

# NIGHT OF IDEAS

POWER TO THE IMAGINATION - 25 JANUARY 2018

## PROGRAMME ANNOUNCEMENT

Launched by the Institut français in 2016, the **NIGHT OF IDEAS** is a project staged simultaneously in Paris, London and worldwide on Thursday 25 January 2018.

In partnership with **Imperial College London**, **Kings College London** and the **V&A**, the **Institut français du Royaume-Uni** has put together a **thought-provoking programme of free debates** exploring the **latest ideas behind issues central to our times**.

Crossing French, British and European perspectives, **Timothy Peake**, **Thomas Pesquet**, **Ken Loach**, **Tracy Edwards**, **Posy Simmonds** and **Tristram Hunt** are among the **fifty leading experts, artists, researchers and journalists** taking part in the NIGHT OF IDEAS.

**Inspired by the Power to the Imagination slogan of the Paris May 1968** protests, the NIGHT OF IDEAS will **engage audiences in open debates** on the **new futures** unfolding in the cultural, artistic and scientific fields, as well as in our political and philosophical frames of discussion.

We'll look at the major issues and aspirations of our times, from **gender equality**, as we are entering the centenary year of women's suffrage in the UK, to the **meaning of revolutions**, on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of May 1968. With a special focus on the **ability of arts and sciences to change the world**, we'll reflect on the new challenges for **space exploration** and **Artificial Intelligence** and explore the blurred lines between **art and science** and between **fiction and reality** in **political TV drama**.

A demonstration of a **Turing's machine**, a showcase of pioneering **Artificial Intelligence technology**, **gigs**, DJ and VJ **performances** will complete the programme. In the run-up to the NIGHT OF IDEAS, a film season, **BEFORE THE NIGHT**, will echo the different themes and the **LITTLE NIGHT** will invite pupils from London schools to reflect on the main topics.

The NIGHT OF IDEAS is organised by the Institut français, the Scientific Department and the Cultural Department of the French Embassy, in partnership with Imperial College London, Kings College London, the Maison française d'Oxford, the V&A, the University of York and the French Tech, and with the support of the European Commission Representation in the UK.

**Night of Ideas: 25 Jan - Venues: Institut français, Imperial College London, V&A - Free event**

**Full programme attached – Info, biographies & bookings: [www.nightofideas.co.uk](http://www.nightofideas.co.uk)**

**Press Contact for further info, interviews & accreditations:**

Natacha Antolini – [natacha.antolini@institutfrancais.org.uk](mailto:natacha.antolini@institutfrancais.org.uk) - 020 7871 3520



## PROGRAMME

### Sharing Space

17:00-18:45 – Institut français – BRAVE NEW WORLDS

**Opening address by Jean-Pierre Jouyet, French Ambassador to the UK**

### *Talk*

Discover the brave new worlds of outer space with astronauts Timothy Peake and Thomas Pesquet and British space scientist and presenter of BBC's *The Sky at Night*, Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock. We will examine the new challenges for space exploration and assess the impact of space discoveries. Why, though, do we need to project ourselves into the universe in the first place? Jean-Yves Le Gall (Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales) and Graham Turnock (UK Space Agency) will also join the debate.

### Speakers

- **Timothy Peake**, Astronaut
- **Thomas Pesquet**, Astronaut
- **Jean-Yves Le Gall**, President of the Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales CNES
- **Graham Turnock**, Chief executive of the UK Space Agency

### Chair

**Maggie Aderin-Pocock** British space scientist and Presenter of the BBC programme *The Sky at Night*

## **Turing's Machine: The Genesis of the Computer Revolution**

18:00-19:00 – Imperial College London – BRAVE NEW WORLDS

### ***Demonstration***

We travel back to the genesis of the computer revolution with Marc Raynaud, Professor of Mathematics and inventor, who will demonstrate at Imperial College a prototype of a Turing Machine that he conceived and implemented using the technology available when the momentous idea and the related conceptual model were put forward by Alan Turing in the mid-1930s.

### **Speaker**

- **Marc Raynaud**, Mathematician

## **AI Tech Showcase**

18:00-19:00 – Imperial College London – BRAVE NEW WORLDS

### ***Pop-up Exhibition***

Imperial College AI Network and the French Tech London present a set of pioneering AI tech, created by leading inventors, artists and researchers. Exploring the practical, theoretical or poetical uses of AI, this interactive showcase will take place in the foyer and main entrance hall of Imperial College London. Open to a wide audience, the show includes a drawing robot, dancing drones, and an AI app for visually impaired people, amongst other innovations.

### **Speakers**

- **Imperial College AI Network** - Imperial academics working at the forefront of AI science and application.
- **French Tech London** - bringing together actors of the French London Startup and Tech scene.
  - **Patrick Tresset**, Artist and Scientist - with Paul, his drawing robot.
  - **Jean-Dominique Lauwereins**, CEO at BeTomorrow and CTO at Dronisos
  - **Pierre-Frederic Jaffre**, Chief of Staff, Data and AI, at Microsoft

**CreAIivity – Artificial Intelligence and Creativity**  
19:00-20:15 - Imperial College London – BRAVE NEW WORLDS

*Debate*

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly defying the realms of possibility in fields ranging from brain science, engineering and medicine to art, music and design. We venture into these new territories with leading researchers including Simon Colton, François Pachet and Aldo Faisal. Can human brain capacity be translated into technology? Will artificial intelligence be capable of creativity and imagination? How creative can we be in a world of AI?

**Speakers**

- **Simon Colton**, Professor of Computational Creativity at Goldsmiths College, University of London
- **Aldo Faisal**, Associate Professor in Neurotechnology at Imperial College London
- **François Pachet**, Director of Spotify Creator Technology Research Lab

**Chair**

- **Ann O’Dea**, Silicon Republic Co-Founder and CEO, Inspirefest Founder

**Can Art Change the World?**  
19:00-20:15 – V&A – NEW FUTURES

*Debate*

Transforming or distorting reality, art has always changed our perception of the world. Constantly pushing boundaries further and exploring new forms of expression, contemporary art continues this to challenge our minds and offer us new ways of seeing.

In this debate, leading figures of the art world discuss the power of art in politics and society, highlighting the artist's responsibility towards society, and the ability of art to make a difference, giving young people the opportunity to build an identity and find a place into our world.

**Speakers**

- **Tristram Hunt**, Director of the V&A
- **Magdalen Fisher**, Director of External Affairs, Sadler’s Wells.
- **Catherine Petitgas**, Chair of the International Council at Tate
- **Rod Skipp**, Artistic Director of In Harmony Liverpool, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

**Chair**

- **Rachel Cooke**, Journalist, The Observer

## Imagining Revolutions

19:00-20:45 – Institut français – BACK TO THE FUTURE

### *Debate*

2018, the 50th anniversary of the Paris protests of May 1968, is the occasion to compare the history of those revolutionary moments that appear essential to collective understandings in Europe and beyond. How do we come to create our specific myths of revolution – what is the work being done by these myths in our collective memory – and what uses do we make today of the idea of revolution? In partnership with **King's College London**, with a guest appearance by **Ken Loach**.

### Talk with

- **Ken Loach**, Film Director
- **Agnès Poirier**, Journalist, Writer and Broadcaster

### Speakers

- **Anna Bernard**, Senior Lecturer in English and Comparative Literature at King's College London
- **Rosa Mucignat**, Senior Lecturer in Comparative Literature at King's College London
- **Karolina Jakaite**, Lecturer in History of Design and Design Management at the Vilnius Academy of Arts
- **Sanja Perovic**, Senior Lecturer in French at King's College London
- **Benedict Schofield**, Head of Department of German at King's College London

### Chair

- **Ziad Elmarsafy**, Head of Department of Comparative Literature at King's College London

## Contemporary Music as a Creative Medium

20:30-21:20 – Institut français – IMAGINATION AND CREATION

### *Talk and Music*

Throughout the centuries, musicians have never ceased to invent, discover, explore new ways to express themselves. Particularly in Western music, evolutions have been drastic and rapid, moving towards greater complexity, new timbres and highly sophisticated forms. At the same time, a growing dichotomy arose between so-called serious music and the entertainment industry.

Where are we now? How does musical creativity express itself in our global world of digital exchanges and fast-moving trends and fashions? How different is the current creative process from preceding times? How does musical creativity connect with other arts and with science? What kind of dialogue is there among those fields?

## Speakers

- **Karol Beffa**, Composer and Pianist
- **Jonathan Cross**, Professor of Musicology at the University of Oxford

## Chair

- **Eric de Visscher**, Music & Art Consultant and Researcher, Visiting Professor at the V&A

### **100 Years of Women's Rights**

21:15-22:30 – Institut français - WOMEN SHAPING THE WORLD

## *Debates*

As we enter the centenary year of women's suffrage in the UK, where do we stand with women's rights and gender equality today?

Women's rights have undeniably progressed in Western countries, as we discuss and celebrate in part one of this debate. There are also ordinary and extraordinary role models shaping the world through their achievements, as we see in part two.

Yet as the explosion of sexual harassment scandals also demonstrates, our societies are still far too male-dominated and still inflict everyday violence on women. Will this awareness encourage men to embrace feminism? (How) can men be feminists? Are we in the middle of a gender crisis? In part three we adopt a Franco-British and European perspective to debate these questions of crucial relevance for the next 100 years of women's rights.

## Speakers

- **Myriam Boussahba-Bravard**, Professor of History at the Université Paris Diderot
- **Ros Cranston**, Film and Archives Curator at the British Film Institute
  
- **Dame Athene Donald**, Professor of Experimental Physics at the University of Cambridge
- **Frédérique Bedos**, film Director, Founder of Imagine
- **Marian Lacombe**, Film Director
- **Tracy Edwards**, Sailor and Author
  
- **Posy Simmonds**, newspaper Cartoonist, Writer and Illustrator of children's books

### **Viola concert by Geneviève Strosser**

21:30-22:10 – Institut français – IMAGINATION AND CREATION

#### ***Concert***

First Prize at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris, Geneviève Strosser's repertoire of solo pieces encompasses some of the greatest works for viola composed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and she works closely with living composers Stefano Gervasoni, Hugues Dufourt (who both dedicated a viola concerto to her) and Georges Aperghis. For the Night of Ideas, her programme includes György Ligeti's sonata for solo viola, Jonathan Harvey's Chant, Giacinto Scelsi's Manto and Helmut Lachenmann's Toccata.

### **Music Rendezvous with Laura Cahen**

22:20-23:00 – Institut français – IMAGINATION AND CREATION

#### ***Concert***

Upcoming French singer-songwriter Laura Cahen, will fill our Art Deco-listed library with subtle songs abounding with poetry. Discover the haunting and romantic ballads on her debut album, *Nord*, powered by her playful reinvention of the French language with an encapsulating dream-pop spirit.

**Power and Politics: The Hottest Genre in TV Drama**  
22:45-23:45 – Institut français – IMAGINATION AND CREATION

***Debate***

Chaired by Walter Iuzzolino, the curator behind global drama channel, Walter Presents, *Power and Politics: The Hottest Genre in TV drama* will lift the lid on some of the most popular recent hit thrillers and royal dramas. Why have they struck such a chord with international audiences, and what successful formulae do they share? Meet the producers, writers and actors behind blockbuster hits like *Spin*, *Victoria*, and *The Bureau*, and explore the line where fiction and reality meet. Who is manipulating whom, and to what extent is fiction shaping real life politics and public opinion? Mathieu Sapin, author of comic books on politics will also join the debate.

**Speakers**

- **Alex Berger**, Producer of *The Bureau*
- **Gregory Fitoussi**, Actor in *Spin* series
- **Daisy Goodwin**, Creator and Writer of *Victoria*
- **Andy Harries**, Executive producer of *The Crown* (season 2)
- **Mathieu Sapin**, Political Comic Book Author and Illustrator

**Chair**

- **Walter Iuzzolino**, Global Drama Curator

**After Midnight Party**  
24:00 until late – Institut français

The Night of Ideas will be closed out by an address from London's first Night Czar and broadcaster **Amy Lamé**.

But the event doesn't end there - acclaimed French **DJ collective, Pétrole**, will play house, disco and hip-hop inspired tunes to take us further into the night.

## BEFORE THE NIGHT

In the run-up to the Night of Ideas, a film programme will explore the Night's themes from a cinematic perspective.

**Before the Night** will take us along roads leading to revolutions, from 1920 Ireland with Ken Loach's Palme d'Or winner *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* to the aftermath of Paris May 68 turmoil with Olivier Assayas's *Something in the Air*; from the fight for equality of the suffragettes in early 20<sup>th</sup> century England to Frédérique Bedos's documentary, *Women and Men*, a manifesto tracing worldwide contemporary gender inequalities.

We'll leave the beaten track and follow in the footsteps of French Secret Service undercover agents with the UK Premiere of the 3rd season of political thriller series *The Bureau*, and follow the trajectory of a young gay man escaping social determinism and bullying by the discovery of the arts in *Reinventing Marvin*.

Other journeys will bring us into the wake of great minds (*The Imitation Game*, *Hidden Figures*), and ultimately send us to the stars with astronaut Thomas Pesquet.

## THE LITTLE NIGHT

In the run-up of the Night of Ideas and opening the Night, the **Little Night** offers the opportunity to the youngest to sharpen their imagination, widen their creativity and express themselves through a series of interactive and multimedia events.

### **The Little Night - Let's Imagine Together**

Thursday 25 January 16.00 – 17:30 - at the Institut français, Bibliothèque Quentin Blake

Animated from Paris by children's author Anaïs Vaugelade through live video, and based on the game *Once Upon a Time (Il était une fois)*, this collective writing workshop will involve kids from London, Paris, Dublin, Dakar and Marrakech. They will engage on short debates and share their views on various topics in a fun and educative way.

Ages: 6-12 years - Free

### **The Little Night - From Dreams to Revolutions**

Several British and French schools in the UK will be inviting their pupils to reflect on the main topics of the Night.

Primary schools will share their pupils' drawings, collages and other visual productions on the themes of night, dream, and imagination, and secondary school students will participate in the debate by working on the themes of space, women in the world, and revolutions, sending special ambassadors to the Night's panels, and producing videos on these themes.

[www.nightofideas.co.uk](http://www.nightofideas.co.uk) #nightofideas @ifru\_london