

Presse Release – 23 Janvier 2023



Hélène Duchêne, Ambassador of France to the UK and writer Zadie Smith will open the 7th edition of the NIGHT OF IDEAS on Thursday 9 February 2023, at the Institut français in London.

This year's edition will gather **40 leading figures from both sides of the Channel**, including member of the House of Lords and former Paralympian **Tanni Grey-Thompson**, writer **Constance Debré**, journalist **Fiona Harvey**, Head of Literature and Spoken Word at Southbank Centre **Ted Hodgkinson** and **Thomas Jolly**, Artistic Director of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024 ceremonies.

Crossing French and British perspectives, writers, philosophers, artists, scientists, academics, journalists, activists and students will explore the recent changes in our world through a series of **lively and free discussions**.

MORE? That is the question which will drive the debates and engage the audience to tackle **contemporary issues, from the climate crisis to post #Metoo politics, from the ethics of fashion to the new geopolitics**.

In these changing and challenging times, when many of us feel the need to share ideas and exchange views, the NIGHT OF IDEAS provides a platform to reflect upon current issues, rethink tomorrow's world and sow the seed of new initiatives.

UK-wide, the Institut français d'Ecosse, and Maison française d'Oxford also take part in the NIGHT OF IDEAS offering a programme of screenings and debates.

In the run-up to the NIGHT OF IDEAS, a film season, **BEFORE THE NIGHT**, will introduce the different panels while the **LITTLE NIGHT** will invite students from British and French schools to reflect on the main topics.

Some of the debates will also be **broadcast live** on YouTube and Facebook.

Launched by the Institut français in Paris in 2016, the Night of Ideas is a project staged in Paris, London and across the world. In London, the Night of Ideas is organised by the Institut français and the French Embassy, in partnership with the Maison française d'Oxford, the European Institute and the Department of English Language and Literature of the University College of London, the Global Engagement Department of King's College, the Bristol Festival of Ideas, the Institut français d'Ecosse, the Agence pour l'enseignement du français à l'étranger, Arte in English, Open City Documentary Festival and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. It is supported by the Institut français in Paris, the French Institute's Trust and Patrons' Circle and the Banque Transatlantique.

Night of Ideas - 9 February 2023 at the Institut français in London – Free entrance
Registration, programme & biographies: on www.nightofideas.co.uk

Press Contact: Natacha Antolini – natacha.antolini@institut-francais.org.uk - 020 7871 3520

Institut français - 17 Queensberry Place SW7 2DT
020 7871 3515 – www.institut-francais.org.uk

NIGHT OF IDEAS CORE PROGRAMME

OPENING EVENT WITH ZADIE SMITH

18:00 – 18:30 - Ciné Lumière – Opening

- **Hélène Duchêne**, French Ambassador to the UK, will launch the Night of Ideas.

- British Novelist **Zadie Smith** will then talk about her work and what this year's theme **More?** means to her with **Ted Hodgkinson**, Head of Literature and Spoken Word at Southbank Centre.

CAN DEMOCRACIES SOLVE THE CLIMATE CRISIS?

18:30 – 19:20 - Ciné Lumière – Debate

From short-termism to the difficulty of consensus-making, critics have highlighted how democratic methods appear unfit to tackle the climate emergency. Still, others argue that more democracy, not less, is the solution to avoid an ecological disaster. As scientists urge governments around the world to take action, are democracies up to the challenge?

With

Sandrine Dixson-Declève, Co-President of the Club of Rome and Climate Change Activist

Lisa Vanhala, Author and Professor in Political Science, University College London

Roman Krznic, Philosopher

Chaired by **Fiona Harvey**, Environment Editor, *The Guardian*

SHIFTING LIMITS

18:30 – 19:20 – La Médiathèque - Debate

The original Olympic motto - "Faster, Higher, Stronger" - characterises sports as an instinctive striving to push our limits beyond the imaginable. But as preoccupations around care and wellness emerge, how can sports fit into a new paradigm of the self, centred on one's pleasure and limitations? Can self-optimisation and self-care be reconciled?

With

Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, Former Paralympian and Member of the House of Lords

Sandra Laugier, Professor in Philosophy, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University

Chaired by **David Papineau**, Professor in Philosophy, King's College London

A MORE CORDIAL ENTENTE?

18:30 – 19:20 – Les Salons - Debate

Franco-British relations have always had their ups and downs, with occasional challenges, misunderstandings and arguments. They have also regularly been tainted by a sense of emulation if not rivalry. Against a challenging and fast-evolving geopolitical backdrop and in light of the war in Ukraine, we will be looking at what brings France and the United Kingdom together, hoping for another new dawn in their relations.

With

Catherine Fieschi, Political Analyst, Academic and Author

Georgina Wright, Director, Institut Montaigne's Europe Programme

Bruno Tertrais, Deputy Director of the Foundation for Strategic Research

Chaired by Sophie Pedder, Author and Paris bureau Chief, *The Economist*

THE ETHICS OF GOOD LOOKS

19:40 – 20:30 - Ciné Lumière - Debate

In light of the climate crisis, the concept of ethical consumption is becoming essential. However, fashion brands and designers are faced with an enormous challenge: how can an industry based on novelty and desire accommodate the imperatives of sustainability? Could these limitations pave the way for innovative creative opportunities?

With

Justine Porterie, Global Head of Sustainability, Depop

Tansy Hoskins, Journalist and Author

Dilys Williams, Director, Centre for Sustainable Fashion and Professor of Fashion Design for Sustainability

Chaired by Sarah Kent, London Editor, *The Business of Fashion*

YOU'VE REACHED MAXIMUM CAPACITY!

19:40 – 20:30 – La Médiathèque – Debate

Seemingly invisible, the digital realm has become the intersection of our public and private lives. Yet far from abstract, concerns over issues such as environmental costs, political radicalism or algorithmic discriminations are reminders that the digital can have far-reaching consequences beyond our screens. As our dependence on the Internet deepens, should we limit our interconnectivity?

With

Guillaume Poix, Writer and Playwright

Martha Dark, Founder and Director, Foxglove

Gabrielle Stemmer, Film Director and Editor

Chaired by Helen Margetts, Professor in Society and Internet, University of Oxford

OPENING THE GATES

19:40 – 20:30 – Les Salons – Debate

Prestigious universities and top schools in France and the United Kingdom have been faced with the pressing issue of social inclusion. Whilst some have supported initiatives to achieve more inclusive cohorts, a contradiction still lingers: built on the premise of selectivity, how can these institutions avoid reproducing social biases? Can elitism and diversity coexist?

With

Pierre Mathiot, Director, Sciences Po Lille

Chaired by Simon Kuper, Author and Journalist at the *Financial Times*

UNTIL WE FALL

19:40 – 20:30 - Ciné Lumière II - Debate

“To do more” or to “achieve more” is today regarded as problematic. It is associated with a hyper consumptive society, a senseless race for growth. Far from being considered a sterile outcome, the idea of "more" becomes an aesthetic stance for artists who wish, through length, experimentation and the spectacular to go through with their art or reinvent it. “Until we fall” will gather artists and researchers to explore this idea of exhaustion in their respective disciplines and artistic practices.

With

Thomas Jolly, Theatre and Opera stage Director

Abraham Poincheval, Artist

Chloe Moglia, Trapeze aerial Artist, Choreographer and Dancer

SEXUAL (R)EVOLUTIONS

20:50 – 21:40 - Ciné Lumière – Debate

The politics of sex has considerably evolved in the past decade, thanks to the essential advocacy work of [feminist movements](#) around the world. The #MeToo uprising has contributed to a wider awareness of sexual and gender-based violence, encouraging us to reassess attitudes and behaviours related to sexuality. Are we living through a new kind of sexual revolution, only this time more preoccupied with gender identity, consent and justice? How do we represent desire, break existing norms and reinvent relationships in its aftermath?

With

Constance Debré, Author

Katherine Angel, Writer and Senior Lecturer in English, Queen Mary University of London

Ivan Jablonka, Historian and Writer

Nicole Fernández Ferrer, Film Producer, Director General of the Centre Audiovisuel Simone de Beauvoir

Chaired by Louise Perry, Journalist and Author

LOVE ME MORE

20:50 – 21:40 – Les Salons – Debate

One need not look far to see that, in today’s world, love is most definitely in the air – the movies we watch, the music we listen to, and even the apps on our phones seem pre-occupied with romantic concerns. While love can feel great in many ways, there is a darker side that often goes ignored. Are there limits to love, and can too much love be a negative thing?

With UCL Debating Society Students:

Christian DaSilva, BA History and Politics of the Americas, 2nd Year

Yelyzaveta Zhura, BA Philosophy and History of Art, 2nd Year

Conor Dolan, BA History, 2nd Year

Phoebe Luxford, BA History and Politics of the Americas, 2nd Year

Manca Rakun, BAsc Arts and Sciences, 3rd Year

Umar Buckus, MSc Building and Urban Design in Development

CLOSING CONCERT WITH ROSCIUS

22:00-22:45 - La Médiathèque – Concert

Live performer, producer and London-based French composer roscius will close the Night of Ideas with an improvised set of electronic music. Combining percussion experiments, vocals, live sampling and harmonization skills, he has spent the last years building himself a unique reputation on the London music scene.

SIDE EVENTS

E-SPORT, BEYOND PRACTICE

18:00 – 21:00 - L’Atelier - Video Games

Awakening the body, training, enhancing your potential: this is what we want to encourage through our e-sports tournament. Professionals, amateurs, or even supporters will be invited to watch or take part in the virtual sport of their choice (rock climbing, tennis, bowling, football etc.); and to put their bodies in motion- individually or collectively.

SOCIAL MEDIA RECONSTRUCTED: TWO FILMS BY GABRIELLE STEMMER

18:30 – 19:20 & 20:50 – 21:40 – Ciné Lumière II – Screenings + Talk

Director **Gabrielle Stemmer** uses the Internet’s large archive box as a playground and research field. Her work explores female virtual communities on social networks, as well as the new spaces of sociability that are created online. During the Night of Ideas and to accompany the panel *You’ve Reached Maximum Capacity!*, Gabrielle Stemmer will present two short films: *Clean with Me (After Dark)* and *Women on TikTok*.

ZERO WASTE PACKAGING: NOTPLA PRESENTATION

19:30-20:30 - Foyer – Workshop

What will “responsible” consumption look like in 2023? Earthshot 2022 award winner Notpla, and its co-founder **Pierre Paslier**, are providing an ingenious answer, with packaging solutions made from plastic-free alternatives. Pierre will introduce participants to “Ooho”, a fully biodegradable beverage package, during this fun and engaging taster session!

ZERO WASTE FASHION WORKSHOP

20:30-21:40 - Foyer - Workshop

In this workshop held by **Holly McQuillan** (Co-Founder of Zero Waste Design Online) participants will explore zero waste garment design and textile-form systems through the making of two trouser prototypes (in paper). Together we will unpack the problems inherent in the current industry, and the opportunities (and risks) that are enabled by alternative ways of thinking and doing.