

EX LIBRIS

The Newsletter of the American Library in Paris

March 2019

Centennial countdown

In May 2020 the American Library in Paris will turn 100. The Library Board of Trustees, staff, and community members have begun planning celebrations, which will begin in the next calendar year.

“The centennial is an opportunity to reflect on our incredible history, but it is also a chance to write the next exciting chapter of this august institution,” said Audrey Chapuis, the Library Director, “From its inception at the end of the First World War to its present incarnation as a bustling lending library and cultural center, the Library has constantly evolved in response to the needs of its constituents.”



LIVING HISTORY A French woman and American soldier consulting magazines at the Library circa 1945

Continued on page 5

GALA 2019

An evening with author Martin Amis

On 6 June, the Library will kick off its 99th year with the annual spring Gala at the Bibliothèque Clément Bayard of the *Automobile Club de France*. Our keynote speaker will be renowned novelist and cultural commentator Martin Amis.

Best known for his essays, including the 2018 collection *The Rub of Time*, and his novels, including *Money* and *London Fields*, Mr. Amis is an exciting addition to the esteemed list of past Gala speakers. Invitations will be mailed in April but tables and seats may be reserved in advance. Contact the Library’s Advancement Coordinator Morgan Wurzburger for more information.

A jury for the Book Award



Photo by Catherine Helle Gallimard

Alice Kaplan



Photo by Dmitry Kostyukov

Pamela Druckerman



Photo by Jean-Francois Paga

Thomas Chatterton Williams

Three distinguished American writers have agreed to serve as the jury for the 2019 American Library in Paris Book Award.

Alice Kaplan, who will chair this year’s jury, is the author of *French Lessons: A Memoir*; *The Collaborator: The Trial and Execution of Robert Brasillach*, *Dreaming in French: The Paris Years of Jacqueline Bouvier, Susan Sontag, and Angela Davis*, and most recently, *Looking for the Stranger: Albert Camus and the Life of a Literary Classic*. She is chair of the French department at Yale University.

Pamela Druckerman is a contributing columnist at *The New York Times* and *1843*, *The Economist’s* new culture magazine. She is the author of *Lust in Translation: Infidelity from Tokyo to Tennessee*, *Bringing Up Bébé: One American Mother Discovers the Wisdom of French Parenting*, and *There Are No Grown-Ups: A Midlife Coming-of-Age Story*, just out in paperback.

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STAFF NEWS



The Library recently welcomed **Elliot Rambach** to the Member Services team. He is a native of Tulsa, but was living most recently in New York, where he was an associate producer at Simon & Schuster's audiobook division. Elliot holds a BA in Classical Studies with a minor in English from the University of Pennsylvania and an MA in Creative Process from the National University of Ireland. He plans to put his knowledge of literature and his radio and podcast production skills to good use with us.

Charlotte Clough, our current Erasmus intern, also brings an academic background in classical studies. Charlotte will be at the Library through June, working at the Member Services desk and assisting the Collections department. In September, she will resume her joint honors degree in French and Classics at the University of Glasgow.

A belated thank you to intern **Molly Burke**, BA student of Political Science and Communication at Boston University. She was working with the Advancement team in November and December 2018, helping with Book Award and other programs.



Isabel Langen and Blythe de Oliveira Foster in *Anniversary!*

Word for Word presents

Anniversary! Stories by Tobias Wolff and George Saunders

Wednesday 17 April 2019 at 19h30

Word for Word celebrates 25 years of theater and literature with performances of "Victory Lap" and "Deep Kiss," short stories by two of their favorite authors, George Saunders and Tobias Wolff. This event, sponsored by the American Library in Paris, the Word for Word Performing Arts Company, the Florence Gould Foundation, and l'École Jeannine Manuel, will take place at the Théâtre de la Tour Eiffel (4 square Rapp in the 7th arr.). Tickets must be reserved in advance with a suggested donation of €20 (students €10). Look out for more details on our website and the next edition of e-Libris.

Remembering Philippe Mélot

Beloved Library member and supporter Philippe Mélot passed away 12 February 2019. Philippe was one of our first book group leaders, and his groups were perennial favorites. Fellow book group member Sara Somers says, "He loved Americans and was so kind and generous to all of us. He was, in my opinion, a very special man and special Frenchman. He went out of his way to extend a welcoming hand and made each and every one of us feel special and important to him. He made studying and reading about French-American relations for the last century exciting."

Philippe grew up in post-war Paris, and for him, America was cloaked in the glory of its courageous soldiers. He spent his summer vacations in Normandy, where memories of WWII were still abundant. His dream was to discover and understand the United States.

Throughout his life, he pursued this interest through his many discussions with American friends and his travels, as well as through wide-ranging reading. In 2009, he fulfilled his dream of cycling across the US, and his trip was the subject of a presentation at the American Library. He was also a faithful attendee, alongside his wife Agnès Mélot, of many of our programs.



Spotlight on Visiting Fellow Ian Leslie

Ian Leslie is a journalist who lives in London. He writes about the science of human behavior, drawing on a wide range of interdisciplinary expertise. He is the author of *Born Liars: Why We Can't Live Without Deceit* and *Curious: The Desire to Know and Why Your Future Depends On It*.

Ian, who will be in residence at the American Library during the months of March and April, is currently researching and writing a book on the topic of “productive disagreement.” We live in a world that features more argument, and more hostile conversations, than ever. Much of it takes place in an environment that is relatively new and the rules of engagement aren't clear. What can we learn from scholars who have studied disagreement and from professionals who regularly have high-pressure, conflict-ridden conversations?



Photo by Fian Monks

A JURY FOR THE BOOK AWARD, *continued from page 1*

Thomas Chatterton Williams is the author of *Losing My Cool: Love, Literature, and a Black Man's Escape from the Crowd* and (forthcoming) *Self-Portrait in Black and White: Unlearning Race*. He is a contributing writer at *The New York Times Magazine*, and his work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Harper's Magazine*, *The London Review of Books*, and elsewhere. He is a National Fellow at New America and the recipient of a Berlin Prize.

The Library will announce the 2019 shortlist of five finalists in July, and the jury will make its selection of the winning title in the autumn. The \$5,000 prize is awarded to the author in a ceremony in Paris in November to which all Library donors are invited.

The American Library in Paris Book Award, now in its seventh year, recognizes the most distinguished books of the year, written in English, about France or the French, and is made possible by generous funding from the Florence Gould Foundation.

Submissions for the prize, which usually number from 70 to 100, are open until 1 May for books published since 1 July 2018, or scheduled for publication before 30 June 2019. Please see the Library website for details.

“Alice, Pamela, and Thomas will comprise an outstanding jury because of their deep familiarity with France, their striking personal achievements, and their literary range,” said Charles Trueheart, administrator of the prize. “We are also pleased that they come to the assignment with long knowledge and love of the Library and its mission.”



WRITERS ON STAFF

Treasures from our archives on view

Books penned by former American Library in Paris staff members are currently exhibited in the Turner Commons, as part of a larger display commemorating **International Women's Day**, celebrated this year on 8 March. We're also honoring the six women who have led the Library through a selection of books, articles, and photographs from our archives.

Women have made up a majority of our staff for decades, but perhaps not for the outlandishly sexist reasons outlined in a 1914 article reprinted in translation in *Library Journal*: “Women as Librarians — A French Viewpoint.” A 1929 copy of *Paris is a Woman's Town* (left) offers a more accurate picture, stating, “[e]ntertaining and worth-while work from every standpoint [...] is to be found at the American Library,” and promises that “soon she is revelling in a series of literary encounters.”

The complete texts are accompanied by photos of Library staff in the early decades: organizing books for the Soldiers Service (1940, right), working in the cataloging department (1945), and taking tea together (1939).



Author Martin Amis in our midst and in the stacks

The Library invites you to read the books of this year's Gala speaker, Martin Amis. From our shelves, you can take home or read in our comfortable spaces titles such as *The Rachel Papers* (winner of the Somerset Maugham Award); *The War Against Cliché* (winner of the National Book Critics' Circle Award); *Experience* (winner of the James Tait Black Memorial Prize); or *London Fields*, which was adapted into a film in 2018 and directed Mathew Cullen.

In addition to these award-winning books, the Library has at your disposal another 17 titles by this prolific author. You can search for the books' availability through our online catalogue or ask at the Member Services desk.

Beat a librarian at her own reading challenge

It should come as no surprise that staff members of the American Library in Paris are avid readers. Many of us belong to book groups, both in person and online. Some staff members use Goodreads to track their reading, while others use notebooks, spreadsheets, or just keep simple lists of books read. This year, we are organizing a friendly competition of book reading as we motivate each other to read for pleasure and for work, as often as possible. We created the *2019 American Library in Paris Reading Challenge* on Goodreads.com to share our book lists and reviews. **All Library members are invited to join the group and participate.**

MYSTERY BOOK GROUP HITS 100 BOOKS!



On Monday 4 February 2019, the Library's Mystery Book Group, co-led by Maureen Paget and Marcia Lèbre, celebrated their ninth year and 100th book! They enjoyed a lively discussion of *Gaudy Night* by Dorothy Sayers. They wore purple in honor of late founding member and co-leader Anne Raynaud.

From left to right: Adele Witt, Polly Gobin, Claire Bennis, Marcia Lèbre, Maureen Paget, Alison Young, Sarah Vaughan

Read on the River

Vedettes de Paris, a French boat company that provides sightseeing cruises on the Seine river, recently implemented a library on their deck where people can take books for free while enjoying the view. The Library decided to help them with a donation of 50 books, hoping that the English language will spread over the Seine.

More Books Borrowed

Last year, Library members checked out and renewed a total of **139,883** items, an increase of **13.6%** from 2017.

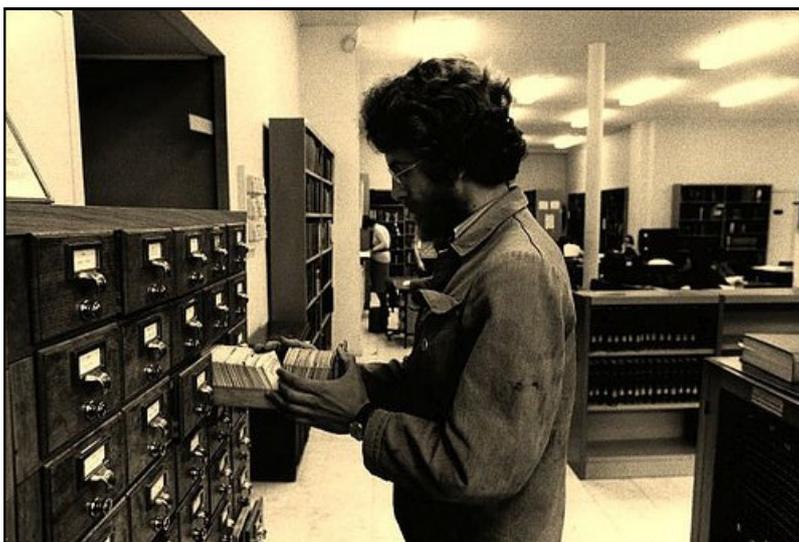
Top titles of 2018

Books most frequently borrowed from the general collection last year

1. *The Bonjour Effect* by Julie Barlow and Jean-Benoît Nadeau
2. *Fables* by Bill Willingham
3. *The Shadow District* by Arnaldur Indriðason
4. *The Golden House* by Salman Rushdie
5. *The Sandman* by Neil Gaiman
6. *Lincoln in the Bardo* by George Saunders
7. *Manhattan Beach* by Jennifer Egan
8. *Market Leader* by David Cotton
9. *The Rooster Bar* by John Grisham
10. *The Whistler* by John Grisham
11. *Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House* by Michael Wolff
12. *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger
13. *Y: The Last Man* by Brian K. Vaughan
14. *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr
15. *The Perfect Nanny* by Leila Slimani
16. *The Dry: A Novel* by Jane Harper
17. *A Storm of Swords* by George Martin
18. *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway
19. *The Transformation of Intimacy* by Anthony Giddens
20. *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*

LIBRARY LORE, STACKS, AND MORE

THE EVOLVING LIBRARY



Above, a patron using the Library's card catalog in 1975. After the donation of a computer by IBM in 1984, the Library began to acquire many new devices to automate library work. In 1989, on the verge of a new era, the Library started using computers for cataloging and circulation of the collection.

BE A PART OF HISTORY

To kick off the centennial countdown, the Library will be hosting an informal **99th birthday gathering** on Tuesday 21 May at 19h30.

Come for more literary history and socialize with fellow readers. Participants will have the opportunity to share stories of the Library that will be collected for the our archives. More details to come!

PRESS ROOM

Library news outside our walls

Audrey Chapuis spoke about the theme of mothers and daughters in literature on a culture program on channel France24 on 29 January.

The **Musée des Arts Décoratifs et du Design** in Bordeaux borrowed the Library's copy of the January 1955 issue of Harper's Bazaar for their exhibition on Japanese paper lanterns, *As movable as butterflies - Les chōchin du Japon*, which is on view until 19 May.



CENTENNIAL COUNTDOWN

Continued from front page

To help prepare for the Library's next century of service, a strategic planning committee, comprised of Board members and Library staff, have conducted focus groups and gathered feedback to see how our current community envisions the Library of tomorrow.

"As we plan for the future, we are above all building on the Library's past successes, including most recently the 2016 renovation, which has drawn over a thousand new members," said Vice Chairman of the Board Forrest Alogna.

The Library will be soliciting input from its constituents in the coming months, including feedback about services, as well as stories of their experiences with the Library, which will be collected for the centennial project.

"For one hundred years the Library has served as a center for cross-cultural exchange, a repository of ideas, and a haven for those who value the life of the mind," Chapuis said. "Together, we can build on those traditions and create new ones, for the readers of today and tomorrow."

Spotted in the stacks...

A Library member brought to our attention a passage in the P.G. Wodehouse epistolary collection *Author! Author!* In a letter to his friend Bill Townend, Wodehouse refers to a book by Trollope, "I took it out of the American library (for which, by the way, thank God; **it makes all the difference to life in Paris**)."

STACKS NEWS

Sections of the Library's collection are shifting! On the Mezzanine, you may have noticed that Audiobooks are now neighbors with the PCA and Kent course reserves and the Mysteries section starts where the Audiobooks once were. Also, the *Newsweek International* back issues that were on this floor have been relocated downstairs to the periodical archives.

Other sections of the Library's collection will be shifting in the coming months. The first significant change on the Main Floor will be in the Biographies and Travel Guides sections. These changes are intended to dynamize some spaces of the Library.

Young Authors Fiction Festival News



The American Library in Paris is proud to be the organizer of the Young Authors Fiction Festival (YAFF), a creative writing initiative that aims to strengthen community among English-speakers in the Paris area through the art and craft of storytelling. Participation in YAFF is free of charge and open to all students ages 5-18 in the greater Paris area who write in English. Last year YAFF received over 450 story submissions and we hope this year's festival will be even larger!

The online submission for YAFF 2019 opened on 1 February and this year's **deadline to submit is 1 April by 22h00**. For submission guidelines and to submit your story please see the Library website's YAFF page.

The winning stories of YAFF 2019 will be published by the Library in two YAFF Celebration Booklets and will be available for sale during an event celebrating young authors and their writing, where we will announce the top 5 stories in each grade. The celebration will be held at the Library on **Friday 14 June** and all writers who submit a story and their families are invited to attend.

This year the Library is excited to partner with the **British Council**, which is supporting YAFF 2019. The Library is also grateful to the other local businesses who are supporting this year's festival, our 70+ volunteer judges, and the volunteers on the YAFF 2019 team who help process submissions and coordinate the festival. Without all of their help, YAFF would not be possible.

As part of the Young Authors Fiction Festival the Library hosted a variety of special workshops, as well as our normal writing clubs, to support writing for the festival and for pleasure! There are more workshops and programs coming up so be sure to check the Library website for upcoming Children's and Teens' events. Don't forget we also have a variety of books in our collection that are sure to inspire you and enhance your writing skills.

Children's Events

Ages 1–3: Toddler Time

The Library's popular Toddler Time series for children 1-3 years old and a accompanying chaperone includes 30 minutes of stories, songs, and rhymes in English. Toddler Time will be held on **7 & 21 March, 4 & 18 April, and 2 & 16 May** with sessions at **10h30 and 17h00**.

Sign-up is required each date.

See the Library website for details.

Ages 3–5: Story Hour

Our weekly Story Hours for children ages 3-5 and their grown-ups is one of our longest running events for children. There are sessions at **10h30** in the Children's Library and **14h30** in the lower level reading room most **Wednesdays**. Each Story Hour lasts an hour, and includes 45 minutes of stories, songs and rhymes, followed by a craft project. As with all of our children's programs, Story Hours are entirely in English.

No reservation required. Please see the Library website for weekly themes!

Ages 6–10:

Saturday Series

Our weekly Saturday afternoon activities include a variety of interactive programming for children ages 6-10 most **Saturdays at 15h00**.

Highlights include **In the French Kitchen with Mardi Michels** on Saturday **16 March** and our **Irish Tales with Patrick Ryan** on Saturday **23 March**.

No reservation required. Please see the Library website for the full calendar!

Ages 9–12:

Sunday Workshops

Our monthly writing workshops cover topics from crafting a short story to spelling and grammar activities. Check the calendar for upcoming topics and dates.

Sign-up is required for this activity. See the Library website for details.

Unless otherwise stated, all programs are free for Library members and €10 for non-members. Children and teens attending Library programs must have their own membership card or be covered by a family membership. Please contact the Children's and Teens' services department for more information about our programs for ages 0-18: celeste@americanlibraryinparis.org.



All the #newbooks

Based on feedback from our teen members, we know many of you have been wishing for a space where you can browse the new books we've added to our collections, so we've carved out a space just for you. We now have a New Book section on our Teen Mezzanine that includes Young Adult Fiction that has been purchased in the past several months. Find them on the long table when you reach the Teen Mezzanine. If you want a title that's not available, one of our staff members would be happy to show you how to reserve books that are checked out, so that you receive the book as soon as it's returned.

From Master Shot to theaters...

Sam Alexandre Leter was a founding member of the Library's Master Shot Film Club for teens back in 2013, and won the Judges Choice award for his short film at our first ever Paris Youth Film Showcase, which was held at the Mona Bismarck American Center for Art and Culture. Alexandre is now a film student at Wesleyan, and his first feature-length film, "Pau," which he co-directed with another former Master Shot Film Club member, **Maxim Bouffard**, will be publicly released at the *Cinéma Saint-André des Arts* in Paris this month as part of a showcase spotlighting independent filmmakers.

The Library's Master Shot Film Club was founded in 2013 at the request of several teens who had participated in **Clarence Tokley's** Library workshop, "Two Hour Film School." Alexandre and Maxim were part of the group of teens who asked if we would begin a club for filmmakers. After Clarence Tokley and Children's and Teens' Services manager Celeste talked it over, the Master Shot Film Club was born, with meetings each month led by Clarence. The club continues this year, with a showcase coming this June!



Above: Alexandre (left) and Clarence (right), at a private screening of "Pau" last January.

College advice, essay help, and more...

Understanding the American University Application Process

With Andrea van Niekerk of *College Goals*
Saturday 30 March from 16h00-17h30

What do families need to know for their student to be successful and satisfied by the university search and application process? During this presentation, *College Goals'* counselor, Andrea van Niekerk, will address the complexities of the American university application system, with special attention to the process and mechanics.

Teens are invited to stick around after the presentation for a short workshop on writing college essays from 17h30-18h30.

Writing a College Application Essay

With Cathy Altman Nocquet
Saturday 4 May from 12h00-14h00

Finding your own voice and unique content for your essay will not only help your application rise to the top, it will improve your writing overall. Join writing coach and author Cathy Altman Nocquet for insights and writing exercises that will help you craft a strong essay in your unique voice.

Registration is required for both workshops. RSVP online!

Top 20 teen titles of 2018

Books most frequently borrowed from the Library's TEEN COLLECTIONS last year:

1. *Catching Fire* by Suzanne Collins
2. *Turtles All the Way Down* by John Green
3. *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
4. *Mockingjay* by Suzanne Collins
5. *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
6. *Paper Towns* by John Green
7. *The Graveyard Books* by Neil Gaiman
8. *Looking for Alaska* by John Green
9. *Lord of Shadows* by Cassandra Clare
10. *The 5th Wave* by Richard Yancey
11. *Eleanor and Park* by Rainbow Rowell
12. *The Librarian of Auschwitz* by Antonio Iturbe
13. *Red Queen* by Victoria Aveyard
14. *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman
15. *One of Us is Lying* by Karen M. McManus
16. *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda* by Becky Albertalli
17. *Tower of Dawn* by Sarah J. Maas
18. *Black Friday Works* of Robert Muchamore
19. *The Blood of Olympus* by Rick Riordan
20. *City of Bones* by Cassandra Clare

EX LIBRIS

The newsletter of the American Library in Paris is published quarterly in March, June, September, and December. Back issues available online.

SPRING CALENDAR

Tuesday 12 March 19h30

Journalist and novelist

Robert Rorke

Robert will present his debut novel, *Car Trouble*, a witty, moving, and inspirational coming-of-age story about a teenager and his abusive father whose obsession with broken-down vintage cars careens wildly out of control. Some of the best books, the ones that remain with us after the trends have passed, are stories that have a strong sense of place. In this book, Robert set out to reconstruct a lost world: Brooklyn of the early 1970s.



Photo by Anne Wermiel

Wednesday 13 March 19h30

Megan Tompkins-Stange on trends in American philanthropy

In the past two decades, American philanthropic foundations have played increasingly powerful roles in setting agendas, championing, and financing public education reforms. Megan, Assistant Professor of Public Policy at the University of Michigan's Gerald R. Ford School, will provide a rare behind-the-scenes view of decision making inside four of the most influential U.S. education philanthropies.



Photo by the Ford School

Thursday 14 March 19h00

Writing Workshop: Finding Yourself in Paris with Lucienne McKirdy



An opportunity for the newly transplanted inhabitants of the city as well as seasoned residents to reflect upon their journey in Paris.

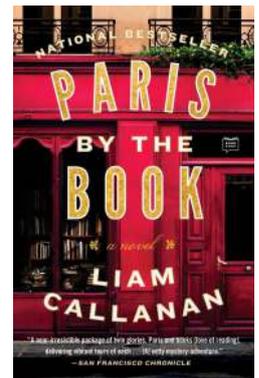
The event is open to Library members (fee of 15€) and non-members (fee of 25€). Space is limited and registration is required. Please see our programs calendar online for a link to sign up.

Evenings with Authors and other weeknight programs at the Library are free and open to the public (with a **10€ suggested donation**) thanks to support from **GRoW @ Annenberg** at the Annenberg Foundation, our members, and those who attend programs. Please note that **doors for evening events open at 19h00**.

Monday 18 March 19h30

Novelist Liam Callanan

What makes Paris, Paris? In *Paris by the Book*, a young American family seeks to find out as they resuscitate a bookshop in the Marais, while simultaneously looking for a family member—a writer—who's disappeared, leaving an unfinished manuscript in his wake. Searching the city, they can't help but trace the literary paths of some beloved Parisian classics, hoping for more clues. Liam will share some of his own discoveries, including about the lives of Ludwig Bemelmans (the author of the *Madeline* series) and Albert Lamorisse (*The Red Balloon*), whose stories and art feature prominently in the book.



Authors, publishers, publicists, and literary agents should direct *Evenings with Authors* speaking inquiries and proposals to programs@americanlibraryinparis.org

UPCOMING PROGRAMS... American Library in Paris Visiting Fellow **Ian Leslie** • **Mark Mayer** • **Amit Chaudhuri** • Panel Discussion on **Immigration and Borders** in Europe • **Tania Teschke** on the **Bordeaux Kitchen** • **Maxine Gordon** in conversation with **Jake Lamar** • **Tash Aw** and **Édouard Louis** • **Emilio Williams** on more treasures of the 7th • A film screening with **Xiaolu Guo** • **Michelle Kuo** • **Otessa Moshfegh** and more...

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