Prime Minister de Villepin Reaffirms France's Fight Against Anti-Semitism at World Jewish Congress

FRENCH Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin delivered a speech at the dinner of the World Jewish Congress held on November 12 in Paris reaffirming France's commitment to combat racism and anti-Semitism.

Prime Minister de Villepin highlighted measures that France has undertaken in the fight against anti-Semitism. Among them, France has stepped up surveillance of sensitive sites and departments with the highest incidences. Approximately 1,200 officers, plus local police and gendarmerie forces are assigned exclusively to the security of Jewish community religious and cultural premises. In addition, a program to make sensitive buildings more secure has been included in the budget of the Interior Ministry. France has strengthened legislative measures against racist, anti-Semitic, and xenophobic acts which has become one of the toughest in the world. The Prime Minister emphasized France's vigilance by pointing to the Interministerial Committee to fight Racism and Anti-Semitism, which meets several times a year to monitor domestic progress. "Increasing preventative measures," said Mr. de Villepin at the World Jewish Congress, "means being faithful to our duty of remembrance. France is facing up to her past." As an example, he highlighted the annual day devoted to remembrance of the Shoah being introduced in schools. As a result, anti-Semitic acts in France fell by 47 percent in 2005, compared with the previous year. "But," says Prime Minister de Villepin, "we must keep up our vigilance because we will win this battle only over time."

Prime Minister de Villepin also stressed the need for a continued French-Israeli friendship: "to wage this battle, we have to strengthen the Franco-Israeli relationship still further. Since 2002, we have made considerable headway on the path of dialogue and friendship between our two peoples. We have stepped up our political exchanges (...) we have also stepped up our cooperation. France is determined to place this friendship, this commitment, at the service of peace. At a time when the region is running the risk of a new outbreak of violence, France stands resolutely at Israel's side. She will not compromise on Israel's security, which can be achieved only through the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is the whole thrust of France's and Europe's commitment in the Middle East."

Minister Douste-Blazy Assesses the Situation in Darfur

FRENCH Minister of Foreign Affairs Philippe Douste-Blazy traveled to Egypt and Sudan to encourage the strengthening of African forces and to provide an opportunity to exchange views on the situation in Darfur. The region lies at the crossroads of the Arab and African worlds. "Nearly 250,000 people have been murdered in Darfur, and 2.5 million people have been displaced [by this conflict]," Minister Douste-Blazy said in an op-ed published in the French newspaper Le Figaro.

Addressing the United Nations General Assembly on September 19, French President Chirac characterized the situation in Darfur by saying, "A crime against humanity looms." As far as France is concerned," stated Minister Douste-Blazy, "it cannot possibly resign itself simply to speaking out." So far, France has provided 76 million euros (approximately $100 million) bilaterally and multilaterally for Darfur's civilians. There are 13 UN agencies, 84 NGOs, and 14,000 humanitarian workers on the ground.

"In Egypt and Sudan, I wanted to meet those who are ready to help us in the quest for a lasting solution," Minister Douste-Blazy explained. He met with President Mubarak in Egypt, and in Sudan with President al-Bashir as well as U.N., E.U., and NGO representatives. On November 12 in Khartoum, he proposed "an intermediate solution which would make it possible to strengthen the effectiveness of AMIS—the African Union force—on Sudanese territory, while respecting that country's sovereignty."

On November 16, the Addis Ababa meeting, organized under the auspices of Secretary General of the U.N. Kofi Annan and attended by France, began to map out the modalities of the international community's response and to facilitate humanitarian aid. "France is relying of the Sudanese authorities' ability to accept on their country's borders an international presence capable of assisting the return of stability in the area", says Minister Douste-Blazy. There is also the risk of the situation in Darfur spreading to Chad and the Central African Republic.

The foreign minister asserted that "neither France nor the international community desire Darfur's secession or the dismantling of the Sudanese administration. Our sole objective is to take the political heat out of the region and further regional stability. For its part, France is ready to make active efforts to facilitate new talks."

The minister of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed France's commitment to implementing a solution to the situation in Darfur, stating that "everyone has their share of responsibility. The aim is not to impose a blueprint from elsewhere, but, through dialogue, to achieve a responsible solution in everyone's interest. This is what France, under President Chirac's impetus, has always sought. It is on this condition that we shall be able to move forward on the path of restoring peace, which, first and foremost, for the suffering civilians, means a promise of regaining dignity and security, too long neglected."
FORMER President of France Valéry Giscard d'Estaing bestowed the Tocqueville Award on former Secretary of State Colin Powell for his autobiography, My American Journey on November 30.

Alexis de Tocqueville, renowned for his book Democracy in America, is considered in France as well as the United States to be one of the greatest thinkers of liberalism. His work has been translated into multiple languages and has played an integral role in examining democratic systems.

In addition to his life as an author, Alexis de Tocqueville was also a politician. He served as Minister of Foreign Affairs (akin to the position of Secretary of State) in 1849 under the Second Republic.

In memory of Alexis de Tocqueville’s contributions to literature, the Conseil Général of la Manche and the Regional Council of Basse-Normandie created a literary prize Le Prix Tocqueville in 1979 to honor writers whose insight parallels that of de Tocqueville. The prize, which also carries a stipend of approximately $18,750, has been offered in the past to such influential persons as ex-president François Mitterrand and ex-Prime Minister Raymond Barre.

Born April 5, 1937, Powell had an outstanding military career. On January 20, 2001, Powell became the first African American Secretary of State, and in 2003, Powell published his well-received autobiography.

France Breaks Ground on First-ever Ecological High School

The construction of Europe’s first “ecological” high school is under way in France.

The building will be located in Poitiers, France, and is expected to open its doors to 500 students in a little less than three years. Ségolène Royal, the representative of the Poitou-Charentes region and the Socialist Party’s candidate for next year’s presidential elections, laid the first stone in a ceremony that marked the groundbreaking. Royal said the high school “demonstrates that it is possible to have a public building with zero fossil fuels (energy obtained from gas, carbon, and petroleum).”

The designers of the project aim for the new high school to be a model for reducing energy consumption detrimental to the environment.

Memorial Dedicated to Harlem Hellfighters

ARMISTICE Day ceremonies throughout France came on the heels of another ceremony less than two months ago honoring WWI veterans. On September 29, a memorial was unveiled in honor of the 369th Infantry Regiment. Better known as the “Harlem Hellfighters,” the all African-American 369th Infantry Regiment was assigned to the French Army for the duration of the U.S.’s participation in WWI. They were among the first American units to arrive in France during WWI. Wearing a combination of U.S.-issued uniforms and French-issued helmets and brown leather pouches, the Harlem Hellfighters fought under French command during various campaigns. The unveiling marked the 88th anniversary of the battle to liberate Sèvèchault, in northern France’s Ardennes Mountains, during which their participation was crucial. A third of the regiment suffered casualties during this battle. Following the war, the French government recognized the regiment for their gallantry and heroism by decorating 171 members with the Cross of War, and one officer with the Legion of Honor. The memorial, a 12” tall black granite obelisk with gilded inscriptions and the regiment’s crest and coiled rattlesnake insignia, is a replica of the memorial that already stands in Sèvèchault.

Members of the U.S. and French armed services were present at the ceremony, as well as French Consul General François Delattre who spoke at the unveiling. Consul Delattre paid homage to the 369th Infantry Regiment’s heroism in WWI by highlighting its part in the victory of 1918 and bringing to the forefront the regiment’s important contribution to the friendship between France and Harlem, between France and the African-American community, and between France and the U.S.
French Cultural Aid to Louisiana Post-Katrina


Founded in 1968 by Jacques Domengieux, a Louisiana attorney and French-speaking senator, Codifil, a US-incorporated agency, intends to revive and develop the practice of French in Louisiana.

The renewal of these agreements will be the occasion for France and Louisiana to reaffirm their commitment to strengthening educational, academic and linguistic cooperation in order to consolidate the Francophone dimension of the state. To this end, these agreements have been revised in response to action by the State of Louisiana which has launched, in the framework of its plan to rebuild areas destroyed by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, a number of educational and cultural projects to which France is contributing.

Some of the projects include: Support for the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) and the Historic New Orleans Collection; sponsorship of musicians’ residences throughout France (Odyssey program) as well as various music festivals; historic preservation projects such as the renovation of a Creole cottage, a plantation, a church, a convent and a house. In addition, the Université d’Orléans (France) welcomed 35 students from the University of New Orleans for two semesters and provided tuition and lodging. The French American Cultural Exchange (FACE) relief fund provided significant assistance for schools in New Orleans and has also supported various other cultural foundations, including: the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, the Resource Center at Louisiana State University, the Alliance Française of New Orleans and Lafayette, and a Multimedia Center for Pedagogic Training.

The cultural initiatives complement those taken in the field of education by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Agency for the Teaching of French Abroad. For more information, please visit: www.ambafrance-us.org.

NBA Welcomes French Basketball Players

The Seattle Supersonics are now benefiting from the skills of two French basketball players, Johan Petro and Mickaël Gelabale. Gelabale joined the team for the 2006-2007 season, while Petro already has a year under his belt with the Sonics. Lojze Milosavljevic, the Sonics’ European recruiter, expressed his enthusiasm for the potential of Gelabale, a 6’7” point guard: “He has great athletic potential, he’s a strong shooter off of the dribble, and a good defensive player.”

Frenchman Boris Diaw was voted Most Improved Player for 2005-2006

Another French player, Boris Diaw, recently agreed to a five-year contract extension with the Phoenix Suns. Diaw, nicknamed “Mr. Versatility” for his formidable presence all over the court, won the NBA’s Most Improved Player Award last year. In the 2006 post-season, Diaw averaged 18.7 points in 20 games.

Petro, Gelabale, and Diaw are among seven French players currently active in the NBA, along with Mickaël Pietrus, Ronny Turiaf, Yakhouba Diawara, and Tony Parker. Parker, one of the quickest players in the NBA, has become a household name as a point guard for the San Antonio Spurs.

40th Annual ACTFL Conference

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) held its 40th Annual Meeting and Exposition November 16-19 in Nashville. At the forefront of this year’s conference was ACTFL’s Discover Languages public awareness initiative: a campaign that launched one year ago to rally support for language education among the general public and to energize those in the profession to renew their efforts to promote language learning at the local level. With over 10,000 visitors last year, the event attracted administrators, methods instructors, and students alike.

Exhibitors at this year’s event in the heartland of country music included embassies, public and private organizations that promote language education, and also a large variety of cultural and gastronomic companies. The Cultural Services of the French Embassy was present at the exposition, with a display called the French Pavilion, which offered a contest about the French-speaking world, chocolate tasting, and French music. The French Embassy, the Government of Quebec, Bayard Presse-Milan Presse, the University of Quebec in Chicoutimi, the American Association of Teachers of
The Life of CHANEL

Gabrielle “Coco” Chanel (August 19, 1883-January 10, 1971) was an iconic French couturier whose revolutionary philosophy, modern femininity, and legendary fashions have made her one of the most important figures in the history of 20th century fashion.

Fashion Show: Paris Collections 2006 debuted on November 12, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. This exhibition, running until March 18, 2007, brings together the latest designs from 10 of the most influential and creative fashion houses, including Chanel. Highlighting approximately 10 pieces from Chanel’s spring couture, the exhibit explores contemporary fashion in Paris. Chanel’s selections feature “pure Chanel,” a collection of youthful updates of the classic suit, as well as subtle references to house signatures. The Chanel exhibition mannequins wear the same flat, white go-go boots as did Coco in the 1950s.

Chanel was born in Saumur, France, the daughter of Albert Chanel and his lover Jeanne Devolle. Gabrielle had five siblings: three sisters, and two brothers, one of whom died after WW II, using boxy lines and shortened skirts, allowing women to leave their corsets behind so they could be free for the work made necessary by war. Elements of this “boxiness” and design remain at the foundation of the elegant House of Chanel. She updated her classic looks in 1954 and the Chanel suit became the status symbol for a new post-war generation. Famous for her many love affairs, Coco Chanel never married, and for more than 30 years, she called the Hôtel Ritz in Paris her home. When she broke off an engagement to the Duke of Westminster, Chanel notoriously asserted, “there are many dukes, but there is only one Chanel.” Chanel’s influence on haute-couture was such that she was the only person in the field to be named on TIME Magazine’s 100 most influential people list. But there is only one Coco Chanel...

Where should one use perfume? asked a young woman. “Wherever one wants to be kissed,” Chanel famously replied. In 1921, the House of Chanel, and the world of perfume, was changed forever by one creation: Chanel No. 5. The scent, the first perfume created by a couture designer, has been the best-selling Chanel product ever since, and was the first perfume ever to be sold worldwide. Until its inception, most perfumes produced were organic-based and exuded a natural “beautiful” floral aroma, designed to enhance a woman’s beauty with sweetness and flowers. Coco Chanel subscribed to the aesthetic theory that “ugly” placed next to “beautiful”, by contrast, makes the beauty more pronounced. Chanel No. 5 was the first artificial perfume introduced to heavily rely on synthetic aldehydes to contrast and therefore highlight a woman’s natural beauty. Before synthetics, perfume either had to be applied heavily before going out to ensure that the fragrance would last, or reapplied throughout the night.

The perfume still has a sales growth rate of over 18 percent, and occupies 5 percent of the world market share for perfume. Sales of Chanel No. 5 have soared ever since it was introduced in the U.S. in the 1950s. The perfume was immediately embraced by the masses and Hollywood alike. Famous spokes-models for the fragrance include Nicole Kidman and Marilyn Monroe. In 1953, when asked in a press interview what she wore to bed, Monroe playfully replied, “two drops of Chanel No. 5.” Andy Warhol, as a tribute to the cultural icon of Chanel No. 5, created nine silk screens of the perfume. The design of the perfume bottle Chanel No. 5 itself was considered to be a work of art. In 1959 it was inducted into the Museum of Modern Art in New York’s collections. Today, it is estimated that a bottle of Chanel No. 5 is sold every 30 seconds.

Coco Chanel is remembered as a leader whose fashion ingenuity helped to liberate and re-define women. She served as a role model of grace, beauty, and femininity defined by simplicity. By shortening skirts and designing comfortable pant suits, Chanel afforded women the sort of comfort and ease hitherto reserved for men’s fashions.

“Dress shabbily and they remember the dress; dress impeccably and they remember the woman,” echoed one of Chanel’s maxims that is omnipresent in her designs. It was Chanel who saw past the corset and replaced it with comfortable, sexier clothing. She demonstrated that women could wear pants and still be feminine. In 1926, she introduced “the little black dress,” which was fabricated from jersey—the comfortable fabric used in men’s shirts. The dress was classic, sexy, and came in only one color: black. Today “the little black dress” is seen as a beacon in the fashion industry that lends itself to be either dressed up or down, and allows the woman, and not her clothes, to shine.

Chanel championed simple lines and utility in order that women feel comfortable in their skin and their clothing. Her fashion empire, at her death, brought in over $160 million a year. Yet at the time of her death, the woman Picasso termed “the most sensible in the world” had a Paris wardrobe consisting of only three outfits. More than a fashion icon, she brought about a way of life and fashion that was championed by other cultural icons, such as Marilyn Monroe, Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis, Catherine Deneuve and Audrey Hepburn. She has been portrayed on Broadway by Katharine Hepburn and on screen by the French actress Marie-France Pisier. The influence of the House of Chanel in the fashion world continues to be extremely important, and Coco Chanel remains an influential legend. Chanel changed not only how women looked but how they looked at themselves.

Audrey Hepburn in a “little black dress” in “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” (1961)
France Télécom Get the Picture!

France Télécom announced on November 7 that it is going into the film business. While the company has stressed it will leave the production to the experts, the new unit it has created aims to co-produce 10 to 15 French and European films a year in conjunction with key figures in the sector. The new subsidiary will be part of the Content Division and will be headed by Patricia Langrand.

"It is only right that they should financially support the film industry," states Michel Gomez, Director General of ARP (Association of Authors, Directors and Producers). Gomez thinks France Télécom is moving in the right direction with this new venture, which he calls a "logical move, in keeping with the way the industry is evolving." Consumers will be watching more and more videos on nontraditional devices such as portable media players, cell phones and soon, perhaps even watches. Holding the rights to the content of these video streams could be a lucrative endeavor.

France Télécom states that this operation is fully in line with its strategy, which aims to move from a network access logic to a service access logic. The move reflects France Télécom's commitment to playing a key role in the pre-financing of French and European cinema, contributing to its diversity and safeguarding the key balances in this sector.

"With the creation of this subsidiary, with a dedicated team and resources, France Télécom, with its Orange brand, is firmly committed to supporting cultural diversity and its financing," explains Didier Lombard, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of France Télécom.

Though the new entity has yet to be formally named, its director has. Frédérique Dumas, a renowned independent producer of such films as Oscar winner No Man's Land and Golden Lion winner Before the Rain, will be heading the nascent project. She has also served as the ministerial adviser for cinema for the French culture and communications ministry (1986-1988), head of development at Polygram Audiovisuel, chairman of the producers' union (Chambre Syndicale des Producteurs) and the cinematographic industry liaison office (Bureau de Liaison des Industries Cinématographiques).

Economic News

French Stocking Company Launches Lingerie Line

Le Bourget™, a well-known French stocking company is launching a line of lingerie to celebrate its 80th anniversary. Traditionally, Le Bourget™ has focused its efforts on producing pantyhose. The scope of the launch of the lingerie line for their 80th anniversary, however, includes a new demographic: young professional women. The new line of lingerie will communicate a fresh, modern attitude, and will serve as a reminder that stockings can always be chic. "Young women," explains Thierry Simon, General Director of Le Bourget™, "have spent their adolescence in jeans and don't really wear stockings..." The fashion today of short skirts is in our favor, and our first collection of lingerie 'Les Dessous Chics' (name of new line) will coordinate our stockings with our lingerie.

Women's stockings have reflected the ever-evolving standards of fashion and social norms throughout Le Bourget's history. During the 1950s, French icon Bridgette Bardot (and her legs in particular) were featured in advertisements for Le Bourget™. The company became one of the largest producers of nylon stockings in the 1960s. It was Le Bourget™ who invented the new fabric Voilance, a slightly gauzier version of nylon, perhaps best known by their famous slogan, "the best invention since skin."

Even though Le Bourget's products have evolved throughout the past eight decades, the company has maintained its quality assurance. "Le Bourget™ stockings have a history, roots, and values that have made the difference for 80 years," explains Simon, "but at the heart of the textile sector that has evolved so much these last years, it's better to launch into the future than to return to the past."

International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor

The European Union, the United States, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation signed an agreement, November 21 at the Elysée Palace, to establish the international organization that will implement the ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) fusion energy project. ITER, representing the world's largest international scientific partnership, aims to provide a new, safe energy source, via fusion energy.

The program provides for the construction, then operation, of the international thermonuclear reactor at Cadarache, in the Bouches du Rhône department-the site selected by the parties in June 2005. Among the goals of ITER is to improve understanding and to master the phenomena of controlled thermonuclear fusion so as to have a virtually inexhaustible energy supply.

"It is our duty to undertake the research that will prepare energy solutions for our descendants. This major scientific project is one of the most innovative programs to steer this tremendous change. It is the hand held out to future generations, in the name of solidarity and responsibility... For the first time ever, seven major partners-Japan, Russia, China, the United States, Korea, India and Europe-represent half of humanity, have joined forces to build an immense scientific facility," President Chirac said at the signing.

Fusion energy-commonly called "star energy"-is produced by nuclear reactions, which, in matter in the plasma state, enable the sun and stars to give off light and heat. Fusion does not pose a problem in terms of the availability of the resources needed in the long run: it uses elements which are available in practically inexhaustible abundance (deuterium and lithium, present in seawater, in particular). Moreover, fusion is an environmentally attractive process: it produces no greenhouse gas emissions and no long-lasting, highly radioactive waste. Finally, the process is safe: there is no risk that the reactor could have a "meltdown" or "runaway reaction." ITER will be the most significant scientific program in the world for the next 30 years.

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Beaujolais Nouveau Has Arrived

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ID-November marks a special occasion in France, and indeed, for wine lovers around the world. It is the much-anticipated annual arrival of the Beaujolais Nouveau, a crisp, fruity red wine best consumed young and slightly chilled.

By French law, the Beaujolais Nouveau cannot be opened until the third Thursday of November. The wine hails from the Beaujolais region, which is near Lyon, France’s third largest city. The Gamay grape used to make the wine must be picked by hand, and is then harvested, fermented and bottled just six weeks before its shipment around the world. It is estimated that 65 million bottles of Beaujolais Nouveau are consumed on the occasion.

The Beaujolais Nouveau’s popularity and consumption are due in part to its reputation as the most “white” of red wines, because it is refreshing, served cool, and has little tannin. The best-selling brand of Beaujolais Nouveau is Georges DuBoeuf, whose bottles can usually be identified because of their whimsical, colorful labels (as shown in the image).

Beaujolais Nouveau’s popularity has transcended French borders and is now celebrated in various cities throughout the world. For example, Washington, D.C., celebrated the event at Dupont Circle’s Bistrot du Coin on November 15. At the stroke of midnight, the District’s Mayor, Anthony A. Williams, popped the first cork, and the Bistro offered complimentary Beaujolais until closing time.

Hip New High-Tech Hotel Opens in Paris

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NEW hotel on the Champs-Elysées, considered a veritable Parisian palace, has redefined luxury and cutting-edge technology. Fouquet’s Barrière, located at the intersection of Paris’s most famous street and Avenue George-V, opened on November 3. The Barrière is built around an interior garden designed by architect Edouard François, with a terrace that offers a panoramic view of Paris.

With flat-screen TVs in each room (and sometimes in the bathrooms), iPod outlets in each corner, wireless Internet connection, and a scanner, printer and color photocopier built into every desk, the technology-savvy are sure to be pleased. However, the Barrière still offers the regal charm of such a hotel, with a monumental stairway, vaulted walls, and personalized butler service for each of the 107 rooms.

The luxury hotel is the first “palace hotel” built in Paris in almost 80 years. The Hotel Georges V, which opened its doors in 1928, was the last such hotel built before the Barrière. François designed the building in “Hausmann” style and the cornerstone of La Barrière is legendary restaurant, Le Fouquet, which has been a staple of Parisian society since its inception in 1899.

Mushroom Enthusiasts Eating Up End of Season

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RENCH mushroom foragers raced to gather as many mushrooms as possible until the first frost settled in November. France consumes hundreds of tons of wild mushrooms each year in their mushroom sauces, mushroom omelets, quiches, and other dishes. There is usually one significant harvest in June and another in September. In addition to these two harvests, forests typically fill with foragers in search of “cépes,” beefy brown toadstools that are considered to be the “royalty” of wild mushrooms, about a week after a soaking rain, as well as the gourmelle rose—a melt-in-your-mouth fungus that is finer than cépes.

Foragers also spend the month of November in search of the last crop before winter sets in. They are waiting for the coup de grâce of mushrooms: the “gris de sapin,” which comes only with first frost, when the other fungi die.
French, market. “We needed to understand what the European will adapt his products to a European, more specifically graphic.”

Tommy Hilfiger Established Presence in Paris

The series was the collaboration of Jean-Jacques Sempé most famous schoolboy in France and his band of friends. have been collected into a second volume celebrating the 1965 in the newspapers group of schoolchildren in the mid-20th century. Now, 45 of the Louvre, launched her study was the painting found in the halls an exploration of the topic in art; a central piece that Stranger at Home.”) The events

Second Volume of Petit Nicolas Released

PETIT NICOLAS (Little Nicholas), one of France’s most beloved cartoon characters is making a reappearance, much to the delight of fans of all ages. Comparable to the American cartoon Peanuts, Petit Nicolas chronicled the adventures of a group of schoolchildren in the mid-20th century. Now, 45 episodes of the cartoon, published between 1959 and 1965 in the newspapers Sud Ouest Dimanche and Pilote, have been collected into a second volume celebrating the most famous schoolboy in France and his band of friends. The series was the collaboration of Jean-Jacques Sempé and René Goscinny, who is also well-known for his creations Astérix and Lucky Luke. Drawn in black and white, “Petit Nicolas” is written from the perspective of its title character and is a charming look at the everyday life of a child, from a tyrannical headmaster to unwanted trips to the barber to schoolyard romance.

The release of the second Petit Nicolas collection by publisher Phaidon Editions coincides with a program by Phaidon Press (an international art book publisher) to reissue, and in many cases publish in English for the first time, much of Sempé’s work. Sempé began to gain attention in the United States especially in the 1970s when his artwork appeared in The New Yorker, which continues to feature his covers and drawings. For the month of November, Phaidon brought out Sempé’s Martin Pebble, Nicholas Again (a Petit Nicolas book), Monsieur Lambert, and four volumes of collected cartoons.
The French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF), which is the New York chapter of Alliance Française, celebrated its 42nd anniversary of “Cinéma Tuesdays” with a retro-spective on the career of director Jacques Audiard, considered the new master of French thrillers. The film series kicked off with *De Battre, mon coeur s’est arrêté* (The Beat That My Heart Skipped), a Hitchcock-style suspense about a young man caught between the dark side of his father’s business and the beauty of his late mother’s gift of music. FIAF also provided guests with the opportunity to meet the director following the screening. Moderated by director James Toback, Audiard answered questions about his films from fans in the audience.

In the spirit of “Cinéma Tuesdays,” the following Tuesdays showcased the rest of Audiard’s full-length features to date, *Sur mes lèvres* (Read My Lips), *Un Héros très discret* (A Self-Made Hero), and *Regarde les hommes tomber* (See How They Fall), as well as *Vénus Beauté* (Venus Beauty Institute), a film that Audiard worked on as a consultant.

At the outset of his professional career, Audiard wanted to be a professor, but dived into the movie industry instead, first as a film editor and then as a screenwriter. Audiard’s directorial career has earned him many admirers, both in France and the United States. With his deft and surprising camera angles, Audiard successfully establishes a feeling of tension that prevails in his films. He is frequently compared to filmmakers like Jean-Pierre Melville and Henri-Georges Clouzot.

For more information about events at an Alliance Française near you, please visit: www.afusa.org.