

## France's Foreign Minister Visits India

*The two-day visit was Michel Barnier's first as France's foreign minister to the world's largest democracy.*

**F**RENCH FOREIGN MINISTER Michel Barnier visited India on October 27 and 28 in order to meet the members of India's new government, including Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh, Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee and other political leaders. Barnier reaffirmed the importance France attaches to the Franco-Indian strategic partnership (established in 1998) and looked at ways to deepen it.

The two nations are natural partners, as they share the same positions on many key international issues, and cooperate very closely in the fight against global terrorism (France and India set up a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism in 2001). The Indian external affairs minister noted that "India and France both agree that international terrorism is a serious challenge to open, democratic, multi-religious and multi-cultural societies. We have reiterated our determination to continue to work closely, to counter the menace of terrorism."

France and India are also important commercial partners, with bilateral trade worth around \$3.25 billion. Indian officials confirmed the purchase of 10 Mirage jet fighters from Dassault Aviation, and indicated that the French company is in the running for an additional order of 124 aircraft. Talks on the sale of six Scorpene submarines

for \$2.5 billion and 43 A-320 Airbus aircraft made good progress.

France's foreign minister, who cited India's "exemplary record" handling civilian nuclear technology, asked it to consider participating in the International Themonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project. This massive \$25-billion research undertaking, to which the United States, the European Union, Japan, South Korea, China and Russia have already signed up, will seek to build a functioning fusion energy reactor. Such a reactor, if technically feasible, would go a long way toward solving the world's energy needs.

According to France's foreign minister, India, the world's largest democracy, its second most populated country and an emerging economic powerhouse, has clearly become a major player in world affairs, and must be treated as such. Indeed, Barnier repeated that France unreservedly supports, as it has for the past four years, India's bid for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.

Barnier took part in a debate on India, France and Europe, and inaugurated the new Alliance Française in Delhi. An increasing number of Indians are signing up for French language classes in the Alliance Française network, which covers 22 Indian cities and is the most important foreign cultural network in India. 



Foreign Minister Michel Barnier (left) and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi.

Photo by: Getty Images / AP Photo

## INSIDE

- 2 L'événement**  
*Chirac Visits China*
- 3 France-Amérique**  
*Ingrid Bétancourt Honored by Embassy*
- 4 Profil**  
*Rimbaud: Poet, Rebel*
- 5 Économie / Science**  
*IFREMER Turns 20*
- 6 Société**  
*France's Favorite Books*
- 7 Culture**  
*Jacques Derrida (1930-2004)*
- 8 Chez nous**  
*The Art of Ethnography*



## ISAF Commander Asks NATO for Reinforcements In Afghanistan

**G**ENERAL JEAN-LOUIS PY of France, who commands the NATO-led International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, told NATO ambassadors in Brussels on October 27 that he thought the number of troops deployed in Afghanistan will probably need to be increased. He said this was necessary to expand the NATO mission to western Afghanistan in order to ensure a secure setting for the four elections due to be held in April 2005 (for the upper and lower houses of the Afghan parliament, as well as for provincial and district elections). General Py hopes that the Alliance will decide on the increase before the end of November so that the parliamentary elections scheduled for April 23 can take place satisfactorily. Commenting on the recent presidential election, General Py applauded the Afghan people for their "courage" which he said had "impressed" him.

The 9,000-strong ISAF force, under NATO mandate, is engaged in operations in Kabul and in nine of the 34 provinces, with a mission to secure the country by preventing possible outbreaks of violence, monitoring the profiles of the 10,000 potential candidates and strengthening local administrations. General Py hopes ISAF will also take on a greater role in the indispensable fight against rampant drug trafficking.

Participants in the talks in Brussels also discussed a possible merger of ISAF and the U.S. army command that is engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom to track down terrorist groups in southern and eastern Afghanistan. At present, General Py considers the American mandate (hunting terrorists) and the ISAF mission (bringing security to the country) to be very different. A merger of the two commands therefore strikes him as difficult to envision for now. 



"Picnic on wine," Sandy Skoglund (U.S.), 2003.

### BARNIER WELCOMES MODERN ARTISTS

On the occasion of the 31st International Contemporary Art Fair (FIAC), French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier held a reception on October 22 for the artists whose works were displayed in what has become one of the world's major art events. Barnier honored the artists' contribution to cultural diversity in an increasingly globalized world. Of the 214 galleries that participated in this year's edition, half were from outside France, including a record 15 from the United States. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture jointly sponsor the Association Française d'Action Artistique, a network that helps artists based in France gain international exposure. Please visit [www.fiac-online.com](http://www.fiac-online.com) and [www.afa.asso.fr](http://www.afa.asso.fr).



**Foreign Minister Michel Barnier (left) and Israeli President Moshé Katsav in Jerusalem on October 18**

**FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER MAKES FIRST VISIT TO ISRAEL**

French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier made his first diplomatic visit to Israel on October 16 and 17. Barnier first paid his respects to French Jews killed during the Holocaust at the Roglit Memorial in Jerusalem. There, he strongly reiterated France's zero-tolerance policy towards anti-Semitism. The foreign minister also met with President Moshe Katsav, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his counterpart Silvan Shalom. Barnier stressed France's and the European Union's support for the Middle East peace process and called Israel's gradual withdrawal from the Gaza Strip a vital step toward a durable peace.

**FRANCE EMBARKS ON 3RD GENERATION NUCLEAR POWER**

State-owned Électricité de France (EDF) announced on October 20 that it will begin building France's first third-generation pressurized-water nuclear reactor at Flamanville in Normandy (construction is slated to be complete by 2007). Reactors using the new technology will gradually replace France's 58 current reactors, which provide 80 percent of the country's electricity. EDF president Pierre Gadonneix declared that nuclear

power will "ensure Europe's energy independence in the coming decades."

**FRENCH FAVOR GLOBAL TAX TO HELP POOR COUNTRIES**

A recent poll indicated that four out of five French respondents favor an international tax, the proceeds of which would go toward economic aid for third world countries. Among those in favor of the tax, the preferred means of collecting such funds would be through a levy on financial and multinational transactions (49 percent), followed by a tax on greenhouse-gas emitters (30 percent). French President Jacques Chirac proposed such an international tax on September 20, during the annual U.N. summit of world leaders (see NFF 04.10).

# Chirac Launches "Year of France" in China

**T**HIS OCTOBER marks the beginning of the Year of France in China, which was kicked off by an official visit by French President Jacques Chirac (see NFF 04.11). For the next ten months, the Chinese public will be treated to an impressive program of a little over a hundred exhibitions, concerts and other cultural events, many of which having as their background China's own historic sites, such as the Forbidden City and the Great Wall.

As well as being a cultural exchange, the Year of France in China is a remarkable opportunity to intensify commercial partnerships between the two countries. On the occasion of Chirac's visit, representatives of French companies closed several deals with Chinese firms, notably in the fields of aeronautics, rail transportation and hydroelectric power. Talks concerning the purchase of a high-speed train line between Beijing and Shanghai (where the French TGV is in competition with the Japanese Bullet Train) made substantial progress.



Photo: François Proulx/Le Figaro

**Jean-Michel Jarre's October 10 light and sound extravaganza in Beijing's Forbidden City.**

In all, the contracts signed during the visit represented a total of \$5 billion, with the largest contract going to Airbus (Air China will purchase six A319 aircraft, and the airline, along with China Eastern, has also committed itself to purchasing 36 A330 aircraft).

The Year of France opened with a concert by Jean Michel Jarre—against the backdrop of the Forbidden City—utilizing sophisticated electronic musical equipment, a symphonic orchestra and choir, and a large-scale laser and light show. One of the most anticipated events, expressly requested by Chinese organizers, is an exhibition in Beijing of "Impressionist Treasures" on loan from the Musée D'Orsay, by artists such as Manet, Degas, Monet and Cézanne, marking the first time such a collection has been shown in China. An exhibition of French design will show a more contemporary collection of items that have defined French style and culture such as the Perrier bottle, a model of the ship Normandie and the football from the World Cup final of 1998.

**FRENCH CUISINE DELIGHTS CHINESE PALATES**

French chefs are slowly carving a place for their cuisine in China as they cater to a Chinese middle class with greater purchasing power and a newfound taste for Western delicacies. Restaurants that have opened branches in Beijing, such as Maxim's, La Cité and Flo, have seen a steady increase in their Chinese clientele, who yearn for a taste of Europe and the ambiance of European brasseries. These high-end gastronomic bastions, which have enlarged their portions to meet Chinese expectations, are also benefiting from the Year of France's spillover effects. New French eateries are opening every year to meet the demands of a burgeoning middle class anxious to explore new gustatory horizons and to overcome its phobia of forks and knives!

## CERN Celebrates 50th Anniversary

*The world's largest laboratory for fundamental physics delves into the mysteries of matter*

**T**HE CENTRE EUROPÉEN de Recherche Nucléaire (European Center for Nuclear Research) celebrated its 50th anniversary on October 19 with a great deal of pomp and circumstance, and with good reason. The flagship of European science is the birthplace of the World Wide Web, of carbon-14 dating, and of techniques that make it easier to detect cancer tumors. It has also produced five Nobel Prize winners, including France's Georges Charpak (Physics, 1992).

The Center, which spans the Franco-Swiss border near Geneva, was founded by 20 European countries, all of which sent representatives to the anniversary ceremonies. President Jacques Chirac of France was particularly eloquent as he praised the Center's accomplishments and called on Europe to make research a top priority in its quest to become the world's leading knowledge economy. He repeated France's desire to place research spending outside the Stability Pact's criteria, so that it would not count toward the 3 percent deficit ceiling.

At the head of a network of 7,000 researchers based in 500 universities across 85 countries, CERN is the world's largest laboratory for fundamental physics. Indeed, the sheer size of its network is what led Britain's Tim Berners-



**The representatives of CERN's 20 member countries, including French President Jacques Chirac.**

Lee to develop the foundations of the World Wide Web in order to facilitate communications. The rest, as they say, is history.

CERN has helped scientists better understand what matter is made of and how it was created during the Big Bang. Work is currently under way on what

will be the world's largest particle accelerator, a 27-kilometer facility that will be able to re-create, when it opens in 2007, the conditions that existed during the Big Bang. To deal with the flood of information that this accelerator will produce, CERN researchers are already working on a new network, the Grid, which will in effect be the world's fastest supercomputer.

For more information, please visit [www.cern.ch](http://www.cern.ch).



# Ingrid Betancourt to be Honored

*The French Embassy and the Foundation for Moral Courage hold an event in her honor*

**T**HE FRENCH AND COLOMBIAN Ambassadors to the U.S., Jean-David Levitte and Luis Alberto Moreno, will co-host a reception in honor of Ingrid Betancourt and Colombia's other 3,000 political hostages on November 8. The Foundation will present this



Ingrid Betancourt, a French-Colombian citizen, has been held hostage by Colombian rebels for the past two and a half years.

year's Moral Courage Award, which recognizes exemplary acts of individual courage, to Ingrid Betancourt.

Betancourt, a 40-year-old French and Colombian citizen, was living in France when the harrowing civil strife in her native Colombia gnawed at her conscience and compelled her to return.

Betancourt soon had a major impact on Colombia's political landscape. Her impassioned protests against drug trafficking and political corruption won her a seat in the country's legislature and by 1998 she had garnered the highest number of votes in her race for a seat in Colombia's Senate.

Betancourt's crusade to unravel the political status quo was not immune to hardship. Subject to countless death threats, Betancourt sent her young children to live with her ex-husband in New Zealand. Despite her desire to remain with her beloved children and the danger looming over her, the courageous politician persisted with her mission and ran for the presidency in 2002. On the campaign trail she met with leaders of Colombia's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) to beseech them to end their rampant kidnapping. Nine days later she was herself kidnapped by FARC rebels, and she remains in their captivity, along with 3,000 other political hostages.

Betancourt's mother, daughter and former husband will attend the event at Levitte's residence, where former Colombian president Alfonso Lopez Michelsen will deliver the keynote speech. ■

## FRENCH GUIDE FOR JEWISH TRAVELERS

A new edition of *FranceGuide for the Jewish Traveler* has just been released by the French Government Tourist Office. The seventh edition of the guide is available to all travelers free of charge. The guide features sites and activities that are particularly relevant to the Jewish traveler in France, such as the Memorial of the Unknown Jewish Martyr in Paris or a walking map of the Marais district, home to a sizable Jewish community. It also provides information on synagogues, kosher restaurants and Jewish bookstores around the country. For more information, please visit [us.franceguide.com](http://us.franceguide.com).

## EADS'S FIRST U.S. ACQUISITION

The European Aeronautic Defense and Space (EADS) company officially acquired America's Racal Instruments for \$105 million in early October. Racal Instruments specializes in test and measurement equipment for use in the military and aerospace sectors. As the first American acquisition for EADS, the move signals the Toulouse-based company's desire to establish itself as a major supplier in the lucrative American defense sector. The Pentagon has approved the deal, which bodes well for increased transatlantic defense cooperation. For more information please visit [www.eads.net](http://www.eads.net).

## MICKEY MAGAZINE TURNS 70

*Le Journal de Mickey*, a popular weekly magazine for children, celebrated its

70th anniversary this year. The magazine, which follows the adventures of Disney's



© Disney Corporation

Mickey Mouse, is uniquely French and has no real American equivalent.

In its 70

years, it has become

the most widely

read weekly among children between the ages of eight and thirteen. In commemoration of the anniversary, *Le Journal de Mickey* reprinted 68 pages of classic comics.

## U.S., FRENCH COMICS UNITE

France's Les Humanoïdes Associés and America's DC Comics, both comic book publishing giants, have joined forces, marking a new development in the two countries' cultural exchanges. As a result of their agreement, DC Comics began publishing French comics in the U.S. in July 2004. Les Humanoïdes Associés were pleased by the agreement, as it will bring the French company increased visibility in the U.S.

# Kriegel Discusses Religion and Politics in Europe

*President Jacques Chirac's human rights advisor was a guest of D.C.'s Alliance Française*

**B**LANDINE KRIEDEL, Jacques Chirac's official representative on integration and human rights issues, delivered a speech at the French Embassy's Maison Francaise on October 18. She delineated the histories of two theological-political systems that provided an escape from the brutal religious wars littering Europe's history. According to Kriegel, the two systems that emerged include the Anglo-Saxon model, in which one "affirms the right to freedom of consciousness and tolerance towards minorities" and "the path chosen by France," which ensures a "neutral public space" in which all religions can coexist peacefully. For Kriegel,

politicians should strive to sustain "a dialogue between both systems," as they have much to learn from each other.

Beyond her role as a top adviser to the French president, Dr. Kriegel is a university professor and an accomplished author, as well as a leading French intellectual. Kriegel's scholarly expertise focuses on philosophy and political history, and she defended the notion that modern politics in Europe derive from a past in which politics and religion were often interchangeable. Her works include *La Politique de la Raison* (1994), *Cité Républicaine* (1998), and *Philosophie de la République* (2000). ■

# Philadelphia's Rodin Museum Turns 75

**T**HIS FALL, the Rodin Museum in Philadelphia, the city where the French artist's work made its U.S. debut in 1876, celebrated its 75th anniversary. Considered one of the foremost collections of Auguste Rodin's works, the museum opened in November 1929 and features many of the 19th-century sculptor's greatest pieces. It has been administered by the Philadelphia Museum of Art since 1939.

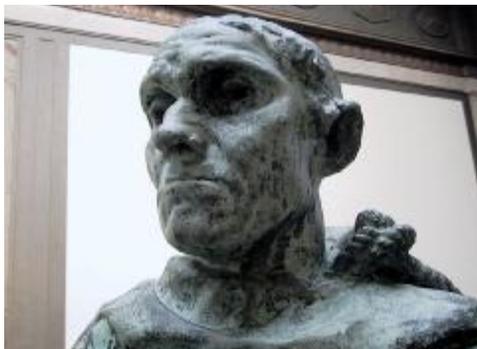
To celebrate its 75th anniversary, the museum prepared a series of events and programs, many targeted at chil-

dren and families, including lectures, concert performances and school activities. In addition to these events, the anniversary

culminated with the opening of a new installation centered around Rodin's *Danaïd* (1902) sculpture, which was recently procured by the museum.

To complement the anniversary events, two new guides to the museum have been prepared, a children's guide and a French-language audio guide, in order to better educate the museum's visitors about Rodin's works.

For more information on the museum and its 75th anniversary, visit [www.rodinmuseum.org](http://www.rodinmuseum.org). ■



Detail of the Bourgeois of Calais statue in Philadelphia's Rodin Museum.



# Rimbaud

This October, France celebrated the 150th anniversary of the birth of one of its greatest poets, Arthur Rimbaud.

Photo of Rimbaud at age 17, two years before the publication of "Une Saison en Enfer."

## A Tumultuous Life

ONE OF FRANCE'S most enigmatic poets, Arthur Rimbaud, was born on October 20, 1854, in the small town of Charleville in the Ardennes region of Northern France. His father, who was stationed in North Africa, was absent for much of his childhood. A precocious youth, Rimbaud excelled in school and won several academic prizes. Nevertheless, he was unhappy in provincial Charleville and ran away to Paris several times. In August 1871, Rimbaud wrote a letter to Paul Verlaine (an older poet who had already made a name for himself in the literary world) in which he included some of his early verses. Verlaine was so taken by the 16-year-old poet's work that

he invited Rimbaud to come to Paris, writing: "Come, dear great soul, you are called, you are awaited." Before leaving, Rimbaud penned one of his most famous poems, "Le Bateau Ivre" ("The Drunken Boat").

In Paris, Verlaine supported Rimbaud and they spent their

days together in cafés, drinking absinthe. Their affair caused a public scandal and Verlaine's wife soon fled. As she prepared papers for a

legal separation, Verlaine and Rimbaud left Paris for Brussels and London. Their strange affair became more and more publicized and Verlaine began to realize that his good reputation was lost. In time, he was overcome by remorse. Depressed and sick, he began to drink heavily and even considered suicide. Nevertheless, their violent relationship continued until 1873. That July, Verlaine became enraged when Rimbaud expressed his desire to return to Paris and shot his protégé in the wrist. When Verlaine threatened him again, Rimbaud called the police. Verlaine was fined and imprisoned for two years.

Unable to do anything for him, Rimbaud retreated to write "Une Saison en Enfer" ("A Season in Hell"). His tumultuous affair with Verlaine provided much of the material for this autobiographical masterpiece. Rimbaud later returned to Paris and London, but was generally blamed for Verlaine's decline and encountered great hostility. In 1875, Rimbaud saw Verlaine for the last time and gave him the manuscript for "Illuminations," a collection of prose poems that was published in 1886. After six years of prolific writing, what followed was one of the loudest silences in literary history.

At age 21, Rimbaud renounced his former life. He gave up writing and began to wander the globe, moving throughout Europe, Asia and Africa. His work finally became acclaimed in this period, yet Rimbaud refused to return to France. He spent 11 years in North Africa, where he worked as a gunrunner and a trader, before returning to France in February 1891. Rimbaud



1 Franc only!



Sculpture of Verlaine in the Jardin du Luxembourg.

## COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS

Numerous events in honor of the 150th anniversary of Rimbaud's birth will take place until the end of the year, especially in his hometown of Charleville-Mézières in Northern France:

**Through November 6:** José-Marie Bel, curator of Rimbaud's house in Yemen, will be in charge of an exposition in Saint-Malo focusing on Rimbaud's experiences in Northern Africa and the Middle East.

**Through May 10, 2005:** The Musée d'Orsay will host a series of five concerts entitled "Rimbaud, Verlaine: Music, Art, Poetry."

**November 10, 17, and 25:** A series of lectures on themes such as poetry and music in Rimbaud's work have been scheduled in Charleville. Also to take place is a reading by Philippe Vaillant of "Une Saison en Enfer."

**Rimbaud's childhood house** on the Quai Rimbaud in Charleville was inaugurated on October 20 (his birthday) and is now open to the public.

**A marathon relay was held** in October in the Ardennes region, Ethiopia, and Marseilles in honor of Rimbaud.

For more information, as well as a complete schedule of events, please visit: [www.mag4.net/Rimbaud/](http://www.mag4.net/Rimbaud/)

died on November 10 in Marseilles after the amputation of his cancerous right leg. He was only 37. ■ ■



Drawing of Rimbaud by Verlaine

## A Sensuous and Powerful Poetry

THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE, Rimbaud's reputation for rebellion often overshadowed his literary work. He only began to receive recognition in 1884, when Verlaine published "Les Poètes Maudits," a collection of the

work of unrecognized contemporary poets, including Tristan Corbière, Stéphane Mallarmé and, of course, Rimbaud. Nevertheless, he had an extraordinary influence on later poets. As early as 1886, Rimbaud was hailed as a visionary. The creators of the symbolist movement proclaimed his work as one of their major influences.

To 20th-century writers, Rimbaud's work often seemed to embody the escape from 19th-century romanticism sought by the modernist avant-garde. In the 1920s, the French Surrealists were inspired by his poetry, partic-

ularly his use of childhood, dream and mystical images to express dissatisfaction with the material world and a search for the spiritual one. Rimbaud's influence has not been limited to France. In the United States, the poets of the beat generation and musicians such as Bob Dylan and Jim Morrison all read Rimbaud's work and claimed it as a source of inspiration. Today, Rimbaud's poetry is undoubtedly a part of the French literary canon, and his work continues to fascinate and inspire thousands of readers.

### Sensation

Through blue summer nights I will wander along paths,  
Pricked by stalks of wheat, trampling the fine grass:  
Dreaming, I will feel coolness underfoot.  
I will let the wind bathe my bare head.

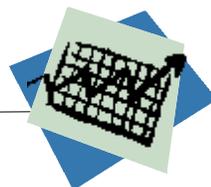
I will not speak, I will not think:  
But endless love will surge through my soul,  
And I will go far, far away, a vagabond  
In Nature—as happy as if with a woman.

### Sensation

Par les soirs bleus d'été j'irai dans les sentiers,  
Picoté par les blés, fouler l'herbe menue :  
Rêveur, j'en sentirai la fraîcheur à mes pieds.  
Je laisserai le vent baigner ma tête nue.

Je ne parlerai pas ; je ne penserai rien :  
Mais l'amour infini me montera dans l'âme,  
Et j'irai loin, bien loin, comme un bohémien,  
Par la Nature, heureux comme avec une femme.

imagery and traditional structure are typical of Rimbaud's earliest work, in which many of the themes he later became known for had not yet been developed. ■ ■



## IFREMER Turns 20

*The renowned French oceanographic institute has earned a reputation for excellence.*

**F**OUNDED IN 1984, the French Research Institute for Ocean Exploitation (IFREMER) has celebrated its 20th anniversary throughout 2004 with many lectures and exhibitions. As a public-sector company with an industrial and commercial purpose, its objectives are oceanographic research and the development of marine technologies with industrial applications. Among its priorities are the rational management of living resources, the protection of the coastal environment and gaining a better understanding of the ocean.

To achieve its goals, the French agency employs 1,900 people, mostly engineers, researchers and technicians, has an annual budget

of 150 million euros and deploys a fleet of nine research ships and two submarines, including the famous Nautilie, which is capable of bringing a crew to record depths of 6,000 meters.



**The Nautilie, an IFREMER submersible capable of exploring 97% of the Ocean's floor.**

Given the ocean's global scale, international cooperation has become critical in order to manage maritime resources effectively. That is why IFREMER is the leading agency in many European oceanographic studies and takes an active part in several major international research programs on climate change and biodiversity. The quality of its contribution is recognized by partner organizations from the United States, Japan and Australia.

For more information, please visit [www.ifremer.fr](http://www.ifremer.fr). ■■

## Michelin Develops Advanced Fuel-Cell Car

**A**LWAYS A LEADER in automobile innovation, Michelin, best known for its tires, has unveiled the "Hy-Light," an experimental car that is designed to be as environmentally friendly as possible. The prototype uses a fuel cell that combines oxygen and hydrogen to produce electricity and an environmentally safe exhaust emission: steam. Daniel



**The Hy-light**

Laurent, head of Michelin's Swiss research center, explained, "It's not the first time that a prototype has been made using a fuel cell, but this one has particular characteristics: it's light, it uses oxygen, and its consumption is very low." As fast as a mid-sized gasoline-powered car, the prototype has a range of 300 miles.

The "Hy-Light" was developed with the help of Switzerland's Paul Scherrer Institute, located near Zurich. The joint team determined the ideal combination of oxygen and hydrogen to power two motors located inside the car's front two "Active Wheels" (see "Riding on Air" in NFF 04.11). The institute also set up a refueling station that performs solar-powered electrolysis on water in order to produce the hydrogen/oxygen mix which is then pumped into the car.

The prototype was recently presented in Shanghai, where it will remain to compete in the Michelin Bibendum Challenge. This event, first launched in 1998, brings together policymakers, automakers and the media in order to find ways to achieve sustainable mobility. ■■

## Singing Bread and Green Chocolate

**A**FRENCH COMPANY has brought avant-garde design to the usually stodgy world of food. Calling itself a "food and drink bureau de style," Enivrance releases new collections every year, and for this year's world and food drinks fair in Paris (the SIAL, which was held from October 17 to 21), it unveiled four new concepts. Top European chefs, drawing inspiration from "back to nature" trends, cooked up concoctions that are healthy yet appeal to one's taste buds.

France's François-Xavier Bogard came up with an egg-like meal: soja-sprouts and other vegetables form the yolk, which is surrounded by green cream and an edible cereal shell, he egg-splains. Fellow Frenchman David Zuddas wanted his health food to appeal to man's carnivorous instinct: his

"Nature Legs" are shaped like drumsticks but made entirely of colorful vegetables. Oriol Balaguer of Spain proposed "green" chocolate: a bar with blueberry sprouts, fennel sprigs, and a dash of vanilla and ginger. And Britain's Heston Blumenthal is designing a sand-colored, wave-shaped bread that will produce three different types of sounds when bitten: a seagull's cry, the crackle of sand, and the swish of waves.

According to Enivrance's director, Edouard Malbois, "the food industry needs new shapes, new textures, new styles" in order to change people's unhealthy eating habits. His company has worked for McDonalds, Harrods of London and Paris's Galeries Lafayette, among others. For more information, visit [www.sial.fr](http://www.sial.fr) and [www.enivrance.com](http://www.enivrance.com). ■■

## THE SMART MONEY GOES TO FRANCE

"La nouvelle France, là où va l'argent intelligent." With this slogan, the French Agency for International Investment (AFII) launched a campaign on October 13 to promote France's economic appeal abroad. By spending 10 million euros over three years, the agency will highlight France's economic strengths in the world's major economic news outlets to win over foreign investors. A new Web site, [www.thenewfrance.com](http://www.thenewfrance.com), will help promote the campaign. Investors can also visit [www.investinfrance.org](http://www.investinfrance.org).

## INSTITUT PASTEUR OPENS IN SHANGHAI

"Hand in hand, we accept the challenge of public health research." With these words, President Jacques Chirac inaugurated the Institut Pasteur's new research center in Shanghai on October 11. This latest in a series of joint Sino-French scientific projects will research viral diseases, such as SARS and AIDS, in order to respond to some of today's most crucial public health needs. The Institut Pasteur is a non-profit biomedical research institution with 25 branches around the world. For more information, [www.pasteur.fr](http://www.pasteur.fr).

## FETE DE LA SCIENCE

Each year the French scientific community seeks to make its research more accessible to the public. This year's "Fête de la Science"—held from October 11 to 17—highlighted the fields of health and biotechnology. Throughout the week, more than 10,000 scientists presented projects, opened laboratories for visits and gave public demonstrations. Other countries participating included the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Poland and Germany.

## HIGH-SPEED CONNECTIONS GAINING GROUND

Of France's 11 million Internet subscribers, nearly half will enjoy high-speed connections by the end of 2004. This was one of the findings in an October 9 report from the Telecommunications Regulation Authority. In the first half of 2004, the number of high-speed connections grew an impressive 12 percent. In addition, the business generated by fast connections now exceeds that resulting from low-speed connections.

## NEW BRIDGE OVER SEINE

Construction recently began on the 37th bridge over the Seine. This newest span, which will be made of lightweight metal with no pillars, will connect two of the fastest developing areas in Paris: Bercy and the neighborhood around the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. When completed in 2006, it will be the capital's fourth pedestrian bridge.

## STEM-CELL RESEARCH GETS GREEN LIGHT

Over the last few months, French legislation has moved toward the legalization of embryonic stem cell research for the treatment of serious illnesses. In August, the French National Assembly approved a new bio-ethics law allowing the use of human embryonic stem cells for a five-year period, for the specific purpose of developing treatments for conditions such as diabetes and Parkinson's disease (see NFF 04.08). This month, Health Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy allowed the importation of stem cells from other countries so that research could begin immediately, even before the new law goes into effect this coming spring. This initiative is designed to jump-start research efforts in the private sector before the law officially authorizes the practice and extends public funding for research.

## CAMPAIGN AGAINST SECONDHAND SMOKE

The French minister of health, Philippe Douste-Blazy, announced on October 14 the launch of the first campaign against secondhand smoke in French history. The campaign will last approximately two weeks, running from October 17 to November 7. It is the hope of the Health Ministry that the campaign, which features some very powerful images, will heighten the public's awareness of the harmful effects of secondhand smoke, as well as educate people about the dangers of smoking in general.

## SMOKE-FREE LABEL FOR BARS

In related news, the city of Paris launched an initiative on October 26 that would officially recognize smoke-free establishments. Starting in mid-November, cafés, restaurants and hotels that ban smoking on their premises will be issued a "smoke-free" label. Several businesses located in neighborhoods that are heavily frequented by U.S. and Japanese tourists have already expressed an interest in participating in the program, which is entirely voluntary.

## FRENCH DRIVER AND CAR WIN WORLD RALLYING TITLE

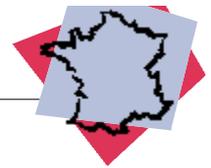


Sebastien Loeb led team Citroën to victory at the Rally of France, held this year in his homeland of Corsica. The last Frenchman to achieve this title was Didier Auriol, who won the world championship a decade ago. Loeb will now

compete against Michael Schumacher (of Formula 1 fame), Colin McRae, Marcus Gronholm and NASCAR champions Jeff Gordon and Jimmie Johnson during the Race of Champions that will be held in Paris's Stade de France this December, to determine who is the world's best driver.

## FRENCH CINEMAS SAY NO TO CELL PHONES

The French minister of industry, Patrick Devedjian, is taking a stand against careless cell-phone owners who forget to put their mobiles on silent during performances. Devedjian gave cinema and theater owners the authorization to install cell-phone blockers that prevent the making and receiving of calls during performances, except in emergencies.



# France's Favorite Books

*The Bible leads the list of the top 100 books that have most influenced the French*

**T**HE SOFRES INSTITUTE investigated the literary preferences of the French population over the summer, and recently released a list of the top one hundred books that have most influenced the French. The



Gollum, a character in *Lord of the Rings*, France's fifth favorite book.

results spanned almost every genre and a multitude of well-known writers, both French and foreign. The top-ranking book was the Bible, followed by Victor Hugo's masterpiece, *Les Misérables*, *Le Petit Prince* by Saint-Exupéry, and Emile Zola's *Germinal*.

Most surprising, perhaps, was that J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* (*Le Seigneur des Anneaux*) came in fifth! Its strong showing undoubtedly had something to do with Peter Jackson's popular film adaptations. Rounding off the top ten were France's *Le Rouge et le Noir* (Stendhal), *Le Grand Meaulnes* (Alain-Fournier), *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (Jules Verne), and *The Three Musketeers* (Alexandre Dumas).

Others on the list included the recent American biographical novel *Not Without My Daughter* by Betty Mahmoody, one of the few nonfiction books to find a place on the list. Poetry collections, plays, and even one comic series also made the list, with the *Adventures of Tintin* (by Belgium's Hergé) coming in at number 18. Other honorable mentions include works by Albert Camus (*The Plague* at 28th and *The Stranger* at 30th), Gustave Flaubert, Emily Brontë, Jack London, and Agatha Christie. ■

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## Family Name Flexibility

*Father's last name will no longer be default*

**A**S OF JANUARY 1, 2005, the practice of giving children their father's last name (the patronyme in French) will no longer be mandatory. French parents will have the option of giving their child either the mother's surname, the father's, or a combination of the father's and the mother's (with either the mother's or the father's coming first). The freedom to choose a surname does not come without restrictions, as the parents' choice will be automatically applied to any other children they have together.

The French government does not expect a large segment of the population to take advantage of this new freedom. Many experts believe the practice of taking the father's name will live on, as it has been passed on for centuries and has become deeply ingrained in French society. But perhaps the French will prove more forward-looking, and future genealogists will need to grapple with impossibly complicated family trees! ■



## FRENCH LOVERS COME OUT ON TOP

An online poll conducted by Durex over the last year has turned up results that bolster France's reputation as the homeland of love. The poll gauged the sexual habits of 350,000 respondents from 41 countries. The results put the French on top, so to speak. On average, the French have intercourse 137 times per year, making France the most sexually active nation on the planet. Greece and Hungary follow close behind. Bringing up the rear are the countries of Asia, with Japan coming in last. Billed as the most comprehensive poll of sexual habits and attitudes in the world, the survey explores its respondents' bedroom practices at an unprecedented level of detail. The organizers of the survey speculate that the anonymity afforded by the online medium may have encouraged participants to be more candid about their sex lives than they otherwise would have been. The survey's findings can be viewed online, at [www.durex.com](http://www.durex.com).

## Tradition or Television?

*The eating habits of the French*

**N**OT ONLY ARE the French famous for their cuisine, they are also known for their healthy eating habits and their emphasis on tradition when it comes to meals. According to a recent survey conducted by the National Institute for Health Education (INPES), the eating habits of the French are evolving, even as they stay anchored in tradition. While most



French people still eat three meals a day, mainly at home, and continue to set aside 40 minutes for lunch and dinner, the typical four-course meal (appetizer, entree, cheese, and dessert) has been downsized to include only two or three courses.

It also seems that the French are becoming less averse to

watching television during meals, since almost half of those interviewed admitted to having succumbed to the temptation. The INPES also stressed that few Frenchmen eat enough fruits, vegetables, and dairy products. As for alcohol, the land of wine drinkers has seen a decline in its consumption, with the average number of drinks per day now at 2.9 glasses compared with 3.2 in 1996. Finally, the results of the survey show that almost two-thirds of respondents fell within their normal weight range, reinforcing the notion that most French people manage to stay slim despite the rich foods that are part of their cuisine. ■



## Deconstructionism Loses Its Father

*The highly influential French thinker, Derrida, died on October 9*

**J**ACQUES DERRIDA, one of France's best-known philosophers and the father of the philosophical theory of deconstructionism, died of cancer on October 9 in Paris at the age of 74. Through his thought and his prolific literary output, Derrida strove to explain how language is inadequate to provide a clear and unambiguous view of reality. According to him, the fixed meaning of any piece of writing dissolves when hidden contradictions in it are revealed. These inconsistencies show deep fissures in the foundation of the Western world's beliefs and values. In Derrida's mind, to deconstruct is to take an idea or a value and understand its underlying mech-



anisms by removing the cement that holds it together.

Derrida had a dramatic impact on the study of literature in the postwar period, especially in the United States, where his thought swept through humanities departments from coast to coast and where he taught philosophy at John Hopkins University, Yale University and the University of California. His line of postmodern inquiry emboldened a legion of American academics to challenge the established literary canon, even the founding axioms of Western civilization. Along with other French postmodern philosophers such as Althusser, Lacan and Foucault, his sheer influence in America was immense.

Derrida will be remembered as a profound thinker who made a lasting contribution to intellectual discourse. As President Chirac stated, "with [Derrida], France has given the world one of its greatest contemporary philosophers, one of the major figures of the intellectual life of our time." 

## Unveiling the Pharaohs

*A major exhibit in Paris's Institute of the Arab World explores Pharaonic Egypt*

**A**N EXHIBITION covering 3,000 years of Pharaonic reign in Egypt is currently being presented at the Arab World Institute in Paris. The exhibition, which will run until April 10, 2005, explores the different roles Pharaohs played in Egyptian society. Absolute rulers, they were looked upon as gods, protectors, and priests. The Pharaoh was the mediator between heaven and earth, and the defender of his people against evil and chaos, making him an important figure of worship.



Pillar from a Karnak temple depicting Pharaoh Akhenaten (New Empire, 18th Dynasty)

© Institut du monde arabe / Ph. Philippe Failland

Included in the displays is the three-meter-high statue of the young

king Tutankhamen, as well as a gallery of portraits and effigies of other pharaohs who left their mark on Egyptian history. The pieces come from several different time periods, including works from the Old Kingdom (2700-2200 BC), but concentrate primarily on artifacts from the New Empire (1550-1069 BC), a time that was considered the golden age of Pharaonic Egypt.

The finale of the exhibition highlights the funeral cult that surrounded the Pharaohs and was responsible for the elaborate funeral preparations and rituals that have fascinated archeologists and Egyptology scholars for decades. While there are contributions from the Louvre, most of the pieces have been loaned by the Cairo museum, and are appearing in France for the first time.

For more information go to [www.imarabe.org](http://www.imarabe.org). 



Psusennes I's funerary mask (Third Intermediate Period, 21st Dynasty)

© Institut du monde arabe / Ph. Philippe Failland

## Monet, Whistler, and Turner at the Grand Palais

**T**HE WORKS of James Whistler, William Turner, and the famous Frenchman Claude Monet, all three impressionist artists from the 19th century, will be on display at the Grand Palais in Paris until January 17. Over 100 works, on loan from prestigious institutions such as the Musée d'Orsay, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Tate Museum, will be shown to the public until the exhibition moves on to London.

Turner, an English artist who predates both Monet and Whistler, was a pioneer of art that is felt—not learned—and was thereby one of the first artists to bridge the gap between traditional painting and impressionism. His influence deeply affected Monet, who discovered Turner's paintings during his

time in London in 1870. Monet took Turner's efforts a step further to become the "official" father of impressionism. Whistler, a lesser-known American artist, was a close friend of Monet's and the two artists helped each other expose their art by setting up exhibitions in both England and France.

The goal of the exhibition is to emphasize the shared influences and inspirations that exist in many of the paintings by these three artists. For example, the colors used to portray light in Monet's series of paintings of the Charing Cross Bridge, Waterloo Bridge, and the Parliament Building in London mimic works done by Turner and Whistler. For more information, visit [www.rmn.fr/galeriesnationalesdugrandpalais](http://www.rmn.fr/galeriesnationalesdugrandpalais). 

### AMERICAN LITERATURE FESTIVAL IN VINCENNES

The French have long been fascinated by the diverse literature of North America. From October 14 to 17, they took the opportunity to celebrate this diversity during the "Festival America—Literatures of North America" in Vincennes (north of Paris). More than 50 North American authors, including Sherman Alexie (*Ten Little Indians*) and Michael Cunningham (*The Hours*), participated in readings, panel discussions, book fairs and signings. Film screenings, photography exhibits and music concerts rounded out this cultural event. For more information, visit [www.festival-america.com](http://www.festival-america.com).

### LE PETIT NICOLAS IS BACK!



© IMAV éditions Gosciny - Sempé.

Millions of readers cannot help but smile when remembering the adventures of the Petit Nicolas. Now, for the first time in 40 years, fans can enjoy new tales about this schoolboy and all his friends. On October 7, *Histoires Inédites du Petit Nicolas (Unpublished Petit Nicolas Stories)*, a collection of 80 recently discovered stories, was released. The work made a strong début, selling nearly 50,000 copies in its first week. These beloved characters, created by author René Goscinny and illustrator Jean-Jacques Sempé, became hugely popular during the early sixties. For more information, visit [www.petitnicolas.net](http://www.petitnicolas.net).

### ART NOUVEAU MUSEUM OPENS

On October 15, French couturier Pierre Cardin opened a new, two-story museum dedicated to Art Nouveau in his landmark Parisian restaurant, Maxim's. After 60 years of collecting, the fashion icon decided to display several hundred pieces from his personal collection in the historic 1893 restaurant. These include tableware designed by Gustave Eiffel, Gaudi-era Spanish furniture and a set of silver brushes and combs once owned by Sarah Bernhardt.

### NEW ADVENTURE FROM MUSKETEERS' AUTHOR

A previously unpublished play from prolific writer Alexander Dumas will soon be released by the French publishing house Honoré Champion. The new play, "Les Voleurs d'Or" (The Gold Thieves), which tells the story of a group of English bandits in Australia, was discovered in 2002 in the archives of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris. Dumas, who is best known for *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Monte-Cristo*, lived from 1802 to 1870.



Julien Dupré's "Les Faneurs" ("The Haymakers"), 1886.

**FRENCH-AMERICAN IMPRESSIONIST EXHIBIT IN ALLENTOWN**

An exhibit bringing together French and American impressionist painters will be hosted by the Art Museum in Allentown, Pennsylvania, until February 13, 2005. The exhibit will feature 41 paintings, by such French and American luminaries as Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Julien Dupré, George Inness, Childe Hassam and John Singer. The works were donated by the Worcester Art Museum and this marks the first time the museum's American and French Impressionist collections have been featured together.

The impressionist movement exemplifies a time when artists were inspired by the beauty and mystery of nature. French impressionists took inspiration from the rural scenes in the areas surrounding Paris and the forests of Fontainebleau. The movement reached America and was embraced by a number of artists who applied the style to their own landscapes, depicting the changing of the seasons and the charm of New England settings. For more information, visit [www.allentownartmuseum.org](http://www.allentownartmuseum.org).

## The Art of Ethnography

*Sculptures by Charles Cordier will be on display in New York's Dahesh Art Museum until January 9*

**W**ORKS BY renowned French ethnographic sculptor Charles Cordier (1827-1905) will be on display at the Dahesh Museum of Art in New York City until January 9, 2005. A man ahead of his time in mid-19th-century France, Cordier depicted people of color as beautiful and proud. With people from various regions in Africa as his subjects, the French artist often had to defend the subjects of his sculptures against racist attitudes. He saw them as human beings, an opinion that created some controversy at a time when people from Africa were still considered by some to be an inferior race.

His first work to be exhibited in an art salon, the bust of a Sudanese man, scandalized society at first, but the work was soon valued for its artistic worth and beauty, especially when France declared the abolition



"Negress of the Colonies," Charles Cordier, 1861.

Courtesy: Musée d'Orsay, Dahesh Museum of Art

of slavery in its colonies in 1848. His pursuit of artistic inspiration and sculpting materials took him to Egypt, Greece and Algeria, which he made his home in 1890, and where he remained until his death in 1905. For his sculptures, he used an exotic array of materials, including onyx, gilded bronze, rare translucent marbles, and oxidized silver. His original and exotic style earned him such acclaim that he was often commissioned to fashion sculptures for the likes of the Louvre, the Paris Opera House, and the chateaux of wealthy aristocrats.

In addition to inspiring him as an artist, his interest in ethnography and anthropology extended to science and philanthropy, and he was an active member of the French Anthropological Society. This exhibit was previously held at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris (see NFF 04.05). For more information see [www.daheshmuseum.org](http://www.daheshmuseum.org).

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