



News From France



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French General Takes Over NATO Command in U.S.



Left to right: Gen. Stéphane Abrial, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Gen. Jean-Paul Paloméros. Gen. Paloméros now leads the Norfolk, Va.-based command.

▲ French Air Force General Jean-Paul Paloméros became head of the Allied Transformation Command (ACT) for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO, based in Norfolk, Va., on Friday, September 28.

The inauguration was marked in an official *passation de commandement*, or change of command ceremony. Gen. Paloméros's nomination marks the second such position held by a French military officer. He takes over from General Stéphane Abrial, also from the French Air Force, who has led the Command since 2009.

In what amounts to a high distinction for France, the commanders are the first and second non-Americans ever appointed to one of NATO's Supreme Allied Commands since the organization's founding in 1949.

Working to maximize integration and efficiency, the ACT serves as a "coordinating hub" among NATO member nations and non-member partners. Its stated mission is to "preserve the peace, security and territorial integrity of Alliance member states through the transformation of NATO military forces, structures, capabilities and doctrine." The group also oversees NATO operations at its centers in Bydgoszcz, Poland; La Spezia, Italy; Monsanto, Portugal; and Stavanger, Norway.

NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen presided over the ceremony. He praised the outgoing officer as one who "brought a clear and coherent focus to the Command's wide range of work."

Gen. Paloméros graduated from the French Air Force Academy in 1976. He commanded aerial combat units in Chad in 1987, participated in the United Nations Rapid Reaction Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995, and led French air operations in Libya in 2011.

The ACT appointment marks the second time Gen. Paloméros has succeeded Gen. Abrial to a leadership position. In 2009, when Gen. Abrial left the Air Force Chief of Staff post to head operations in Norfolk, Gen. Paloméros filled the vacancy in Paris.

From the Ambassador's Desk: A Message From François Delattre

▲ It's been an active month for French-American relations. At the Embassy we've honored our two countries' military cooperation, celebrated our shared success in science and participated in international security efforts in the West African nation of Mali.

We honored 13 American WWII veterans with the French Legion of Honor and two active U.S. soldiers for their recent cooperation with France in Libya and Afghanistan. On September 28, French Air Force General Jean-Paul Paloméros succeeded his fellow countryman Stéphane Abrial and became the new Allied Commander for Transformation at the NATO base in Norfolk, Va., one of the organization's two strategic commands.

On October 9, French scientist Serge Haroche and American David Wineland were awarded the 2012 Nobel Prize in Physics. Their work in quantum physics may create new opportunities, notably in supercomputing.

On October 15, the UN Security Council, of which both the U.S. and France are permanent members, adopted a resolution on Mali. Introduced by France's UN delegation, it represents an important step to help Mali re-establish its territorial integrity, combat terrorism and foster a political dialogue among its main political stakeholders. France will stand side-by-side with Mali in this effort.

As we prepare later this month for the great American tradition of Thanksgiving, we can all be thankful for the many levels of cooperation between our two countries, which continue today at full strength.



"From the Ambassador's Desk" appears each month. Your comments and questions are welcome (see p. 8).

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Paris Motor Show Rolls Out Eco-Friendly Future Cars

Auto enthusiasts flocked to the City of Light to catch a glimpse of the future at the Paris Motor Show, held September 29 through October 14. The biennial expo is the oldest motor show in the world, first held in 1898. Innovative production and concept cars were on display during this year's event, which featured automakers from around the globe.

Eco-friendly vehicles took center stage as manufacturers such as Chevrolet, BMW, Ford and Ferrari displayed extravagant new automobiles with hybrid motors and other energy-saving features.

One of the show-stopping hot rods was French company Peugeot's Onyx, named Best Concept Car of the show by *Autoweek* magazine. The "supercar" is based on Peugeot's dedication to speed and style, featuring a eye-catching color scheme of copper and black carbon fiber. It is capable of reaching speeds of more than 200 miles per hour. The Onyx was also one of the many "green" cars on display, boasting an electric motor and hybrid diesel engine.

New Holocaust Memorial Inaugurated in Drancy, France

Seventy years after the start of the deportation of French Jews to concentration camps around Europe, France's Holocaust Memorial, based in Paris, has opened a new site in the Parisian suburb of Drancy. Between June 22, 1942 and July 31, 1944, an estimated 70,000 French, Polish, and German Jews were deported from the Drancy internment site to concentration camps all over the continent, including approximately 61,000 who were sent directly from Drancy to Auschwitz.

The Drancy site of the Holocaust Memorial museum was inaugurated on September 23 by French President François Hollande, who called on those in attendance to pass on the memories of Holocaust's many victims. The Drancy museum celebrated its first month by offering a series of events, from documentary screenings to guided museum tours and personal testimonies. A free Sunday shuttle from Paris helped visitors reach the site, which covers nearly 27,000 square feet.

Film director Rose Bosch's 2010 film *The Roundup*, depicting the 1942 raid and mass arrest of Jews in Paris, was shown on October 28, closing out the museum's programs for the first month of operations.

France and Germany Celebrate 50 Years of Friendship

Once bitter enemies, France and Germany are now celebrating 50 years of post-war alliance. In a ceremony held on September 21 in the German city of Ludwigsburg, French President François Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel observed the fiftieth anniversary of General Charles de Gaulle's 1962 speech to the German public. The General's address, delivered in fluent German, is today considered the event that ushered in a new era of Franco-German friendship.

The recent event marks the start of the "Franco-German Year," in honor of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Élysée Treaty.

Gen. de Gaulle, a leading figure of the French wartime resistance efforts and French President from 1959 to 1969, famously delivered what is remembered as a "ground-



Current Franco-German unity mirrors the post-war precedent between Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer.

breaking reconciliation" speech on September 21, 1962, just months before he and German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer signed the Élysée Treaty, a formal declaration of friendship. The 71-year-old Gen. de Gaulle congratulated Germans in attendance "first and foremost for being young," and lauded them also for being German. "You are children of a great people," he said.

An estimated 650 individuals were in attendance at the commemoration ceremony this year, at which both the French and German leaders echoed Gen. de Gaulle's salute to Europe's post-war generation. Mr. Hollande urged young people to "Build Europe in your image: demanding, moral, generous and open." Addressing the crowd in French, Ms. Merkel concluded: "Long live French and German youth! Long live European youth!"



interview with the expert

Nicolas Guillou,
Magistrat de Liaison, Office of Judiciary Cooperation

Whether in Paris courtrooms or at the U.S. Department of Justice, **Nicolas Guillou** spends his days seeking legal solutions to domestic and international issues. **News From France** sat down with the **Magistrat de Liaison**, a fairly new position in French diplomacy, for a look at his work involving everything from extradition to international adoption.

What does it mean to be **Magistrat de Liaison**, and what are your duties?

The title translates as "liaison prosecutor," and is a position created in the 1990s, which is quite recent compared to more traditional embassy positions. The principal duties involve legal assistance requests, extradition requests, and international prison transfers.

Another task of mine is to help French judicial actors write their legal assistance requests and explain the American legal system to them. The idea is to anticipate any problems and help them prepare their requests according to what the U.S. authorities require.

I also provide American prosecutors with the complementary information they may need about French legislation, while dealing with civil international cooperation, which includes matters such as child abduction, international adoption and exchange of evidence.

So, not just dealing with the bad guys.

No, it's much broader than that. I also write comparative law analysis for the French Minister of Justice. So, generally, for every bill that is prepared by the Ministry of Justice, the liaison prosecutor presents the system that exists in other countries. For example, Christiane Taubira, the French Minister of Justice, has announced that the government was going to propose a reform on class actions, which are very common in the U.S.

I will provide a comparative analysis on how this type of lawsuit is organized here, and what could be important in France on that issue.

In what capacity do you work with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)?

One of the specifics of my position, compared to my colleagues here at the embassy, is that I have two offices. I have an embassy office and another at the DOJ. This enables me to be right in the middle of the Department of International Affairs and to interact directly with my American colleagues. It helps to accelerate the judicial process, which can be quite long, for plaintiff and defendant alike.

What would you say is the biggest difference between French and American judicial processes?

One of the biggest differences is that the criminal procedure in the U.S. is very much orally based. A lot of verbal interaction happens in courts: debates, cross-examination. In France, with the exception of the last part of a criminal trial, everything is written down. Here, there are stronger standards of proof to obtain evidence.

On the other hand, Europe is more strict for things like online data protection, for example. It's always a question of finding a balance, whether in France or the U.S., between civil liberties and the rights of the prosecutors to conduct their investigations.

Hollande Outlines Priorities at First U.N. Appearance

▲ In his first appearance as head of State before the United Nations General Assembly on September 25, French President François Hollande outlined top priorities of his government and called for international action to ease conflicts around the globe.

Addressing representatives from the 193 member states in attendance, Mr. Hollande called for reform of the United Nations infrastructure, including an expansion of membership in the U.N. Security Council.

"Having a seat on the Security Council means making a commitment to take action to promote peace across the world," said Mr. Hollande, adding that the Council is now facing matters of urgency—the first of which is the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Syria.

Mr. Hollande named three major threats which he believes merit world attention: violent fanaticism, the global economic crises and climate change. Mr. Hollande referred to the Security Council stalemate that prevents the U.N. from a more robust response to the Syrian crisis. He reaffirmed that France would recognize a Syrian opposition-led government as soon as one can be formed.

The French leader's remarks echoed those of U.S. President Barack Obama, who had addressed the Assembly a few hours before. "In Syria, the future must not belong to a dictator who massacres his people," said Mr. Obama.

President Hollande and other top French officials in attendance later visited Ground Zero, the site of the former World Trade Center, where they laid a wreath in commemoration of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Later in the week, both the American and French delegations to the United Nations further urged the international community to respond to violence in the Sahel



Key issues Mr. Hollande addressed at the UN included climate change and current conflicts in Iran, Mali and Syria.

region of northern Mali. The region is under the control of militant Islamists, including Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) following a military coup in March 2012.

The Sahel situation, which French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius has dubbed "Sahelistan," is complicated by a hostage situation stemming from the kidnapping of four French citizens in September 2010.

U.S. Sisters Among 13 Awarded French Legion of Honor

▲ As the world's largest-ever war raged through the spring of 1944, two sisters from Salem, New Jersey, sent a letter to Washington, D.C., volunteering for service with the U.S. Army Nursing Corps. Dorothy Levitsky and her younger sister Ellan had just one request: that they not be separated while on duty.

Just three months after the Allied landing in Normandy, they departed for France on September 11, 1944, where they served for just under a year. Sixty-eight years after their deployment, Mrs. Dorothy Levitsky Sinner and Mrs. Ellan Levitsky Orkin were recognized along with 11 other World War II veterans with France's prestigious Legion of Honor on September 27 at the Embassy of France.

The women describe their time in the Army Nursing Corps as an adventure. They slept in individual tents or folding cots and had limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables. With the diet leading to an overall poor nutrition, the pair resorted to bartering with the local French by trading butter and sugar for solid foods like poultry. Despite the language barrier, the sisters felt comfortable among French locals and made numerous friends.

Now in their nineties, the Levitsky sisters return to France every June 6 to commemorate the Allied invasion on D-Day. "I think when I left I took a little piece of Normandy with me," said Ellan in a 2011 interview. "We come back every year and we'll come back as long as we can."

"We come back to see the place," said Dorothy, add-

ing that, "We [also] come back for the people. They're our friends. It's a family."

The Levitsky sisters were among the thirteen veterans honored as Knights of the Legion of Honor at the September 27 ceremony. Other honorees were Bernard Amadio, Richard H. Beltz, Shelton B. Bosley, Frank Bressler, Alfred V. Domineck, Donald M. McKee, Joseph A. Patucci, Ernest E. Personeus, Edward Torres, and Henry Wessel. French Veterans Affairs Minister Kader Arif presented each award after a speech in which he saluted the honorees as "sons and daughters of France."



Ellan and Dorothy Levitsky (L-R) sat among 13 "sons and daughters of France" honored on September 27.

French Company Lays Tracks for Tramway in D.C.

Prominent French transportation company RATP Dev (Autonomous Operator of Parisian Transports) is sharing its expertise in tramway development by heading up a project for a new tram system in Washington, D.C., to be completed by the end of 2013. The first line will cover two miles and seven stops serving the city's northeast quadrant. RATP operates the Paris metro and bus systems, and parts of the city's tram and RER regional rail networks.

RATP Dev and its subsidiary, McDonald Transit Associates, are working with the D.C. Department of Transportation in construction of the line, which will run through the rapidly developing H Street Northeast neighborhood.

"This is one of the first times an American authority has decided to entrust a private operator with the running of its trams," said Mathieu Dunant, CEO of RATP Dev America. "The goal is to combine the experience of our local subsidiaries in the U.S. with the internationally recognized expertise of the RATP Group for the benefit of customers."

RATP operates a worldwide set of projects located in Manchester, U.K.; Florence, Italy; Hong Kong and elsewhere.

Festival America Fêtes Western Hemisphere's Best Books

Vincennes hosted the 6th anniversary of Festival America, a biennial Fall celebration of the literature and cultures of North, Central and South America. The festival features not only talks and readings by the continents' top authors, but also offers films and concerts incorporating varied themes that connect with societies on both sides of the Atlantic. Nobel laureate Toni Morrison was the guest of honor, and spoke to a crowd of nearly 500 about her new novel, "Home," which tells the story of a veteran returning to the U.S. after the Korean War. This year marks the first time that authors from South America joined the festivities. A total of 75 writers represented 14 different countries at the three-day event, drawing a crowd of nearly 30,000 people.

Through a partnership with UNESCO and Survival International, Festival America also featured eight photography exhibits of the history and life of American Indians. The festival is the largest celebration of pan-American literature in France and features over 100 events to explore the literature of an entire hemisphere and the role writers play globally.

French Electronic Music: A History of Global Success



If you don't know David Guetta or Martin Solveig by name, you've surely heard their catchy songs—unless you never, ever listen to the radio. They are among the most famous electronic music makers in the world, notching hits every time they release a single. But did you know both of them are French?

Mr. Guetta, who has sold more than 18 million albums worldwide, and Mr. Solveig, who produced Madonna's latest album, are currently the most prominent figures of a vibrant French music scene.

In fact, France's success story in electronic music is nothing new. French composer and producer Jean-

Michel Jarre was one of the pioneers of the "New Age" movement in the 1970s, selling more than 80 million albums. Twenty years later, a musical genre dubbed "French Touch" emerged with artists such as Etienne de Crécy and Daft Punk, setting a new standard in the "house" genre of club music.

Like Detroit or Nashville in the U.S., some French cities have nurtured vibrant local music scenes. Versailles, one of Paris's chic suburbs, is one these inspiring towns, being the birthplace of the members of groups such as Air, famous for their mesmerizing sonic landscapes, or Phoenix, whose punchy last album was played extensively on American rock radio.

Many French musicians are trying to follow the path taken by these prestigious forerunners. Ed Banger Records, the music label run by the former manager of Daft Punk, is home of many of them.

Several factors explain the robust success of the French music scene in America. The historic cultural exchanges between the two countries, the lively musical culture in France and the important influence of American artists on French musicians are some of these reasons. Another crucial element is language: most of the new bands in France sing in English, even if it's only brief sentences or slogans, as in most of Air's songs. Phoenix is known for its almost nonsensical verses. Part of David Guetta's enormous popularity in the U.S. is due to his collaborations with American R&B artists such as Kelly Rowland, Rihanna and Usher.

The Embassy of France in the United States, through its cultural center, La Maison Française, wanted to shed light on the French music trend. On October 12 and 13, La Maison Française hosted "French Underground," a festival of the latest French music, visual arts and cinema, organized in collaboration with the U.S. event promoter, Brightest Young Things.

"French Touch music is still very strong," says Alice Chamblas, deputy cultural attaché at the French embassy, "and our goal was to connect these artists with American audiences." 

Counter-clockwise from top left: David Guetta; newcomer Yan Wagner; Nicolas Godin of the group Air; Daft Punk plays a spaced-out set; veteran hip-hop artist Wax Tailor jams at La Maison Française; the mixing board, which is to electronic music what the guitar is to rock'n'roll; and a funky musician plays it loud for Washington, and the world.

“StreetLove” App Brings Art de la Rue to Your Mobile Device



The organizers of StreetLove want to show Parisian and worldwide graffiti to the Internet generation. From postmodern portraits and picketing Einsteins to Warhol-like Madonnas, the project highlights cutting-edge public expression.

▲ The desire to shed new light on the underground world of street art has led two French mobile application designers to release “StreetLove.” The “app” follows an Internet project under the same name, which displays the work of hundreds of international street artists online.

As a parallel to the Internet phenomenon, the StreetLove app features a list of today’s prominent street artists whose works can be found throughout the streets of Paris and internationally. Each artist catalogued on the app is given a brief biography that describes the artist’s inspirations, explains their preferred techniques and mentions the notable locations of their works.

The application additionally provides photo slide-shows as an overview of each artist’s body of work and interviews with select artists. Users are informed of the street art and graffiti in their immediate area by the application’s map and location sensor, while a calendar of exhibitions keeps art fans aware of upcoming displays.

Project creators Steve and 100driine (“Sandrine,” spelled in graffiti form) aim to use the application to raise global appreciation of street art forms. The creators call the app a “way to recognize all those artists who work in the shadows to enliven our days. It is a way to tell them thank you; thank you for the small moments of escape and wonderment your creations give us.”

French Group to Attend D.C. Medical Tech Summit

▲ In the under-explored territory between mobile devices and modern medicine, France is blazing a trail. UBI-FRANCE, the French Agency for International Business Development, will lead a delegation of French companies at the “2012 m-Health Summit” in Washington, D.C., from December 3 through 5. The 2012 edition of the annual conference will highlight technological developments, business models, innovations in research and policy implementation in the “m-health” (mobile health) industry.

Described as “on-the-go healthcare” by Susannah Fox, Associate Director of Digital Strategy at the Pew Research Center, mobile healthcare is seen as a new wave of medical technology that will facilitate greater efficiency in patient care. Capable of remotely monitoring vital signs, gathering patient medical history, and even distributing

health information via SMS messaging, m-health aims to revolutionize care options worldwide.

“You can do anything related to your health on your cell phone. Whether you’re doing a personal health record, checking your glucose level, or just want to know how far you’ve walked,” explained Dr. Philip Olla, Founder of Mobile Diagnostic Services in a “Mobile Health News” video report. Many public institutions, research laboratories, mutual insurance companies and patients across the globe expect to benefit from the rapidly developing m-health technology.

UBIFRANCE’s 2012 French delegation will include companies offering a wide range of products and services, from wireless sensors and smartphone applications to secure cloud-based platform technology.

TEDxParis 2012 Highlights “Ideas Worth Spreading”

Three and a half years after its first conference was organized in France, TEDxParis once again brought people together to share “ideas worth spreading” on October 6 at Paris’s Olympia music hall.

Founded in 1984, the early emphasis of the Technology, Entertainment and Design (TED) conference was technological innovation and design techniques, though now conference speakers address a significantly wider range of topics. Past TED speakers have included former U.S. President Bill Clinton, U2 front man Bono and Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin.

Though the TEDxParis conference is held in French and focuses on French interests, “We have, of course, kept the American spirit, which is very optimistic, because that’s TED, that’s what fuels us—the desire to overtake surrounding cynicism,” said TEDxParis founder, Michel Lévy-Provençal.

This year’s speakers included independent filmmaker Djinn Carrénad, war crimes jurist Céline Bardet, and a high school teacher from Limoges, Yann Dall’aglio, who spoke on the ties between love and capitalism.

Vanity Fair Magazine Set to Launch French Edition

Renowned American entertainment and fashion magazine *Vanity Fair* has confirmed its upcoming launch in France. Xavier Romatet, head of the French affiliate of the Condé Nast publishing group that owns the brand, said the magazine is intended to be released before summer 2013. An experienced team has been established to head the French *Vanity Fair* and equip the high-end magazine for success. French journalist Michael Denisot will lead the editorial division under the experienced eye of new editor-in-chief, Anne Boulay. Ms. Boulay is former editor of the French *Gentlemen’s Quarterly* and known for the role she played in GQ’s success in France. The team hopes to establish a level of accountability and prestige for the new magazine and guarantees to back their stories with extensive investigation, providing the best journalism at the intersection of politics, fashion and culture.

“*Vanity Fair* is legendary in the States,” Ms. Boulay said in a recent interview with France’s edition of *Vogue*. “It’s the only magazine able to successfully mix entertainment with in-depth reporting of unrivalled quality, and we are aiming to offer a French version with the same strong identity.”

N.Y. Restaurant Week Fêtes Gallic Gastronomy

Foodies from throughout New York City had their pick of the *crème de la crème* of French fare during French Restaurant Week, held September 17 through 30. The event featured a variety of special dishes offered at over 50 restaurants, bringing many French delicacies to the tri-state area.

French Restaurant Week takes place this year as part of the Fête de la Gastronomie, an initiative by the French government to celebrate French food and chefs worldwide, which is sponsoring nearly 4,000 events around the globe. The Fête itself takes place on the first day of fall in France, while other festivals, such as Restaurant Week, take place over the following weeks in other countries.

The theme for this year's festivities was "*Terroirs: Creativity and Tradition*," in celebration of the diversity of French food and its ability to embrace new ideas while honoring a proud gastronomic past.

The Fête de la Gastronomie began in France last year, while the September event in New York marks the third edition of Restaurant Week in the past two years.

Before Elections, French Bloggers Take Texas Roadtrip

In the world of politics, Texas is considered a politically conservative place. But two French journalists hoped to look deeper into the state's fall political palette on a road trip through the Lone Star State in the weeks leading up to the U.S. Presidential election.

Céline Fandos, a French freelance journalist in Austin, Tex., and Mélinda Trochu, a videojournalist from France, began their journey on October 15 across a multitude of Texas cities with one goal: to sit down at the dinner table with Texans and find out what issues were guiding their votes in the upcoming election.

The two women maintain a blog titled "Texas Families," where readers can follow them along their journey. The blog, which is updated regularly with pictures, charts, interviews and video clips, aims to provide a better understanding of Texan life to the francophone world. The American political process is described along with discussions of various topics, from campaign finance rules to presidential debate reactions. The blog is accessible at texasfamiliesblog.wordpress.com.

In First U.S. Concert, French Rock Icon "Realizes His Dream"

▲ New York City's Beacon Theater has played host to a wide range of notable guests and events. No previous performer, though, could have possibly promised to heat things up like the star of the venue's October 7 performance. After some 50 years of prominence, French rock legend Johnny Hallyday finally made his U.S. concert debut.

Once referred to as "the biggest rock star you've never heard of" by USA Today, Johnny Hallyday (né Jean-Philippe Smet) is a phenomenon in France and a pop culture icon throughout French-speaking Europe.

First inspired by Elvis Presley and the American rock revolution of the 1950s, Mr. Hallyday is one of the most popular and prolific French music artists of all time. He has recorded more than 1,000 songs, sold more than 110 million records and has had 21 albums go platinum.

The October 7 performance was his first full-scale U.S. concert and third public appearance in New York, where he previously filmed a music video and sang at a charity



Mr. Hallyday brought a half-century of rock to New York on October 7. Through his career he has adopted images of U.S. culture, with nods to motorcycles and Hollywood.

event attended by Jacqueline Kennedy in 1962.

"New York has always had a particular resonance for Johnny," said the star's agent, Sébastien Farran, adding, "New York is the most rock'n'roll city in the world, historically as well as culturally speaking. Johnny has always wanted to play here for this reason [...] He's realizing his dream."

French Enviro-Architects Lecture in Chicago, Detroit

▲ In a world marked with ever-increasing populations, infrastructure and industrial growth, two French architects envision a new approach to urban planning that will reconnect city-dwellers with a natural environment. Jacques Ferrier and Pauline Marchetti, innovators in green architecture concepts, gave lectures on October 9 at the Chicago Architectural

Club and on October 11 at the University of Detroit Mercy. The talk focused on the question, What should urban planning look like in today's world?

Mr. Ferrier and Ms. Marchetti's response involves the advancement of "architecture that takes into consideration the challenges represented by megalopolises and goes beyond the mere prospect of sustainable development."

The French pair promotes urban planning that breaks from the strategic placement of organic elements around a city. Instead, they seek to integrate natural environments into the city itself. In their lectures Mr. Ferrier and Ms. Marchetti draw attention to the idea that most modern architecture has sought to shut out nature, not integrate it. The duo endorses the idea of "bioclimatic architecture," a design style that harmonizes manmade structures with the natural environment.

Mr. Ferrier and Ms. Marchetti have recently brought their concept to life for the Beijing Museum of Natural History. They designed giant vertical gardens and interior waterfalls to add to the natural dynamics of the building. The architects feel that bioclimatic architecture creates "a city that is more than a simple landscape combining nature and artifact; it is an inhabited environment, a living fabric within which various organisms have created a balance."

Ms. Marchetti and Mr. Ferrier's lectures in Chicago and Detroit are a vibrant addition to the continuing Franco-American discourse on modern transatlantic architecture.



© Pierre-Olivier Deschamps / Agence VU

In their designs, Pauline Marchetti and Jacques Ferrier seek to transcend the "mere prospect" of sustainability.

César in Hand, Hit Film “Les Intouchables” Vies for an Oscar

▲ French box office hit “Les Intouchables” [“The Untouchables”] was submitted for consideration as “Best Foreign Film” at the 85th annual Academy Awards, scheduled for February 24, 2013. Reacting to the announcement, director Olivier Nakache told RTL radio on September 18, “We are crazy with joy [...] What surprises me is the impact of this film all over the world. Every day I receive messages from all over, and I say to myself that the power of cinema is incredible.”

“Les Intouchables” was originally released in France in November 2011, quickly becoming “the cultural event of 2011” according to a poll published by Agence France-Presse a month after the film’s debut. The story of a wealthy quadriplegic and an impoverished “banlieusard” (suburb resident) who becomes his caretaker, Mr. Nakache’s film has sold more than 20 million tickets outside of France and is the second most successful French international release after Jean-Pierre Jeunet’s “Amélie” (2001).

Once a film has been submitted to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for consideration as Best Foreign Film, it will compete with other films submitted by foreign nations for one of five nominee slots for the Academy Award. Only active and permanent Academy members who have attended English-subtitled screenings of all five nominee films may vote for the winning picture, announced annually at the Academy Awards show, the “Oscars,” in February 2013.



Omar Sy, who co-starred in 2011’s “Les Intouchables,” hopes for further success at February’s Academy Awards.

“Les Intouchables” picked up a César Award, France’s highest film honor, in February 2012 for Best Actor. Omar Sy (pictured) delivered a passionate performance as the unconventional caretaker, and beat out popular favorite Jean Dujardin (“The Artist”) for the prestigious acting award.

Louvre Opens New Wing Dedicated to Islamic Arts

▲ Paris’s world-famous museum, the Louvre, is welcoming visitors this fall to its newly opened Islamic Art wing. Hailed by French President François Hollande as a “gesture of respect for peace,” the new exhibit space is the result of a decade-long project costing close to 100 million euros (\$130 million). The project was partially funded by the French government as well as endowments from Azerbaijan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman and Saudi Arabia.

Located in the Louvre’s southern Visconti courtyard, the space currently displays 3,000 of the Louvre’s Islamic art reserve of 18,000 works, including mosaics from an-

cient Damascus. Morocco’s King Mohammed VI and Saudi Prince Waleed Bin Talal were among the many donors for the collection.

The Louvre’s department of Islamic art is the museum’s largest addition since the construction of I.M. Pei’s glass pyramids for the occasion of France’s bicentennial in 1989.

The wing’s inauguration came more than a month after the opening of a temporary exhibition paying tribute to the “Golden Age of Muslim Civilization” at the National Geographic museum in Washington, D.C.



After 10 years and some \$130 million, the new development marks the largest change at the Louvre since I.M. Pei’s glass pyramid (above), installed in the museum’s courtyard in 1989. The exhibit echoes a smaller-scale show in Washington.

Parisian Theater Troupe Brings Classic Work to U.S.

From September 21 to October 13, players from the Théâtre de la Ville de Paris stopped in four U.S. cities to bring Eugène Ionesco’s absurdist play “Rhinoceros” to American audiences from coast to coast. “Rhinoceros,” directed by Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota, was staged in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Ann Arbor, Mich., and New York.

The story of a provincial French town whose inhabitants turn into rhinoceroses—a metaphor for the spread of ideologies such as Communism, Fascism, and Nazism before the start of the second World War, the work explores themes of conformity, culture, mass movements and morality. “Rhinoceros” is often cited as Ionesco’s finest work.

The play premiered at Paris’s Odéon theater in January 1960 to rave reviews, and in 2011 was revived by the Théâtre de la Ville de Paris. By the end of their run this autumn, the troupe will have given nearly 150 performances.

A Garden “Rendez-Vous” at Embassy’s Cultural Center

On October 3, the French embassy’s cultural center, the Maison Française, unveiled its latest exhibition of artwork. “Rendez-Vous in the Gardens,” a traveling photo collection of different garden scenes by celebrated French photographers, is now on display after exhibitions in the French cities of Epernay and Cognac.

Featuring prints by such noted photographers as Jean Gilletta, Jacques Henri Lartigue, and Bruno Réquillart, the collection features a look at gardening landscapes from 1851 to 1987. The exhibition is presented through a partnership between French champagne house Moët Hennessy and the French Ministry of Culture and Communication.

Now in Washington, D.C., before going on display at the Embassy of France in Berlin, the photo collection is divided into seven distinct modules, each with a unifying theme.

“Gardens in the Nineteenth Century” includes prints by early photography pioneers Alfred-Nicolas Normand and Eugène Atget, while arrangements from more recent eras, such as “Paris and New York: Back and Forth” and “Democratic Gardens” feature twentieth-century photography pioneers André Kertész and Willy Ronis.

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An Evening of Continental Culture at “Euro Night” 2012

▲ Traveling around Europe can take time and money, but it's not the only way to enjoy the cultural diversity of the Continent. On Friday, September 28, the French embassy in Washington, D.C., hosted an evening celebrating the rich heritage of 22 European Union member nations for its 2012 edition of “Euro Night.”

Those attending had the opportunity to sample food and drinks from each participating country, from Belgian sugar waffles and Maltese pastries to Scotch whiskey. Guests also enjoyed live music and dance performances.

“The greatest thing about Euro Night is that it brings people together from different backgrounds, whether European or otherwise, to appreciate [European] diversity,” said one guest in attendance.

“It's a lot of fun and there's a great atmosphere,” said another. “It's an open opportunity to meet people from all over the world.”



Music, dancing, food and drink were on the docket at the French embassy's annual “Euro Night” on September 28.

French Youth Baseball Battles in Florida Qualifiers



With 10,000 players and 200 clubs, France has even sent a few of its best baseball players to the Major Leagues.

▲ In France, the phrase “Allez les Bleus!” may conjure images of the national soccer team and memories of great games and players. For a growing number of the French population, however, the phrase brings a different sport to mind: baseball.

The French Federation of Baseball and Softball (FFBS) was founded in 1924 following the Olympic Games held that year in Paris. Almost a century after its founding, the Federation boasts nearly 10,000 players among 200 clubs, with roughly half of the players under the age of 21. Some of these young athletes play for American colleges and a few of them, namely Alexandre Roy and Andy Paz, have been recruited to the Major Leagues.

The most recent honor for the FFBS came as an invitation for the youth national team to compete among 28 countries in the qualifying rounds of the World Baseball Classic in Florida on September 19 through 23.

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