William Styron to be Honored at the U.S. Ambassador’s Residence

William Styron, eminent name of letters, will be honored at an American Library in Paris dinner on June 4, 1996, at the residence of Pamela Harriman, the U.S. Ambassador to France.

The American Library in Paris takes special pleasure in paying tribute to Mr. Styron since he has a particular fondness for libraries. In fact, Mr. Styron’s literary habits were nurtured and encouraged within a library. “The United States Marine Corps introduced me to the glories of the library,” he says. “The library became my hangout, my private club, my sanctuary, the place of my salvation,” he adds. Because at 17 Styron was too young to be sent into combat, he was assigned to the V-12 program at Duke University, “which then as now possessed one of the great college libraries in America,” he points out.

Having grown up in Virginia, Mr. Styron is rightly considered to be a southern writer. Many see him as William Faulkner’s successor. He draws on the local ambiance and paints with words memorable characters that propel his storytelling. From slavery to Nazism, his works grapple with the problems of evil and guilt and how to reshape and continue living as these become the inevitable basis of human existence.

William Styron was awarded the Rome Prize in Literature for his first novel, Lie Down in Darkness (1951). He garnered the Pulitzer Prize for The Confessions of Nat Turner (1967) and the National Book Award for Sophie’s Choice (1979). These modern classics were followed by Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness (1990) and Tidewater Morning (1993). Mr. Styron is a co-founder of The Paris Review and an honorary member of the Prix Goncourt jury.

An avid supporter of the library as an institution, he explains, “during the many months I was at Duke, I felt that when I was reading in the library I was sheltered from the world and from the evil winds of the future; no harm could come to me there… It was doubtless an escape of sorts,” he admits, “but it also brought me immeasurable enrichment.”

“God bless libraries,” he proclaims. The American Library in Paris is pleased to have the opportunity to honor this distinguished writer who happens to be a friend of libraries.

This dinner is made possible by the generosity and support of: Aon, AT&T France, Bank of America, Booz Allen & Hamilton Inc., CIGNA International, Hôtel de Grillon, Delta Air Lines, Laboratoires Merck Sharp & Dohme-Chibret, Russell Reynolds Associates, Seagram Global Brands Division, and Siemens Nixdorf. The Trustees of the American Library in Paris express their warmest thanks to these sponsors.

Best-selling Author at ALP

As part of the “Evenings with an Author” series, the American Library in Paris, together with Editions du Seuil, was pleased to present David Guterson, bestselling author of Snow Falling on Cedars on the occasion of the publication of his book in French on March 19, 1996.

An overflow crowd flocked to the Library to hear him introduce his book and then read a key chapter. After an animated question-and-answer period, individuals chatted with the author over champagne and had him sign their copies.
A New Collection of Art Books, Courtesy of Abrams
While Paul Godfrey, CEO of Abrams, the well-known American publisher of art books, was in Paris in March for the Salon du Livre, he visited the ALP to hear David Godfrey read from his new release, The Godfey Gallery. During this visit, Mr. Godfrey arranged to give the library 300 volumes.

The Paul Goodman Collection
Dr. Paul Goodman, professor of history at the University of California-Davis, who had written his professional collection to the American Library in Paris, died last November. His collection includes important books published on American history during the post-1940 years with special emphasis on rural settlements, the Civil War and political history. He discovered the American Library in Paris through a friend and faith howler visitor who visited French colleagues and recognized what a valuable resource it represents for French scholars of American studies. He felt that his collection would be a valuable addition to our already fine collection in this field. To quote a letter from Dr. Goodman: “As an incurable Francophile, it will give me great pleasure to help American studies in France.”

Visit of Count René de Chambrun
On February 6, 1988, the American Library in Paris celebrated the visit of Count René de Chambrun with a small champagne reception in his honor. His mother was Countess Clara de Chambrun, a Cincinnati native and sister of former speaker of the House of Representatives Nicholas Longworth. A Shakespeare scholar, she oversaw the Library after Dorothy Reeder, the then director, was forced to return to the United States when American World War II.

The American Library in Paris at the 16th Salon du Livre
As many of you might know, the 16th Salon du Livre, a huge French book fair featuring more than 5,000 publishing houses, 900 authors, and 250,000 books took place in Paris from March 23-27, 1999. This year the University of America was the special guest of honor and was represented by about 80 publishers and 35 authors.

American Sixth-graders in Paris
Two sixth-graders from the Willard School in Sanford, Maine, recently visited the American Library in Paris, Morgan Donnelly and Stefan Moore won a trip to Paris for their entry in an essay contest at their school.

The Idea for the contest and the exchange trip with students from Paris came from ALP Trustee Nancy Willard Magadan, whose parents founded the school in Sanford. "It was a wonderful experience to give children from her hometown an opportunity to see another culture and experience a different culture,“ she said.

Children's Story Hours in May, June, July, and August
All children's story hours are held on Wednesday afternoons from 2:30 to 3:30.

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This offered a unique chance for the public to meet such distinguished writers as Richard Ford, Ernest Gaiman, Joseph Heller, Barry Hannah, Art Spiegelman, Walter Mosley, James Salter, Tobias Wolff, Jeanne Clarie, Sandra Givens, Bilan Cetin, and many more. It also provided a unique opportunity for the American Library in Paris to increase its visibility in the French literary community with a booth at the Salon.

A press release announcing this event was sent to all major French magazines, television, and radio stations and resulted in at least one unprecedented about the Library on France's 25th TV show.

The ALP booth was small (600 square feet) but in a central, corner location, not far from the large American section and right next to the Cafe Literature, another place for the public to meet authors and editors informally. Our logo, mission statement, and the eye-capping library poster created by Pierre Le Tan were displayed.

We also highlighted the early years of the ALP through old photographs and screen-used our special collections, activities particularly the “Festivities and an Author” series, and readings through posters, flyers, and photographs.

An astounding number of people stopped by and were delighted to find out that there is indeed an American Library in Paris. Most of them participated in our special Salon du Livre lottery, which raffled annual memberships, books, book club and library posters.

In addition, our ALP book fair, which had been especially created and donated by Print International for the Salon, also proved very popular. Library staff tabled there, and volunteers manned the booth. They found it was a great way to meet new people interested in the library and its activities and to welcome members.

The American Library presence at the Salon du Livre enabled us to meet American authors and invite them to participate in our “Eenings with an Author” series. All the authors seemed thrilled at the possibility of being part of the ALP’s literary tradition.

Currenty she is working on James Joyce’s Finnegans Wake and a translation of Persian poetry by Hafez for Saiz, the Paris publisher.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR “EVENINGS WITH AN AUTHOR”

Wednesday, May 29, 1996, 8:00 P.M.

William Styron — Book Signing Party

Nancy du Plessis — Notes From the Moroccan Journal

Aldous Huxley — a vision of the future

Time will tell if Styron’s book, which was not available at the party. Alternatively, guests may bring their own copies for dedication.

Wednesday, June 19, 1996, 8:00 P.M.

Nancy du Plessis — Notes From the Moroccan Journal

Aldous Huxley — a vision of the future

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ALP Welcomes Three New Trustees

The American Library in Paris held its Annual Meeting on March 19, 1996. At that time we said farewell to longtime trustees Kandice Vettier and Brenda Harper Vandamme and saluted their dedication. Three new trustees were voted in.

We are delighted to welcome:

ARTHUR MARCHET is a professional with a leading American insurance brokerage group. He used the ALP as a university student and has been a collector of American first editions for 20 years. "It is a pleasure and a privilege," he says, "to be a French member of the Board of Trustees of the ALP. I will be delighted to share my love of books." He promises to "support actively the ALP's expansion plans."

HENRY DE MONTEBELLO has 15 years of experience with Russell Reynolds Associates in Paris and New York. He works with U.S. and international clients in consumer products and general industry. Earlier he was with Cresup, McCormick & Puget, Inc., in London. He is a graduate of Harvard and the Colgate Darden Graduate School of Business at the University of Virginia. About his appointment, he says, "I am excited at the prospect of participating in the further development of this great institution in France."

GREGORY WALTER WEINGARTEN is an artist based in Paris. A native of California and a graduate of Stanford University, Mr. Weingarten moved to Paris seven years ago. He has studied painting at Parsons and at the Beaux-Arts. He is on the advisory committee of the Annenberg Foundation, a philanthropic institution dedicated to the support of education.

Staff Changes

We welcome Doreen Hamilton as a librarian. She holds a Master of Arts in French literature and economic history and a postgraduate diploma in librarianship. Doreen has worked at the British Council Library, Université de Paris IX (Dauphine), and at Carnegie International in London. She will be working the extended hours in the Circulation Department and will assist at the reference desk and in the research center. Stop by and meet her on your next visit to the Library.

Chris Daniels, who has worked in the Library for the last four years, has resigned to pursue a career as a computer programmer with a Paris-based firm. Having started with us as a volunteer, he was subsequently hired to cover the extended hours and work on the computer system.

Opening Hours
Open Tuesday through Saturday 10 AM - 7 PM.
Closed Sundays, Mondays, and Holidays.

Exceptional Closing Hours
May: Saturday, May 25, at 5 PM; Wednesday, May 29, at 6 PM
June: Wednesday, June 5, at 5 PM; Tuesday, June 18, at 6 PM; Wednesday, June 19, at 6 PM
Closed Thursday, August 15