

[Press Release: For Immediate Release]

To: General News/Feature/Culture and Arts – Assignment Editors/Editors/Reporters

Highlight Dance Programme of French May Arts Festival 2022: Carte Blanche to Christian Rizzo

Second Collaboration Breaking Geographical Boundaries between France and Hong Kong
with Installation, Dance Film Screenings & Pop-Up Dance Performance
in the West Kowloon Cultural District



(29 Apr 2022, Hong Kong) French May Arts Festival 2022 and West Kowloon Cultural District are delighted to unbox art with Hong Kong audience through the week-long genre-binding and multifaceted programme, *Carte Blanche to Christian Rizzo*, curated by French choreographer extraordinaire Christian Rizzo, co-presented with Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels and Freespace.

This marks the second year of partnership between French May and Freespace to commission the talented French Choreographer Christian Rizzo to curate Carte Blanche to Christian Rizzo – which is the highlight dance-themed programme throughout the French May Arts Festival 2022.

Curated with his full creative control, the programme, which will be staged inside Freespace, features three main components: an art installation, a pair of dance films and a pop-up dance performance. It also incorporates diverse artistic elements and interactive experiences including dance, sound, visuals and objects, collaborating with Hong Kong-based dance artists. The programme highlights are as follows:

Installation: 100% polyester, objet dansant n°57

Created in collaboration with Caty Olive, this installation comprises a ‘bodiless’ dance, a moment of silent contemplation and an imaginary itinerary, all converging towards an examination of the notions of absence and invisibility. Having received critical acclaim worldwide with previous exhibitions in Paris, Berlin, New York, Seoul and Hanoi, the exhibition at the French May Arts Festival 2022 marks the 57th showing of this work and its first-ever exhibition in Hong Kong.

Dance Film Screenings: TTT: tourcoing-taipei-tokyo (2009 – 2011) and bouquet final (2020)

Two intriguing and insightful dance films will be screened. Co-produced by Rizzo and the visual artist Iuan-Hau Chiang, *TTT: tourcoing-taipei-tokyo* is a minimalist triptych that explores the relationships between body, motion and space through the employment of motion-capture and hybrid reality technologies.

After choreographing a solo dance titled *en son lieu* for break-dancer Nicolas Fayol in 2020, Rizzo invited video artist Sophie Laly to make *bouquet final* as an extension to the dance piece. Featuring a mesmerising performance by Fayol, the film reimagines the original dance piece by setting it in rhapsodic dreamscapes where rituals, a dark forest, a cave and an erupting volcano come together in physical and non-physical gestures to create an enigmatic story.

Pop-up Dance Performance

Drawing on his close observations of Hong Kong landscapes, this is a unique and inspiring collaborative stage work by Christian Rizzo and five Hong Kong-based dance artists – Chan Wai-lok, Joseph Lee, Carman Li Ka-man, Wong Pik-kei, Yang Hao. Each of them will be tasked with developing a 10-minute solo dance, and they will choose different locations at Freespace to stage their performances, which are meant to blend into their specific surroundings and prompting the audience to reimagine the many possibilities of arts through dance and space, as well as to ponder on their own relationship with their surroundings.

Online Talk

As a delightful supplement to the programme, there will be an online talk, during which Rizzo will share his career highlights and challenges, and his experience of collaborating with artists from different backgrounds over the years, which are sure to inspire art lovers, aspiring art students as well as those who pursue arts as a career.

Creative Dance Workshop for Families

Complementing the threefold programme, family audiences will be thrilled with the chance to unleash their athletic potential at the dance workshop, with Unlock Dancing Plaza’s unique “Bodydynamics” method, through which parents and kids can explore each other’s feelings through physical movement, and foster stronger bonds and new forms of communication. This one-hour workshop will be conducted in Cantonese, with advance registration required.

“With this Carte Blanche, I wanted to collaborate not only with fellow artists Caty Olive, Sophie Laly and Iuan-Hau Chiang, but also with the Hong Kong choreographic scene. Created with the possibility to remotely cross territories, the art forms displayed throughout Freespace (films, installation, performances), will create a dialogue with each other to question the body’s relationship to a defined space. The dance performances will become narrative connections between fiction and

abstraction underlined by the challenges of their creation. This Carte Blanche is therefore an attempt to make presence and movement resonate at multiple points despite geographical locations, maintaining momentum despite distance, sharing time despite separation,” said Christian Rizzo.

“Guided by the values of creation, transmission and education, Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels is dedicated to supporting artists and institutions in the presentation of modern and contemporary choreographic heritage, while also promoting new productions. To implement this project, in the fall of 2020 we concluded a number of partnerships with dance compagnies and institutions throughout the world, and in March 2022 we organized the first edition of Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels Festival in London. The partnership with French May and Freespace in Hong Kong reflects our commitment to supporting creation and highlighting an artist with a remarkable background and approach to choreography. The initiative also allows to promote exchanges with Hong Kong-based performing artists. I would like to thank French May for its outstanding contribution to the development and presentation of choreographic culture,” said Mr. Serge Laurent, Van Cleef & Arpels' Dance and Cultural Program Manager.

“Through that collaboration between French choreographer Christian Rizzo, Freespace and local dancers, French May Arts Festival responds to its mission as a cultural bridge between France and Hong Kong. That cultural event also reflects this year’s objective to overcome the ongoing limitations caused by the prevailing pandemic and unbox the boundaries. More than ever, the French May Arts Festival is committed to innovating and challenging arts and creativity,” said Mr. Xavier Mahé, General Manager, French May Arts Festival.

“The programme curated by Christian Rizzo transcends travel restrictions and connects Rizzo, local artists and Hong Kong audiences on opposite sides of the globe physically and digitally. Rizzo breaks the boundaries between dance and visual art and impresses Hong Kong audience by showcasing the creativity in choreography and endless possibilities of arts. The collaboration with Rizzo and French May testifies to our vision in cultivating long-term partnerships with international artists to bring diverse, quality and creative performing arts programmes to our discerning audience,” said Karen Cheung, Head of Dance, Performing Arts, West Kowloon Cultural District Authority.

Programme Schedule

Date: 31 May - 5 June 2022 (Tuesday - Sunday)

Venue: Freespace, Art Park, the West Kowloon Cultural District

Programme	Date	Time	Online platform / Venue		
Online Talk	From 31 May 2022	/	<u>West Kowloon Video Platform</u>	<u>Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels website</u>	<u>French May website</u>
Installation	31 May – 2 June 2022	1:00pm – 9:00pm	The Room, Freespace, the West Kowloon Cultural		

	3 June – 4 June 2022	11:00am – 9:00pm	District
	5 June 2022	11:00am – 7:00pm	
Dance Film Screenings	31 May – 2 June 2022	1:00pm – 9:00pm	The Studio, Freespace, the West Kowloon Cultural District
	3 June – 4 June 2022	11:00am – 9:00pm	
	5 June 2022	11:00am – 7:00pm	
Pop-up Dance Performance	3 June – 5 June 2022	3:00pm, 4:00pm, 5:00pm, 6:00pm	Freespace, the West Kowloon Cultural District
Creative Dance Workshop for Families	4 June – 5 June 2022	2:00pm – 3:00pm	The Terrace, Freespace, the West Kowloon Cultural District

Free admission

Registration for “Creative Dance Workshop for Families” will be available in due course:

<https://www.frenchmay.com/>

<https://www.westkowloon.hk/en/carte-blanche-to-christian-rizzo#overview>

* Suitable for ages 5 and above

“Carte Blanche to Christian Rizzo” Photo Caption:

<p>Photo 1</p> 	<p>Given full creative control to curate a series of free events, choreographer Christian Rizzo presents a multifaceted programme “Carte Blanche to Christian Rizzo”, comprising an installation, dance films and a live performance.</p> <p>Photo courtesy: Mario Sinistaj</p>
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Photo 2



French choreographer extraordinaire Christian Rizzo

Photo courtesy: Mario Sinistaj

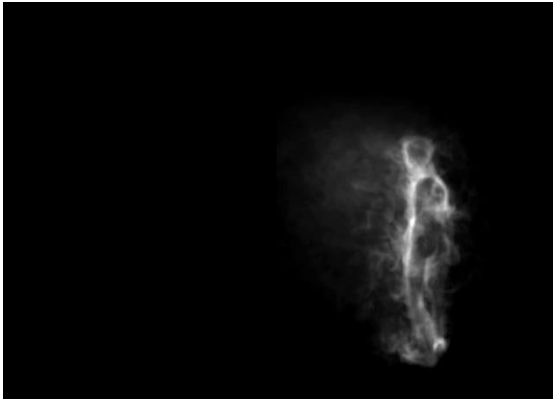
Photo 3



Art installation “100% polyester, objet dansant n°57” comprises a “bodiless” dance, a moment of contemplation and an imaginary itinerary.

Photo courtesy: Caty Olive

Photo
4a



A pair of intriguing and insightful dance films will be on display.

Photo courtesy (4a): Christian Rizzo and Iuan-Hau Chiang

Photo courtesy (4b): Marc Damage

4b



Photo 5



Christian Rizzo will partner with five local dance artists, each tasked with developing a 10-minute solo dance at different locations at Freespace, the West Kowloon Cultural District, to stage their performances.

Courtesy of West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

High-resolution photos: <https://bit.ly/3xZAK4O>

For more information about French May 2022, please visit: www.frenchmay.com



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About Dance Reflections

The Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels initiative marks a new chapter in the relationship uniting the Maison and the world of dance. This program, designed in collaboration with international partners, epitomizes Van Cleef & Arpels' commitment to supporting choreographic legacies, nourishing contemporary creations and popularizing this artistic universe among the broadest possible audience.

This initiative includes three distinct actions: the first consists of encouraging the artists and institutions that keep repertory art alive and contributing to contemporary performance. The second action involves organizing an annual choreographic event featuring recognized works as well as new creations. Finally, the Maison plans to organize actions to raise awareness focused on culture and dance for audiences of every stripe – professionals and amateurs alike.

About the West Kowloon Cultural District

The West Kowloon Cultural District is one of the largest and most ambitious cultural projects in the world. Its vision is to create a vibrant new cultural quarter for Hong Kong on forty hectares of reclaimed land located alongside Victoria Harbour. With a varied mix of theatres, performance spaces, and museums, the West Kowloon Cultural District will produce and host world-class exhibitions, performances, and cultural events, providing twenty-three hectares of public open space, including a two-kilometre waterfront promenade.

About Freespace

Freespace is Hong Kong's new centre for contemporary performance. Located in the heart of the Art Park, Freespace presents multi-genre performances and events, produces boundary-pushing

collaborations, and promotes new ways of seeing and experiencing performance. Freespace houses The Box, a flexible space for cutting-edge performances and one of the largest black box theatres in Hong Kong, two multi-purpose spaces, The Room and The Studio, designed for creative exchange and artistic collaborations, and Lau Bak Livehouse, an intimate bar cafe presenting live music from Hong Kong and around the world.

About French May

Established in 1993, French May is one of the largest cultural events in Asia. With more than 100 programmes presented across 2 months, we showcase the most diversified art forms: from heritage and contemporary arts, paintings and design, to classical music and hip-hop dance, cinema and circus. It has become an iconic part of Hong Kong's cultural scene reaching out to 20 million visitors since its inception.

French May brings the arts to everyone, not only in cultural venues, but also in public spaces, shopping malls and more, inviting everyone across Hong Kong to enjoy art in their daily lives.

In the aim of promoting accessible-arts for all, French May places a strong emphasis on education through outreach programmes, guided tours, workshops, masterclasses and free performances.

The festival strives to reach the widest possible audience and contribute to the education of the young and less-privileged, working closely with over 50 local institutions and organisations to establish barrier-free arts access.

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