



EX LIBRIS

The Newsletter of the American Library in Paris December 2014

A literary couple for the 2015 Gala

The Library will welcome two distinguished American novelists, Michael Chabon and Ayelet Waldman, as the guests of honor and speakers at the 2015 Gala Dinner.

Chabon is the bestselling and critically-esteemed author of *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction, and of such varied works of fiction as *Wonder Boys*, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, *The Mysteries of Pittsburgh*, and most recently *Telegraph Avenue*.

Waldman is the author of *Love and Treasure*, *Red Hook Road* and a bestselling and controversial memoir, *Bad Mother: A Chronicle of Maternal Crimes, Minor Calamities and Occasional Moments of Grace*.

Chabon and Waldman and their four children live in Berkeley, California.

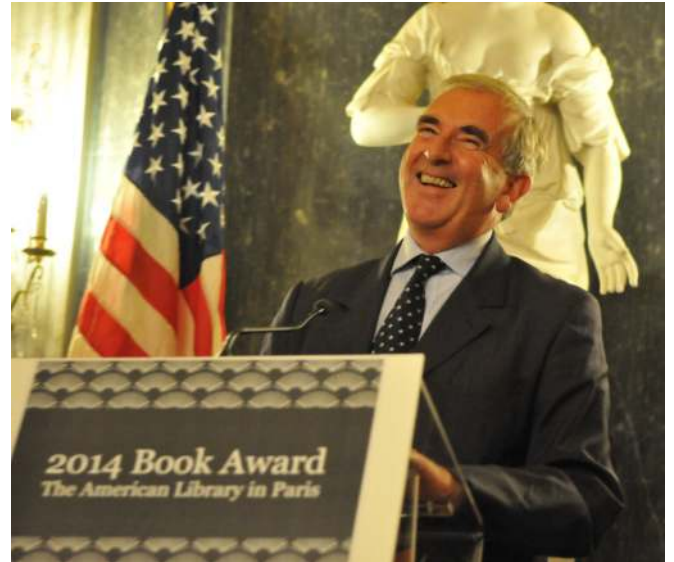
More than 200 people every year support the American Library by attending the Gala Dinner, our biggest fundraiser of the year. Members and non-members alike are invited to attend. Invitations will go out in mid-April, but mark your calendars now for the evening of **Tuesday 26 May 2015**. The dinner will take place, as last year, at the Automobile Club de France on Place de la Concorde.



Pour mémoire

If you are receiving this issue of *Ex Libris* by mail, it arrives with yet another chance to help the Library keep its doors open, its shelves stocked, its members served, its programs humming, its resources deep and wide.

Please remember that membership fees cover only a fraction — not quite one fourth — of what it costs to operate the Library. Please use the enclosed donation card and envelope, or go online to the Library website, and make a gift. Thank you in advance for your generosity.



THE LIBRARY BOOK AWARD

‘An Officer and a Spy’

The second annual American Library in Paris Book Award was presented on Monday 3 November 2014 to Robert Harris for his historical novel *An Officer and a Spy*.

Alice Kaplan, chairman of the 2014 jury, presented the award to Harris in the presence of 100 guests at a ceremony at the George C. Marshall Center in the Hôtel de Talleyrand. The other two jurors this year were Pierre Assouline and Sebastian Faulks.

The Book Award, made possible through the support of the Florence Gould Foundation, honors the most distinguished book of the year, in English, about France or the French-American encounter.

An Officer and a Spy, published by Random House in the United States and Hutchinson in the United Kingdom, recounts the conspiracy at the heart of the Dreyfus affair through the eyes of French army officer Georges Picquart, who relentlessly pursued his belief that Alfred Dreyfus was innocent.

"The dirty little secret of writing, as E.L. Doctorow once said, is that you have to find the voice," Harris said in his remarks. "The moment I realized that I should write this novel as Georges Picquart's memoir, I had the voice. And thereafter, history gave me all the characters and all the stories."

Harris said he was drawn to Picquart "because he seemed to me a truly interesting French hero. He could only be French. If the Dreyfus affair reflects discredit upon France, the fact and the behavior of Picquart reflects enormous credit."

More on the Book Award ceremony on page 4.

INSIDE THE LIBRARY



Authors at the Library: A special exhibit

More than seventy authors and other public figures make evening appearances at the Library every year, and we've been taking their pictures. In January, the Library presents a special exhibit of images of speakers captured in the stacks. Three examples, left to right above: religion scholar Reza Aslan (who spoke 23 March), memoirist Emily Lodge (19 February), and historian Simon Winchester (20 November 2013).



Ideal gift suggestion(s)

1. A membership to the American Library brings joy and enlightenment to a loved one throughout the year. Pick up a gift card at the front desk.
2. An all-cotton, American-made Library tote bag, is a useful gift that simultaneously declares your attachment to a beloved institution.
3. A stack of fine used books from our December book sale (Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 December).
4. Why not put the membership card and the books in the tote bag and tie a bow on the whole package?

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Please note that the Library will be closed from **Wednesday 24 December 2014** through **Thursday 1 January 2015** inclusive. Regular operating hours resume **Friday 2 January 2015**. Books may be returned 24/7.

Ever dreamed of speaking Mango?

As the Library expands its offerings of e-resources, members now have access to Mango Languages, a popular online teaching tool. You may choose from more than 60 conversation-based language courses, not to mention fun mini-courses (Pirate, Italian for Romance, Russian slang) or a chance to watch a specially-subtitled foreign-language film. Mango also offers English lessons in

17 languages, including French.

Mango's easy-to-follow lessons emphasize cultural sensitivity and the audio clips feature native speakers. Vocabulary and grammar are presented in real-life situations, with plenty of repetition to ensure retention and proper pronunciation.

As a member you may access Mango anywhere. From the Library's cat-

alog portal, click on the E-Sources menu and log in with your Library card number and password. Create a profile to track your progress.

If you need help accessing Mango, ask a staff member. We already speak English, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and Persian, but plan to learn a few more languages — with Mango.

Rose Finkenstaedt R.I.P.

The Library lost one of its beloved patrons last summer. Rose Lindsay Harvey Finkenstaedt died on 30 August in her 88th year. Educated at Vassar, the Sorbonne, and Columbia, a professor of comparative literature at Hofstra and an editor of *The Liberator*, Rose Finkenstaedt settled in Paris in 1967 and continued to write books of philosophy, novels, and translations of French cookbooks. She is already missed.

EX LIBRIS

The newsletter of the American Library in Paris is published four times a year, in March, June, September, and December.

Coming in January: Ta-Nehisi Coates

The Library welcomes Ta-Nehisi Coates at the beginning of January as the next Visiting Fellow.

The author of *The Beautiful Struggle: A Father, Two Sons, and an Unlikely Road to Manhood* and a national correspondent at *The Atlantic*, Coates has become one of the most influential writers and thinkers on race in America, and has commented recently on the Bill Cosby case and on the unrest in Ferguson, Missouri.

Coates will be speaking at the Library on **Tuesday 13 January** about Martin Luther King and the unfinished work of the civil rights movement. He will conduct a teen workshop on **Friday 16 January** about comic books, superheroes, and history, and on **Tuesday 3 February**, Coates will discuss his novel-in-progress about a black Chicagoan who moves to Paris.



Photo by Liz Lynch

As a Visiting Fellow, Coates will be active in the life of the Library and available for informal conversation as well.



A month of Alex Danchev

Biographer and scholar Alex Danchev spent November at the Library as a Visiting Fellow.

He led an evening program on the subject of his biography-in-progress, René Magritte, which follows works on Georges Braque and Paul Cézanne. Shifting from art to international affairs, his academic speciality, Danchev joined a panel discussion about global terrorism. He led an informal staff tutorial and gamely worked on his own research wherever he could find a spot at the Library. He and his wife, Dee, were present at many Library occasions and outings.

Alex returns to his faculty position at the University of St Andrews with the Library's thanks for his presence and engagement. The de Groot Foundation makes the Visiting Fellowship possible.

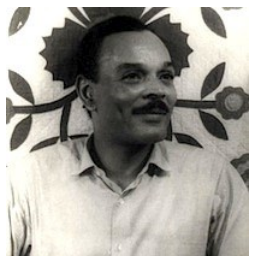
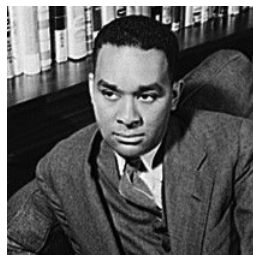
'Brothers in Exile'

To mark Black History Month, the Library explores an intriguing triptych of literary giants (and Paris exiles) of the mid-twentieth century—Richard Wright, James Baldwin, and Chester Himes.

The three are the subjects of a play by Paris author Jake Lamar, *Brothers in Exile*.

An exhibit about the three writers will be on display in the Library reading room from **3 February to 12 April 2015**.

Jake Lamar and exhibit curator Naida Culshaw will discuss these images at a vernissage on **Tuesday 17 February** at 19h30.



Malcolm X in the stacks

The lower level of the American Library was chosen as the setting for a scene in an upcoming documentary film entitled *Malcolm X, aux noms de l'identité noire*. A crew from France Ô shot a sequence depicting Malcolm X in a library during his years in prison in the late 1940s. The documentary will air on France Ô in February 2015. Watch *e-Libris* for the alert!



Greg Frite plays Malcolm X.

BOOK AWARD



AT THE BOOK AWARD

Guests at the Book Award ceremony heard the chairman of the jury, **Alice Kaplan** (top), read the citation for *An Officer and a Spy*. At a reception following, **Diane Johnson** (above), chairman of the Library Writers Council, speaks with **Simone Gallo**, the Library collections manager, with author **Laurel Zuckerman** in the background. At a private dinner after the ceremony (below), film director **Roman Polanski** — who inspired **Robert Harris** to write the book and will make a feature film about it — talks to **Ed Turner**, who leads a Library book group on whistleblowers that read *An Officer and a Spy* this fall.

More photographs and the jury's citations for the six shortlisted books may be found on the Library website. The advertisement at right was published in the 21 November issue of *The New York Review of Books*. Photographs by Krystal Kenney.



The American Library in Paris

ESTABLISHED 1920

The American Library in Paris Book Award 2014

was presented on 3 November 2014 to

An Officer and A Spy

By **Robert Harris**

Random House

The \$5,000 award, for the best book of the year in English about France or the French-American encounter, was created in 2012 with a generous gift to The American Library in Paris from the Florence Gould Foundation. The jury every year is drawn from the membership of the Library's Writers Council — this year, Alice Kaplan, Pierre Assouline, and Sebastian Faulks.

Other books on the 2014 shortlist are:

How to Ruin a Queen: Marie Antoinette, the Stolen Diamonds and the Scandal That Shook the French Throne, by Jonathan Beckman (Da Capo Press)

The Embrace of Unreason: France 1914-1940, by Frederick Brown (Knopf)

Brave Genius: A Scientist, a Philosopher, and Their Daring Adventures from the French Resistance to the Nobel Prize, by Sean B. Carroll (Crown)

Citizen Emperor: Napoleon in Power 1799-1815, by Philip Dwyer (Yale University Press)

Lovers at the Chameleon Club, Paris 1932, by Francine Prose (HarperCollins)

Nominations for the 2015 American Library in Paris Book Award are now open to books published since July 1, 2014 or scheduled for publication before June 30, 2015. For more information, please visit the Library website.

The American Library in Paris Visiting Fellowships

The American Library in Paris is pleased to announce its 2014-2015 Visiting Fellows:

Alex Danchev of the University of St Andrews, at work on a biography of Magritte.

Ta-Nehisi Coates of the Atlantic Monthly, at work on a novel set in Paris.

Susan Hiner of Vassar College, at work on a book about 19th century French fashion, *Behind the Seams*.

The Visiting Fellowship is designed for authors at work on French or French-American topics.

The Visiting Fellowship, made possible by a generous gift from The de Groot Foundation, provides a \$5,000 stipend to cover travel and accommodations in Paris for a month while the fellow is in residence. The Visiting Fellow speaks at the Library, leads workshops, engages in the life of the Library community, and uses the resources and connections of the Library to deepen his or her execution of a manuscript.

The Library is entertaining applications for 2016 and beyond. For more information, please visit the Library website.

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The man who built the Library

The American Library is at a watershed in its institutional life. When Simone Gallo retires at the end of this year, he will have served the Library for nearly half of its existence. It is not an exaggeration to say that he almost single-handedly built the modern collection of the Library, now 120,000 volumes strong, the largest of its kind on the continent.

Gallo was 33 years old when he came to work at the Library 44 years ago. Initially he was put in charge of handling book and magazine orders and cataloguing for five branch libraries then attached to this one (in Montpellier, Nancy, Toulouse, Grenoble, and Nantes). Very soon he was given more responsibilities, and essentially has overseen the American Library collections department for the past forty years, surviving seven directors.

As the spelling of his first name might suggest, Simone Gallo was born near Turin, and sent to be a seminarian with the Order of the Salesians of Don Bosco when he was nine years old. As a teenager he was sent as a missionary to Brazil, where though his academic record was excellent, he ultimately chose not to pursue the priesthood.

Such were his abilities, however, that he had been put in charge of the seminary library. Remaining in Brazil and earning his library science degree, he went on to work at the library at the University of Brasilia, the new capital, and to teach there.

In 1968 he was awarded a Ford Foundation grant for a master's program at Catholic University in Washington, where he spent the year with his new wife, Fernanda, another Brazilian librarian. By now, he recalls, he felt himself Brazilian and spoke Portuguese more easily than Italian. (He speaks at least five languages now, and reads twice as many.)

In 1969, Fernanda was posted to UNESCO in Paris for what was supposed to be two or three years. Simone went back to school in Paris to work on a master's degree in linguistics, but, he says, "I lost faith in the



Simone Gallo in his natural habitat.

theories." It was about then that he saw a newspaper advertisement for a part-time job at The American Library in Paris.

To say that Simone Gallo is irreplaceable would be an understatement. A performance evaluation by director Clifford De Roode in 1980 describes his work habits thusly: "excellent, works with an almost frightening intensity, punctual, meticulous, exacting." This has not changed.

The Library uses a sophisticated computerized card catalog, but Simone's brain is just as capacious and often quicker. Every time I get a bright idea about a book the Library should order, Simone almost always placed the order last week, the fruit of his close reading of *The New York Review of Books*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, *The London Review of Books*, and who knows what else. Impossible as it may seem, Simone usually has read the books.

In addition to cataloguing and purchasing and weeding and the million details of managing a vast collection, as well as advising Library users about their research needs, Simone

also has overseen the retrieval (usually in an SUV piloted by his friend Arthur Marchet) and evaluation of donated books to the Library – more than 40,000 a year! Only a few are added to the collection, and most go up for sale, but every one of them has been eyeballed by Simone Gallo.

Simone Gallo will also be irreplaceable as the institutional memory of the Library; as the early-morning go-between with our cleaning team; as the one who knows every nook and cranny in our quirky property, not just all the books within it; and as someone versatile and agile enough to chase stray pigeons back out the Library windows. As he considers them a waste of time and declines to attend them, staff meetings are the only events in our future life as a Library team that will remain unchanged with his retirement.

In any event, we won't have much chance to miss him, because Simone Gallo has expressed his wish to continue to volunteer his wisdom and service in the years to come. As we honor his extraordinary service, we are delighted he will remain in our midst.

Charles Trueheart, Director

Meet the intern

The Library's current children's and teen's services intern, Matilda Rossetti, recently graduated from the University of St Andrews with a degree in literature. She has worked in two research libraries but wanted to explore a different setting before deciding on whether to study library science in graduate school. She was attracted to The American Library in Paris for its diverse cultural mix.

After two months at the Library, she now recognizes many faces and appreciates the sense of community here. Of course, putting books in the hands of children and teens is a favorite part of her job. She feels that her storytelling skills have grown during her time here and having to entertain a group of 3-5 year olds is always an exciting challenge. She's also enjoyed



learning more about kids' literature and finds it fascinating to see which books circulate the most.

The internship position that brought Matilda to the Library is made possible by the generous support of an anonymous donor. Past visitors filling this position include Rebecca O'Neil and Brianna McClusky, and this January the Library will welcome Jay Kelley.

Halloween was a scream!

This year the Library welcomed more than 1,000 people throughout the day of our annual Halloween Extravaganza.

Performers the Improprofessionals, Charlotte Chiew and Amanda Ford put together great shows for our two parties, one for younger and one for older kids.

Library staff members and volunteers plan the Extravaganza beginning during the summer months. It takes a big team to make such an event happen. Thanks to everyone who helped make this year's Halloween events such an extravagant success!



Staff creatures Celeste Rhoads (Max), Abigail Altman (Thing 1) and Eric Hengensbaugh (Thing 2).

TEEN EVENTS AT A GLANCE

This is just a small selection of our events for young adults. Check the Library's website and monthly flyers for complete and up-to-date information.

Bad Art Night

Friday 12 December 19h00-21h00

Master Shot Film Club

(meeting)

Saturday 13 December 17h00-18h30

Teen Writing Group

(meeting)

Saturday 20 December 17h00-18h30

A History of Comics

with Ta-Nehisi Coates

Friday 16 January 19h00-21h00

Master Shot Film Club

(meeting)

Saturday 17 January 17h00-18h30

Teen Writing Group

(meeting)

Saturday 24 January 17h00-18h30

Master Shot Film Club

(meeting)

Saturday 14 February 17h00-18h30

Teen Author Smash

Saturday 25 April 17h00-18h30

Save the date for our biggest teen event of the year, where you'll be able to meet and chat with lots of young adult authors, including Amy Plum, Morgan Matson, Tom Pollock, Amy Tintera, Bree Despain, and many, many more!

A friendly reminder from Celeste Rhoads, head of children's and teen services: Sign-up is required for all Teen Nights and clubs. Please send an email to Celeste to reserve a spot: rhoads@americanlibraryinparis.org

CHILDREN (ages 1-12)

KIDS EVENTS AT A GLANCE

This is just a small selection of our events for children. Check the Library's website and monthly flyers for complete and up-to-date information.

Language Comes to Life (with Paris Spelling Bee)

Saturday 6 December 12h00-13h30
For ages 8-12

Registration required. Send an email to rhoads@americanlibraryinparis.org to reserve a spot.

Winter Wonderland

Sunday 7 December 15h00-18h30

Winter events for children of all ages!

Pizza and Movie Night

Saturday 10 January 19h30-21h30

Join the Paris Spelling Bee team for a movie and an introduction to spelling bees.

Registration required.

We Love Valentine's Day

Saturday 14 February 15h00-16h30

For ages 5+

Celebrate Valentine's Day in the Children's Library with some great stories and fun games and then make your own handmade cards.

ENGLISH TUTORING

with Patrice Morley

Thursdays 16h30-18h00

The Library is testing a new service for our members! Educator Patrice Morley will be offering tutoring in English in the Library on Thursday afternoons. Stop by to practice your English, or bring in your English homework! This activity is open to children and teens of all ages, and RSVP is required:

rhoads@americanlibraryinparis.org

Winter Wonderland

Sunday 7 December 15h00-18h30

The Library's annual Winter Wonderland event will be held on **Sunday 7 December**, and we've planned a few surprises for those who will be in attendance. Children of all ages and their families are invited to attend for stories, crafts, snacks, and refreshments as well as performances by our special guests, Valerie Beatson and Matt Black. After Matt's rockin' performance we'll be treated to a visit from a frosty friend (Olaf from *Frozen!*) and guests will have a chance to have their portraits taken. Our staff and volunteers come together each year to bring a bit of snow and sparkle to Paris in December. We hope you'll come celebrate with us.

The Paris Spelling Bee is back!

Registration for the Paris Spelling Bee will open on 1 December to all English-speaking students who are in CM1-6ème (4th-6th grades). First-come, first served. Space is limited to 90 applicants.

The Paris Spelling Bee (PSB) is modeled after American spelling bees and is organized by Gifted in France in collaboration with The American Library in Paris.

Registration deadline - Tuesday January 13

Visit the official Paris France Spelling Bee blog more information about the upcoming bee and to download a copy of the registration form: parisfrancespellingbee.wordpress.com.

YAFF is back too!

The Library is pleased to host the 2015 edition of the Young Adult Fiction Festival, a Paris-wide competition for the best creative writing in town. The deadline for applications is **April 1** — no fooling. Check our website.

Reading aloud for the very young

Ages 1-3: Mother Goose Lap-Sit

Lap-sits will be held on 4 and 18 December, 8 and 22 January, 5 and 19 February. There are two sessions on each of the above dates: from either **10h30-11h00** or from **17h00-17h30**.

Sign-up is required, and each child must be accompanied by an adult lap!

Ages 3-5: Wednesday Story Hour

Stop by for our weekly interactive Story Hour each Wednesday from **10h30-11h30** and **14h30-15h30**.

No reservation required!

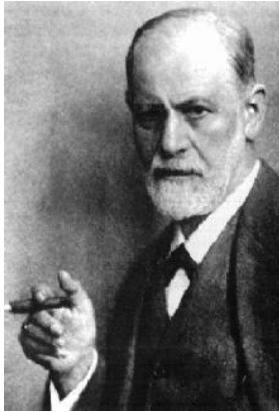
Unless otherwise stated, all programs are free for library members and €10 for non-members. Children attending Library programs must have their own membership card or be covered by a family membership. Please contact Celeste Rhoads for more information about our children's programs: rhoads@americanlibraryinparis.org.

CALENDAR

Wednesday 10 December 19h30

Sheila Kohler's 'Dreaming for Freud'

The author of *Cracks* and *Becoming Jane Eyre* presents her latest novel, *Dreaming for Freud*, a fictionalized account inspired by Sigmund Freud's *Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*. The Library's 2013 Gala speaker, Joyce Carol Oates, praised it as a "slyly subversive, subtle and sensuous revisionist interpretation of Sigmund Freud and his iconic Dora."



Tuesday 16 December 19h30

Artisanal sweets ★

Laurent Palanque, the owner-pâtissier of Le Petit Duc on avenue Rapp, shares his know-how and love of French *douceurs*. Join us for a taste of his delectable delights and an evening of discussing sweets.



Tuesday 6 January 19h30

Mr. Twain goes to Washington

The career of Samuel Clemens as a newspaper correspondent in the U.S. capital is much less well known than his work as a novelist. Author John Muller reveals how this period formed the iconic writer's later work.

Wednesday 7 January 19h30

Ethnicity and urban policing

In his book *Enforcing Order: An Ethnography of Urban Policing*, French anthropologist Didier Fassin examines how law enforcement in France and elsewhere interacts with populations facing discrimination. Analyzing the 2005 riots in the Paris suburbs, he explores the daily aspects of policing, public security, and injustice. A French expert working in the U.S., Fassin has perspectives on these issues and the respective policies in both nations.

Tuesday 13 January 19h30

Ta-Nehisi Coates: The question of race and reparations ★

Visiting Fellow Ta-Nehisi Coates (see page 3), in the first of several Library events, expands on his June 2014 *Atlantic* magazine article *The Case for Reparations*, exploring not just slavery, but the injustices against black people in housing and employment that followed, and the still-unfinished work of the civil rights movement.

Wednesday 14 January 19h30 ★

'When Paris Went Dark'

Ronald Rosbottom, a French and European studies professor at Amherst College, discusses his latest book, a dense recounting of life in Paris under German Occupation. Rosbottom explores the quotidian and what that meant for Parisians and Germans alike.

Long-listed for the National Book Award for non-fiction, *When Paris Went Dark* was praised by 2011 Library Gala speaker Scott Turow as "a rich work of history, a brilliant recounting of how hope can still flourish in the rituals of daily life."



Coming in winter

A panel of authors who write about **Paris**, a Nicolas Nabokov biography, '**How to Ruin a Queen**', an **agent and author** in conversation, Teri Agins and Dana Thomas on **fashion, desserts galore**, and much more.

SAVE THE DATE: Word for Word performances of two Alice Munro stories, "The Office" and "Dolly," will take place on 5 and 6 May.

Evenings with Authors and other weeknight programs at the American Library are open to the public. No reservations are necessary. A donation of €10 (students €5) is requested at events marked with a ★

The American Library in Paris

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americanlibraryinparis.org

