



Olympics 2024 – D17 – Good bye and good luck

The closing ceremony was more serious on Sunday evening, August 11, 2024.

The athletes, medalists or not, were all physically present in a packed Stade de France. The scenography suggested a planisphere with the 5 continents. The parade of all the delegations was more human – they were no longer on boats, on the Seine, far from each other, but side by side, all together. The dress code was free – each country chose to emphasize the message they wanted to convey - a sporty touch (France and the USA), or an impression of lightness in summer shirts (UK or the Netherlands) or traditional clothing evoking their culture (many African or Asian countries).

Music was the other star of the evening. A classic song «Sous les Ponts de Paris» opened the ball in the Jardin des Tuileries next to the Olympic basin that had been the highlight of the opening ceremony. Other songs and music evoked French monuments- Charles Aznavour, Joe Dassin or Johnny Halliday closely associated with the Stade de France which he often ignited. Classical music was present, conducted by a woman conductor, born in Seine Saint Denis, Zahia Ziouani who founded the orchestra Divertimento whose vocation is to make classical music accessible to all.

The show proposed was strange and futuristic. It was reminiscent of a scary cartoon from the 1970s, turbulent and tumultuous times in the world - “The Wild Planet”, inspired by a science fiction novel. The creatures in white that have reconstructed the 5 Olympic rings resembled the main characters the Oms, transformed into pets by the Draags. The threat is equally important in 2024 with explosive geopolitics that has not seen an Olympic truce in Ukraine or the Middle East. Many unknowns are in the air about the XXXIV Olympiad to be held in Los Angeles (USA), first nation in the final ranking of the Paris Games, just before China, which it has surpassed in extremis. France is the first country in Europe, very close to the UK and the Netherlands.

California will host the next Games, if all goes well. The intervention of a superhero, Tom Cruise, taking on his role as «Mission Impossible» was responsible for reassuring us. The United States has always been able to intervene with Europe in the XXth century so that democracy wins during two world conflicts (WWI & WWII). We will be able to rely on their strike force within NATO to protect us from the looming authoritarian threats. But what if democracy in the US is faltering? The threat is strong with the upcoming presidential elections that are again fracturing US society.

A message of hope- a woman mayor, Anne Hidalgo for Paris, passed on the flame to another woman mayor, Karen Bass, they share the same values. Hollywood will of course be a backup to build a storytelling worthy of the name. But the only support will come from another American woman, of Indian and Jamaican origin, who will lead a decisive fight for democracy in the United States on November 5, 2024 – goodbye Paris and good luck to America.

- (1) Commission européenne (2007) « Livre Blanc sur le sport » - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52007DC0391&from=DA>
- (2) COJO- <https://olympics.com/fr/paris-2024/comite/nos-responsabilites/financement-des-jeux>
- (3) France télévision, retransmission de la cérémonie de clôture, dimanche 11 août 2024
- (4) Bénédicte Halba (1997) « Economie du sport », Paris : Economica
- (5) Bénédicte Halba (1999) « Dopage et sport », Toulouse : Milan
- (6) René Lalloux (1973) « La planète sauvage », film français d'après l'œuvre originale de l'écrivain français Stefan Wul
- (7) , Zahia Ziouani, orchestre Divertimento - <https://www.orchestre-divertimento.com/>

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