



CULTURAL SERVICES
FRENCH EMBASSY
IN THE UNITED STATES

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**NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY
AND THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF FRANCE IN LOS ANGELES
TEAM UP TO PRODUCE 'NIGHT OF IDEAS'
TO EXPLORE THE MEANING OF 'BEING ALIVE'**

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 2020

5:30 – 11 PM

TICKETS AVAILABLE WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8 AT 10 AM

L.A. line-up includes a Moonlight Meditation; musical and dance performances from Jessica Fichot Quartet, Gavin Turek, and Heidi Duckler Dance Company; panel discussions with Patt Morrison and mini lectures; a VR experience; live DJs; film screenings; speed dating, and much more.



Los Angeles, January 7, 2020 – The Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC), the Consulate General of France in Los Angeles and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S., present the Los Angeles edition of **'Night of Ideas' (La Nuit des Idées)** on **January 31, 2020**, from **5:30 to 11 pm**, at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHM) in Exposition Park. The 2020 global edition is taking place simultaneously in 150 cities and 65 countries across the world.

This free marathon of talks, pop-up performances, music, and film screenings featuring thinkers, artists and athletes celebrates the theme of 'Being Alive.' This can be understood as a command, a call to awareness, an action, and a commitment. What is being alive? What is our place in the living world? How does 'Being Alive' impose on us to take action? These will be the questions at the heart of the 2020 'Night of Ideas.' NHM's iteration kicks off the season of First Friday night-time events.

The Los Angeles 'Night of Ideas' program convenes a range of powerful voices, including award-winning photographer and one of *Time* magazine's Leaders of the 21st Century, Ian McCallister; founder of Wild Immersion, the world's first virtual nature reserve, Adrien Moisson; oceanographer Bethanie Edwards; the first man to swim the Atlantic Ocean, Benoît Lecomte; Executive Director of Planet and Environment at XPRIZE Foundation, Dr. Jyotika Virmani; and cross-country cyclist and racing driver, Evens Stievenart.

'Night of Ideas' will take over the entire museum, activating the halls, labs, and rotunda, where each space will host a range of different activities. The Los Angeles line-up also features a Moonlight Meditation with Alain Lancelot in the Nature Gardens; two rounds of speed dating where guests will have the opportunity to sit around a table in an intimate setting while community organizations lead discussions on their topics of choice before rotating to the next; panel discussions about rainforest biodiversity, ocean health and sustainability, and the importance of being outside, moderated by Pulitzer Prize and Emmy winner, Patt Morrison; and performances by Jessica Fichot Quartet, Heidi Duckler Dance Company, soulful pop princess Gavin Turek, DJ Novena Carmel, and DJ Bobby French.

"We are delighted to host Night of Ideas for a second time and bring together this fascinating and eclectic group of thought leaders and artists who will teach us about what it means to be alive and well," said Dr. Lori Bettison-Varga, NHMLAC President and Director. "This exciting collaboration with the French Embassy will encourage people to think about our well-being and inspire change, not only for ourselves, but for our community, our city, and our larger ecosystem."

"As new generations wish to give more meaning to life and positively impact the environment that surrounds them, the Night of Ideas 2020 theme 'Being Alive' will embrace the work of inspiring people who are focused on improving our conditions and pushing the boundaries of what is possible. What a great topic to open 2020 and the new decade!" said Nathalie Soirat, Deputy Consul General at the Consulate General of France in Los Angeles. "We are glad to partner again with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, as this iconic and treasured institution is the perfect venue to present challenging topics and make people think on a smaller scale and on a global level."

Night of Ideas is FREE to the public; RSVP required. For more information and to reserve tickets, please visit [NHM.ORG/nightofideas](https://www.nhm.org/nightofideas).

PRESENTERS AND SPONSORS

Co-presenters

The 2020 edition of Night of Ideas is presented by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHM), the Consulate General of France in Los Angeles and produced in collaboration with "La Nuit des Idées," a project of the Institut Français and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States.

About the Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County

The Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC) include the Natural History Museum in Exposition Park (NHM), La Brea Tar Pits, and the William S. Hart Museum. They operate under the collective vision to inspire wonder, discovery, and responsibility for our natural and cultural worlds. The museums hold one of the world's most extensive and valuable collections of natural and cultural history—more than 35 million objects. Using these collections for groundbreaking scientific and historic research, the museums also incorporate them into nature and culture exploration in L.A. neighborhoods, and a slate of community science programs—creating a natural history museum experience that explores the past, but increasingly addresses the present and the future.

NHM is located at 900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90007. Visit nhm.org.

About the Consulate General of France in Los Angeles

The Consulate General of France in Los Angeles represents France's cultural, scientific, academic, political and economic interests in South California and four other states (South Nevada, Arizona, Nouveau Mexique, Colorado). While providing various consular services to French nationals, the French Consul platform promotes cooperation, innovation and mutual understanding between France and the U.S.

About the Cultural Services of the French Embassy

The Cultural Services of the French Embassy promotes the best of French arts, literature, cinema, digital innovation, language, and higher education across the US. Based in New York City, Washington D.C., and eight other cities across the country, the Cultural Services brings artists, authors, intellectuals, and innovators to cities nationwide. It also builds partnerships between French and American artists, institutions, and universities on both sides of the Atlantic. In New York, through its bookshop Albertine, it fosters French-American exchange around literature and the arts. Learn more at frenchculture.org.

Sponsors

This event is made possible with the generous support of [XPRIZE](#), Bank of America, Open Societies and the Michael Silver Foundation.

Media Partner

KCRW

JANUARY 31, 2020, 5:30 – 11:00 PM

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

NORTH AMERICAN MAMMAL HALL, LEVEL 1

Level 1 of the North American Mammal Hall will feature musical and dance performances.

7:00pm: Jessica Fichot Quartet, accompanied by her accordion, toy piano, and fiery band, the Los Angeles-based chanteuse and songwriter draws from her multi-ethnic French / Chinese / American heritage to create an intoxicating multilingual fusion of French chanson, Shanghai jazz, gypsy swing and international folk.

8:00pm: Welcome Remarks by **Dr. Lori Bettison- Varga** and **Nathalie Soirat**, Consul General of France in Los Angeles

8:30pm: Heidi Duckler Dance Company,

Heidi Duckler Dance was founded in 1985, a pioneer in producing interdisciplinary performances.

HDD advances social equity in under-resourced communities by providing opportunities and access

to interact with meaningful spaces and circumstances. Over the past 35 years, Artistic Director, Heidi Duckler, has created over 350 original works locally in LA neighborhoods such as: Downtown LA, Boyle Heights, San Pedro and most recently in residence at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital in Willowbrook, CA. Duckler's work has been internationally recognized in Cuba (Ciudad en Movimiento 2016), Germany (Tanzmesse 2018), and Chile (Puerto de Ideas 2018 & The LOFT Festival 2019). This year HDD was awarded funding from LA County Arts Commission, California Arts Council, LA Department of Cultural Affairs, DEW Foundation, Annenberg Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. HDD produces over 25 productions and over 6,000 diverse residents are served annually.

10:00pm: Gavin Turek

It's impossible not to become infatuated with soulful pop princess Gavin Turek. The LA Native is always clad in a hand-made 70s fringe dress (designed herself in every color) and armed with the best dance moves you've ever seen. It's easy to draw comparisons anywhere from Tina Turner to Beyoncé but really, Gavin is her own force to be reckoned with. Performing always came naturally: she grew up with a father who played piano and often tagged alongside her mother who toured coffee shops singing gospel. Growing up in Los Angeles, Gavin obsessively studied two things: music (Donna Summer, Prince, Lauryn Hill, Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, Giorgio Moroder) and all forms of dance. Originally aspiring to be a professional dancer, Gavin spent years training and traveling abroad before eventually returning to singing and songwriting as her main medium of expression; but dance is naturally a vital component for her live show, where even the most apathetic concert goer leaves her shows revitalized and inspired.

NORTH AMERICAN MAMMAL HALL, LEVEL 2

Level 2 of the North American Mammal Hall will feature discussions and panels, 45-60 minutes each, moderated by Pulitzer Prize, Emmy, and Golden Mike winner, Patt Morrison.

6:30 pm: RAINFORESTS – THEY'RE NOT JUST ABOUT THE TREES with NHM Curator of Entomology, Dr. Brian Brown, co-founder of Pacific Wild, award-winning photographer and author, Ian McAllister, and Executive Director of Planet and Environment at XPRIZE, Dr. Jyotika Virmani

8 pm: AN RX FOR THE SEVEN SEAS with long distance swimmer, Ben Lecomte, oceanographer Bethanie Edwards, NHM Curator of Fish, Bill Ludt

9:30 pm: BE ALIVE – BE OUTDOORS with executive coach, sophrologist and author, Alain Lancelot and cross-country cyclist, Evens Stievenart

AGE OF MAMMALS GALLERY

The Age of Mammals Gallery will feature mini lectures, 20-25 minutes each with a 50-75-person capacity

6 pm: Future of Toxic Waste Clean-up with NHM Curator of Mineral Sciences, Aaron Celestian

7:30 pm: Mental and Physical Endurance with cross-country cyclist, Evens Stievenart

8:15 pm: Mindfulness with Director of Mindfulness Education at the UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center, Diana Winston

10:15 pm: Radical Botany with authors, Natania Meeker and Antónia Szabari

NHM's 3D THEATER

NHM's 3D Theater will feature film screenings

6 pm: The Salt of the Earth (2014), directed by Juliano Ribeiro Salgado and Wim Wenders /110min

8:15 pm: Human (2015), directed by Yann Arthus-Bertrand/143min

ROTUNDA

Over the course of 90 minutes in speed dating style, guests will have an opportunity to learn from and interact with 10 different community organizations on a range of topics without ever leaving their seats. Throughout the sessions, representatives will move from table to table, leading discussions on topics of their choice.

6-7:30 pm: ROUND 1 includes discussions with Amigos de Los Rios, Black Girls Trekkin, Boyle Heights Bridge Runners, Chia Café Collective, Tree People

8:30-10 pm: ROUND 2 includes discussions with Active SGV, Friends of the LA River, LA Neighborhood Land Trust, Latino Outdoors, Nature for All

AFRICAN MAMMAL HALL, DJ LOUNGE

The African Mammal Hall will host two outstanding DJs throughout the evening. Guests are invited to join **DJ Novena Carmel (from 5:30-7 pm and again from 9:30-11 pm)** and **DJ Bobby French (from 7-9:30 pm)** for dancing and mingling.

GEM & MINERAL HALL

5:30-11 pm: Wild Immersion Virtual Reality

Wild Immersion VR Experience produces virtual reality entertainment, creating immersive footage of wild animals and natural habitats. Wild Immersion is an educational, ethical, and ecological initiative. Wild Immersion is committed to preserving nature, safeguarding biodiversity and making a positive impact on society. Via exclusive 360° virtual reality films, visitors are immersed in an amazing close-up encounter with wildlife and nature, offering an intensely vivid experience.

NATURE LAB, GROUND FLOOR

The ground floor of the Nature Lab will feature family activities.

5:30-8 pm: Discover French via Ecology and Biodiversity with the *Alliance Française de Pasadena*

Join the Alliance Française de Pasadena and learn to say some colors and animal names in French. Guests of all ages are invited to expand their language skills.

Alliance Française de Pasadena is a language school specialized in the learning of French, an exam center, and a French cultural center. The Alliance welcomes children, teenagers, and adults. It has a professional team of native French-speaking teachers who have an innovative way of teaching.

5:30-8 pm: "Mixed & United" Community Mural with Valerie Daval, Visual Artist. Leave your mark during *Night of Ideas* by contributing to a community mural. From handprints to plant prints, this interactive art piece will celebrate our coexistence with nature.

6-8 pm: Animal Meet and Greet Leslie Gordon – Manager, Vertebrate Live Animals at NHMLA will present an animal ambassador from the museum’s collection.

NATURE GARDENS

At **7:30 pm**, enjoy a **Moonlight Meditation** with **Alain Lancelot** in the Nature Gardens

About The Night of Ideas

Co-produced by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S., the Institut Français, Paris, and local partners since 2015, Night of Ideas aims to encourage and foster discussion across cultures and generations.

The first Los Angeles edition took place in 2017 and gathered thousands of people. The intellectual marathon has expanded around the country, taking different shapes depending on regional partners and local expectations. In 2020, Night of Ideas will take place in five U.S. cities: Norfolk (Jan. 25), Chicago (Jan. 30), Miami (Jan. 30), Los Angeles (Jan. 31), Boston (Jan. 31), San Francisco (Feb. 1), and New York (Feb. 1). Learn more about the worldwide event by visiting lanuitdesidees.com/en/about.