

## France to Host World's First Nuclear Fusion Plant

**O**FFICIALS FROM 30 nations picked Cadarache, a southern French city near Marseilles, as the site for the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) at a conference in Moscow on June 28. Representatives from the European Union, the United States, Japan, Canada, China, Russia and South Korea unanimously chose France to host the site for this \$12-billion fusion reactor project, which may hold the key to man's future energy needs. Indeed, if successfully developed, fusion reactors would represent a quasi-inexhaustible source of electricity that would produce no harmful greenhouse-gas emissions.

"It is a big success for France, for Europe and for all the partners of ITER," said French President Jacques Chirac, on hearing of Cadarache's selection. He thanked the European Commission and all the European Union countries for their unfailing support of Cadarache's candidacy, as well as Russia and China who supported it from the outset.

President Chirac also sent a message of thanks to Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi for the spirit of dialogue and mutual trust which prevailed throughout the discussions, allowing an international consensus to be reached on the choice of the ITER host site. France won the bid over Japan in large part because France, with 58 nuclear reactors (the most in the world after the United States), has a great deal of experience in the field of nuclear energy. But Japan will maintain a privileged

position in the project, with a Japanese scientist leading it and several other high-level positions reserved for Japanese nationals.

"We are making scientific history," said Janez Potocnik, the European Union's science and research commissioner, at a news conference in Moscow, after the multinational partners in the ITER project discussed how to fund one of the world's most expensive scientific experiments. France and the E.U. will finance 50 percent of the project, with the remaining five parties contributing 10 percent each.



A computer rendition of the ITER fusion reactor in Cadarache

ITER is an expensive undertaking because it will in effect attempt to harness the sun's power. Like all stars, the sun runs on nuclear fusion, which is particularly efficient, requiring mere grams of reactor fuel rather than tons, making it a virtually inexhaustible supply of power. Unlike the nuclear fission that occurs in existing reactors, nuclear fusion does not produce large amounts of radioactive waste. Nor does it generate plutonium, which could be used to build nuclear bombs. There is a catch, however: a sustainable fusion reaction can only be achieved at temperatures surpassing 100 million degrees Celsius, no mean achievement!

International researchers should begin work on the experimental fusion reactor at the end of the year, and will take an expected 10 years to complete it. Within the next 30 years, the team hopes to succeed in making fusion power practical for commercial use. For more information, visit [www.iter.org](http://www.iter.org).

## INSIDE

- 2 L'événement  
*Iraq Conference in Brussels*
- 3 France-Amérique  
*NFF Survey Results*
- 4 Profil  
*Bastille Day*
- 5 Économie / Science  
*Paris Air Show*
- 6 Société  
*Academy Admits Algerian Author*
- 7 Culture  
*Centre Pompidou Summer Exhibits*
- 8 Chez nous  
*Cézanne-Pissarro Exhibit at N.Y.'s MOMA*



## Finance Minister Breton Calls for Bigger Aid Effort While in New York

*Thierry Breton renews France's call for an international tax on airline tickets to help finance increased aid effort*

**F**RENCH FINANCE Minister Thierry Breton and the new minister delegate for cooperation, Brigitte Girardin, came to New York to attend the General Assembly on Financing for Development on June 27-28. At the meeting, Breton stressed the need for countries to shift into higher gear in order to reach the goals set by the Millennium Declaration in 2000. Highlighting the severity of the AIDS epidemic and the low life expectancy in too many African countries, he urged contributors to rapidly consider how to best help the world's poorest countries.

"Last week, the G8 finance ministers, including myself, reached an agreement to forgive the multilateral debt of the heavily indebted poor countries towards international financial institutions," Breton said (see our article on page 2 for details). "However (...) forgiveness cannot be the main lever of development finance. This is why France wants the September summit to be an opportunity to increase both the volume and the quality of official development assistance." France, for its part, will raise its official developmental assistance to 0.5 percent of its GNP in 2007 and to 0.7 percent in 2012, including 0.15 percent for the least developed countries. France also plans to make sure

that two-thirds of its bilateral assistance continues to go to Africa, the continent most in need of aid.

Breton warned however that there is still an urgent need for stable long-term financing from all countries—not only the richest ones—in order to replace the often volatile assistance from countries experiencing budgetary difficulties. In light of this, the French minister reiterated France's position, namely that the world community should implement international solidarity levies that would provide aid agencies with additional funds. In particular, he proposed a solidarity tax on airline tickets, and announced that France, Brazil, Chile and Germany are hoping to rapidly implement a pilot program to determine such a tax's feasibility. The proceeds would be allocated through existing institutions in order to avoid needless duplication and could be used to finance the most urgent human development programs, such as vaccination campaigns and the pooled purchase of AIDS treatments. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, as well as British Finance Minister Gordon Brown, E.U. Commissioner for Development Louis Michel and the World Bank expressed their support for such an airline tax.

**FRANCE HAILS  
LEBANESE VOTE**

French officials noted with satisfaction the successful and peaceful completion of elections in Lebanon on June 19, the first Lebanese elections free of foreign interference in three decades. The election resulted in a win for the reformists, allowing the list led by Saad Hariri to gain an absolute majority. Hariri is the son of the popular former prime minister, Rafiq Hariri, who was assassinated in February (see NFF 05.02). One of his first moves was to visit President Jacques Chirac in Paris to discuss the new political situation in Lebanon. France is now preparing an international plan to aid Lebanon's new government.



Saad Hariri

**POLLUTION TRADE  
MARKET LAUNCHED**

Paris launched a CO2 stock market on June 24, which will allow companies to trade pollution rights. In 2003, the E.U. imposed annual pollution limits on its members by selling pollution emission permits. Companies are granted pollution certificates—the right to release a specific amount of pollutants—which, if they do not use, they may sell to other companies that are exceeding their pollution quotas. European officials hope that this market-based solution will incite companies to find the most cost-effective way to reduce pollution. The total European market for pollution rights is estimated at 20 billion euros. To learn more, visit [www.powernext.com](http://www.powernext.com).

**INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH  
BUDGET DOUBLED  
TO 1 BILLION EUROS**

At the Paris Air Show on June 18, French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin announced that the government would double its spending on industrial research from 500 million to 1 billion euros (\$1.23 billion). Villepin said the increased funds will attract "the best researchers and the most skilled workers" as well as create new jobs in fields such as solar energy, nanotechnology, biotechnology and biofuels. Villepin cited the air show as a prime example of successful European cooperation, the kind of cooperation necessary to move France's economy forward (see page 5 for more on the air show).

NEWS FROM FRANCE / July 06, 2005

**France Committed to Helping Iraq**

**T**HE EUROPEAN UNION and the United States co-hosted a conference in Brussels on June 22 to demonstrate the international community's support for the transition process under way in Iraq. Conference members affirmed their determination to assist Iraq in building a strong democracy and achieving full sovereignty in the framework defined by Security Council resolution 1546 adopted last year.

French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy remarked at the conference that confronting the presence of daily violence in Iraq remains a challenge which requires the international community to "renew our promise by giving our common commitment new concrete content ... and respond[ing] to Iraqi expectations with specific and tailored proposals."

France has already offered Iraq substantial debt relief, provided funds for reconstruction through direct contributions and through collaborative efforts with the E.U. and NATO, and has offered to help train Iraqi security forces. Douste-Blazy called for yet more solidarity with the new Iraqi government as it prepares to elaborate a constitution, saying, "While it is up to the Iraqi authorities themselves to fulfill [the country's hope and desire to rebuild], France wishes to participate in their efforts and encourage them."

**Several Measures Benefit  
World's Poorest Countries**

**U**.N. SECRETARY-General Kofi Annan, joined by French President Jacques Chirac and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, was proud to announce the total cancellation of the world's poorest countries' multilateral debt toward the World Bank and IMF. The G8 ministers of finance came to an agreement to completely erase the debt of 18 countries, 15 of them African, for a total of \$40 billion. By the same token, the Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency) declared that it stepped up aid to developing countries by 11 percent in 2004. The agency's plans for 2005 include increasing the geographic perimeter of aid and to continue participating in the reconstruction of countries ravaged by the December 2004 tsunami.

In related news, President Jacques Chirac announced that France would increase its pledge to the U.N. AIDS fund to 300 million euros for 2007, doubling the amount it has given this



**FRENCH-U.S.  
DRUG BUSTING IN  
THE CARIBBEAN**

In one of their latest operations, French forces intercepted 900 kg of cocaine in a fishing boat on June 7.

In a series of drug busts off the coast of Florida during the past three months, French armed forces, in conjunction with the South American Joint Interagency Task Force of Florida, seized close to five tons of cocaine and 400 kilograms of marijuana. The French Navy has been an integral part of the war on drugs in the Caribbean throughout 2005. In cooperation with American forces, French armed forces have participated in aerial and maritime operations in South America as part of a global effort to stop drug trafficking that affects both the United States and Europe.

year. The Global Fund to fight HIV, AIDS and other diseases welcomed France's plan to boost its contributions, and encouraged other nations to do the same. "To meet our current commitments, we will need \$2.3 billion in 2005, \$3.5 billion in 2006 and \$3.6 billion in 2007," said Richard Feachman, the Fund's executive director. The Global Fund is a unique public-private partnership created three years ago by Secretary-General Kofi Annan to marshal additional resources in the battle against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

**France Contributes to Tsunami Warning System**

**A**T THE 23RD general assembly of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, France announced the launch of a 1.5 million-euro (\$1.8 million) program to install a new tsunami warning system in the Indian Ocean. Because the giant wave reached most coastlines an hour or two after being triggered by an earthquake in the ocean, many lives could have been saved had a proper warning system existed.

The French government will finance the program, which will be operating from the National Center of Reunion to provide sophisticated, real-time capacities for receiving, evaluating, and disseminating warning messages from France's observer networks in the Indian Ocean. France will also establish stations for receiving information in Madagascar, Tanzania, and Kenya as well as take action

to educate and train coastal communities.

This project is part of the international Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System designed to strengthen the national warning systems, disaster management and prevention mechanisms, and preparedness of the countries that were hit by the devastating tsunami last December (particularly Indonesia and Sri Lanka). France's contribution stems in part from concern for its overseas department, Reunion, a small island east of Madagascar which suffered along with its neighbors from the tsunami.



In yellow, the countries hit by the December 2004 tsunami.

After sending more than 41 million euros (\$50 million) in emergency aid, France is now focusing on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the ravaged areas. Over 60 French-backed projects, representing a total of 20 million euros, are currently under way throughout the region.



## NFF Survey Results

**W**E WOULD LIKE to once again thank all of the 1,147 readers (10 percent of our total subscriber base!) who participated in our survey (see NFF 05.03). We received countless suggestions, for which we are especially grateful!

In particular, several of you asked that we include French articles in our issues. We are considering such a move, but are worried it would conflict with our overriding goal, which is

### FRENCH NEWS IN FRENCH

*France-Amérique* (a subsidiary of *Le Figaro* that comes out every Wednesday)  
[www.france-amerique.com](http://www.france-amerique.com)  
 +1 (212) 221 6700  
*Le Journal Français* (monthly magazine)  
[www.journalfrancais.com](http://www.journalfrancais.com)  
 +1 (800) 232 1549

that NFF be accessible to all Americans. In the meantime, for those of you who'd like some more French in your news diet, we

recommend two U.S.-based publications, *France-Amérique* and *Le Journal Français* (see boxed text). You should also get in touch with your nearest Alliance Française, which should be able to provide you with French-language resources. Visit [www.afusa.org](http://www.afusa.org) for a list of their locations throughout the United States.

Many of you also asked for more news on French cultural events taking place in the United States. We'll do our best, despite space limitations, but unfortunately we cannot be as exhaustive as we'd like to be! But to keep abreast of everything French that's going on in the U.S., a great place to start is [www.frenchculture.org](http://www.frenchculture.org).

**How You Rate NFF!**  
 65.39 % Excellent  
 32.69 % Good

The French government offers several other free newsletters, which you may also find of interest:

#### Tourist information:

*E-News from France* ([us.franceguide.com](http://us.franceguide.com))

#### French aerospace news:

*France in Space* ([www.france-science.org](http://www.france-science.org))

#### Educational news (workshops, scholarships...):

[www.frenchculture.org/newsletter/subscribe.asp](http://www.frenchculture.org/newsletter/subscribe.asp)

Thank you again for your responses, and please do not hesitate to get in touch with us again, as we always appreciate your feedback! ■ ■

### WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU WANT

About 15 percent of our readers are 25 or younger, and 22 percent are 66 or over, with the rest somewhere in between. Though we send out approximately 11,000 issues, we estimate our actual readership to be at least 25,000, as more than half of you share your issues with two or more readers. When asked to list your favorite topics, culture came out way ahead (82 percent of you listed it as one of their top three choices), followed by diplomacy/politics, France/U.S., tourism, and society (between 53 and 43 percent each), economy/business and science/technology (around 22 percent for each), and, last, sports (which, at 5 percent, was no winner!). Fortunately for us, your three favorite sections in NFF generally matched your favorite topics. Once again, culture was on top (74 percent), but current events was close behind (67 percent), followed by France-America (46), society (38), in-depth (31), *chez nous* (26) and economy / technology (22).

### RHÔNE-ALPES DELEGATION VISITS PENNSYLVANIA

A delegation from the Rhône-Alpes Regional Council visited Pennsylvania from June 18 to 22 (during the world's leading biotechnology trade fair) in order to establish a partnership between the two regions in the economic, scientific, cultural and educational spheres. The governor of Pennsylvania, Edward G. Rendell, announced that his state will open a trade office in Lyon in fall 2005, and he also indicated that he will accept an invitation to visit the Rhône-Alpes region before the end of the year. The French region will thereby become the first to set up a formal bilateral economic relation with an American state.

### BNP PARIBAS BUYS U.S. BANK

BNP Paribas, the second largest bank in the euro zone, announced that its American subsidiary, BancWest, is in the process of acquiring the Nebraska-based Commercial Federal for 1.12 billion euros (\$1.36 billion). The acquisition of Commercial Federal will add 198 branches in seven states to BNP Paribas's U.S. network, making it the sixth largest in the west. This acquisition is in line with the French bank's aggressive expansion in the U.S.: it has acquired 16 American banks in the last 15 years, and, in the last year, it has managed to double its American network.

### FRANCE AND U.S. REACH SPACE SHUTTLE AGREEMENT

French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte and NASA Administrator Michael Griffin signed an agreement for the use of Istres Le Tubé 125 Air Base as a transoceanic abort landing site during a ceremony June 7 at NASA's headquarters in Washington, D.C. "I see here another demonstration of the long lasting friendship between our two countries," said Levitte at the signing ceremony. "This paves the way for further collaboration in the framework of space exploration." The agreement authorizes U.S. space shuttles to enter and fly over French airspace, and land at the 125 Air Base of Istres Le Tubé in an emergency.

### ARMSTRONG KICKS OFF LAST TOUR DE FRANCE

Lance Armstrong won the Tour de France for a record sixth time in 2004, and this summer he will attempt to win his seventh straight title, cycling with his new Discovery Channel team, before retiring. "The Tour de France will be my last race as a professional cyclist—win or lose," said Armstrong in a press conference announcing his retirement. "Having said that, I am fully committed to winning a seventh tour." The 92nd annual Tour de France, covering a total distance of 3,607 kilometers, set off on July 2 and will run through the 24th.

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### EADS CHOOSES ALABAMA

EADS announced on June 22 that it plans to build a \$600-million aircraft plant in Mobile, Alabama, should it win a U.S. Air Force contract to build America's new refueling jets. Though EADS is still in the process of bidding on the contract, it will in any case start construction on an engineering center that will create 150 jobs in 2006. Mobile was chosen over three other southern cities because of its conveniently located airfield next to a deep-water port, allowing the Toulouse-based company to easily transport massive parts shipped from Europe to their plant. The runners-up—Florida, Mississippi and South Carolina—will receive five-year grants for their university internship programs from EADS.

## Embassy Gives Web Site a Face Lift

**T**HE EMBASSY of France launched a revamped Web site in early June with a visitor-friendly design. The enhanced home page greets visitors with dynamic photos, images and colors, as well as the latest news on France. "With this new site we want to encourage people to spend more time going from one page to the next discovering France," said webmaster Félix Ferrant. "It's an immense



active games. Check it out at [www.ambafrance-us.org](http://www.ambafrance-us.org). ■ ■

**NEWS FROM FRANCE** / July 06, 2005



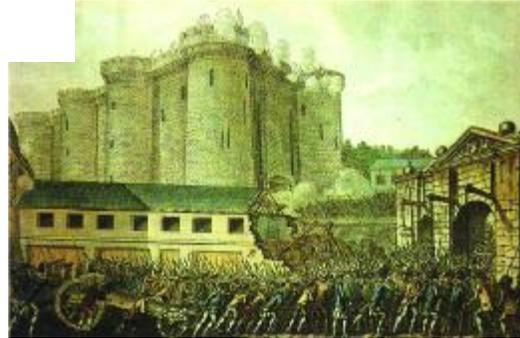
# BASTILLE DAY

## REVOLUTION!

### The history behind Bastille Day

IN 1880, the 14th of July, or Bastille Day as it is also known, officially became France's national day, in memory of the storming of the Bastille on July 14, 1789. At the time, France was a country ruled by a corrupt upper class. The country was nearing bankruptcy, the poor had little food and the emerging middle class (bourgeoisie) felt powerless over the future of their country. Outraged by these conditions, protesters banded together on July 14, 1789, and stormed the Bastille prison, releasing the seven political prisoners inside and seizing all the arms that were kept there. King Louis XVI and his wife Marie Antoinette, fearing for their lives, fled to Versailles. This march on the Bastille, a citadel symbolizing the hypocrisy and corruption of France's political system, marked the beginning of the French Revolution. The lasting significance of this event was the recognition that power was held neither by the King nor God, but by the people.

Bastille day was decreed by a law on July 6, 1880, and in 1848 "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" was reinstated as the national motto. To ensure that the holiday would take on a national character right from its first year, the minister for the interior set up a commission to draw up a program for the day. Secular ceremonies in schools, the inauguration of republican statues, the distribution of provisions to inhabitants, bell-ringing, the widespread unfurling of flags and bunting, and military parades were encouraged throughout France. The army's participation was meant to bring together all those afflicted by the loss of Alsace and Lorraine after France's defeat at the hands of the Prussians in 1871.



The Bastille is overrun on July 14, 1789

Towns with conservative administrations were naturally reluctant to celebrate a secular, republican "ideology" which their town councilors rejected. Monarchists and Catholics saw the Revolution as a vile act of history. They refused to see in it as a conquest for freedom or civic emancipation. In their eyes, the triumphant processions going through the streets of the capital on the evening of Bastille Day were nothing but gatherings of rioters. Such an attitude was of short duration, however, as July 14 soon transcended political considerations and became a celebration of *la mère patrie* ("the motherland").

In part, this was because of another important July 14 in French history: July 14, 1790. Indeed, Léon Gambetta, one of the founders of the Third Republic, once asserted in a speech, "The French people freed themselves on the day of July 14, 1789, but where the glory of our fathers was great was on July 14, 1790, on the Champs de Mars. That was when the French nation was founded."

On this day, the Feast of the Federation was held, bringing a vast movement of fraternization to a triumphant close. In Paris, the Champs de Mars had been arranged as a huge amphitheatre, dominated by the altar to the mother country which had been erected on a central island. Fourteen thousand federates coming from the provinces and representing the nation flocked around it, and an estimated crowd of 300,000 people looked on. After the mass, celebrated on the altar of the mother country, La Fayette, the hero of the American War of Independence, took the oath, in the name of the federates, uniting the French in the defense of liberty, the constitution and the law. The king, in turn, swore to uphold the constitution decreed by the Assembly. In the provinces, this federative pact was simultaneously made by all of France's inhabitants. With this single burst of patriotism, the unity of the nation was no longer just a concept, but a reality.

## REVELING!

### Celebrating Freedom French-Style

THE 14TH OF JULY 1880, the first to be celebrated as an official national holiday, sought to restore France's pride in itself after the defeat of 1871, to ensure national cohesion, and to re-establish France's military power.

Military parades have played a key part in all Bastille Day ceremonies ever since, and thousands of people from all across France come to Paris to watch the armed forces march along the Champs-Élysées on July 14, with the French president and foreign dignitaries in attendance. The French government has recently begun to invite troops from allied countries to participate in the parade as well; several countries in Western Europe, as well as the United States, have sent contingents.

Bastille Day is also an occasion for the president to make a major political speech and to hold a press conference, in which he reflects on what has been accomplished and sets out a program

for the rest of the year. This decisive political moment, similar in many ways to the State of the Union speech in the U.S., marks the beginning of a new political year and gives the nation an opportunity to reflect on its achievements and goals.

But July 14 is more than a patriotic martial celebration with weighty political significance, it is also a great excuse to party! Public gatherings take place in lit streets, and fireworks illuminate the sky. Traditionally, French firefighters organize public dances to which entire communities were invited. And of course, thousands of partygoers attending private evenings throughout France and beyond uncork champagne bottles to toast *liberté, égalité, fraternité*.

West Point cadets parade on the Champs-Élysées during Bastille Day (2002).

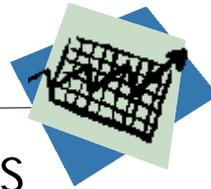


Bastille Day fireworks

### BASTILLE DAY IN THE U.S.

As always, Bastille Day celebrations will be held throughout the United States this year. In Nevada, people will be toasting the French holiday at the Paris-Las Vegas Casino Resort. In New York, Champagne Veuve Clicquot is sponsoring a pétanque tournament. And, in what has become a favorite for Washingtonians, waiters and waitresses from area restaurants will display their finesse and speed in a 12-block race along Pennsylvania Avenue, carrying trays of champagne. In Dallas, Texas, local Francophiles will share a little *joie-de-vivre* and say *au revoir* to the Honorable Denis Simonneau, Consul General of France, when the French-American Chamber of Commerce Dallas/Fort Worth celebrates Bastille Day 2005.

To learn about events near where you live, please contact your nearest Alliance Française ([www.afusa.org](http://www.afusa.org)), French-American Chamber of Commerce ([www.faccparisfrance.com](http://www.faccparisfrance.com)), or French Consulate ([www.ambafrance-us.org/intheus/consulates.asp](http://www.ambafrance-us.org/intheus/consulates.asp)).



## Paris Air Show a Success on All Fronts

**T**HE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY set a new record this year by attracting nearly half a million people to its biggest gathering, le Salon du Bourget, just north of the French capital. The 46th Paris Air Show, held from June 13 to June 19, featured more than 200 planes and helicopters, as well as aeronautical and military hardware by some 1,900 exhibitors from 41 countries. French President Jacques Chirac launched the events and toured the exhibits before witnessing the first display flight of the star of this year's show, the Airbus A380 superjumbo. The 555-seater and world's largest passenger plane, which made its maiden flight in April, took to the sky every day during the week-long demonstrations, always surrounded by throngs of spectators toting cameras and cell phones.



President Jacques Chirac (front left) at the Paris Air Show

The show proved to be a big success for Europe's Airbus, which sold 280 aircraft for a total of \$33.5 billion. These strong figures included 125 orders for its newest model, the A350, which was purchased by airlines such as Air Europa and U.S. Airways/America West. Airbus officials foresee delivering at least 360 aircraft in 2005 and 400 in 2006.

As always, U.S. aircraft were among the most avidly sought after, with the Defense Department sending a dazzling display of air power and senior officials to show off its latest technological advances and to express its desire to pursue transatlantic cooperation in aerospace and defense. "The U.S. military is eager to facilitate defense-industrial cooperation with its allies, partners, and friends," said Colonel Andres Ortegon, spokesman for the European U.S. Command.

Visit [www.paris-air-show.com](http://www.paris-air-show.com) for more information. ■■

## France, Japan to Develop New Supersonic Airliner

**A**EROSPACE INDUSTRY associations from France and Japan signed a three-year agreement on June 14 to promote cooperation in supersonic flight research. At the Paris Air Show, France's Aerospace Industries Association and the Society of Japanese Aerospace Companies (SJAC) launched a joint research program in several key areas, including engine noise and fuel efficiency, in order to develop a supersonic airplane that would link Tokyo with New York in six and a half hours and with Europe in less than six hours—half the current times. About \$1 million will be invested annually in the initial research phase by both organizations.

By combining Japan's manufacturing technology with France's supersonic technology, this initial agreement will pave the way for a basic technical study which may eventually result in the full-scale development of a 300-seater capable of reaching Mach 5 (five times the speed of sound). "Personally, I think

France has the most expertise in supersonic transport because it has the operational know-how of having built the Concorde," said Akira Yanagida, head of SJAC's engineering division. He added that French and Japanese aerospace researchers share the same concerns in terms of minimizing the airliner's costs and adverse environmental impact.

Should it be built, the new plane will be the first airliner to travel beyond the speed of sound since the Franco-British Concorde, which was retired in 2003 after 27 years in operation. ■■

### 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARIANESPACE

The European company Ariespace celebrated its 25th anniversary at the Paris 2005 Air Show, and confirmed the July launching of a 6.5-ton Thai telecommunications satellite, the largest ever. CEO Jean-Yves Le Gall announced that his company had had a satisfactory year, making a profit of 8.3 million euros despite unfavorable exchange rates, and said that the future looks bright. Since December 1979, Ariane rockets have taken off from Kourou (French Guyana) more than 160 times, making Ariespace the leading commercial satellite launcher. The newly revised Ariane 5 rocket is capable of launching up to 10 tons of equipment, and of deploying two satellites at a time. In 2006, Ariespace will launch an automatic spaceship designed to supply the International Space Station (ISS).

the presence of certain stimuli, become specialized cells.

In 2004, the team showed that these cells could be guided toward precise regions of the brain. Their latest accomplishment consists in showing that these stem cells can then be coaxed into becoming neurons that produce dopamine (lack of dopamine is what causes Parkinson's disease). The team demonstrated this neurological process in adult mice, and is now planning to test the feasibility of such therapies on animal models of Parkinson's. ■■

## Stem Cells Hold Promise in Fight Against Parkinson's

**T**HE LATEST FINDINGS of a Pasteur Institute research team, associated with the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), suggest that therapies using stem cells could one day help cure Parkinson's disease, a very debilitating brain illness affecting nearly four million people throughout the world. The team, led by Pierre-Marie Lledo and working in collaboration with Magdalena Götz's team from the University of Munich, first demonstrated in 2003 that the adult brain produces new stem cells, which was contrary to the scientific community's deeply held convictions at the time. Stem cells are matrix-like elements which, when in

### ALCATEL TO DESIGN NEW EUROPEAN RESEARCH NETWORK

DANTE (Delivery of Advanced Network Technology to Europe), a non-profit organization that operates European research and education networks, announced that it has selected Alcatel to design a multi-service network dubbed GÉANT2. The project will extend the networking services currently offered by GÉANT, the leading research and education network for scientists. GÉANT2 will connect 34 countries and over 3 million users. Alcatel's improvements will include direct optical connectivity and increased network protection.

### EADS AND ALCATEL WIN GALILEO SATELLITE CONTRACT

EADS and Alcatel, previously heading two rival bids for the development of Galileo (the future European satellite navigation system), finally joined forces to produce a winning proposal. The European Union accepted their joint bid on June 27, and the two companies, together with Thales and Finmeccanica, will soon start work on Europe's own Global Positioning System. To learn more, visit [www.galileoju.com](http://www.galileoju.com).

### UMA THURMAN ONCE AGAIN FACE OF LOUIS VUITTON



American actress Uma Thurman, of *Kill Bill* fame, will once again be the face for Louis Vuitton's 2005-2006 ready-to-wear line. The actress, whose first ad campaign for the company was photographed in a sleek industrial setting, will now strike a pose in more intimate indoor settings to capture the luxury and sophistication of the Vienna-inspired collection.

### ALSTOM TO BUILD TWO CRUISE SHIPS

MSC Croisières, an Italian cruise line, has commissioned two new ocean liners from Alstom Marine. At 335 meters long and 38 meters wide, the two new ships will be almost as big as the world's largest cruise ship, the Queen Mary II, also built by Alstom. Scheduled to take to the sea in the spring of 2008 and 2009, the ships will accommodate 4,000 passengers and 1,300 staff members. Their innovative design will give passengers more access to sea views (over 80 percent of cabins will have windows).

## AUTHOR OF "IS PARIS BURNING?:" DIES AT 75

Journalist and author John Lawrence Collins Jr. died from a brain hemorrhage on June 20 on the French Riviera, where he lived in Ramatuelle. Collins was born in Connecticut in 1929 and graduated from Yale before serving in the Army. While stationed near Paris he met Dominique Lapierre at Allied Headquarters and the two became partners. They researched and co-authored several nonfiction books, including *Is Paris Burning?*, which reconstructs the liberation of Paris in WWII and which was adapted for film in 1966.

## "CLOSER," NEW WOMEN'S MAGAZINE LAUNCHED

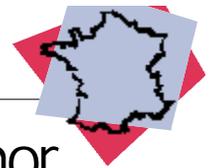
The group Emap France launched a new weekly magazine, *Closer*, which targets female readers, ages 25 to 49. In 92 pages, *Closer* combines four magazines in one by including sections covering celebrities, stories on ordinary people, fashion and beauty, and a television guide. Over one million complimentary copies of the premiere edition were distributed and 850,000 copies of future editions will be sold every Monday. For more information, visit [www.emapmedia.com](http://www.emapmedia.com).

## THE MAJESTY OF THE SARRE



François Zanella, a former miner, set sail on June 23 in his meticulously crafted model of the "Majesty of the Seas," a Royal Caribbean cruise ship. Built to one-eighth scale over the course of 11 years, the 33-meter long and 5-meter wide model includes an apartment, elevator and terrace. In the presence of the numerous sponsors who helped him fund his enormous project, Zanella, with tears of joy streaming down his face, launched his 800-ton boat onto the Sarre River. Once Zanella equips his boat with two 100 horsepower engines, he plans to begin traveling French and European waterways in the spring of 2006.

NEWS FROM FRANCE / July 06, 2005



# French Academy Elects Algerian Author

**T**HE PRESTIGIOUS Académie Française, founded in 1635 and made up of a circle of 40 elite writers and intellectuals—*les Immortels*—who watch over the French language, voted on June 16 to accept Assia Djébar as one of its members. Publishing her first novel, *Thirst*, in 1955 at the age of 21 under the pseudonym Assia Djébar, Fatima-Zohra Imalayène has become a celebrated author committed



Assia Djébar

to capturing the identity of North Africans, with a special focus on women. Her central themes are the fate of the Arab Muslim woman, travel between the Arab and Western worlds, and confrontation with the French colonial past. She draws upon history, often focusing on areas that have been largely overlooked (such as the role of women), as well as on her personal experiences growing up in Algeria as the daughter of a teacher and studying at the École Normale Supérieure of Sèvres as its first female Algerian student. Djébar's novels are widely read and have earned her much recognition as a writer and an activist, including the Neustadt Prize and the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade. Although the Académie Française has previously accepted foreigners, she is its first member coming from the Maghreb region of Africa.

# Eat Your Veggies! France Ramps Up Fight Against Obesity

**L**IKE MANY OTHER developed countries, France is facing a rise in the incidence of obesity in its population, with 40 percent of the French now considered overweight or obese (the rate is 64 percent in the U.S.). The government, worried that a rising rate of obesity will lead to substantial increases in health spending, has decided to take action. Several proposals have already been approved, such as regulating junk food advertising or banning vending machines in schools (see NFF 04.09). Now, the Ministry for Food and Agriculture has paired up with fruit and vegetable growers to encourage the consumption of healthier products. Posters promoting fruit juices are appearing throughout the metro system, vegetable tastings are being organized, and even restaurants are jumping onto the bandwagon, by proposing sophisticated vegetarian fare.

Local initiatives are also being implemented. In the Pas de Calais region, two cities have joined forces to undertake a 15-year joint project under the banner "Fleurbaix

Laventie Ville Santé." Since 1992, a study has been conducted on the residents of these two cities to understand the factors that cause obesity. The study, whose results were used by numerous health organisations worldwide, first focused on the diet of children and how it is influenced by environmental and biological factors. The last phase of the study, which will end in 2007, encourages all the cities' inhabitants to adopt new food habits by offering them personal coaching. This unique experiment is seen by many as a model to follow for French cities resolved to take action against rising obesity levels. For more information, visit [www.villesante.com](http://www.villesante.com).

## PREGNANCY ENVY

Thirty-eight percent of French fathers would like to become pregnant, if doing so were ever possible. As part of a Fathers' Day special, *Enfant Magazine* and Ipsos conducted a telephone poll of 500 parents and asked various questions ranging from the number of children they would like to have to the lengths they would go through to have a child if they were infertile. Surprisingly, the results were nearly identical for mothers responding to the male pregnancy question, with 40 percent of those polled saying that, if ever physically possible, they would like their husbands to carry their child to term. For the poll's complete results, please visit [www.enfant-magazine.com](http://www.enfant-magazine.com).



# La Samaritaine Takes a Sabbatical

**T**HE ARCHITECTURALLY monumental department store, La Samaritaine, will close for about six years for renovations. The art nouveau / art deco structure needs to have electrical circuits replaced, and smoke extraction systems and flammable wooden flooring installed in order to meet fire safety standards. With a complete closure of the store, renovations are estimated to take three to six years; but if done in stages, it could take eight to 10 years, said Samaritaine management.



La Samaritaine closes for six years of renovation.

La Samaritaine was built by art nouveau architect Frantz Jourdain and art deco designer Henri Sauvage in 1869. Parisians and visitors have enjoyed a cup of coffee and a croissant on the terrace overlooking the Seine for over 100 years.

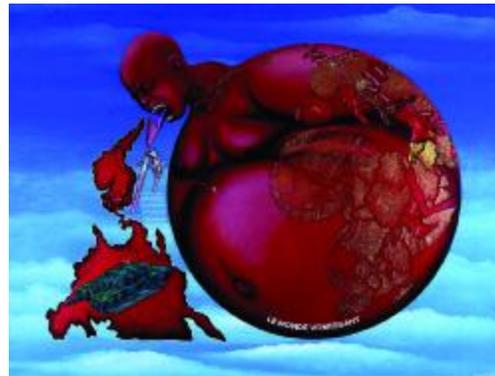
All of the store's 1,250 employees will be paid until an employment solution is found. The president of La Samaritaine said rumors of a hotel replacing the department store are false and that the store will re-open after the renovations.

La Samaritaine is one of the capital's oldest department stores, built shortly after the establishment of Le Bon Marché—Paris's first department store—in 1848. La Samaritaine owes its name to the hydraulic pump near the Pont-Neuf that operated from 1609 to 1813. A gilded relief on the front of the pump showed the good Samaritan talking to Christ at Jacob's well. For more information, visit [www.lasamaritaine.com](http://www.lasamaritaine.com).



# Fresh Exhibits at the Centre Pompidou

**T**HIS SUMMER, Paris's foremost modern art museum, the Centre Pompidou, presents three special exhibits, each well worth a visit. The first of these, the "Big Bang" exhibit, displays 850 paintings, sculptures, films, architectural models, multimedia installations and books, all drawn from the Center's vast permanent collection. The works are organized thematically (construction / deconstruction, archaism, sex, war, subversion, melancholy and re-enchantment), under the overarching theme of "destruction and creation." The exhibit shows how artists break the rules of order and establishment to re-create the chaos of the 20th century. It runs through February 27, 2006.



*Le Monde Vomissant*, by Chéri Samba (Africa Remix)

A royal mantle made of beer-bottle caps, masks crafted from jerry cans and a chair sculpted from handguns left over from Mozambique's civil war are some of the pieces of art emphasizing a struggling continent's attempt to reconcile modernity and tradition, poverty and resourcefulness, in the "Africa Remix" exhibit, which runs through August 8. The exhibit organizes about 300 works of art by 80 artists from 25 African countries into three themes—history and identity, city and country and body and soul. African contemporary art merges with tribal art, and throughout the exhibit the recycling theme is used to emphasize the lopsided relationship between poor ex-colonies and their wealthy former rulers. "The Europeans took away our masks and left us their trash bins," says Beninese mask artist Romual Hazoué. "I turn their bins into masks."

The final exhibit displays work by French architect, decorator and teacher Robert Mallet-Stevens (1886-1945). This is the first retrospective dedicated to one of France's leading avant-garde architects. His work is shown through original drawings, photographic prints, architectural models, film extracts and pieces of furniture. The exhibit runs through August 29. Visit [www.cnac-gp.fr](http://www.cnac-gp.fr) for more information. ■

## CHAGALL'S "CIRCUS PEOPLE"

A special exhibition in Nice gives visitors a glimpse of Marc Chagall's fascination with the world of the circus, with a selection of his paintings and drawings. Born in Belarus in 1887, Chagall was closely associated with the surrealist movement.



Jewish Theater, *Music*, 1920 (detail) by Marc Chagall

He painted clowns and acrobats throughout his career, regarding them as "tragic human beings who, for me, are like the figures in some religious paintings." He treated them as allegorical figures, but they are also in large part autobiographical representations. The works, which display in Nice at the Musée National Message Biblique Marc Chagall until October 3, are from Chagall's "French period"—the several periods of his life that he spent in France.

For more information, visit [www.musee-chagall.fr](http://www.musee-chagall.fr).

## ONE-QUARTER OF THE FRENCH DREAM OF BECOMING WRITERS

In France, being a writer continues to have a certain cachet, so much so that about 25 percent of the French have already written or thought about writing a book, according to a recently conducted Ipsos Culture / *Figaro Littéraire* survey. Indeed, 19 percent of men and 26 percent of women have written or plan to write poetry, a novel, a play or a collection of memoirs. Over half of those aspiring to be writers would like to see their work published.

## DICTIONARY OF THE DEAD

A new book, *Qui Était Qui?* (the "Who's Who of the Dead"), tells the stories of over 8,000 French personalities who passed away in the 20th century. The book features anecdotal biographies of these notable individuals, and also includes their burial places or where they were cremated, giving admirers a chance to pay their respects.

## "LES POUPEES RUSSES" SEQUEL TO "L'AUBERGE ESPAGNOLE"

A new French comedy, *Les Poupées Russes* ("The Russian Dolls"), hit the big screens on June 15. Director Cédric Klapisch's film follows up on the story of *L'Auberge Espagnole*, released in 2002. The first film told a story of love and friendship among French exchange student Xavier and his European student housemates in Barcelona. The new film takes up this story five years later when Xavier, now a struggling writer, travels to St. Petersburg for the wedding of one of his Barcelona friends. Rising star Romain Duris plays Xavier and famous French actress Audrey Tautou also stars in the film.

# The Cernuschi Asian Art Museum Reopens its Doors

**P**aris's Cernuschi Museum, showcasing the second largest Asian art collection in France and the fifth largest Chinese art collection in Europe, re-opened to the public after a three-year hiatus for renovation and expansion. Decompartmentalized, open to natural light and to the adjacent parc Monceau, the redesigned museum is described as an "aesthetic promenade" by its curator, Gilles Béguin. The museum includes 12,000 works of art, 900 of which are on display, 300 more than before the renovations.

Henri Cernuschi himself contributed 4,000 pieces of artwork from his extended trips to Japan and China. The 19th-century Italian economist, who took refuge in France for political reasons, donated the hotel and the rich art collection it houses to the city of Paris upon his death in 1896. Some highlights of the exhibition include a huge enthroned Buddha statue from a temple in Tokyo that was destroyed by a fire and a "yeou" vase from China's Chang era (1550-1050 B.C.) called "tigresse." The vase is considered the most important archaic bronze work in Europe.



*Saint Jerome Reading a Letter* by Georges de la Tour.

## DE LA TOUR PAINTING DISCOVERED

The director of the Spanish Institute in Madrid noticed an unusual oil painting in the headquarters of the Instituto Cervantes in March, and transferred it to the Prado Museum where it was identified by an art historian as a work by the 17th-century French painter, Georges de la Tour. It depicts Saint Jerome reading a letter, holding a pair of pince-nez. The painting, believed to have lain unnoticed for centuries, is only the second piece by de la Tour known to exist in Spain and will remain for now at the Prado.

As is the case with all municipal museums in Paris, access to the permanent collections of the Cernuschi museum is free. In September, the first of the museum's temporary special exhibitions, which occur twice a year, will be dedicated to Chinese celadons (artwork made with a greenish ceramic glaze).

Visit [www.paris.fr/musees/cernuschi](http://www.paris.fr/musees/cernuschi) to learn more. ■

## ANNETTE MESSAGER RECEIVES LION D'OR

France's pavilion, featuring an installation by Annette Messager, received the Golden Lion award at the annual Venice Biennale, a major international contemporary art festival. Her work, entitled *Casino*, led spectators into a land of surrealist imagery loosely based on the story

of Pinocchio. More than 70 countries and 90 artists displayed paintings and various forms of artwork, which were as diverse as a performance artist perched on a hippo and gallery guards breaking out into song.



Louis and Hubert Laroze fly a two-person kite (Rouzat, 1911).

**LARTIGUE: CAPTURING "LA JOIE DE VIVRE" ON FILM**

Visitors to the Louisiana Art and Science Museum in Baton Rouge will find themselves smiling before Jacques Henri Lartigue's vivacious photographs. On display until July 18 in an exhibit entitled "Jacques Henri Lartigue: A Boy, a Camera, an Era," the photographs perfectly reflect the turn of the past century, an era of unbounded optimism. Lartigue was a pioneer in the field of photography, born only 50 years after its advent in the 1840's, and he is revered for his contributions to photographic technique and vision. He began taking photographs in 1901 at the age of six, mostly of friends and family enjoying themselves during the last carefree days of *la Belle Epoque*, on the eve of World War I.

While Lartigue photographed well into his 80s, many of his most famous photographs are those he took as a child. Thrilled by the emerging automobile and aviation technologies that would soon revolutionize the 20th century, he also photographed the activities of inventors, scientists, and daredevils, expressing a fascination with anything new and exciting. As described by one gallery director, the subjects of his photographs, "jump, leap, speed by in goggles and clouds of dust, dive into ponds, paddle barrels across lakes, and promenade in the Bois de Boulogne with elegant hats and parasols." Infused with an innocent and playful perspective on life, these portraits exude a warm human spirit and communicate a refreshing optimism. Looking at the world through Lartigue's youthful eyes reminds us to have fun, the way only a child dares to; it makes us want to kick up our heels and hop into his world. For more information, visit [www.lasm.org](http://www.lasm.org).

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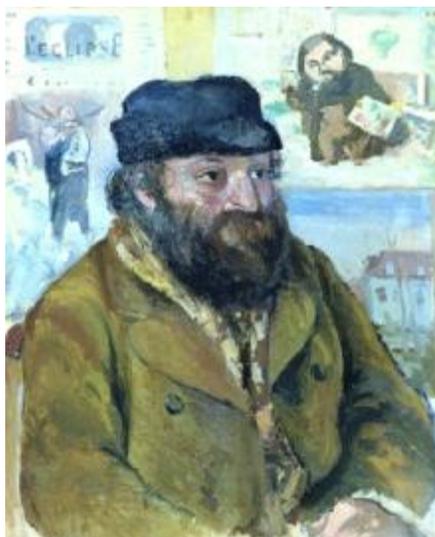
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# MoMA Reunites the Works of Old Friends

*New York's Museum of Modern Art proposes a fascinating exhibit on Cézanne and Pissarro*

**A**RT OFTEN SERVES as a medium for intellectual exchanges and discussion, with evolving artistic styles representing the evolution of ideas. This is evident in the comparison between the works of two celebrated French painters, Camille Pissarro and his student Paul Cézanne, who worked side-by-side in Pontoise and Auvers in France's Oise River Valley. The New York Museum of Modern Art's exhibit, "Pioneering in Modern Painting: Cézanne and Pissarro 1865-1885," features 80 paintings and drawings, including portraits, still lifes and landscapes, on display together for the first time since the artists created them.

Presenting their collections together offers an unprecedented opportunity to



Portrait of Cézanne, by Camille Pissarro (1874).

understand the artists' intense engagement in exploring new pictorial processes. While Pissarro was an Impressionist, using loose brush strokes to emphasize the ephemeral, changing qualities of light, Cézanne added a monumental quality to his art, wanting "to make of Impressionism something solid and lasting like the art in museums." Indeed, his style became highly influential with 20th-century schools of art, especially Cubism. The two artists' choices of almost identical subject matters and motifs allows viewers to examine their parallel creative paths and their mutual exchanges that contributed so much to modernism in terms of art and ideology. For more information on the exhibit, which runs through September

12, visit [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org).

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