

《 “ 法国五月 ” 登陆中国 》

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Every spring, Hong Kong and Macao are transformed into la vie en rose, as all things French descend upon the two cities. Le French May is arguably Asia's most encompassing festival. It's organized by the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macao. This year will feature more than 120 exhibitions and performances, plus culinary and cinematic delights. This year's Le French May marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and France with a collaborative roster highlighting similarities between the two countries.

"On Jan 31, 1964, in the Elysee Palace, (former French president) Charles de Gaulle concluded a press conference by a remark on what he called the 'affinities' between France and China," says chairman of the board of Le French May Andrew S. Yuen.

"These cultural and historical 'affinities' have been reactivated and serve as the fulcrum of a new joint global ambition sent through the 2014 edition of Le French May. Hong Kong and Macao will once again greatly benefit from French and Chinese humanistic traditions. In an era of unprecedented interdependence, it is the quality of their articulation which makes a difference."

Consul general of France in Hong Kong and Macao Arnaud Barthelemy says: "Le French May 2014 will focus on Sino-French cultural cross influence." In visual arts, the Hong Kong Museum of Arts will present the works of the Chinese painters who worked in Paris during the early 20th century and met with French artists, such as Picasso or Matisse.

They consequently renewed the codes of their own arts and became famous masters, from Lin Fengmian and Chang Yu to Zao Wou-ki or Zhu Dequn.

"The ballet Marco Polo by Nice Opera Ballet will take the audience into an incredible journey and feature the discovery of the East by the West," Barthelemy says. "The theater play called Mirror will explore the similarities between French comedies and Chinese opera through the unusual encounter of traditional characters from both genres. The cinema program French Shadows: All Eyes on China will present the vision of Chinese directors about France and reciprocally the glance of French movies on China."

Yachting fans can cheer on their favorite team on May 10 and 11 as 100 boats race for the cup in the Societe Generale Regatta, held in partnership with the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club to celebrate the company's 150th anniversary.

Two exhibitions will focus on scientific research: Plagues? From the Plague to New Emerging Infectious Diseases pays tribute to the discovery by Alexandre Yersin of the plague in Hong Kong 120 years ago, while Ars Mathematica looks at the relationship between art and mathematics through digital sculpture and thermo-chromic paints.

Essential Accessories of the Little Black Dress, curated by Anne Camilli, explores the meticulously crafted accouterments that enhance every fashionable woman's wardrobe.

Studio Putman, Ambassador of Style showcases the legacy of the late Andree Putman and her continued influence on French design, carried on through the work of her daughter Olivia Putman.

The fertile Rhone Valley and the city of Lyon are the partner regions for Le French May this year, and nowhere is that more evident than through Le French Gourmay, the culinary arm of the festival.

Lyon native Pierre Gagnaire is this edition's culinary ambassador, and his specially created menus will be available throughout the month of May at Cafe Causette and two-Michelin-starred Pierre, both in Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong.

Another 60 restaurants will be participating with unique menus throughout the festival, including Amber, Caprice and Robuchon au Dome in Macao.

"The festival has evolved over the years to become a mainstream cultural event for the community of Hong Kong," Yuen says. "It is no longer just a program in the calendar of French-speaking art lovers but a part of the daily life of Hong Kong people throughout the months of May and June."

