

France and China Strengthen Diplomatic Ties

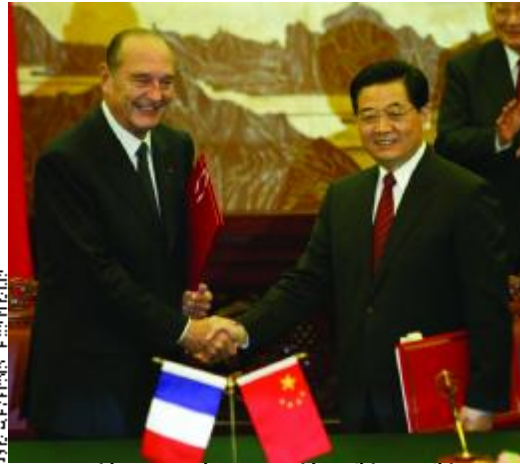
DURING his fourth presidential visit to China, October 25-28, President Jacques Chirac met with President Hu Jintao of the People's Republic of China to discuss continuing French-Sino cooperation on a number of issues such as energy, telecommunications, financial services, agriculture, aerospace, and environmental protection. President Chirac highlighted the strength of French-Chinese relations during a joint press declaration with President Hu Jintao on October 26: "Never in the long history of our bilateral relations have our relations been as close and trusting. This visit is witness to a further strengthening of our strategic partnership."

The same day President Chirac also delivered a speech to Beida University students, to whom he referred as "the leaders of tomorrow's China." In the speech he quoted Confucius to describe what the cooperation between France and China can accomplish: "If two people are of the same mind, their strength can break iron." Chirac expressed his hope to more closely align Asia and Europe through their cooperation as leaders of these regions: "In this quest for global balance, in this desire for dialogue and harmony, Europe and Asia share objective analyses based on the experience and wisdom of countries with very ancient cultures. We are not competing for power, but have common interests. This is why France has been behind some major initiatives designed to bring Asia closer to Europe."

Presidents Chirac and Hu also discussed promoting further development of bilateral trade and investment, enabling France and China to move beyond the traditional customer-supplier relation-

ship with the aim of putting economic cooperation between the two countries on a long-term footing. The two countries also agreed to continue their policies of support for reciprocal exchanges between companies, particularly for small to medium-sized companies.


In the context of the deep and complex changes in the interna-



President Hu welcomes President Chirac to China

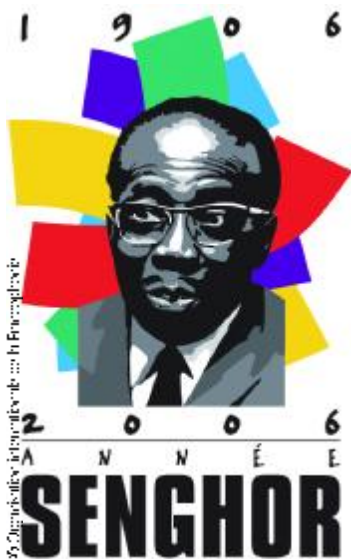
tional situation, France and China have agreed, in extension of their Joint Declaration of 1997, to consolidate, develop and enrich their strategic global partnership. One area in which Chirac stressed that cooperation is important is combating diseases: "Because diseases know no borders, we must also, continuously, strengthen the international cooperation effort. The world's mobilization at China's side in the fight against SARS and bird flu is exemplary in this respect. This is one of the messages I shall

be taking tomorrow to Wuhan, citadel of our cooperation in the field of medicine and our joint battle against emerging diseases." France and China have also pledged to work closely together to combat terrorism and to promote environmental issues.

Cooperation between France and China dates back to January 27, 1964, when France became one of the first western countries to establish diplomatic relations with China. President Hu Jintao said their relations have reached "a historical high." He made a state visit to France from January 26 to 29, 2004 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of establishing their diplomatic relations. 

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100th Anniversary of Léopold Senghor

OCTOBER 9 marked the centennial of the birth of Léopold Sédar Senghor, a poet and former president of Senegal who championed both African identity and the French language. Born in Senegal, Senghor received an education in French at a Catholic mission school. He studied philosophy in France, and after fighting for the country in World War II, published his first poetry collection, *Chants d'Ombre (Songs of Shadow)* in 1945. Senghor was known for his appreciation for the beauty of French language, and was

renowned for his work in the language. In 1983, he became the first African to become a member of the *Académie Française*, the academic organization charged with preserving the French language. He is also credited as one of the founding fathers of the *Francophonie*, a term that refers to governments, countries and peoples that share French as a common language. Senghor won numerous medals and honors for his literary work, including the *Dag Hammarskjöld Peace Prize* in 1965.

Senghor also had a resounding impact on both African politics and culture. He began a political career after World War II as a representative of his nation to the French parliament, then went on to hold various other positions in Senegal. When the country gained independence from France in 1960, Senghor was elected its first president.

The 100th anniversary of his birth has been marked with celebrations across the Francophone world. Senghor is known for having said that he would rather be remembered as a poet than a statesman, but both of his roles led to the honor and respect that he receives today. Upon his passing, French President Jacques Chirac honored Senghor's contributions to humanity: "Poetry has lost one of its masters, Senegal a statesman, Africa a visionary, and France a friend." 

France and its Fight Against Global Warming

NELLY Olin, French Minister for Ecology and Sustainable Development, stated on October 31 that she fully agreed with the conclusions of the *Stern Review* on the Economics of Climate Change.

On July 3, 2006, the French "Facteur IV" working group, charged with determining how to reduce France's greenhouse gas emissions by a factor of four by 2050, delivered its conclusions. Chaired by the French economist Christian de Boissieu, this group comprised 31 experts in the relevant fields. A meeting had even been organized in London in 2005 with the *Stern Review*. The French and British findings come to the same conclusion: we have to combat climate change effectively, and for this there must be major changes at the technological, industrial and societal levels.

For the French government, the battle against climate change has been a priority for many years:

Environmental protection measures have been incorporated into national law. By incorporating environmental protection into its Constitution, passing an energy policy Act and drawing up a climate plan, France has given itself the legal means to address the environmental challenges.

In March 2005, France added a reference to the Environment Charter to the Preamble to its Constitution. This charter endorses, among other things, the precautionary principle and reconciles the protection and husbanding of the environment with economic development and social progress. By putting this charter at the top of the hierarchy of standards, France demonstrated its commitment to the environment issue.

The Multiyear Sectorial Estimates Act of July 13, 2005 sets the guidelines for France's energy policy for the coming years. It was the result of a long consultative process launched in January 2003 with the National Debate on Energy, followed by the parliamentary debates in 2004. This Act sets four major goals, including that of safeguarding human health and the environment, particularly by combating the increase in the greenhouse effect. To achieve them, the government is giving priority to research and the development of new energy technology. The government gives Parliament an annual progress report on its action on renewable energies and energy savings. The Act also creates a Higher Energy Council dealing not only with gas and electricity, but also energy control and the development of renewables.

The Climate Plan, drawn up in 2004 and updated every year, includes measures in every area of France's economy and in people's daily lives, with the goal of saving 54 million tons of CO₂ annually by 2010.

Environmental concerns are taken into account at every phase of the energy supply chain, from producer to consumer. Nuclear power and renewables offer an effective solution to atmospheric pollution and global warming. In France, 78% of electricity is generated by nuclear energy. In 20 years, thanks to nuclear power, EDF has substantially reduced its emissions of pollutants (70% reduction of nitrogen oxide and sulphur dioxide emissions over the period) which translates into an overall 30% cut in atmospheric pollution in France. France's nuclear power program has reduced CO₂ emissions by 40%.

FRANCE AMONG THE LEADERS FOR BIOFUELS

French Minister of Economy, Finance and Industry, Thierry Breton, unveiled in October France's E85 flex-fuel pump, which can deliver a biofuel consisting of a mixture of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent petrol. France expects to have 500 such pumps in a year's time.

This fuel highlights France's success in biofuel research—it is number one in the E.U. for the production of renewable energies.

France already has one of the lowest per capita CO₂ emissions: fourth in the world. France is pursuing its efforts and has set specific targets with regard to its energy policy: reduce CO₂ emissions by a factor of four by 2050; achieve a biofuel incorporation rate of around 2 percent in 2006 and 5.7% percent by the end of 2008; while the European Commission has set a target of 5.75 percent of petrol stations delivering biofuels by 2010, France is planning to have 7 percent of stations achieve that goal.

Generally speaking, French energy policy today is being formulated with one major concern: to safeguard human health and the environment through the battle against greenhouse gases and pollutants.

France is the main producer of renewable energy in the EU (15% of the total production of the 25-member E.U.) France is moving closer to the goal of the Act of July 13, 2005, envisaging meeting 10% of energy needs from renewable sources by 2010. In 2005 wind power energy production rose by 61% and biofuel production by 14%.

With the Act of June 28, 2006, France was the first to frame a national policy for the long-term management of radioactive material and waste. According to Hans Rotté, the OECD's nuclear energy agency, the Act providing for burying waste deep underground and setting a timetable for this "has put France clearly in the lead in Europe".

As for energy savings, public awareness campaigns and incentives (e.g. tax deductions) have been used since the first oil shock over 30 years ago. New ones are regularly launched; the Climate Plan makes public awareness its first objective. "The International Energy Agency has calculated that the average French person was responsible for 6.3 tons of carbon dioxide, one of the lowest levels in Europe, one-third of the US average and below Japan and Russia." For example, 25,000 heat pumps were installed in 2005.

France is actively promoting the strengthening of international environmental protection mechanisms. France has ratified the 1997 Kyoto agreement, which sets for every country specific targets for cutting greenhouse gas emissions. A recent report stresses that France's predicted CO₂ emissions make her one of the few European countries to be on schedule for meeting its Kyoto commitments.

In his speech at the G8 summit on July 15, 2006, President Chirac called on his fellow leaders to commit to the rapid creation of a United Nations Environment Organization. The French memorandum stresses that the UNEO would increase funding capacity, rationalize the system of governance and give the environment issue a global institutional framework. The President also announced that a major international meeting devoted to the creation of the UNEO would be held in Paris early in 2007. Finally, Paris will also host in January 2007 the meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which next year will issue its fourth report on the damage caused by climate change.

First European CEO Summit on Business and AIDS

THE first European CEO Summit on Business and AIDS was held in Paris on October 13. Organized under the patronage of French President Jacques Chirac, in partnership with the French Foreign Ministry and Global Business Coalition (GBC) in the fight against pandemics, especially AIDS, the summit signals the growing commitment of businesses in the fight against pandemics. It also reflects France's commitment to make the "health divide" between developed and developing countries one of the key items on the international agenda.

The Global Business Coalition is an extensive network of socially conscious businesses dedicated to fighting global pandemics. Over the last five years, GBC has grown from 17 to over 220 companies and it continues to increase the number and diversity of its members. Over 50 multinational firms were represented at the summit, including France's: Total, L'Oréal, Accor, Lafarge, and Areva; the Netherlands's Heineken; Britain's Unilever; Norway's Statoil; Ukraine's Interpipe; and Russia's Vostok-Service.

Because the fight against pandemics is also critical to development and the stability of developing countries, the summit's participating members regard it as a pre-eminent geopolitical issue. "The mobilization of the private sector, both industrial and commercial, is a major asset" in the global fight against pandemics, asserted French Minister of Foreign Affairs Philippe Douste-Blazy.

Paris was chosen to host the summit in light of France's commitment to alleviating the toll that pandemics take on the global community—and these efforts have not gone unnoticed. "Holding the European CEO Summit in France made intrinsic sense for GBC because of the country's experience and leadership on AIDS," said Richard Holbrooke, President of GBC and former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. "We applaud the French-led initiative UNITAID, an innovative approach to financing and sourcing AIDS drugs." Funded through a solidarity contribution established on airline tickets, UNITAID's objective is to acquire low-cost medicines to fight not only AIDS but also tuberculosis and malaria. One of its current ambitions includes the development of pediatric medicines to treat 100,000 children afflicted with AIDS and 150,000 with tuberculosis by the end of 2007.



Richard Holbrooke (left), French Minister Douste-Blazy (center), Jorge Sampaio



U.S. Awards Bronze Star to French Soldier

THE United States of America payed tribute to the heroic combat action of a French Navy commando, Premier Maitre Loïc Le Page, posthumously awarding him the Bronze Star Medal for Valor in a ceremony at the American Embassy in Paris on November 8. Premier Maitre Le Page's widow, Aude, children Alexis and Eléonore, and father, General (retired) Maurice Le Page were present to receive the honor on behalf of Maitre Le Page. Major General Francis Kearney, Commander of the U.S.



Major General Francis Kearney presents the Bronze Star to Aude Le Page

Special Operations Command, Central Command, awarded the honor on behalf of the President of the United States, and U.S. Ambassador Craig Stapleton presented the family an American Flag that has flown over the American Embassy in Paris.

On March 4, 2006, Premier Maitre Le Page was the assault team executive officer on a mission to sweep through the

Maruf Valley in Afghanistan. While pursuing a group of militia, he and his men were hit by small arms, light machine gun fire, and rocket propelled grenades. His team returned fire, with him personally leading the assault until he was wounded by enemy machine gun fire. Three enemy militia members were killed and 10 were captured as a result of Premier Maitre Le Page's actions.

President Franklin Roosevelt authorized the creation of the Bronze Star Medal during World War II to recognize military members for their heroic or meritorious actions against an enemy. The "Valor" device on the medal identifies that it was awarded for an act of combat heroism. Premier Maitre Le Page received the Bronze Star with the Valor device.

Task Group ARES, France's Special Operations Force in Afghanistan in which Premier Maitre Le Page was serving, has supported U.S. and Coalition forces in Afghanistan since 2003 as part of the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force.

St. Genevieve, Missouri: Bastion of French Cultural Heritage

THE Fifth Annual Sainte Genevieve Conference, honoring French settlements and culture in North America and the Caribbean will take place November 16-19 in St. Louis, Missouri. Located along the Mississippi River 50 miles south of St. Louis, St. Genevieve, Missouri is a quaint European-style village and a National Landmark Historic District. Founded in 1735, it is Missouri's oldest permanent settlement.

The conference is sponsored by the French Heritage Society, with participation of the Missouri Historical Society and will include speeches and tours, as well as other cultural and educational events. The conference will also feature discussions on architectural preservation in addition to lectures that address French cultural influence on the area. Subjects such as "French Influences on Landscape in the Mississippi River Valley" and "Poteaux-en-terre in the United States" will explore the historical and cultural significance St. Genevieve has played in the region. *Poteaux-en-terre* is an architectural technique in which the walls of a house are made of heavy upright logs, usually hewn flat on two or four faces, with their ends buried several feet in the ground. Between these logs is a solid filling of *bouillazage*, a mix-

ture of clay and grass, or *pierrotage*—rubble stone and clay. Two of the five remaining *poteaux-en-terre* houses in North America are located in St. Genevieve.

Named after the patron saint of Paris, St. Genevieve retains much of its original French architecture, customs and charm. More than 150 pre-1825 structures line the streets, and St. Genevieve has one of the largest concentrations of French Colonial architecture in the world. The French Colonial Heritage National Historic Site Study Act of 2005, which authorized the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the French Colonial Heritage Area in the State of Missouri as a unit of the National Park System, concluded St. Genevieve is essential to the historical preservation of French influence in the United States: "the Area contains some of the only existing examples of a French Colonial Period settlement. (...) Local state agencies and organizations have undertaken significant efforts to preserve the historic architecture of St. Genevieve and convert it to educational facilities devoted to the history of the early French experience in the New World.

Littell Awarded France's Highest Literary Prizes

AMERICAN novelist Johnathan Littell earned France's most prestigious literary award, the *Prix Goncourt*, on November 6 for his newly published novel in French; *Les Bienveillantes* (*The Kindly Ones*). The *Prix Goncourt* is awarded to "the best and most imaginative prose work of the year." The book has also earned the *Académie Française's* prestigious literary prize, *Le Grand Prix du Roman*.

A 900-page World War II novel, the work delves into the complicated workings of the human mind and explores the dark themes of WWII, as the narrator is a Nazi SS officer. Publisher Jonathan Burnham describes the book as: "There's nothing like it and I believe that it will be acclaimed in the U.S. (as it has been in France) as a true masterpiece of our age." The novel, published by

Gallimard, is a bestseller in France. It is expected to be published in the United States by HarperCollins in 2008.

Jonathan Littell grew up in the United States and currently resides in Barcelona. He is the son of acclaimed writer Robert Littell, who is well known for his spy novels. *Les Bienveillantes* was written in French as a tribute to two of the author's favorite writers, Stendhal and Flaubert. *Les Bienveillantes* won the *Prix Goncourt* by a vote of 7 to 3, and won the *Grand Prix du Roman* by a vote of 12 over two other novels, which each garnered four votes. For more information, please visit: www.gallimard.fr.



PARIS-SAN FRANCISCO ART EXCHANGE

Sixteen San Francisco-based artists recently welcomed Parisian artists for a joint exhibition of their work, in conjunction with San Francisco's "Open Studios" event. The California city was taking its turn at hosting, following the invitation for American artists from San Francisco and Chicago to travel to France last October to participate in a Parisian "Open Studios". The events aimed to celebrate the bond of appreciation for art regardless of nationality, and viewers enjoyed work in a variety of mediums, including print, ceramics, paintings, sculpture, and photography. Gavin Newsom, the mayor of San Francisco released a statement proclaiming October 11, 2006, as "Paris-San Francisco Artist Exchange Day." The document declared that "Since 1997, Paris and San Francisco have enjoyed a sister city relationship that continues to provide opportunities for city officials and citizens to experience and explore their respective cultures."



AMERICAN CHOREOGRAPHER HONORED IN FRANCE

William Forsythe, an American choreographer from New York, is being honored in France this fall with shows in Paris and then Lyon, an exposition in the Louvre, and the broadcasts of two television programs that Forsythe created for the French-German TV station, Arte. Known for his inventive exploration challenging the traditions of classical ballet, Forsythe has been regularly invited to France since his choreographic debut at the Paris Opera in 1983. He went on to become the resident choreographer for the Stuttgart Ballet and the Frankfurt Ballet. He then formed a company in his own name, all the while creating new works for companies across Europe and in the United States. In addition to his innovative choreography, Forsythe has also contributed to other forms of visual art, such as: film, architecture, and interactive multimedia. In Paris, a show created by Forsythe called "Three Atmospheric Studies" ran in early October in conjunction with the 35th Annual Paris Autumn Festival, which celebrates the creative arts. The exhibition in the Louvre (which runs from October 13 to December 11) highlights an installation that Forsythe created in cooperation with film director Peter Welz and combines painting, drawings, and video projections. Finally, the Opera Ballet of Lyon will perform "Limb's Theorem" in November, an important piece in Forsythe's repertory.



Marie Antoinette: Fashion Queen



Marie Antoinette, Franz Xaver Wagenschöncirca, circa 1770

OVER 200 years later and Marie Antoinette is still in vogue. Actress Kirsten Dunst was featured on the cover of the September 2006 issue of Vogue magazine for her role in Sofia Coppola's recently released movie about the young queen, *Marie*

creativity to give them a modern flair that reflect Antoinette's evolving personality. Canonero, who worked closely with Coppola, asserted that: "Sofia wanted a richness and a freshness for Marie Antoinette and the clothes needed to show her evolution from a very young girl to a sophisticated woman. You see more through her dresses how she gains more confidence, and even her décolletage becomes more emphasized."

Antoinette. But Marie Antoinette herself is still very much the stylish celebrity that she was in her own time. What is it about this fashionable queen that still piques the interest of fans and the media over two centuries later? In addition to Coppola's film, she is the topic of a recent PBS documentary and several books, including Caroline Weber's *Queen of Fashion: What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution*.

Weber's book presents a fashion history of Marie Antoinette. From her three-foot high "belle poule" hairstyles embellished with fruit, toys, and feathers, to her brocade hoop-skirts with bodices florid with bows, to her diamond-encrusted or fur-lined slippers, Marie Antoinette was a fashion pioneer who still inspires followers today. Reproductions of her childhood dresses and costume jewelry are on sale at the Louvre and other museums in France. American retailers Avenue and Anne Taylor Loft have added a Marie Antoinette touch to their fall fashions. Marc Jacobs based his Louis-Vuitton spring/summer 2007 collection on the latest movie, which devotes a great deal of screen time and considerable behind-the-scenes resources to Marie's passion for fashion.

The costumes for *Marie Antoinette* were always a central part of Coppola's vision for the film's design, so she sought out Academy Award-winning costume designer Milena Canonero who possessed both a historical understanding of 18th century styles and the



Kirsten Dunst, center, in Sophia Coppola's Marie Antoinette

Weber postulates that the cause for continued American fascination in a queen who reigned in France over 200 years ago might have something to do with the mythical air surrounding royalty in the American conception, in combination with an ever-popular interest in the lifestyles of the rich and famous. "Americans have always been hung up on royal families because we don't have our own. More than ever we're obsessed with celebrities," she explains.

How many celebrities will have their own soundtrack and clothing line 200 years after they have gone?

COURT SOCIETY AND FRIENDS OF A QUEEN

As part of her duties as queen, Marie Antoinette met and entertained several historically significant figures throughout her life.

As a child, she met child virtuoso Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart when he performed a short musical concert for the royal family. He allegedly asked for Marie's hand in marriage.

After the American War for Independence, the Marquis de La Fayette was greeted triumphantly upon his return to France and danced a quadrille with Marie Antoinette at the Trianon.

In 1778, Benjamin Franklin, the United States's first ambassador to France, visited Versailles to receive the King's formal assent to the treaties that made France the first country to recognize the United States as a sovereign nation. The picture below depicts Marie Antoinette sitting beside her husband, Louis XVI.

Marie Antoinette "Behind the Scenes"

Popular fascination with Marie Antoinette today highlights her legendary extravagance, but beyond the abstract, mythical conceptualization of France's most famous queen is her lesser known evolution from child to queen to mother.

On November 2, 1755, Marie Antoinette was born Maria Antonia Josepha Joanna, the fifteenth child of Empress Maria Theresa and Emperor François I of Austria. She lived a carefree childhood and received an education typical of a princess, intended to mold her into an elegant and refined young lady. To preserve the alliance Austria had formed with France during the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), Maria Antonia was betrothed to the dauphin of France, Louis XVI; grandson of Louis XV. She left for France at the age of 14 to start her new life and identity.

Before crossing the Rhine into France, Maria Antonia's ladies-in-waiting ceremonially removed her Austrian clothing and finery as they were a symbolic link to the House of Habsburg. She was dressed anew in French clothing to assume her new role as France's Crown Princess. With her new attire came her new name, Marie Antoinette.

When she first arrived she was far from being a daring sophisticate. Her first act establishing herself as an independent iconoclast was to refuse to wear the customary yet suffocating whalebone corset. Over the years she continued to flout convention, mainly through her attire. She delighted her grandfather-in-law Louis XV and shocked the public by taking up riding lessons and wearing men's breeches and a riding coat. She even commissioned an equestrian portrait of her in full riding attire on a rearing stallion, emulating her hero Louis XIV, the Sun King.

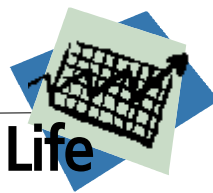
Marie Antoinette soon started reinventing fashion as a way to project power. Traditionally a queen would dress more modestly, eclipsed by the brilliance of the king's stunning outfits. Marie wanted to cultivate an appearance of political credit. Soon others imitated her authoritative hairstyles and grandiose dresses.

As she grew older she became less extravagant. After having her first child in 1778, a girl named Marie Thérèse Charlotte, and three others, Louis Joseph, Louis Charles, and Sophie Béatrix, she became a devoted mother. She eventually abandoned her elaborate wigs and dresses for a more modest and matronly appearance.

Besides hosting extravagant balls and dinners in the magnificent gowns and hairstyles for which she is most known, she enjoyed privacy and seclusion in the Petit Trianon her husband had given her as a wedding gift or hamlet she had constructed at Versailles. There she would escape the rigors of court society by playing shepherdess and farm girl while wearing more comfortable, provincial clothing. This side of Marie Antoinette can still be experienced today as her enclave, recently labeled "Marie Antoinette's Domain," is open to the ever-curious public (see nff. 06.09 for more information on le Petit Trianon - also available in online archives at: www.ambafrance-us.org/publi).



Franklin Urging the Claims of the American Colonies before Louis XVI, George Peter Alexander Healy, ca.1847



Touch Technology Brings Objects to Life

FRENCH scientists have perfected an innovative technology that brings objects to life and makes them interactive by touch alone. ReverSys™, the process offered by the Sensitive Object Company, uses sound to produce interfaces that respond to a touch or a sound.

Tap the vase in the hall and the house lights up, tap the wall and the door closes behind you, while a wall plate beside your bath allows you to adjust the temperature and the strength of flow.

These man-machine interfaces (MMI) are now possible thanks to the work of researchers at the CNRS "waves and acoustics" laboratory, a partner of Université Paris VII. This innovative technology, christened ReverSys™, patented and developed by Sensitive Object, is based on the recognition of the sound waves formed in an object when touched at a precise place. The sound of a blow hitting a table has its own acoustic signature at the point of impact. This signature, like a genetic fingerprint, is unique. The same blow hitting the table a few centimeters away will emit sound waves that will be distributed

in a different way. This property was revealed by a physical process called "temporal reversal" which precisely identifies the source of the sound waves emitted. The signal is recorded by sensors, and a single USB port on a conventional PC is all that is needed to run the device.

The first application implemented and now marketed by Sensitive Object based on this technology takes the form of a Virtual Keyboard. This small control panel can be personalized by assigning different functions to any key. "This virtual keyboard is designed for situations requiring a sterile environment, in particular dental surgeries and hospitals. The distribution of computing equipment in hospitals, especially in high-tech treatment units, contributes to the spread of bacteria which can cause nosocomial infections", points out Hervé Martin, managing director of Sensitive Object. It looks like a flat self-adhesive sticker with no wires and no mechanical parts, is very robust and can be easily disinfected. For more information, please visit: www.sensitive-object.com. ■

French Scientists Create New Variety of Apple

A NEW variety of apple has been perfected in France, to the delight of farmers and health-conscious consumers alike. The "Ariane" apple is naturally resistant to the fungus *Venturia inaequalis*, which causes apple spotting and scabbing. The variety was born in the United States, but the original cross-breed was small and inedible. Since 1979, scientists

at INRA (National Institute for Agronomical Research) in Angers, France, have been crossing different kinds of apples to create one that would yield a very strong resistance to offset the need for pesticides. This effort came to fruition at INRA with a seed parent of the "Florina" and "Prima" varieties and a pollen parent of "Golden Delicious."



New "Ariane Apple"

The resultant apple is medium-sized, with firm and crisp skin and a high level of sugar and acid. Since spotting is regarded as the greatest enemy of apple farmers, many in the profession consider the development of the Ariane apple to be the "most important technological advance in the field of fruit cultivation in the last 20 years." The 2006 apples are now available in grocery stores around the world and the season is expected to last until May. ■

First Low-Fare Airport



Ryanair is one low-fare airline traveling out of MP2

FRANCE has recently opened its first airport for low-fare airlines in Marseille, in the southeast of France. The MP2 (short for Marseille-Provence 2) is adjacent to the current Marseille-Provence airport. The terminal will offer direct flights to 19 destinations in Western Europe and Morocco by December. Seven budget airlines will serve as carriers for the MP2, including the well-known Ryanair, and the airport's directors are looking to expand.

The Marseille-Provence airport (which, at 400,000 low-fare passengers per year, is the country's fourth-largest) undertook the project to address the increasing demand for low-budget travel. Remodeled in two years from an old freight hall, services at MP2 have been reduced to a minimum—translating into less fees incurred by the consumer. Apart from respecting security standards, the decoration is basic, air conditioning non-existent and passengers must carry their own luggage to inspection points.

Jean-François Bigay, the president of Marseille-Provence, noted that the low-fare airline sector is "increasing by 25 percent a year as compared to five percent for the traditional market." ■

15TH SCIENCE FESTIVAL HOSTED IN FRANCE

France celebrated its 15th annual *Fête de la Science* (Science Festival) this year from October 9-15. Organized by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, the event was marked with over 3,500 presentations across the country and in France's overseas departments. The Festival was created in order to engage citizens in and to spark knowledge of scientific issues. This year's theme was "The Impact of the Environment on Health." Explaining the topic, Minister of Higher Education and Research François Goulard said, "The year 2006 has particularly emphasized the results of research on the connection between health and the environment, health and work, along with experimental measures to reduce the impacts of the environment and pollution on human health." There were 110 "Scientific Villages" across France, where visitors could explore various fields through information stands, expositions, debates, and shows. The festival is particularly significant as a liaison between scientists and the public, in that scientists were available to field questions and explain their work in many of the events. It also offered the opportunity for young people to explore potential careers in science. In Paris, the city offered a 15-stop "promenade" in the scientific quarter of la Montagne Sainte-Geneviève, where participants could visit the places that have harbored the work of researchers for the past 150 years. Strasbourg focused many of its presentations on air quality and atmospheric and household pollution.

ASTRONAUTS TURN TO FRENCH GASTRONOMY

Astronauts are now getting a taste of fine European meals at the International Space Station (ISS). The National Center for Space Studies (*Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales*) is working with the Alain Ducasse group (named for the famous French chef) to create meals for astronauts at the ISS. Food is an important consideration when planning space missions, and many factors, such as transport, storage space, and nutritional value have to be taken into consideration. According to French astronaut Jean-Pierre Haigneré, "sharing a really good meal provides some social interaction" and re-creates "a link with earth."

WORLD'S FIRST DEER CONCEIVED BY IN-VITRO FROM ANOTHER SPECIES

French scientists announced on October 21 the successful birth of the world's first deer conceived by in-vitro fertilization by another species. They hope this technique will help save threatened species in the future. Scientists, in order to test the process, implanted the embryo of a Japanese Sika deer, a non-threatened species, into a common deer. The deer delivered the healthy fawn, named Milou, in August. The technique is being experimented on in animals as a means of helping to repopulate endangered animal species. The researchers hope the process will help boost breeding programs by having common species carry the in-vitro fertilized embryos of closely related endangered species. In-vitro fertilization works by fertilizing an embryo outside the mother's uterus, and afterwards it's placed in the selected parent's womb for proper growth. This technique is different from cloning, where matured genetic material is taken from a host and is then placed in an embryo lacking its own nucleus.

FRENCH SOCCER TEAMS NOW TRADED ON STOCK EXCHANGE

The French National Assembly approved a bill on October 11 to allow French soccer teams to use the stock market as a medium of raising money. The Assembly's approval followed the European Commission's decision in late 2005 in support of allowing soccer clubs to float their values on the stock market. The new legislation is expected to increase French teams' ability to compete with wealthier clubs throughout Europe, in countries such as England, Germany, Italy and Spain—many of which already quote soccer teams on their respective markets.

FRANCE PREPARES TO HOST 2007 WORLD CUP FOR RUGBY

Bernard Lapasset, president of the French Rugby Federation and of the 2007 World Cup organizing committee, and French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy detailed on October 20 the Ministry's support for the 2007 World Rugby Cup in terms of issuing visas, accompanying measures for young people, cooperation projects to promote the international development of rugby, and communication plans for the final phase of the series. The sixth edition, which France is hosting for the first time, will take place in ten cities throughout France: Paris, Saint Denis, Toulouse, Nantes, Marseille, Lyon, Bordeaux, Lens, Saint Etienne and Montpellier, as well as two associated cities in the United Kingdom (Edinburgh and Cardiff). Nearly half a million foreign visitors are expected in France for the event, making it an ideal platform, beyond the sporting event itself, for strengthening exchanges between participating countries and France.

PAVILLON NOIR INAUGURATED IN AIX-EN-PROVENCE

A new National Choreographic Center, called the *Pavillon Noir* (picture below), was inaugurated in Aix-en-Provence, southwest France on Oct. 19. The building was designed by architect Rudy Ricciotti and financed in part by the French government and local sponsors. The Center will be directed by Angelin Preljocaj, an Albanian choreographer who is also the head of an Aix-based modern dance company of 24 dancers known as the *Ballet Preljocaj*, to which the building is dedicated. The facility is the first of its kind to be equipped with four studios and a main stage which can host 378 spectators. It is a structure composed of dark cement with voluminous windows that offer equilibrating transparency.



▷ Pavillon Noir/ Photo: JC Carbonne

to which the building is dedicated. The facility is the first of its kind to be equipped with four studios and a main stage which can host 378 spectators. It is a structure composed of dark cement with voluminous windows that offer equilibrating transparency.

CITY HALL IN PARIS AUCTIONS OFF ITS WINE CELLAR

Oenophiles (wine lovers) from across the world flocked to the City Hall of Paris, where Mayor Bertrand Delanoë held an auction of the city's wine cellar on October 20 and 21. Most of the wines had been collected between 1977 to 1995 and have since accrued significant value. Nearly 5,000 wines were auctioned off, and two bottles of Romanée Conti 1986 sold for 5,000 euros (approximately \$6,000) each. Another highlight that generated enthusiasm among bidders was the bottles of Château Pétrus Bordeaux appraised at 1,200 euros (\$1,440) each.



France Mourns Loss of Co-founder of *L'Express*


JEAN-JACQUES Servan-Schreiber, co-founder of the weekly *L'Express*, died on November 8 at the age of 82. In 1953, Mr. Servan-Schreiber launched *L'Express* with Françoise Giroud, which originally ran as a Saturday supplement to the family-owned newspaper *Les Echos*. After being inspired from a trip to the United States, Servan-Schreiber transformed *L'Express* into a weekly news magazine patterned after *TIME*. *L'Express* has been hailed as a mirror of French society, and counts among its contributors Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, and André Malraux.

Mr. Servan-Schreiber spent much of his life in the public spotlight of France, not only in his capacity with *L'Express*, but as an author and politician. In addition to writing two best-selling books, Mr. Servan-Schreiber decided to try his hand at politics. Among other posts, he served several terms in the French National Assembly.

According to the *New York Times*, Mr. Servan-Schreiber emerged as an intriguing personality, with the historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. calling him "a European of the Kennedy generation" in the forward to the book's American edition (1968). He

enjoyed being known only by the initials JJSS— the "most famous initials in France, along with BB, for Brigitte Bardot," he claimed in an interview with *The Washington Post* in 1981.

Servan-Schreiber later brought his expertise to the United States as an educator at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

French President Jacques Chirac reflected on the life of JJSS by saying, "One life wasn't enough to contain his energy, creativity and enthusiasm so he forged multiple destinies." 




J.J. Servan-Schreiber

New Technology Enables Self-guided Tour of Paris

JUST when you thought there were no more uses for your MP3 player, PDA or cell phone, software programmers have come up with a new role for these versatile gadgets: tour guide. Now travelers can download tour guiding software straight from the Internet or CDs into almost any MP3-compatible device. Not only can they tour Paris at their own pace, but visitors can choose the places of interest they would like to see, making them completely independent yet well informed. With

the touch of a button, an expert narrates the history and significance of the works of art and monuments right in front of them.

For those who do not have an MP3 device but still want to be free from being herded around with 20 other tourists, there is the Digi-Guide. A Digi-Guide is a Pocket PC you wear around your neck, already equipped with tour guiding software. It also comes with a mini-GPS system small enough to fit in your pocket. "Once the tour starts, you just follow the path displayed on the screen by locating yourself with the symbol indicating your position," explained Patrick Acoca, one of the two brains behind the Digi-Guide. Along the way, monuments, boutiques, or restaurants can be pointed out at the user's command. The technologically-challenged need not feel intimidated. "It is very simple to use; it has only three buttons," remarked Jean-Thomas Rouzin from the marketing department of Esri-France, the software designer for Digi-Guide.

A Digi-Guide Pack can be rented at select hotels, or by Internet or phone to be picked up at withdrawal points or delivered to you personally, anywhere in Paris. For more information on Digi-Guide, visit its Web site at www.digi-guide.com. 




▷ Photo: Reuters

Tourists visit Paris using new technology as guide

"Art Career Days" Provide Glimpse into the Life of Artisans

ARTISANS shared a glimpse of their know-how with the public during France's annual "*Journées des Métiers d'Art*" (Art Career Days) from October 19 - 22. Over 3,500 artisans, including goldsmiths, brickworkers, ironworkers, glovemakers, jewelers, and ceramic artists presented their craft in expositions throughout France. One hundred and fifty training centers, workshops, and schools opened their doors and more than 200 presentations were set up for visits in different French localities. In Paris, the art school of the Louvre worked out of the mayor's office in the 17th arrondissement to display the process of jewelry-making: from the sketch to the final fabrication.

The Art Career Days were organized at the initiative of Renaud Dutreil, Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises, Crafts industries, Trades, and the Private Practices in cooperation with the Society for the Encouragement of Art Careers (SEMA.) The aim of the annual event is to get out the word, especially to students, about potential career paths for artisans. Minister Dutreil spoke about how significant the artisan field is in the country: "The economic weight of the art trades is important in France as well as abroad. The companies create employment; many craftsmen are in search of apprentices and hope for an increase of their business in the future years. French craftsmen are eager to pass on their know-how to the next generation." 



French Farmers Spice Up Gastronomic Traditions

In an effort to spice up their products and evolve while simultaneously retaining their traditions, French farmers are experimenting with their gastronomic traditions. In a recent farm exposition in Paris October 21-22, which offered 200 vendors and attracted approximately 20,000 clients over the course of four days, visitors were able to sample the new wares. Among classic items on display, such as fish pâté and cheese, were the more exotic fusions, like chocolate foie gras and kiwi liquor.



Blackcurrent Ketchup

Reviews from those who sampled the new products were mixed. One enthusiast of black currant ketchup exclaimed, "I think it's a fabulous idea. It would go well with duck." The fruit farmers that had developed the ketchup, Isabelle and Sylvain Olivier, noted that the recipe was, in fact, adapted

from an 18th-century invention. On the other hand, one who tried the chocolate foie gras was not quite as intrigued by the idea, asserting that "there's a bitter aftertaste. It's a little different."

The French agricultural producers' foray into adventurous products represents an effort to compete in an evolving market place. Many farmers also expressed the hope that their new twists on conventional goods would offer consumers healthy ways to tempt their palate. In order to lure new customers, the farmers are trying to find a balance between tradition and innovation.

"The French public is now split in its attitude to good food. I think there are those who have lost their taste and those who still like to eat good food" said Eric Watiez, director of the Paris farm show. For more information, please visit: www.salonsfermiers.com.

Fifth Annual "White Night" in Paris Celebrates Art and Culture

KNOWN for its late-night liveliness, Paris celebrated its fabulous nightlife on October 7 with the 5th annual *Nuit Blanche* (White Night, or Sleepless Night.) The mayor's office organized the festivities, which included free cultural events and free entry to museums and swimming pools until 7 am. There were also several concerts and exhibitions in six of the city's districts. Parisians, tourists, and art lovers alike enjoyed the sights and sounds of the event, which included an "aquatic concert," where composer Michel Redolfi transmitted his sounds through water. Daring artistic



Place de la Concorde, Paris, illuminated during the nuit blanche

displays were created specifically for the event, such as an edible candy sculpture made by Felix Gonzalez-Torres and a giant Jacob's ladder by Thierry Dreyfus suspended off the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, France's national library. Along with all-night entry into such classics as the Louvre and Notre Dame, the revelers were also encouraged to explore galleries and venues off the beaten path. The idea for *Nuit Blanche* has caught on in many other cities, including Madrid, Rome, and Naples. Elaborating on the idea behind the event, artistic directors said that "*Nuit Blanche* opens the city to the world of art and invites everyone to discover the art of today at night, at the bend of a road, in an out-of-the-ordinary place, or in a prestigious building."

Anniversary of the Neanderthal

THE *Musée de l'homme* (Museum of Man) in Paris is commemorating the 150th anniversary of the discovery of the first fossilized Neanderthal in Düsseldorf, Germany. In 1856, two workers at a limestone quarry stumbled upon the remains believed to be a distant cousin to *Homo sapiens* in a cave in the Neander Valley just east of Düsseldorf. To this day, scientists have been trying to solve the enigma of the Neanderthal. The Museum is presenting an exhibition to explore what the way of life of the Neanderthals might have been like and what might have led to their disappearance 50,000 years ago. Did the Neanderthals use some kind of spoken language? How advanced was their cognitive capacity? Did they die off from hunger, cold or disease? The exhibit presents many theories regarding Neanderthal intelligence and physical characteristics.



Reconstruction of a Neanderthal by Elisabeth Daynès

fossils, along with a reconstruction of this human cousin by artist Elisabeth Daynès and the primitive tools they used. The exhibit runs from October 13 to January 8 of next year. For more information, please visit: www.mnhn.fr.

NEW INITIATIVE TO PRESERVE HERITAGE

The Institut de France, which works to preserve locations of important national heritage in the country, is receiving generous support from benefactors in France and across the world. To help finance its considerable undertakings, the Institut takes donations from benefactors at all levels of giving. For example, for 5 euros, a sponsor can contribute a roof slate to the Château Vaux-le Vicomte, which is currently undergoing renovation. The Institut provides recognition to these donors with an inscription of their name on the slate. In Versailles, for around 150 euros, art lovers can help refurbish statues of their choice on the grounds of the Sun King's (Louis XIV) residence. These generous donations are acknowledged, as well, with the benefactor's name etched on a plaque fixed to the base and on the scaffolding at the site. Sponsors can donate not only to famous cathedrals and museums but also to modest buildings, which are essential to remembering France's past. For more information, please visit www.institut-de-france.fr.

TROPHIES FOR FRENCH GASTRONOMIC SPIRIT

The French Association of Friends of the Spirit of Gastronomy announced October 24 the name of the four laureates of the 2006 Spirit of Gastronomy trophies, named for their contribution to French food and culture at the international agro-food trade show, SIAL. The reception was attended by the French Minister of Agriculture, and crowned four countries; India, Canada, Thailand, and Russia. Mrs. Karen Anand, from India, was awarded the cultural trophy for her writings and television emissions on French art of living and gastronomy. Mr. Hubert Sacy from Canada, the Director General of Alcohol Education, was awarded the science trophy for his efforts to promote in Quebec reduced alcoholic consumption by placing "Moderation has the best taste" on all alcoholic advertisements. Mr. Kittu Cha Sangmane, from Thailand, won the enterprise trophy for his development of the venerable old tea salon *Mariage Frères*. Lastly, a special trophy was awarded to French Professor and restaurant-owner Alexandre Smelianskyi from Russia, who created French brasseries where he holds literary parties designed to honor French authors.



Napoléon Exhibition Conquers South Carolina!



Napoléon crossing the Alps, Jacques-Louis David, ca. 1801

THE fascinating story of Napoléon Bonaparte is currently portrayed in a new exhibition titled *NAPOLÉON An Intimate Portrait* at South Carolina State Museum in Columbia. Created from the collection of 1st Empire authority and author, Pierre-Jean Chalençon, the exhibit showcases rare, personal belongings of Napoléon I, as well as some of the most famous depictions of him by the greatest artists of the time. While elements of the exhibition have been loaned for major exhibitions around the world, this is the first time these artifacts are being seen in North America.



Napoléon in His Study, Jacques-Louis David, 1812

NAPOLÉON An Intimate Portrait offers visitors an opportunity to see beyond the "legend" of Napoléon Bonaparte to gain an understanding of this complex figure as a man. User-friendly interpretive text and more than 250 objects, framed paintings, prints and documents, as

well as furniture from the Imperial palaces, shine a light on the life of one of history's pivotal figures.

The exhibition's signature artifact is Napoléon's hat, worn during his victory at the Battle of Essling in 1809. No icon of his extraordinary life is more recognizable than his famous hat, worn "broadside on," with brim aligned to his shoulders, to distinguish himself from the other officers on the battlefield. In this hat and others like it, he strode across the European continent and into the pages of history.

Curator Fritz Hamer explains that the exhibit delves into the life of an unforgettable figure: "Napoleon was one of the most fascinating characters in history, from his military genius and great victories to his famous defeats and exiles. He was also a 'self-made' man, who attained his position without being born to royalty, but through his own talent, determination, and vision." The exhibition runs in the South Carolina State Museum until January 1, when it moves to the Oklahoma City Museum of Art. For more information, please visit www.napoleonexhibit.com.

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Looking for the perfect cadeau?

To help you get ready for the holidays, the staff at **France Magazine** has been compiling our **2006 Holiday Gift List**—things we've tried, things we own, things we wish we owned....

On our Web site, you'll find all our favorite French things listed with links to online purveyors.

Come back often—we will be updating the list through the end of the year. It's one-stop shopping for all your favorite Francophiles!

Joyeuses Fêtes!

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