'Or* and the Academy Award for Best Picture. In the award's nearly 50 some-year history, 18 of the winners have been American, with Italian and French filmmakers following behind. Last year, British director Ken Loach took home the Golden Palm for "The Wind That Shakes the Barley," a story about two brothers' involvement in the Irish War of Independence and subsequent Irish Civil War.



History of the Festival

The Cannes Film Festival has come to be synonymous with glamour and prestige. Its pleasant climate, appreciation for cross-cultural art, and international reputation as a privileged venue for filmmakers are only a few of the host city's distinguishing characteristics.

The festival's roots stem from a much more idealistic foundation than people often realize. The framework for the Cannes Film Festival began in 1938 as a protest to the propaganda films sweeping the most popular festivals of the time. French, British and American jury members withdrew from *Mostra di Venezia*, the Italian film festival that gave its highest award to a Nazi propaganda film by Joseph Goebbels. Later that year, critics and filmmakers established the Cannes Film Festival with the goal of creating a festival free of political bias and censorship. These leaders included Robert Favre Le Bret, who later became the festival's longest-serving president, and Louis Lumière, who is often accredited as being the father of cinema along with his brother, Auguste.

The first festival held at Cannes began on September 1, 1939, but the outbreak of World War II prevented it from reaching its conclusion. The next festival was not held until 1946 and included films from Walt Disney and Alfred Hitchcock. At this time, Cinema, and the celebration of the art, was becoming increasingly important in France. The festival gained the support of the new National Center for Cinematography (CNC) the following year.

But it was in the 1950s that Cannes expanded and gained the renown that it enjoys today. The festival was moved from September to May, a change that

set Cannes apart from other competitions taking place in the fall. The change also made the festival the kick-off to summer and the tourist season along the Côte d'Azur.

During that time the festival became, as a spokesperson of Cannes Film Festival said, "the privileged venue where great directors present their latest opuses." The list of attendees expanded, and the festival truly became a venue for international exploration in film. Louis Malle of France and Federico Fellini of Italy were regular attendees, as well as Walt Disney.

The scope of Cannes has continued to expand. The festival has grown to encompass seven major sections: "In Competition," "Out of Competition," "Un Certain Regard," "Cinéfondation," "Critics' Week," "Directors' Fortnight" and "Marché du Film." The first two categories indicate simply whether or not a film will be eligible for the *Palme d'Or*, the top honor awarded at the festival. The "Un Certain Regard" category, the largest of the festival, was created in 1978 to promote world cinema and to incorporate several side events. While it does not offer any awards, "Cinéfondation," which presents short films, does give out three prizes. "Critics' week," established in 1962, is run by the Union of French Film Critics, and "Director's Fortnight" is open to feature-length and short films. Films, as well and foreign rights, are bought and sold at the "Marché du Film," or Film Market.

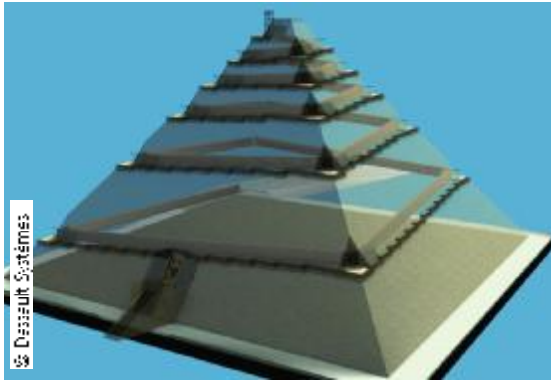
From its origins in protesting political bias and censorship, *Le Festival de Cannes* has become one of the largest media events in the world and is attended by 4,000 journalists and over 1,600 media representing over 75 countries.

French Scientist Unveils New Theory About Great Pyramid

On March 30, French architect Jean-Pierre Houdin unveiled a new three-dimensional computer simulation that claims to crack a 4,500-year-old mystery surrounding Egypt's Great Pyramid of Giza, suggesting that the pyramid was built from the inside out, rather than the outside in as traditional theories propose.

"This is better than the other theories, because it is the only theory that works," said Houdin who believes that workers used an outer ramp to build the first 47 yards of the pyramid. Next, an inner ramp forming a spiral tunnel is believed to have been used to transport limestone and granite blocks of stones to the apex of the pyramid. According to Houdin, using this technique, the pyramid could have been built by as few as 4,000 people rather than the 100,000 other postulations suggest.

Traditional theories surrounding the construction of the



Researchers used advanced computer techniques to simulate the construction of the pyramids

pyramid argue that a system of external ramps was used to push over three million stones in place. The pyramid, located just outside of Cairo, houses the tomb of Pharaoh Khufu and has been a source of mystery among modern archeologists and architects who have struggled to understand how such an enormous structure was built without the aid of iron tools. The Pyramid is also the only surviving structure of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

Houdin has investigated the theory of construction for over eight years and has been working with French Dassault Systems and a team of 14 engineers for the past two years to create a computer model to illustrate the process. The modeling system created and developed by Dassault allowed Houdin to produce a three-dimensional model of the pyramid which he uses to give credence to his theory. An international team is currently being assembled to probe the pyramid using radars and infrared cameras.

Research May Allow Scientists to Predict Aromatic Potential of Wine

It is now possible to predict the aromatic potential of wine even before grapes are harvested, according to a recent study by the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA).

Methods recently developed by INRA researchers in Montpellier and the Technical Institute for Viticulture and Oenology (ITV France) will facilitate the detection and quantification in grapes of "aromatic precursors," odorless compounds which are transformed during wine-making into odorous compounds characteristic of the grape. These techniques are the

result of 30 years of INRA research and will allow the industry to further improve the quality of their wines through early analysis.

Detecting and quantifying the aromatic compounds present in their wines enable wine-growers to decide whether to let the wines age or to sell them young. Producers can also determine whether to make changes to their wine-making techniques. The evaluation of a wine's aroma while grapes are still young will also help farmers to better categorize their vineyard plots.

For more information, please visit: www.inra.fr.

French Space Telescope Discovers Earth-like Exoplanets

Launched on December 27th, 2006, the French-led Corot (CONvection, ROTation & Transits of extra-solar planets) Space Telescope, a cooperative mission between the

French National Center for Space Studies and the French National Center for Scientific Research, as well as international partners ESA, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Germany and Spain, has already made its first successful observations. Corot's onboard instruments have detected their first exoplanet, baptized Corot Exo-1b. The spacecraft has also detected its first oscillations in a star. The data remains raw as all of the sources of noise and disturbances have not yet been taken into account. However, the relative precision of the current data implies that even very small exoplanets, similar to Earth, are within the grasp of Corot, and that variations of the stellar reflected light by the planet may be observable (depending on its reflectance), allowing for a deduction of its chemical composition. For more information, please visit:

www.cnes-tv.com/corot_en.



Artistic depiction of Corot Satellite



French fans of Yahoo! who find themselves on the run this month will be excited to discover the company's latest development in cell phone services. Yahoo! announced May 3 that oneSearch, the company's mobile Internet search engine, has expanded its network. Previously available exclusively to paying customers in the United States, cell phone Internet users in France will now be able to access the search engine free of charge, where they will have access to the latest news and developments in everything ranging from finance to the local weather report. The company also plans to expand its services to users in Germany, Great Britain, Spain, Italy, and Canada. For more information, please visit: www.yahoo.fr.

PARIS BASED COSMETICS BRAND OFFERS SOMETHING FOR ALL



Paris, known for its *haute couture*, internationally renowned cuisine, and artistic masterpieces, has something else to add to its list of accomplishments: a type of *maquillage* (make-up) that aims to cater to women of all skin colors. Fabrice Mahabo, the creator of blackUp cosmetics, offers a collection of foundations designed to match every shade of a woman's skin, "whether black, European, Indian, Latin, mixed race or Asian." Considered the leader in luxury make-up products for colored skin, blackUp currently counts over 450 retail outlets all around the world. Designer Mahabo began realizing his dream at the age of 26. A graduate of the Christian Chauveau school of artistic make-up in Paris, he came to France as a teenager from the Ivory Coast, and quickly noticed the shortage of products for colored skin. "At the make-up school there were lots of brands for white skins, but only one or two for black skins, and those were low quality," he said. The young make-up artist quickly created a solution to meet the market demand for such products. For more information, please visit: www.blackup.com.

THIRD ANNUAL IRONMAN OF FRANCE COMPETITION

A record number of athletes will be competing in the third annual Ironman France competition, scheduled to take place on June 24 in Nice. Over 1,400 participants have already registered for the French triathlon, the youngest of the European Ironman series, which includes 2.4 miles of swimming, 112 miles of cycling and a 26.2 mile run over a five-day period. Since the triathlon began in Hawaii in 1978 after a debate over whether runners or swimmers were in better shape, ironmen competitions have been held worldwide. Now considered as one of the most difficult sports in the world, the Ironman tradition motivates thousands of talented athletes to train for months as they vie for the prestigious title. For more information, please visit: www.ironmanfrance.com.



PARIS UNVEILS NEW ARCHITECTURE CENTER

Architects, fans, and enthusiasts from across the world have been celebrating since the unveiling of the *Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine*, Paris's brand new architecture center which officially opened its doors last March. Designed to please a variety of audiences, from both the seasoned architect to the casual visitor, the center seeks to promote French architectural heritage, from the 12th century to the present. Through an array of expositions, meetings, debates, and projects, the library and archive center will offer materials that will appeal to the general public and help the architecture specialist hone his craft. The center's inaugural offerings include *Avant-Après: Architecture au fil du temps* (Before-After: Throughout Time), a film series featuring a cycle of 150 short films that highlight the evolution of architecture and urban planning throughout time, and *Rêver la Ville* (Dream of the City) which pays homage to the work of renowned French architect Christian de Portzamparc. Both exhibitions will run until September 16. For more information, please visit: www.citechailot.fr.

75th Anniversary of Aviation Pioneer Alberto Santos-Dumont

2007 marks the 75th anniversary of the death of aviation pioneer Alberto Santos-Dumont. The Brazilian-born Santos-Dumont's interest in mechanics and eventually aeronautics took off during a seven-month visit to Paris in his youth, marking the birth of a relationship with the city which would propel his curiosity for motors and mechanics into aviation history.

Santos-Dumont, nearly 18 at the time, returned to Brazil after visiting France for several months with his family in possession of a Peugeot with high wheels and a 3.5 horsepower engine, studying the machine with an intense inquisitiveness from all angles. Although the young engineering enthusiast left France, his passion for the country remained stronger than ever. Fascinated by the secrets of mechanics, physics, chemistry and electricity, Santos-Dumont later returned to Paris to dedicate himself to the study of aeronautics. Soon after, he celebrated his first balloon launch, on July 4, 1898, in *Le Jardin d'Acclimatation* in Paris. Following the success of his first aviation accomplishment, the young engineer established a workshop, where he designed and created all of his



Santos-Dumont's 14-bis takes flight in 1906

flying balloons. In this Parisian facility, Santos-Dumont designed the Santos-Dumont no. 1, the first motor-powered balloon in aviation history, which went aloft September 20, 1898.

Those accomplishments only marked the beginning of the pioneer's success in the field of aviation. Santos-Dumont's most notable achievement occurred in the fall of 1906 with his

success of the 14-bis airplane at Bagatelle Field in Paris. While the Wright Brothers achieved a historic aviation benchmark three years earlier with their *Flyer* at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, the 14-bis made history with its flight on October 23 by becoming what is largely considered as the world's first self-propelled airplane. Less than one month later, on November 12, the white aircraft would achieve a world record for its flight of 220 meters at a speed of 41.292 km/hr, thereby earning the title of "flight no. 1" from the International Aeronautics Federation. The *Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace* (MAE), located on the northern outskirts of Paris, offers an extensive exhibition dedicated to the remarkable life of Santos-Dumont.

Agence France-Presse's Two New Initiatives Create Buzz

The international French news agency *Agence France-Presse* (AFP) announced in April the creation of a new scholarship for journalism students and its decision to supply news to a Mediterranean Internet news portal.

The "AFP Scholarship," launched April 23, is a prestigious award which offers the first-prize winner a six-month contract and two runners-up a three-month contract at one of AFP's bureaus, either in France or abroad. After judging the candidates' performance, dedication, and skill, a jury made up of AFP's information chief, editor-in-chief and three journalists will determine the top three contenders. Final results will be announced by June 4. This year, only students at French universities can compete, but in 2008 plans are for the competition to include students from journalism schools all over the world.

Meanwhile, the French news agency announced other developments, including its decision to join 18 other national news

agencies in supplying news to *ANSAméd*, an international press agency focused on the Mediterranean that provides daily news coverage from all the countries in the Mediterranean. The news portal, available in Italian, English, and Arabic, aims to create a forum for sharing information relating to the Mediterranean and to promote communication between countries in the area. Says AFP chairman Pierre Louette: "AFP is global today because it is multi-regional. Everything concerning the Mediterranean concerns us, and we wanted to be part of this great idea to supply news 'about' and 'for' a great region of culture, trade and history, which more than ever is situated at the center of geo-political stakes."

AFP will contribute between 10 and 20 daily news items with a Mediterranean angle from its bureaus in Marseille, Nice, and Montpellier, in addition to offering contributions from its offices in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Mauritania.



For those who have always been intrigued by the art, romance, and luxury of French culture, one glance at "Lost in Francelation" will leave its audience begging for more. The new videoblog, developed by France's Office of Tourism, *La Maison de France*, has been created for those who are curious to know just what gives France its special *je ne sais quoi*. Hosts Dan Heching and Hillary Keegin are setting out on adventures to answer that question, while discovering everything France has to offer along the way.

In the first episode, Heching seeks to

sate viewers' curiosity by embarking on a search for the French cliché. "France is the birthplace of the cliché, whether it's a French Poodle or a ride on the Seine, and I want to know: why here? How did our collective 'cliché' of romance, of art, of luxury, and of European culture in general end up all in the country of France? And do our present-day perceptions border on stereotypical clichés?" he asks. "I am looking for the classic French person, ambiance, café, brasserie, city, town, situation and landscape in order to decide whether clichés really do exist. In doing so I hope to discover as much of what France has to offer as possible,

through its many guises, appearances and characters."

Discoveries range from an intriguing conversation with the chauffeur of a *taxi parisien* to walks through the smaller streets of Paris. The adventure continues with stops at the local *marché* and a quintessential Parisian café, only to end with a fine glass of red wine outside of the *Moulin Rouge*, as the host bids farewell to the viewers, all set to the entrancing melodies of Edith Piaf. After touring themselves, viewers may submit their own video commentaries and adventures as feedback. To start your own adventure, please visit: www.lostinfrancelation.com.

French Cuisine Tickles International Critics' Palettes

The London-based *Restaurant* magazine announced April 23 the release of the 2007 "S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurant" list. The international list of the world's best restaurants paid homage to a dozen French restaurants, over half of which advanced into the top 25.

Although the highly sought after title of World's Best Restaurant went to Ferran Adria's "El Bulli" in northern Spain, France boasted the largest number of restaurants on the list, beating countries across the globe, including the United States and the United Kingdom, both of which claimed eight and seven, respectively. The City of Lights affirmed its reputation for *haute cuisine*, boasting nine dining establishments on the list, making



Chefs at restaurant in Paris prepare a delicious dish

the City of Lights the city with the most top 50 restaurants. The cities of London, with six restaurants, and New York, claiming four restaurants on the list, followed closely behind.

Now in its sixth year, the world's best list was first published in 2002 by *Restaurant* magazine. It is compiled by a group of prominent food writers, critics, publishers and commentators from around the world. For more information about the contest, including a complete list of winners, please visit www.theworlds50best.com.

30th Birthday Celebration in the "Airs" for the Centre Pompidou

The Centre Pompidou is celebrating its 30th anniversary with "*Airs de Paris*," a vast plastic-arts, design and architecture exhibition exploring transformations in today's cities and in city life. The exhibition, named after the oeuvre by Marcel Duchamp which marked the opening of the Centre in 1977, is divided into two *volets* (sections) of 73 artists, designers and architects. It treats Paris as a point of convergence, where the exhibited artists may have lived or worked. The event runs from April 25 to August 15 and presents the greatest artistic works from the 1970s to today.

The first *volet* of the exhibition features such artists as Duchamp, Gordon Matta-Clark, Jean-Luc Moulène, and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster. Organized into ten themes, the art featured in this section examines topics such as technological,



Le Centre Pompidou is hosting "Airs de Paris"

economic and social changes in the city and explores the place of the individual in the urban space. The second section pays homage to architecture, design, urbanism and the countryside. Divided into four chapters, this *volet* offers a glimpse of the imagined city, of today and tomorrow.

With the works of Campement Urbain, Gilles Clément and Didier Fautino, this part of the show is sure to delight.

Podcasts, performances, online forums and conferences will also be a part of this magnificent exhibition. For more information, please visit www.centrepompidou.fr.

Plans for New Music Hall Crescendo in Paris



Digital image of the interior of the future concert hall

It was music to the ears of orchestra members and concert-goers when French Minister of Culture and Communication Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres and Mayor of Paris Bertrand Delanoë announced April 5 plans to build Paris's new music venue. Renowned architect Jean Nouvel was chosen to create the new

Philharmonie de Paris, an eye-catching concert hall to be built in northeast Paris in *Le Parc de la Villette*. The opening is set for 2012.

The *Philharmonie*, an estimated \$260 million state of the art music facility, will include a 2,400-seat auditorium that will allow audience members to sit on all sides of the orchestra, including the area behind it, in what experts call a "vineyard" style on a series of multilevel terraces. In computer generated models, the *Philharmonie* resembles a mound of loosely stacked plates topped by a 170-foot-high sail.

The construction of the *Philharmonie* will serve the needs of *l'Orchestre de Paris*, which will have its base there, as well as a variety of international performers, allowing Paris to take its place among the major symphonic capitals of the world. Jean Nouvel is a highly respected architect in France as well abroad, having also designed Paris's *Institut du Monde Arabe* and the recently opened *Musée du Quai Branly*, in addition to the new Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, which opened last year.

BARBIE'S THOUSAND AND ONE LIVES



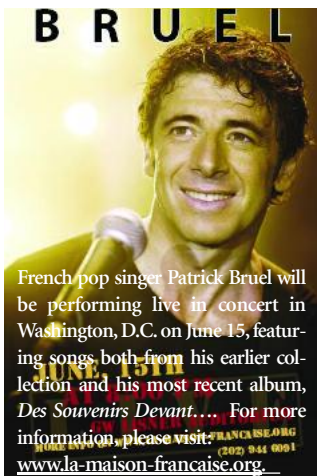
A new temporary exhibition at the *Musée de la Poupée-Paris* features 200 Barbie dolls and a collection of decorated

sets equipped with furniture and accessories, until the end of September. With the cooperation of Mattel France, "*Barbie's Thousand and One Lives*" presents the iconic doll in her many vocations and activities throughout history. Barbie has been enchanting the lives of children in the United States since 1959, and in France since 1963. An estimated 4.6 million Barbies are sold in France every year, and over one billion dolls have been sold since her creation. Reaching nearly four generations of women, Barbie has always reflected current trends and has become an international pop culture icon. She may be best known as an elegant movie star or a beautiful princess, but over the decades, she has taken on a variety of roles that has enthralled children all over the world. Since Barbie's introduction nearly 50 years ago, she has appeared in more than 90 different roles, including an airline pilot, ballerina, university graduate, Olympic athlete and even UNICEF ambassador! The *Musée de la Poupée-Paris* offers hands-on children's programs in addition to the main exhibition. A fashion workshop will give kids the opportunity to create their very own Barbie doll dresses. Young imaginations can also compete in the "Draw a New Occupation for Barbie" contest. For more information please visit:

www.museedepoupeeparis.com.

CHICAGO WELCOMES BÉATRICE ET BÉNÉDICT IN THE PARK

Chicago Opera Theater offers the rare opportunity to view a full production of French Romantic Composer Louis Hector Berlioz's spirited piece *Béatrice et Bénédict* May 23 until June 2. The comic opera is based on Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" and will be presented at the Harris Theater in Chicago's recently completed Millennium Park. An international roster of first-rate artists has been brought together by Brian Dickie, in a contemporary twist on this French classic. English conductor Jan Latham-Koenig will make his Chicago debut, working with the German director Nicola Raab. Title roles will be sung by Sandra Piques Eddy, who won over Chicago theater-goers as Cherubino in 2005, and tenor Joseph Kaiser, who starred in Kenneth Branagh's film version of Mozart's "The Magic Flute" will play the character of Bénédict.



French pop singer Patrick Bruel will be performing live in concert in Washington, D.C. on June 15, featuring songs both from his earlier collection and his most recent album, *Des Souvenirs Devant...* For more information, please visit www.la-maison-francaise.org.

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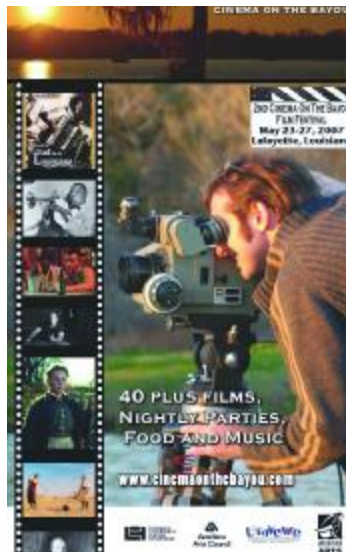
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Louisiana Film Festival Celebrates Cajun and Creole Cultural Heritage

The 2nd Annual Cinema on the Bayou Film Festival celebrating Cajun and Creole cultural heritage will take place May 23 to May 27 in Lafayette, Louisiana. The festival will present a series of nationally and internationally acclaimed documentaries from a diverse group of filmmakers. Through film screenings and film panels, organizers hope to promote cultural exchanges between French Louisiana, the United States and other Francophone countries.

This year the Cinema will feature new and cutting-edge fiction and non-fiction films, alongside documentaries, all the while surrounded by Cajun culture, including cuisine and music. "Little Chenier," the award-winning



film about two brothers who live on a houseboat in the Bayou, will open the festival May 23. This year's festival will also showcase numerous French language films, including Jean-Pierre Bruneau's "Dedans le Sud de la Louisiane," Andre Gladu's "Tintamarre, La piste Acadie en Amerique," Marc Andre Forcier's "Les Etats-Unis d'Albert" and Veronique Denis' "Boscoyo."

After an extremely successful turnout last year, which included four sold-out auditoriums and 40 some film screenings, the Cinema on the Bayou hopes for even greater success this year. The festival is funded in part by The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities and the Acadiana Arts Council Decentralized Arts Funding Program. For more information about venues and the festival, please visit: www.cinemaonthebayou.com.

Minneapolis Exhibition Explores Life at the French Court

The glitter and splendor of Versailles will be the subject of a new print exhibition at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. "L'Ancien Régime: Life at the French Court in the 17th and 18th Centuries," will run from June 30 to December 9 and includes a collection of prints drawn from the permanent collection that capture the romanticism of the Ancien Régime, or "Old Regime," as post-Revolutionary France termed the former system of aristocratic rule.

Printmakers such as Charles Nicolas Cochin II, Jean-Michel Moreau and Jean Le Pautre were commissioned by the kings of France to commemorate the ongoing court celebrations and to propagate, both at home and abroad, the grandeur of the

French court and aristocracy. Ironically, these widely disseminated images of frivolity and decadence may have contributed to mounting tensions against the royal regime, helping to perhaps insight France's revolution at the end of the 18th century.



Portrait of Louis XIV, 1638-1715, Engraving by Robert Nanteuil

The estimated 1,000 courtiers who kept rooms at Versailles spent their time attending a dizzying schedule of amusements each season, including legendary events such as masquerade balls, concerts, theater performances, and fireworks displays. The *Menus Plaisirs du Roi*, the official bureaucratic department of the king's household responsible for overseeing the entertainment, employed a small army of artists, craftsmen, architects and printmakers to execute and record the elaborate events for which no expense was spared.

For more information about the exhibition, please visit: www.artsmia.org.

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