

Media Contact:
Rob Farmer
Landis Communications, Inc.
415-359-2316
rob@landispr.com
www.landispr.com



Media Contact:
Tarah Beaven
Landis Communications, Inc.
415-359-0888
tarah@landispr.com
www.landispr.com

FRENCH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF EDUCATING STUDENTS FOR A GLOBAL FUTURE

Peter Coyote, Michael Moritz, Tiffany Shlain, Guillermo Gómez-Peña and others help celebrate 50th Anniversary of first bilingual immersion school in San Francisco, February 11, 2012 at Castro Theatre

San Francisco, CA (December 1, 2011) – The [French American International School](#) celebrates its 50th anniversary on February 11th, at the Castro Theatre with a gala community event: “i-speak,” an evening of conversation sharing ideas with international thought leaders, artists and celebrities on innovation in the 21st Century. The event features appearances by actor Peter Coyote, venture capitalist Michael Moritz, filmmaker Tiffany Shlain, and artist-activist Guillermo Gómez-Peña, among others. The “i-speak” event is part of a two-day celebration marking French American’s 50 years of pioneering bilingual, internationally focused, and academically challenging education in San Francisco. Other activities include a student “i-speak” event on February 10th, alumni authors’ book readings and a treasure hunt connecting the school’s campuses in Hayes Valley from the ‘70s to the present.



French American Bilingual School opened a 2-room school in San Francisco with 23 students in three grade levels (lower kindergarten, higher education and first grade) in September, 1963.

“At French American we fiercely believe in the intelligence and sophistication of our students,” said Head of School [Jane Camblin](#). “We strive to provide them with an ever-evolving, ever-relevant 21st century curriculum designed to create provocative global thinkers and contemporary, ethically-minded world leaders. True to the legacy of our far-sighted founders, we remain a dynamic, forward-looking organization.”

French American, with its International High School, is an internationally recognized and accredited independent pre-kindergarten through 12th grade institution. Through programs unique in the Bay Area, French American teaches students essential critical thinking skills and provides them with the ability to communicate across cultures. By 8th grade, students are fully fluent in both French and English and well on

their way to mastering a third language. Graduates of International High School go on to attend the top colleges and universities around the world.

“We are celebrating 50 years on the leading edge of educational thought and practice with an event that looks to the future,” said Gerard “Tex” Schenckan, French American International School Board Chair. “The concept of ‘i-speak’ is based on our tradition of excellence and innovation. With this event, we will be giving something back to a community that has been so supportive for so long.”

The 50th anniversary celebrates a school that began in the 1960’s era of internationalism as an experiment in bilingual immersion education. French American is San Francisco’s first bilingual independent school. Founded by a small group of visionary parents and community leaders, it is today the oldest, largest bilingual school in San Francisco.

50th ANNIVERSARY EVENT INFORMATION

“i-speak” Series: The 50th Anniversary Signature Event – School of the 21st Century

On Saturday, February 11th, 2012, from 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. at San Francisco’s Castro Theatre, the French American International School presents a collection of international thought leaders, artists and celebrities discussing topics on innovation that are both interactive and inspiring. Speakers confirmed for the “i-speak” event include:

- **[Peter Coyote](#)**

Peter Coyote has performed as an actor for some of the world’s most distinguished filmmakers, including: Barry Levinson, Roman Polanski, Pedro Almodovar, Steven Spielberg, Walter Hill, Martin Ritt, Steven Soderberg, Diane Kurys, Sidney Pollack and Jean Paul Rappeneau. Mr. Coyote has written a memoir of the 1960’s counter-culture called *Sleeping Where I Fall* which received universally excellent reviews, appeared on three bestseller lists, sold five printings in hardback was re-released with a new cover and afterword in May, 2009. A chapter from that book, “Carla’s Story,” won the 1993/94 Pushcart Prize for Excellence in non-fiction. He is currently working on a new book about politics. From 1975 to 1983 he was a member of the Literature Panel of the National Endowment of the Arts and then Chairman of the California State Arts Council. During his Chairmanship and tenure, expenditures on the arts rose from 1 to 16 million dollars annually. He is an ordained Buddhist who has been practicing for 36 years and he was ordained as a priest in August 2011. He is and has been engaged in political and social causes since his early teens.



- **[Michael Moritz](#)**

Parent of two former French American International School students, Moritz joined Sequoia Capital in 1986 after working as a reporter for *Time*, writing the 1984 book *The Little Kingdom: the Private Story of Apple Computer*. His investments include Google, Yahoo!, PayPal, Apple Computer, Cisco, Webvan, YouTube, eToys, and Zappos. His investment in Google helped him achieve the number one listing in *Forbes*’ “Midas List” of the top dealmakers in the technology industry in 2006 and 2007, and a place on the 2007 “TIME 100.” In 2009, 25 years after “The Little Kingdom,” Michael Moritz published a revised and expanded follow-up: “Return to the Little Kingdom: How Apple and Steve Jobs Changed the World.”



- [Tiffany Shlain](#)

Honored by Newsweek as one of the “Women Shaping the 21st Century,” Shlain is a filmmaker, founder of The Webby Awards, co-founder of The International Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences and a Henry Crown Fellow of the Aspen Institute. Her work in film & technology has received 48 awards and distinctions and her last four films premiered at Sundance. They include “Life, Liberty & The Pursuit of Happiness,” about the importance of reproductive rights in America and “The Tribe,” an exploration of American Jewish identity & the Barbie doll, “Yelp: With Apologies to Allen Ginsberg’s Howl,” about our addiction to technology and the value of “unplugging,” and her new acclaimed feature documentary, “Connected: An Autobiography about Love, Death & Technology,” which explores what it means to be “connected” in the 21st century.



- [Guillermo Gómez-Peña](#)

Guillermo Gómez-Peña is a performance artist, writer, activist, radical pedagogue and director of the performance troupe La Pocha Nostra. Born in Mexico City, he moved to the US in 1978. His performance work and 10 books have contributed to the debates on cultural diversity, border culture and US-Mexico relations. His art work has been presented at over eight hundred venues across the US, Canada, Latin America, Europe, Russia, South Africa and Australia. A MacArthur Fellow, Bessie and American Book Award winner, he is a regular contributor for newspapers and magazines in the US, Mexico, and Europe and a contributing editor to The Drama Review (NYU-MIT). Gómez-Peña is a Senior Fellow in the Hemispheric Institute of performance and Politics and a Patron for the London-based Live Art Development Agency.



Photo Credit: Zach Gross, 2007

- [Nathaniel Stookey](#)

First commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony at age 17 (while a senior at International High School) Nathaniel Stookey has since collaborated with a remarkable range of artists, from Frederica von Stade to Lemony Snicket, from the Philadelphia Orchestra to The Mars Volta. His composition *The Composer is Dead* is one of the five most performed orchestral works of the 21st century, worldwide. He is currently at work on a new string quartet for Kronos Quartet. Nathaniel is a graduate of French American International School (class of 1988) and is a current parent of 2 children in the lower school.



Photo Credit: Ole Lütjens

- [Moyara Ruehsen](#)

Associate Professor, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Moyara is an award-winning instructor and economist. She has three graduate degrees from Johns Hopkins University (MHS, MA, PhD) and is a certified anti-money laundering specialist (CAMS). She teaches courses on international trade and finance, anti-money laundering and most recently, counter-terrorist financing policies. The focus of her “i-speak” piece will be on privacy in our inter-connected electronic world.

- **Oral History Interviews**

International Baccalaureate film students, under the supervision of film instructor Matthew Perifano, present tales of the school through interviews by school pioneers, former heads of schools, faculty, alumni and families. Tapings were held in New York, Paris and San Francisco during the fall of 2011.

ABOUT FRENCH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Located at 150 Oak Street in San Francisco's Hayes Valley neighborhood, [French American International School](#) is an independent pre-kindergarten through 12th grade institution with more than 1000 students. French American offers rigorous academic programs of study in French and English, culminating in either the International Baccalaureate or French Baccalaureate diploma. International High School is one of just six schools in the country—and the only one in the Bay Area—to deliver both the International and French Baccalaureate programs of study.

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

i-SPEAK EVENT DETAIL: **WHEN:** Saturday, February 11, 2012, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

WHERE: Castro Theater, 429 Castro Street, San Francisco

TICKETS: Available via the French American International School website, www.international.org, starting in January 2012.

MEDIA PLEASE NOTE: For more information about the 50th anniversary celebration or to request an interview with Jane Camblin, please contact Rob Farmer at (415) 561-0888 x 2316/rob@landispr.com or Tarah Beaven at (415) 561-0888 x 2306/tarah@landispr.com. Visit French American International School online at: www.internationalsf.org

###