

This March, Let's Celebrate Our Dynamic Canadian Francophonie!

OTTAWA, MARCH 2, 2017 – Today, the Canadian Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue is launching the 19th annual Rendez-vous de la Francophonie (RVF). The theme for this year's event, which runs from March 2 to 22, is ***The francophonie in 3D: Diversity, Duality, Dynamism!***

The day will begin with an RVF 2017 press conference at Ottawa's École secondaire publique De La Salle, organized in collaboration with the Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (CEPEO). Along with RVF goodwill spokespersons Mariette Mulaire and Emmanuel Bilodeau, more than 500 young people will participate in a panel discussion on Canada's Francophonie. This is a concrete example of how Francophone school boards are involved in activities that highlight the Canadian Francophonie.

"This unprecedented collaboration reflects our mission of offering high-quality education in French. A thriving Franco-Canadian community depends on youth engagement and on young people's enthusiasm for celebrating their identity. The CEPEO's 14,500 students are the ones kicking off the celebrations, which promise to be rich in cultural expression and inspiring to all; this makes us very proud!" explain Linda Savard, Chair of the CEPEO, and Édith Dumont, Executive Director of the CEPEO.

To finish off this day of celebrations, the Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue will host an RVF launch party for its partners and representatives of the Canadian Francophonie. Guests will be treated to an evening of laughs with Emmanuel Bilodeau, Katherine Levac and two of our favourite participants from the *LOL-Mort de rire* contest. The gala reception will take place at the Shenkman Arts Centre in Orleans, starting at 5:30 pm. Portions of the event will be broadcast live on Facebook by the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie.

Across the country, Francophone and Acadian communities will be marking the start of the 19th annual Rendez-vous de la Francophonie with flag raisings, social and cultural events, and official proclamations. Visit RVF.ca to discover hundreds of different activities.

"This year, as we celebrate the 150th anniversary of Confederation, the government is anxious to recognize everything that makes Canada a remarkable country, especially its two official languages. That is why we are proud to support cultural events like the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie," states the Hon. Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage.

From now until March 22, our website will also be featuring free films from the National Film Board, as well as a variety of contests. Furthermore, the RVF, in collaboration with Gestion Juste Pour Rire (the folks behind Just for Laughs Festival), are organizing a 17-city cross-Canada tour that will wrap up in Cornwall on March 25.

For details on what is going on in your region, visit rvf.ca/en/calendar. Follow @RVFrancophonie on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and share your experiences during the Rendez-vous on social media using the official #RVFranco hashtag.

“The Rendez-vous de la Francophonie are an opportunity to collectively celebrate 150 years of the peaceful coexistence of our major Indigenous, Anglophone and Francophone linguistic communities,” explains Andrée Lortie, Chair of the Canadian Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue.

The Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue would like to take this opportunity to thank its partners: the Department of Canadian Heritage, Juste Pour Rire Management, the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF), Air Canada, the Language Portal of Canada, NAV Canada, the National Film Board, Parks Canada, the Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française (FJCF), the Collège La Cité, Unis TV, Canada Post, VIA Rail, the Secrétariat aux affaires intergouvernementales canadiennes du Québec (SAIC), the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique, the Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (CEPEO), le Consortium national de formation en santé – University of Ottawa, RDÉE Canada, Groupe média TFO, the Government of Manitoba, Desjardins and the Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orléans (MIFO).

The RVF are organized in conjunction with the Journée internationale de la Francophonie (March 20), an annual event that celebrates the French language and diverse Francophone cultures. Made possible by the financial support of Canadian Heritage, the RVF are overseen by the Canadian Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue.

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