



News From France

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A free monthly review of French news & trends

French Finance Minister Michel Sapin Discusses Global Finance in Washington



Appointed on April 2, French Finance Minister Michel Sapin traveled to Washington for the annual Spring Meetings at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on April 10 through 12. Among many other officials, he met with U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Jacob Lew (left). Please see full story on p. 3

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

With the arrival of spring in Washington, the city's famous cherry blossoms have bloomed. French-American relations have been similarly lively, with instances of close cooperation across a broad set of issues this month.

The crisis in Ukraine continues to hold the world's attention, and France and the U.S. are addressing the situation together with the relevant international organizations. French President François Hollande spoke with U.S. President Barack Obama via telephone several times these last weeks, and expressed a shared concern for the destabilization of the country's eastern regions. President Hollande called for restraint and emphasized the importance of avoiding provocation. Both Presidents expressed their common goal of de-escalating tensions between Russia and Ukraine as soon as possible. Several crises showed the same spirit of cooperation between our two countries, such as Iran, Central African Republic, or Syria.



Those links were highlighted during a three-day trip of General Pierre de Villiers, Chief of Defense Staff of France who met with a group of senior U.S. military officials led by General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Their exchanges focused on American and French analysis of current and future threats that both our armed forces will need to manage in good cooperation, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa.

France and the U.S. have also demonstrated strong cooperation in science and technology. From April 5 through 13, French leaders took part in a study tour of U.S. tech businesses and laboratories. From Washington, D.C., to Boston, French and U.S. specialists exchanged best practices in science-based innovation. Likewise, I had the honor of awarding U.S. scientist James Rothman the Legion of Honor, France's highest award, on April 4 in New York. As a Nobel Prize-winning researcher in biochemistry, Dr. Rothman has acted in a number of partnerships with French scientists, and is a grantee of France's Partner University Fund.

France's engagement in Washington this month also extended to international finance. At the Spring Meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund from April 10 through 12, new Finance Minister Michel Sapin joined his counterparts—including U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Jacob Lew—in talks on global economic development strategies.

As we look ahead to May, when Foreign Affairs and International Development Minister Laurent Fabius will come to Chicago and Washington, and to June, when President Obama will travel to Normandy to remember the 70th anniversary of D-Day, I am confident that, like Washington's cherry blossoms, the closeness between our two countries will continue to grow.

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Embassy Crowns Debaters in D.C., Offers Trip to France

On April 12 and 13, the Embassy of France and the George Washington University co-hosted an international student competition called "The Lafayette Debates."

Responding to the prompt of defending cultural exception, the best and brightest student debaters had the opportunity to engage with prominent scholars, diplomats, military figures, and professionals on issues of political, social, and cultural significance.

The winning pair of the tournament was Emory University, represented by Brian Klarman, Kristin Lowe, and coach Ed Lee. The other finalists were Danny Alexander and Eric Lanning from Houston University. The best speaker of the tournament was Joseph Nelson of George Washington University.

The individuals who competed in the semi-finals of the tournament were from Emory University, Houston University, the University of Southern California, and Mary Washington University. As a prize for their performance in the debates, the students have been invited to participate in a study tour to France in June.

Ambassador Visits Ohio to Promote French-U.S. Ties

On April 23, Ambassador François Delattre traveled to northwest Ohio for a day's worth of commercial and cultural activities with U.S. Representative Bob Latta.

Touring Ohio's 5th Congressional district, which Rep. Latta represents, Amb. Delattre met with business leaders to shed light on the region's economic ties with France. Nearly 20,000 Ohio jobs exist because of French investment. Rep. Latta's state conducts \$250 million in exports to France each year.

The commercial ties between France and Ohio are "growing year after year," Amb. Delattre said during the visit.

The tour also included aspects in local education and culture. While on the campus of the University of Findlay, Amb. Delattre enjoyed a French-themed lunch prepared by the school's hospitality management department. He also traveled to the Toledo Museum of Art, where he took in an art exhibit from the Louvre's Tuileries collection.

Amb. Delattre later met with a U.S. veteran of World War II who served in France, as part of France's current priority of honoring its liberators.

Rep. Latta serves as a Co-Chair of the Congressional French Caucus, a bipartisan Member organization of the U.S. Congress founded in 2003.

President Welcomes Bill Gates for Talks on Development



During a meeting at the Elysée Palace in Paris on April 1, Messrs. Gates and Hollande explored opportunities in greater partnership between France and the philanthropic Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which Mr. Gates co-chairs.

▲ On April 1, French President François Hollande welcomed Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, to the Elysée Palace in Paris. The meeting served primarily as an opportunity for in-depth discussion about the challenges faced in development and international solidarity, with a particular focus on Africa. The meeting occurred just before the EU-Africa summit in Brussels which took place on April 2.

During their discussions, the President and Mr. Gates agreed to continue their joint involvement in the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, of which France is a strong proponent and historically its second largest contributor, the GAVI Alliance [formerly the Global

Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization] and UNITAID, another French-led initiative on global health funded essentially by innovative financing through air ticket taxes.

They also committed to greater cooperation in connection with different relevant international forums on development (United Nations, G8, G20), and on the ground through projects in West Africa and the Sahel region.

Both emphasized the need to use innovative funding to raise additional resources for development, particularly through the implementation of a financial transaction tax. France is the world's fifth-largest contributor to developing countries with a total amount of \$15.9 billion in 2013.

Head of French Armed Forces Visits United States

▲ During a three-day trip to discuss common military and strategic objectives, General Pierre de Villiers, Chief of Defense Staff, visited Washington, Omaha, Neb., and Tampa, Fla., from April 22 through 25.

The top official across all of France's military branches engaged in press conferences, ceremonies and meetings with a large group of representatives from the Joint Staff, CENTCOM, STRACOM, and SOCOM.

On the morning of April 23, Gen. de Villiers laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. Gen. de Villiers later traveled to the Pentagon, where he met with a group of senior U.S. military officials led by General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The exchange focused on U.S. and French analysis of current and future threats of shared concern. The following day, the delegation gathered at U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM) to address strategic issues of common interest.

The delegation then traveled to Tampa, where on April 25 Gen. de Villiers visited U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) as well as U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) for further briefings on security activities of mutual interest to France and the United States.



Gen. Pierre de Villiers, France's Chief of Defense Staff, met with Gen. Martin Dempsey and U.S. strategic commands.

Cameron Griffith, Congressional Affairs Liaison

▲ The U.S. President and the Department of State often work closely with leaders from other countries as part of their official duties. But did you know that Congress also collaborates with foreign governments from around the world? **Cameron Griffith** fosters connections between French and American policymakers every day as the Congressional Affairs Liaison between the Embassy of France and the U.S. Legislative Branch. Perhaps the best example of Mr. Griffith's work is the Congressional French Caucus, a bipartisan group of 103 Members of the U.S. Congress founded in 2003.

News from France sat down with Mr. Griffith to discuss his role in promoting French-American cooperation on Capitol Hill.

In your own words, what is your position within the Embassy of France?

As the Congressional Affairs Liaison at the French Embassy, I try to ensure that members of Congress and their staffs know what is happening in France, what French policies are, and what French investments are happening in the United States. Part of what I do is make sure that, if there are questions posed by members of Congress about France, I am able to find an answer. I'm up on the Hill frequently. Another important part of my job is when French delegations come to Washington, I try and figure out who their counterparts are on the Hill and then organize meetings for them. This is perhaps the most important thing I do as the Congressional Affairs Liaison.

What elements of your background allow you to do your current work?

I worked on Capitol Hill for nine years in the U.S. House of Representatives as Legislative Director for a member of Congress from Indiana. Being there showed me how Congress works. Now, I facilitate meetings between members of Congress and staff and the Ambassador, Embassy colleagues, visiting delegations, visiting members of Parliament, and ministers, among others. They are the experts, and I know the process. Being a former staffer allows me to interact easily with Congressional staff, make those introductions, and determine who would be the best interlocutors for whatever the visit or topic is.

How would you describe the policy convergence between lawmakers in France and the U.S. today?

It's hard to say that there is a convergence of policy. It's rather—in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, for example—how those members are looking at certain international issues, and trying to figure out, with input from French officials, what they might do in terms of legislation.

What is the history and purpose of the Congressional French Caucus, and how are they active today?

It was started in the fall of 2003 when Ambassador Jean-David Levitte got together with Congressman Amo Houghton, whose father was the U.S. Ambassador to France during the Eisenhower administration. They were concerned that, in the fallout over the war in Iraq, many members of Congress did not fully appreciate the long-standing alliance between the U.S. and France.

As a result, they decided in 2003 to launch a Congressional member organization focused on France. In France, there is a U.S.-France friendship group, a *groupe d'amitié*, which is one way the U.S. Congress can learn more about France. Having different ways of approaching members



to talk about France, to broaden their understanding of what France is: that is what the Caucus is doing.

What value do you bring to the table as only Liaison of your kind within France's diplomatic network?

I can show my French colleagues how Congress works, including the legislative and the budget processes. For example, the difference between authorizing and appropriations legislation is one of my favorite things to talk about. We have training sessions here when new diplomats and other embassy colleagues arrive in September. In addition, we invite representatives from the Congressional Research Service to give a presentation on how Congress works. I meet with diplomats individually to learn more about issues they are working on. I read practically all-day-every-day information related to Congress, which has to do with hearings, bills, and issues that are coming up. I disseminate it broadly throughout the Embassy. It's a way of complementing and adding to some of what they might be focused on already.

The celebration of the 70th anniversary of D-Day is coming. What will you do to commemorate it?

It will be a special event this year in Normandy on June 6, with seventeen Heads of State expected to be present. President Obama will be there as well as members of Congress and U.S. World War II veterans. Being involved with the D-Day commemorations is one of the greatest honors I have in this job. I was in Normandy five years ago for the 65th anniversary, and it really was something special.

This year, there has been a lot of interest about France and D-Day. A member of the French Parliament got together with Senator John Boozman (Ark.), one of the French Caucus Co-Chairs as well as a member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. They have jointly developed a resolution that would commemorate the 70th anniversary of D-Day. They are also in discussions about trying to get a similar bill passed in the U.S. Senate and the French National Assembly. 🇫🇷

Finance Minister in D.C. for World Bank, IMF Meetings

The new French Minister of Finance, Michel Sapin, traveled to Washington from April 10 through 12 for the annual Spring Meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

During his time in the U.S. capital, Minister Sapin attended the G7 and G20 conferences, as well as met with his counterparts from other countries and other international figures. His schedule also included time with World Bank President, Jim Yong Kim, and the Managing Director of the IMF, Christine Lagarde, as well as U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Jacob Lew.

Central to these gatherings are the meetings of the IMF's International Monetary and Financial Committee and the joint World Bank-IMF Development Committee. The two groups come together to discuss progress on the work of the IMF and the World Bank.

The conclusion of the meetings determined that global economic activity continues to strengthen. However, because the recovery is still fragile and risks remain, creating a more dynamic, sustainable, balanced, and robust global economy remains a top priority for IMF and World Bank partners.

Miami Consul General Hosts Gala for French Studies

The Consul General of Miami hosted a fundraising gala for the French International Program Association (FIPA) at his residence on April 12.

The event, which included dinner and dancing, was themed "Black Tie with a Twist." The money raised at the gala helps FIPA accomplish projects and carry out its mission to promote French language learning in southern Florida. The organization, started in 1987, serves as a link between French authorities and the public schools in Miami-Dade County.

FIPA works with four schools in the Miami area, which include Sunset Elementary, Coconut Grove Elementary, GW Carver Middle School, and International Studies Charter High School. With funding from the public, schools, and government of France, FIPA helps to sustain the French International Studies (IS) program in these institutions. The organization also provides educational materials for the classrooms such as books and school supplies.

In 2013, the association had raised enough resources to contribute to the salaries of the French IS program educators.

France's Economic Diplomacy: an Opportunity for All

The term “economic diplomacy” might strike some as an obscure concept from a history course they took way back when. Yet France's economic diplomacy cuts a thoroughly contemporary figure in our changing world. In light of the 2008 financial crisis and other factors, French leaders are rolling out efforts to boost growth and business by leveraging the country's public- and private-sector networks. At global, regional, and local levels, here's a look at one of the highest priorities for France today.

A Global Network

“Economic recovery is the government's priority,” said Laurent Fabius, France's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development. “It requires a rebalancing of the current account, and thus results on markets abroad. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the second largest diplomatic network worldwide. It can and must contribute.” This ambitious mandate calls on French professionals from across every sector—the government, as well as private-sector businesses of all sizes—to stir the economic pot on France's behalf.

To that end, Mr. Fabius has approved a 10-point list of focus areas in French economic development abroad. A Business and Global Economy Directorate has nominated seven representatives to lead efforts in promising partner countries such as India, Mexico, and the United Arab Emirates. France's cabinet ministers will be stepping up their frequency of foreign travel, with economic promotion as a central goal.

Efforts to strengthen human capital in France include reforms of work visa regulations as well as grants for foreign students from strategic countries who intend to train in high-potential growth sectors like technology, engineering, and development of cultural networks to promote the “French brand.” Such students will advocate for the country's design, entertainment, fashion, and home furnishings industries. Each measure supports the “economic reflex” encouraged by the Foreign Ministry and other government bodies.

One of the clearest examples of economic diplomacy focus occurred this month, through the *Rencontres Quai d'Orsay-Entreprises* meetings on April 9. Using the name of the Foreign Ministry's historic location in Paris, some 700 leaders from French business and government convened for discussions on strategy and best practices in the shared goal of success.

The slogan of the event, “When diplomacy facilitates the economy,” describes as much the spirit of the conference as the worldwide scope of the campaign.

Regional Potential

At the heart of France's drive to stimulate growth are a number of regional strategies, based in the countries or regional areas best positioned to partner with France.

In Europe, French leaders have been striving

within the branches of the European Union to establish greater oversight in financial regulation, a European banking union, and other measures for the EU financial sector.

Outside of Europe, organizations like Ubifrance, the French trade commission, help promote French businesses in markets as diverse as technology—a French Tech Tour is scheduled to visit Canada this June—and textiles in the southeastern United States. This May, two French companies will exhibit as part of the JEC Americas

event, a key convention within the industry.

Likewise, the Invest in France Agency released a report last year titled *They Chose France*, in which business leaders from Brazil, Canada, and the United States described their reasons behind doing deals with French businesses.

Of all the foreign actors in France's commercial environment, American businesses play a unique role: the United States was France's leading foreign investor in 2012, active in 23 percent of all projects and behind 21 percent of all jobs created by foreign companies. More recent partnerships have been launched by some of the best-known French and American companies: Safran and Airbus are investing in markets from Alabama to New Hampshire, while Amazon, Google, and Microsoft have each chosen France as bases for their global operations.


The Local Advantage

Business success also takes place at the local level. Looking at the recent examples in California and Virginia, French economic diplomacy is perhaps nowhere as vibrant as in the United States.

In San Francisco, startups like Scoop.it embody the best of French innovation matched with the American entrepreneurial spirit. Its co-founders, Guillaume Decugis and Marc Rougier, are serial entrepreneurs and successfully led tech ventures prior to founding their current venture in 2011.

The impact of French groups like Scoop.it was part of the reason that, during his State visit in February, French President François Hollande traveled to Silicon Valley. Promoting French activities in the tech and innovation sector, he also inaugurated the U.S.-French Tech Hub on February 12. The site serves as an “incubator,” or a laboratory to experiment with technical ideas and business models, optimizing their chances of success once on the market.

And in Washington, the Embassy of France looked no further than Virginia to find another recent commercial partner. On March 13, Governor Terry McAuliffe and Ambassador François Delattre signed a joint agreement on sustainable development. France and Virginia share an unusually robust economic relationship already: between 2009 and 2013, France invested \$570 million in the state, making the country the second-largest foreign investor in Virginia. The agreement, which aims to promote sustainable urban growth in the state's rapidly expanding north, should provide another strong example of French-American partnership through commercial exchange.

All in all, France's economic diplomacy is rolling out at global, regional, and local levels. It's an opportunity not just for France, but for each of its foreign partners. For the United States in particular, the future of cooperation with French commercial players—whether in government or the private sector—seems to bear the promise of real success. 

“Economic recovery is the government's priority. It requires a rebalancing of the current account, and thus results on markets abroad...”

Economic diplomacy represents this contribution to the country's collective effort and is thus an essential priority for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.”

**- Laurent Fabius,
Minister of Foreign Affairs**



Foreign Minister Fabius spoke at the *Rencontres Quai d'Orsay-Entreprises* meetings held on April 9 in Paris.



ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY IN 2014 :

6 ambassadors for **12** French regions

helping local SMEs and intermediate-sized enterprises to expand internationally

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ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY IN 2014 :

9 special representatives for key partners :

- China
- the Balkans
- Brazil
- Russia
- Japan
- the United Arab Emirates
- Algeria
- Mexico
- India

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ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY IN 2014 :

Abroad : creation of more than **130** economic committees,

bringing together public and private stakeholders, led by the ambassador

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ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY IN 2014 :

In Paris : double the amount of contact with companies

from **400** to **700** regular meetings

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Top left: Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe and Amb. François Delattre sign a sustainability agreement in March. Top right: the *Rencontres Quai d'Orsay-Entreprises* event on April 9. Center: the facts and figures of France's economic diplomacy plan. Bottom: President Hollande promotes economic diplomacy in San Francisco in February.

Google Launches Interactive Tour of Marseille

Night Walk is the latest endeavor from the tech-giant Google attempting to expand upon their interactive platform, Maps. For their first launch, the company has set the tour in the southern French city of Marseille.

The interactive map allows users to experience the culture of the Cours Julien, a neighborhood known for its unique street art. Users navigate a designated pathway using the 360° street view. In addition, users may venture off the path in certain streets of the Cours Julien.

Located in the 6th arrondissement, the Cours Julien is known for its jazz, art, and open-air market. Google's Night Walk highlights these features with Hotspots, or points of interest. Google searches, YouTube videos, and high-definition images make up the 34 Hotspots located on the map. These checkpoints act as sources of information on the culture, art, and history of the area and city. Most exist on the designated path, but to complete them all, users must explore.

The site comes in both French and English. To experience Marseille from home, visit www.nightwalk.withgoogle.com.

Annual "French Week" Returns to Cajun Country

The partnership between Arnaudville, La., and Redon, in the French region of Brittany, returned to Louisiana this April during La Semaine Francaise d'Arnaudville, or Arnaudville French Week. The cultural and economic event took place from April 18 through 23, and was sponsored by the French Consulate in New Orleans.

The summit incorporated arts, crafts and folk life traditions, effects on economy, the consideration of environmental issues through sustainable design, and the roles of public policy and advocacy.

A new program debuted during this year's French Week called the Communication and Interpretation Center. The service enabled French, Americans and Cajuns to understand each others' vocabulary, as well as various expressions and their meaning to create a glossary common to the three cultures.

The series also served as a platform for the exchanging and sharing of ideas and projects focused on Creative Placemaking, a concept which integrates art, language, and education in order to breathe new economic life into public and private spaces.

French Science & Tech Leaders Conduct Study Tour in U.S.

▲ In a trip organized by the Institute for Advanced Studies in Science and Society (IHES), French science and technology leaders journeyed to the United States from April 5 through 12 to see key locations in American science and technology industries.

Forty-one scholars participated in the IHES 2013-2014 training cycle. The scholars are from both the private and public sectors, and are involved in various disciplines.

During their trip, they were tasked with observing how the geopolitical, historical, and cultural context of the U.S. shapes its policies and activities, particularly with respect to the science and digital technology fields. During their site visits, the participants were able to draw comparisons between France and the U.S.

Their observations will be used to inspire changes in the science and technology sector in order to promote further innovation in France. The program also wants the leaders to develop a capacity to anticipate and better respond to new situations arising from advances in technology.

IHES, a French public program, was created in 2007. Its mission statement cites its primary goals as being to "provide training, disseminate scientific and technical culture, and foster public debate regarding scientific and technological progress and its impact on society."

According to its website, all of the programs and teaching methods employed in IHES's one-year national training course are aimed at building a "shared



Minh-Hà Pham, Amb. Delattre, Marie-Françoise Chevallier-Le Guyader, and Marc Daumas convened this month.

understanding of the relationship between science and society" by allowing participants from diverse social and professional backgrounds to come together in an environment of reflection, encounter, and debate.

IHES President Bertrand Collomb said that financial and economic crises, a geographical shift in world growth, climate change, and the increased frequency of natural disasters have made science and technology increasingly useful in finding solutions to these problems.

French Company Exhibits Canned Wine at U.S. Convention

▲ From April 8 to 10, the French company Winestar, innovators of canned wine, attended the 71st Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America Convention in Las Vegas.

The annual event brings together distributors and exhibitors of beverage products to foster new relations and maintain current partnerships. The convention is held yearly by the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America, a national trade association. Winestar was represented under the Park Street's booth, a firm focused on importing, distributing, and industry solutions.

Winstar is a unique company that promotes fine French wines in cans. Currently, the business highlights a limited selection of wines. However, they aim to expand their offerings to 12 permanent wines from around the country and occasionally distribute more selective products from smaller vineyards.

Wine in a can may seem strange to most, but the innovators at Winestar aren't letting those notions stop them. The technology used in the packaging is specific to wine. The company uses cans made from aluminum which are oxygen- and light-resistant, unlike glass bottles. The cans are also coated so that the taste of the wine is not altered by the packaging. At the 2013 China Wine and Spirits Awards, the company's product earned a Gold Medal, a first for canned wines.

The company also promotes eco-friendly practices, as aluminum cans are completely recyclable. In collaboration with Ball Packaging, an American business, Winestar cans use the minimum amount of aluminum needed.

New trends in market needs make these wines more appealing. The convenience of a single-serve can of wine allows for consumption control and variety while avoiding waste. With Winestar's goals to expand, the enhanced selection will allow for consumers to create their own collection at home.



The French company Winestar has partnered with a U.S. packaging firm to create an eco-friendly can containers.

“Art of Pastry” Event Showcases French-U.S. Partnership



Founded in 1995, the French Pastry School, based in Chicago, has trained a generation of U.S. food professionals.

▲ On April 3, the Embassy of France hosted a night all about pastries as part of the Francophonie Cultural Festival.

The event, called “Cuisine: The Art of French Pastry with Chef Jacquy Pfeiffer,” included a pastry tasting, screening of the documentary “Kings of Pastry,” and signing of Mr. Pfeiffer’s book, “The Art of French Pastry.”

In 2013, he was awarded the Medal of the Centennial Honor by the Académie Culinaire de France and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Fine Chocolate Industry Association.

Mr. Pfeiffer started his career as an apprentice at the Jean Clauss Pâtisserie in Alsace, France. He went on to make pastries at renowned establishments. Mr. Pfeiffer made pastries at the Fairmont and Sheraton hotels in Chicago, the Californian pastry shop Hong Kong and the Hyatt Regency. Mr. Pfeiffer has also crafted desserts for the Sultan of Brunei.

In 1995, Mr. Pfeiffer co-founded The French Pastry School, located in Chicago, with Sébastien Canonne in 1995, the result of Mr. Pfeiffer’s longtime desire to establish himself abroad. The French Pastry School is now considered one of the world’s top pastry institutions. Mr. Pfeiffer is currently the Academic Dean for Student Affairs. He is also the Honorary Chair of the Pastry Chicago organization.

FLA-FRA Festival Brings Month of French Culture to Florida



In a vibrant example of French and regional partnership, the FLA-FRA Festival offered music, movies, and art to Miami residents and visitors throughout the month of April. Highlights included DJs and a François Truffaut film retrospective.

▲ Throughout the month of April, the FLA-FRA Festival took place in Miami. The event, a project organized over a period of two years, was created to bring together French and Floridian artists in a new and innovative way.

The series took place mainly in two parts: The first segment called “In Search for Sunrise: France,” took place at sunrise on the beaches in Miami throughout the entire month of April. Each day, performances, site-specific events or five-minute “Culture Clicks” were made available to the public.

The five-minute exhibitions celebrated a significant French-born artist, musician, philosopher, dancer, or writer. Daily Culture Clicks featured local Miami artists performing their art “the French way”—which included outdoor performances of songs and poetry.

Music and dance were also an integrated part of the festivities at various points in the month. Cabaret singer Floanne and jazz star Cécile McLorin Salvant performed on April 11 and 12. Dancers Cédric Andrieux and Myriam Gourfink performed their contemporary routines on April 25 and 26.

The series’ programming also highlighted cinema, including Miami’s own “Films on the Beach,” an event organized in partnership with the Miami Beach Cinéma-thèque. This film festival revisited the early works of François Truffaut, which are known as a culmination of French Cinema’s Nouvelle Vague.

Tigertail Productions, a Miami-based productions company, was primarily responsible for the planning of the FLA-FRA Festival.

French Cinema Fest Marks 10th Edition in Metro NYC

The 10th annual Focus on French Cinema Festival ran April 4 through 6 at several sites in and around New York City.

The Festival organizes several activities for students each year in Greenwich, Conn., and New York City. This year these included a college student Q&A session, a Sunday morning family film, a French film review writing contest for area schools, and a public roundtable featuring directors and actors.

The movies were shown in different theatres in each respective city. The Opening Night movie in Greenwich was “9 Mois Ferme,” or “Nine Month Stretch.” The Closing Night film in New York was “Les Garçons et Guillaume, à Table!” or “Me, Myself and Mum!”

Focus on French Cinema Festival was founded in 2005. It has screened over 100 films to over 25,000 viewers in the tri-state area in nine years.

Guests included Christine Gozlan, producer of “Rue Mandar,” or “Mandar Street,” as well as actor Vincent Macaigne, who starred in “2 Autumnes 3 Hivers,” or “2 Autumns 3 Winters.”

Embassy Hosts Student Tour Promoting Religious Tolerance

What do an agnostic, atheist, Catholic, Jew, and Muslim have in common? The Embassy of France in the U.S. hosted five French students, one of each respective religion or viewpoint, on April 17.

Ismael Medjdoub, Samuel Grzybowski, Victor Grezes, Ilan Scialom, and Josselin Rieth are touring the world to promote interfaith dialogue and cooperation.

The male students, aged 20 to 28, started their world tour on July 13. Through interviews and research, they plan to collect data that will offer new ways of communication between people of different faiths.

The students have also visited parts of Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Their travel expenses have been offset through crowd-funding and a network of generous donors. The group will tour France after the world tour to share its experiences with the public.

The project was built by Sparknews and Coexister, a French interfaith youth movement. The international trip will occur every year with a new team.

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Houston Festival Celebrates French and Global Dance

▲ The Dance Salad Festival presented Paris Opera Ballet Etoiles, Laetitia Pujol, and Manuel Legris alongside French choreographer Jean-Philippe Dury April 17 through 19 at the Wortham Center in Cullen Theater. The festival is organized by the Houston International Dance Coalition, and its mission is to present culturally diverse dances at a professional level and showcase international dance talent.

Laetitia Pujol and Manuel Legris performed "Pas de Deux from Sylvia," or "Not Two from Sylvia" by choreographer John Neumeier. Music was from Léo Delibes. French choreographer Jean-Philippe Dury will bring his choreography made for his Madrid-based dance company called "Elephant in the Black Box." "Le Parc," or "The Park" was created by internationally recognized French choreographer Angelin Preljocaj and is set to an adagio from Piano Concert No. 23 by Mozart.

Other dance companies present at the festival were "Norwegian National Ballet" of Norway, "Beijing Dance/LDTX" of China, and "Wiesbaden Staatstheater Ballet" of Germany.

The Dance Salad performances brought together three separate yet related evenings of dance from emerging and long-standing choreographers. The company describes the festival's offerings as those which "would never be seen together anywhere else."


The festival also has public outreach programs. The Film and Lecture program is shown in libraries, schools, and other community venues throughout the year. The Afternoon Student Concert allows high school students to see the Opening Night dress rehearsal and learn free of charge about various dance forms.

Artist to Artist Workshops is a series that allows the local Houston dance community to learn choreography from some of the world's leading dancers. Workshops are at all levels of dance and occurred April 15 through 18. The Open Workshop open to intermediate and advanced dance students at a nominal fee.



The Dance Salad Festival returned to Houston for its 19th year of French and international dance performances.

This year's Festival was the 19th anniversary season in Houston and 22nd season since its inception in Brussels, Belgium.

Sponsors include the Houston Arts Alliance and Texas Commission of the Arts. Community partners include Rice University, KIPP, University of Houston's School of Theatre and Dance, and the High School for the Performing and the Visual Arts' Dance Department. 

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