

Speech by PSHA at press conference of Le French May 2012

Following is the speech by the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Raymond Young, at the press conference of Le French May 2012 held in Tsim Sha Tsui today (March 28):

Consul General, ladies and gentlemen and friends from the media,

Good afternoon. It gives me great pleasure to join you all and the Consulate General of France in launching Le French May 2012. On behalf of the Home Affairs Bureau, I would like to express our warmest congratulations on the 20th anniversary of Le French May, which, with the untiring efforts of the Consulate General of France, has grown into one of the most important and well-established arts festivals in Hong Kong and in the region.

The Home Affairs Bureau and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) have always been long-time partners of Le French May with venue sponsorship for the many magnificent cultural performances and exhibitions of the festival throughout these years. This year we are celebrating the 20th edition of the festival as well as the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The LCSD is particularly honoured to be a Major Partner of the 2012 festival, providing not only venue sponsorship but also co-presenting with the Consulate General of France the blockbuster exhibition "Picasso - Masterpieces from Musée National Picasso, Paris" at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum.

It is a great honour for the Hong Kong Heritage Museum to collaborate with the world-renowned Musée National Picasso, Paris, to showcase 55 items of Picasso's works of painting and sculpture, spanning every phase of the artist's career, including masterpieces of expressionism, cubism and surrealism. The exhibition, which will run from May 19 to July 22, will be a comprehensive retrospective of Picasso's creative life as well as his artistic innovation. It promises to be not only an eye-opening exhibition for the art lovers, but also will attract the younger generation and encourage their interest in art.

Apart from the Picasso exhibition, this year's Le French May also features a variety of performing arts programmes organised in collaboration with our local artists and performing groups, including the opening concert of Fauré's "Requiem" by the Hong Kong Sinfonietta under the baton of Yip Wing-sze and with promising local

vocalists Yuki Ip and Albert Lim; the opera production of "Carmen" by the Opera Hong Kong under the artistic direction of Warren Mok with an international cast; and "Musical Waves", a concert by renowned soloists with the City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Consulate General of France for bringing to Hong Kong an impressive series of performances and exhibitions from France for Le French May 2012. I wish the festival a resounding success. Thank you very much.

Ends/Wednesday, March 28, 2012

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