Beat: Arts

RACHIDA DATI LAUNCHES PORTAL FOR AUDIO DESCRIPTION & AWARD MARIUS PRIZE CEREMONY

BY CNC MIN OF CULTURE

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USPA NEWS - The Marius Audio Description 2025 award ceremony was held on February 25 at the National Center for Cinema and the Animated Image (CNC) in Paris 14. Rachida Dati, Minister of Culture, and Charlotte Parmentier-Lecocq, Minister Delegate for Autonomy and Disability, were present for this event. The Marius Prize for audio description awarding best audio-descriptor by Marius trophy, was created in 2018 by the French Confederation for the Social Promotion of the Blind and Partially Sighted (CFPSAA). It has rewarded the best audio description among the feature films nominated for the César Academy for Best Film 2025.
During this ceremony, Rachida Dati announced the launch of the "Audio Description Portal", a new digital platform developed by the Ministry of Culture. This platform aims to centralize the offer of audio-described films and facilitate access to cinematographic works for people with visual disabilities. She also handed over the Trophy awarding, the Marius Prize, for audiodescription, to Meryl Guyard and her visually impaired "teammate" Ouiza Ouyed for their work in making The Count of Monte Cristo accessible to blind and partially sighted people.

THE MARIUS CEREMONY AWARDS THE PALMARES COMMENTED BY A BLIND INTERPERTOR

The award ceremony starts up with the usual welcome of the ministers by Gaetan Bruel, President of the CNC, Bernard Defebvre, President of the CFPSAA, and Sylvain Nivard, President of the Valentin Hauy association.
After the Speeches given by the two ministers as the introduced the 8th edition of Marius Prize of audio description 2025 on stage at CNC. The Prize rewards his work on the feature film by Alexandre de La Patelliere and Matthieu Delaporte. The audio description of the film is narrated by Ouiza Ouyed.

This ceremony underlines the importance of audio description in cultural inclusion and highlights the efforts to make cinema accessible to all. Rachida Dati's speech thus emphasized the commitment of the Ministry of Culture to make cinema more accessible to all, particularly to the visually impaired and blind.
"This is only the beginning, because this platform is intended to be significantly enriched in the coming months thanks to new partnerships". Rachida Dati, the Minister said, and took the opportunity to unveil a new audio description portal, presenting a catalogue of 2,562 audio-described films.

Sylvie Bones, the Marius Prize Coordinator, explains the extent of the composition of the jurors making up the essentially female jury, in France, with 71% from the provinces of France and the former Paris, and even from foreign countries, such as Monaco, the Netherlands, Belgium, Martinique, Reunion, and even a juror from the USA "The jurors number 223 participants for this year 2025 (2024, 250 jurors), of which 63% are women, with an average age of 54 years; the youngest juror is 12 years old and the oldest, 87 years old. The majority of the jury is blind at 56%, also including visually impaired people. She also explains how the choice of the prize list was very difficult and tight with 33 points between the 1st and the 5th film

MINISTER OF CULTURE RACHIDA DATI ANNOUNCED A PORTAL FOR AUDIODESCRIPTION IN THE NAME OF INCLUSION
Minister of Culture Rachida Dati made an important announcement during her speech “the launch of the "Portal of audiodescription", a new digital platform developed by the Ministry of Culture. She highlighted the framework of this platform “ to centralize the offer of audio-described films and facilitate access to cinematographic works for people with visual disabilities.”

The Minister Dati, also stressed the impressive number of films already available on the portal “more than 2,500 audio-described works. Mention of the partners involved in the project, including Arte TV, La Cinetek, Canal+, France Televisions and Orange.” Minister Dati acknowledged the importance of audio description for cultural inclusion. The minister for culture, concluded by expressing her the desire to enrich the platform in the future, with new features, new partners and information on the works available in media libraries and in cinemas.”

AUDIODESCRIPTION IS A TECHNIC THAT ALLOWS BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE TO WATCH A MOVIES

Audio description is a technique that allows blind or visually impaired people to perceive the visual elements of a work, such as films, shows or exhibitions, through detailed audio narration.

This practice emerged in the United States in the early 1970s. Gregory Frazier, a professor at San Francisco State University, developed the concept of audio description after briefly describing a film to a blind friend. This experience led to the creation of an academic program dedicated to audio description.

In 1988, the first film with audio description, "Tucker" by Francis Ford Coppola, was presented to blind people. At the same time, August Coppola and Gregory Frazier organized training courses for foreign students, including the French, in order to spread this practice. Source : Wikipedia

AUDIO-DESCRIPTION IS BORN IN 1975 IN USA, 1989 IN FRANCE

Appearing in the United States in 1975, audio transcription is a technique that should allow people with visual impairments to perceive subtleties and feel the emotions transmitted on screen. Thus, comments are inserted between dialogues in order to deliver essential information that cannot be perceived by hearing. Depending on the context, audio description specifies material elements such as sets, landscapes, costumes, written instructions but also movements and actions. In France, audio description was introduced in 1989. Arte (French-German BroadcastTV) was a pioneer in broadcasting audio-described programs in 2000. Since then, other television channels have followed, making programs more accessible to visually impaired people.

“Today, audio description is widespread, with films, series and shows accessible thanks to this technique, thus allowing a better inclusion of blind and visually impaired people in culture and leisure”. By Sabine Faraut

The eighth Marius for audio description was awarded to Meryl Guyard and her visually impaired "teammate" Ouiza Ouyed for their work in making The Count of Monte Cristo accessible to blind and partially sighted people (replay of the ceremony in the video opposite).The Prize rewards his work on the feature film by Alexandre de La Patelliere and Matthieu Delaporte. The audio description of the film is narrated by Ouiza Ouyed.

SUCCESSFUL VILLA ALBERTINE’S CHAIR NY, GAETAN BRUEL NEW YORK IS NOW THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE CNC
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This young 36-year-old graduate of the Ecole Normale Supérieure was therefore preferred to Olivier Henrard, the Director General of the CNC who had been acting as interim president, "with brilliance" according to Rachida Dati, since Dominique Boutonnat's resignation in June 2024.
Previously, the very young man had become an advisor to the Ministry of Defense in 2012, being at the origin of the creation of the army's cinema mission. As advisor to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs (2017-2019), he led the full integration of creative industries into our economic diplomacy. In the meantime, he administered the Pantheon and the Arc de Triomphe within the Centre des Monuments Nationaux. This is a report by our correspondent Rahma Sophia Rachdi, in the field.

Audio description portal : Available, for the moment, in beta version, this portal encourages visitors to "send any suggestions or

feedback" by email to contact@audiodescription.beta.gouv.fr.

CEREMONY, JURY AND AWARDS OF THE MARIUS 2025 PRIZE
The Marius 2025 was presented yesterday evening at the CNC, in the presence of its new president, Rachida Dati and the Minister Delegate for Autonomy and Disability, Charlotte Parmentier-Lecocq, who praised the work accomplished on The Count of Monte Cristo. Above all, they announced on this occasion the launch of an Audio Description Portal, which already references 2,500 films and redirects users to partner VOD and SVOD platforms.

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