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## France seeks to enhance cultural collaboration with Malaysia



A report in *The Malaysian Reserve* looks at how France is seeking to enhance education and cultural collaboration with Malaysia.

As well as outlining plans to increase the teaching of French language in Malaysian schools and numbers of Malaysian students in French higher education, the French Ambassador to Malaysia Frédéric Laplanche said the cooperation between the two countries has extended past the economy and politics, and is now rooted in culture as well.

“The French Film Festival has reached Penang and Johor Baru, which shows that there is a great strength in our arts exchange,” he said.

Furthermore, he pointed out that Paris’ Centre Georges Pompidou is featuring pieces by artist Latiff Mohidin, which is the first time the gallery is focused on South-East Asian art.

“It is one of the most important galleries in France and to have a Malaysian artist’s works featured there shows both countries’ recognition in arts,” he said.

Latiff’s art from his *Pago-Pago* series will be exhibited until May 28, 2018. This year’s concert themed “One Planet” is to deliver a message on climate change through music and songs that represent the two countries, including P Ramlee’s *Nak Dara Rindu* and *La tendresse*.

The performances featured 23 French students from Lycée Français de Kuala Lumpur (KL) and 22 singers from the KL Children’s Choir.

The *Saya Sayang Paris!* is part of Le French Festival 2018, formerly known as the French Art and Film Festival, which is an annual event that provides a platform of expression for French arts and cultural exchanges, while showcasing arts from cinemas, performing arts, visual arts and gastronomy.

It was founded by music teacher and artist Najwa Halim as a non-profit organisation to promote arts and education, whereby the first edition last year celebrated the 60th year of the France-Malaysia tie.

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