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YOUNG TALENTS/JEUNES TALENTS PROJECT

Group of 12 American art students produce videos inspired by their experiences in France

March 11, 2008, Los Angeles, CA – The “Jeunes Talents” or “Young Talents” - a group of twelve visual arts students from six prestigious American art and design institutions were each invited—video cameras in hand—for 10 days to one of three French regions in 2007. Upon their return they were asked to produce a very personal travel video inspired by their experiences. These trips were sponsored by Maison de la France, French Government Tourist Office and the Cultural Services of the Consulate General of France in Los Angeles as a means of nurturing Franco-American friendship and to provide an opportunity for these students to discover France and showcase their work and talent. A website www.franceguide.com/us/jeunestalents is dedicated to this project, which is in its second year.

The artists and aspiring filmmakers were sent in three groups to three different regions of France – Alsace, Brittany and Southwestern France (Midi-Pyrénées and Dordogne). Based on their experiences, each artist was asked to produce a 10-to-15 minute video clip about their host region, representing their feelings about France during their trip. Along with the students' bio, trip itineraries and background information on the Jeunes Talents project, the videos are also accessible online and can viewed from the artists' individual bio pages, under the “Who Are They?” section heading on the dedicated website.

All 12 students were chosen from leading American art and design schools – Art Center College of Design in Pasadena; California Institute of the Arts in Valencia; Dillard University New Orleans; Otis College of Art & Design in Los Angeles; University of Louisiana at Lafayette and University of

New Orleans. Each school was selected for its reputation and for the quality of its student body.

The 12 participating artists are:

- * Jennava Laska from Nashville, TN (Art Center College of Design)
- * Sally Levi from Pasadena, CA (Art Center College of Design)
- * Derek Villarreal from Covina, CA (Art Center College of Design)
- * Heather Bursch from Los Angeles, CA (California Institute of the Arts)
- * Mason Richards from New York, NY (California Institute of the Arts)
- * Dustin Thompson from Santa Clarita, CA (California Institute of the Arts)
- * Natasha Lee from Los Angeles, CA (Otis College of Art & Design)
- * Manasi Patel from Ahmedabad, India (Otis College of Art & Design)
- * Levan Tkabladze from Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia in Russia (Otis College of Art & Design)
- * Wesley Hollis from Houston, TX (Dillard University)
- * Allison Bohl from Bossier City, LA (University of Louisiana at Lafayette)
- * Jeffery Hartwick from New Orleans, LA (University of New Orleans)

PARTICIPATING REGIONS OF FRANCE

Alsace's unique culture and history are reflected in its architectural heritage, gastronomy and the arts. Between the Rhine River and the Vosges mountains, from the capital city of Strasbourg to Mulhouse via Colmar's little Venice, the country roads are lined with castles, flowered half-timbered villages, and vineyards. The warm-hearted and welcoming Alsatians are known for their great and distinctive way of life. Don't miss this beautiful and unique region, just two hours and 20 minutes from Paris via the high-speed train, TGV East, which boasts Europe's fastest train service with a commercial speed of 200 mph! Experience Alsace through the lenses of Jeffrey Hartwick, Sally Levi, Manasi Patel and Mason Richards. For information on Alsace, visit www.tourism-alsace.com or www.abcoffrance.com.

Brittany boasts the longest shoreline—1,676 miles—of any French region along the Atlantic coast. From sandy beaches to imposing rocky promontories jutting into the sea, Brittany's shores are dotted with fishing villages, historic walled cities, spectacular lighthouses and magnificent off-shore islands. The interior also reveals the culture and soul of Brittany, with its Broceliande Forest, home to Merlin's tomb, or the 3,000 prehistoric stone alignments of Carnac and the distinctive Parish closes. With over 4,000 castles and manors, from its towns of art and history and Cities of Character to its modern harbors, Brittany is a visual wonderland for both visitors and budding filmmakers. Experience this enchanting land on the edge of the world through the eyes

of Heather Bursch, Jennava Laska, Natasha Lee, and Dustin Thompson. For more information on Brittany, visit www.brittanytourism.com.

Southwestern France -- The **Midi-Pyrénées** is known for the towering landscapes of the Pyrénées Mountains and the Gorges of the Tarn River. It boasts some of France's most beautiful villages such as Saint Cirq Lapopie and ancient towns such as Albi, with its Toulouse-Lautrec Museum and remarkable Ste-Cécile Cathedral. The capital, Toulouse, is both a historical and technological center and is home to the French and European aerospace industry's Airbus.

Neighboring **Dordogne** is a land of rolling hills and wending rivers dotted with medieval castles, perched villages and fortified bastide towns. It is world-renowned for its prehistoric sites—Lascaux and Les Eyzies-de-Tayac and exceptional towns like Sarlat and Périgeux.

Enjoy the sites and sounds of Midi-Pyrénées and Dordogne as shown by Allison Bohl, Wesley Hollis, Levan Tkabladze and Derek Villarreal. For information on the Midi-Pyrénées, visit www.tourism.midi-pyrenees.org and for information on the Dordogne visit www.dordogne-perigord-tourisme.fr.

JEUNES TALENTS SPONSORS

Cultural Services of the French Consulate — The Cultural Services of the Consulate General of France in Los Angeles' mandate is to enable the American public to experience the rich and dynamic world of French culture in various events in Los Angeles and environs.

Maison de la France — Created in 1987 and placed under the authority of the Ministry of Tourism, Maison de la France, also known as the French Government Tourist Office, is responsible for the promotion of France as a holiday destination, with 33 offices in 28 countries around the world. In the United States, Maison de la France has offices in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago.

The *Jeunes Talents* Program is made possible thanks to the generous patronage of **Mr. Lionel Sauvage**. Sponsorship is also provided by the Alsace, Brittany, and Midi-Pyrénées Regional Tourist Boards and the Dordogne Departmental Tourist Board; Air France; FLAX (France Los Angeles Exchange) and Rail Europe.

PARTIPATING ART INSTITUTES AND UNIVERSITIES

Art Center College of Design — Art Center College of Design (artcenter.edu) is a global leader in art and design education. Since its founding in 1930, Art Center has profoundly influenced popular culture, the way we live, and important issues in our society. As the first design school to receive United Nations Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) status, Art Center provides opportunities for students to create design-based solutions for humanitarian and non-profit agencies around the world. Located in Pasadena, California, Art Center offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in a wide variety of art and design disciplines, as well as public programs for all ages and levels of experience. www.artcenter.edu

CalArts — The first U.S. higher educational institution to integrate the visual and performing arts under one roof, is recognized as the nation's leading laboratory for the arts. Housing six schools - Art, Critical Studies, Dance, Film/Video, Music and Theater - CalArts embraces creative cross-pollination among diverse art forms and traditions, and strongly encourages each artist to pursue his or her vision within a broad context of social and cultural understanding. www.calarts.edu

Dillard University in New Orleans — Dillard University is a private, historically black, comprehensive undergraduate institution, having as its purpose the development of graduates who are broadly educated, culturally aware, concerned with improving the human condition, and able to meet the competitive demands of a global and technologically advanced society. To achieve this purpose, the university strives to create and maintain an academic climate that is conducive to the pursuit of scholarship through programs of excellence anchored in the liberal arts. www.dillard.edu

Otis College — Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles' oldest independent art school, was founded in 1918. The College offers an interdisciplinary education for architects and designers who will shape the future. Otis prepares diverse students of art and design to enrich our world through their creativity, their skill, and their vision. Its programs embrace new technologies and emerging disciplines, uniting these practices with established strengths in fine arts and design. www.otis.edu

University of Louisiana at Lafayette — The University of Louisiana at Lafayette is the largest member of the University of Louisiana System. The University is dedicated to achieving excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, in research, and in public service. For undergraduate education, this commitment implies a fundamental subscription to general education, rooted in the primacy of the traditional liberal arts and sciences as the core around

which all curricula are developed. The graduate programs seek to develop scholars who will variously advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the material conditions of humankind. The University reaffirms its historic commitment to diversity and integration.

www.louisiana.edu

University of New Orleans — The University of New Orleans (UNO), the urban research University of the State of Louisiana, provides essential support for the educational, economic, cultural and social well-being of the culturally rich and diverse New Orleans metropolitan area. UNO's Film Arts program is one of the most technologically advanced in the country, featuring a motion capture facility and state-of-the-art digital post-production editing and audio suites. The undergraduate program is founded on a liberal arts education terminating in a 120 credit-hour baccalaureate degree. The masters program is an accredited, terminal, 60-hour MFA.

www.uno.edu

Full profiles of each student artist and school, and photos of each participating region are available upon request. Interviews with the participating students are also available.

For more information about the participating schools in Southern California:

- Christine Hanson, Art Center College of Design, (626) 396-2394 or christine.hanson@artcenter.edu
- Katherine Lee Seth, California Institute of the Arts, (661) 291-3044 or kalee@calarts.edu
- Margaret Reeve, Otis College of Art and Design, (310) 665-6957 or mreeve@otis.edu