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The American Library in Paris

ESTABLISHED 1920

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In this message

- [On the Library's Mission](#)
- [Gala 2022 Speaker Announced](#)
- [March Programs for Adults](#)
- [Kids' and Teens' News](#)
- [Visiting Fellows in the News](#)
- [Library Lore: The Mystery of Jeanette Ettlinger](#)
- [How Can You Help the Library?](#)

In the event that this *e-Libris* is cut short by your email service, please click the link at the bottom of the email to see the newsletter in its entirety.



On the Library's Mission

Dear friend of the Library,

Our day-to-day work at the American Library consists of improving access to our [collections](#), creating [cultural programs](#) that will entice and edify participants of all ages, and providing a platform for writers and thinkers, both [established](#) and [up-and-coming](#).

But since our founding over a century ago, the Library has also served a more intangible mission, one that runs through and undergirds every program and service that we offer. It was a mission boldly stated by our founding community, which was comprised of individual supporters, partner civic institutions, politicians, ambassadors, and educators. That mission was to promote peace. They believed that our institution, in its modest and pragmatic way, would sow understanding and fellow feeling among diverse people.

In the words of the first President of the Board, Charles Seeger, in 1925:

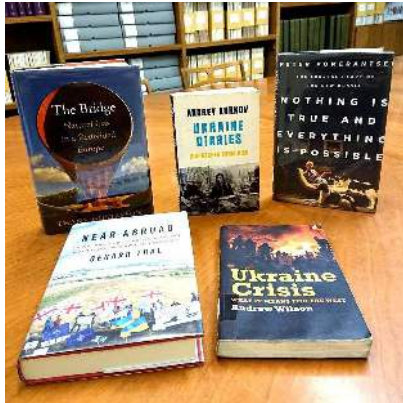
"International education being a fundamental requisite for any serious effort toward international

peace, it follows that the international library by its mere existence and its daily service is unconsciously working toward that high end.”

The world has changed in countless ways since Seeger wrote those words. But the Library, like many other international cultural institutions, still works in pursuit of peace and as a humble living memorial to our shared history. Remembering that mission and our history is part of our daily work.

Sincerely,

Audrey Chapuis
Library Director



As the Library reaffirms its pursuit of international peace through knowledge and dialogue, we invite you to explore our collection to deepen your understanding of the social, environmental, and political issues that affect us all.

For more context on the war in Ukraine, visit our Members' Lounge for our latest book display, which features works on Ukrainian, Russian, and Soviet history, Russian oil and gas, Putin, amongst others. All displayed books are available for checkout.

2022 Gala Speaker: Ann Patchett

We are pleased to announce that we will be commemorating the Library's **102nd anniversary** at our Annual Gala with honoree **Ann Patchett** on **19 May** at the Automobile Club de France.

Ann Patchett is the author of eight novels and four books of nonfiction. She is the recipient of the PEN/Faulkner Award, England's Women's Prize, the Booksense Book of the Year, and has been a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Pulitzer Prize. Her work has been translated into more than thirty languages. She was named one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World by *Time* magazine. In 2011, she opened Parnassus Books in Nashville. Her latest book, a collection of essays, *These Precious Days*, was published in November 2021.



As many of you know, the Library is a nonprofit organization. When you support our appeals for charitable donations and fundraising events, you make everything that we do possible.

For more information about the Gala, to purchase tickets, or to make a donation, click below:

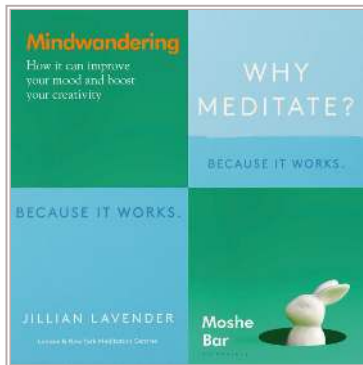
[2022 Gala](#)

March Programs for Adults

Evenings with an Author events are sponsored by GRoW @ Annenberg

Due to the inherent uncertainties of these pandemic times, upcoming programs may be canceled, rescheduled, or may take place virtually. Once you have RSVPed to an event, you will be informed of any changes via email.

Evenings with an Author are free and open to the public, unless otherwise noted. You must RSVP to attend our programs, either in person or via Zoom.



[Meditation and the Wandering Mind](#) [with Jillian Lavender and Moshe Bar](#)

Online Event

Tuesday 1 March at 19h30 CET

The challenges of the past two years have pushed many to seek new methods for managing anxiety and achieving focus. Learning to observe the wanderings of one's mind is a difficult task, and one which often feels shrouded in mystery. Yet, as Jillian Lavender argues in her new book, it is not an impossible one, and can even be easy with the right instruction. The aim of *Why Meditate? Because it Works* is to demystify meditation, and provide beginners with a practical and clear guide to its benefits. Lavender will be in conversation with cognitive neuroscientist Moshe Bar, who has written on the technique of "mind wandering."

This program is presented in partnership with the [Abdul Hameed Shoman Public Library](#) and the [US Embassy](#) in Amman, Jordan.

[RSVP to attend on Zoom](#)



[Architecture for the Future](#) [with Mollie Claypool and Jack Self](#)

Online Event

Wednesday 2 March at 19h30 CET

As we look to the future, how might architecture and design help to bring about a brighter one? Mollie Claypool is an architectural theorist, designer, educator, and practitioner. She asks how we might employ automation to create more equitable frameworks for design production. Jack Self is an architect, curator, and writer who works in domestic design and housing, the history of communitarian life, alternative modes of finance and ownership, and new environmental standards. Together, they will discuss the tools available within the field that can support society-wide change.

[RSVP to attend on Zoom](#)



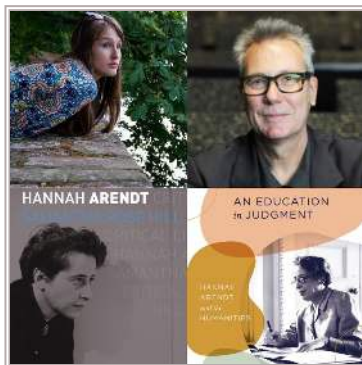
[Education of Hand and Heart with Satish Kumar](#)

Online Event

Tuesday 8 March at 19h30 CET

Co-founded by activist and educator Satish Kumar in 1990, Schumacher College is a school for ecological studies, offering ecology-centered Master's programs, short courses, and horticultural classes. Arguing that the current mode of education, developed at the dawn of the Industrial Age, is out-of-date, the College's founders offer a pedagogical approach which confronts the climate crisis by treating nature itself as a teacher. Kumar will be speaking about the past, present, and future of ecology-centered learning and teaching, in conversation with Programs Manager Alice McCrum.

[RSVP to attend on Zoom](#)

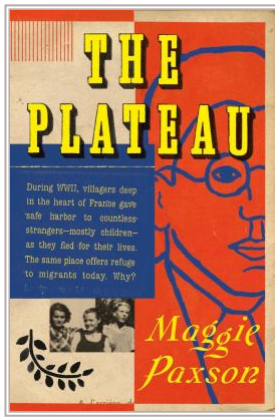


[Hannah Arendt Revisited with Samantha Rose Hill and D.N. Rodowick](#)

Hybrid Event: In person at the Library and on Zoom
Wednesday 9 March at 19h30 CET

A part of the University of Chicago Press's Critical Lives book series, author and researcher Samantha Rose Hill's *Hannah Arendt* complicates the mythological status of the eponymous historian (and sometimes philosopher). Rose Hill presents us with a nuanced picture of a woman who rejected any classification of herself or her ideas, and whose perspective on tragedy and violence was made all the more astute by a love for life and for the world. Rose Hill will be in conversation with University of Chicago professor D.N. Rodowick, who argues in his newest work, *An Education in Judgment: Hannah Arendt and the Humanities*, that Arendt's philosophy of judgment could reorient the humanities toward a practice of free engagement.

[RSVP to attend in person or on Zoom](#)



[How to Be Good](#)
[with Maggie Paxson](#)

Hybrid Event: In person at the Library and on Zoom
Tuesday 15 March at 19h30 CET

Winner of the 2020 American Library in Paris Book Award, Maggie Paxson's *The Plateau* is motivated by a simple question: "how to be good?" To find an answer, Paxson, a trained anthropologist, traveled to the Plateau Vivarais-Lignon in southern France. During World War II, the area was known for taking in hundreds of strangers (children and adults) fleeing Nazi persecution. Today, the region houses asylum-seekers as they wait for the outcomes of their cases. From following the thread of her own distant relative, who was murdered by Nazis for sheltering children, to speaking with present-day refugees, Paxson's pilgrimage adopts as its stakes the state of her own soul. Rather than a clinical study of the human, the result is a moving story of humanity.

[RSVP to attend in person or on Zoom](#)



[The War Epic Revisited](#)
[with Maaza Mengiste](#)

Online Event


Wednesday 16 March at 20h00 CET

Please note the special start time of this event.


The Shadow King, novelist and essayist Maaza Mengiste's newest release, takes place in 1935 Ethiopia as Mussolini prepares to invade. An account of an orphaned woman who transforms into a warrior, this novel defies the conventions of the war narrative. There is no sense of triumph, but rather deep and unending horror. Violence is not glorified, but is described in damning and measured detail. Perhaps most importantly, women are not merely spoils of war or mourners, but fighters. Mengiste brings the forgotten figures of wartime to life with contained and rhythmic prose, working (as the title suggests) in the shadow of a historical event which devastated a nation.

This program is presented in partnership with the [Abdul Hameed Shoman Public Library](#) and the [US Embassy](#) in Amman, Jordan.

[RSVP to attend on Zoom](#)

 Past programs are on YouTube, including *Universalisme* with Mame-Fatou Niang; *How to Play La Parisienne* with Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu & Elaine Sciolino; *American Runaway* with Audrey Edwards & Ellen Hervé Wright; *We Are Bridges* with Cassandra Lane & Malika Harding; and *Hood Feminism* with Mikki Kendall & Kierstan Kaushal-Carter.

 Listen to our podcast, *Evenings with an Author*, available wherever you get your podcasts.

 Visit our Facebook page for information about upcoming events and Evenings with an Author sponsored by GRoW @ Annenberg.



GRoW@
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Evenings with an Author 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, our members, and those who attend programs.

Kids' and Teens' News

Events for children and teens continue in person, in small groups, or as hybrid events. Registration is required to attend any program, and you must be a Library member to attend children's events. To find out what's coming up next, check our [calendar](#) and register early!



The **Young Authors Fiction Festival deadline, 1 April at 22h00**, is fast approaching! For those ages 5–18 who are planning to enter, **watch our video with writing tips** from members of the YAFF Committee. Young writers ages 8–12 who are interested in bringing the characters in their stories to life can attend our [Creating Characters](#) workshop on Saturday 5 March. Those who would like help editing their stories can attend an [Editing and Revising](#) workshop on Sunday 20 March.

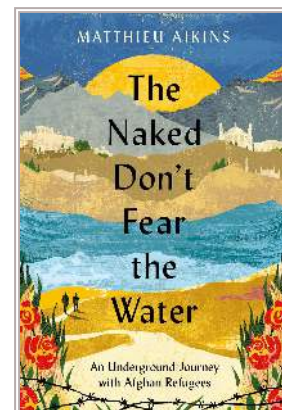
Check out the [YAFF page](#) on the Library's website for information on submitting and FAQs about the festival. Happy writing!



On 11 February, Children's and Teens' Services Intern Pallas-Amenah Morgan (above) led a **Slam Poetry Event** for one of our Teen Nights. Participants spent the evening exploring the myriad ways poetry has inspired movements for change, from the Harlem Renaissance in the United States to *Negritude* in France. Read more about the slam poetry we explored during the event on the [Library's blog](#). Find out about upcoming workshops and Teen Nights on the Library's [programs calendar](#).

Visiting Fellows in the News

The Library's **2020–21 Visiting Fellow, Matthieu Aikins**, is a journalist who has covered Afghanistan for many years. In Aikins's *New York Times* Guest Opinion piece, "[We've Never Been Smuggled Before.](#)" published on 14 February 2022, Aikins writes about the most recent wave of refugees fleeing Afghanistan, spurred by the Taliban's late 2021 takeover of the country. Quoting the Library's **fall 2021 Visiting Fellow, Dina Nayeri**, he delves into the complicated international bureaucracies faced by asylum seekers, who after long and dangerous border crossings in the hands of smugglers, risk having their resettlement applications denied if their stories of danger and violence in their home countries aren't deemed "compelling" enough.



On [Wednesday 6 April](#), Aikins will join us at the Library to discuss his latest book. In *The Naked Don't Fear the Water: An Underground Journey With Afghan Refugees*, the author recounts how his friend and translator Omar is denied a Special Immigrant Visa for the US. When Omar decides to flee Afghanistan as a refugee in 2016, Aikins leaves his own passport behind and goes with him.

We are currently accepting applications for our **Visiting Fellowship program** for fall 2022 and spring 2023. The application deadline is 1 April 2022.

We invite you to share this opportunity with writers and documentary filmmakers in your community. Please visit our [Visiting Fellowship webpage](#) for more information.

The American Library in Paris's Visiting Fellowship is made possible through the generous support of The de Groot Foundation.

Library Lore: The Mystery of Jeanette Ettlinger

When you think of the American Library in Paris, what comes to mind? Our collection of books and magazines? Our programs for children, teens, and adults? Our study spaces and e-resources? But what about our institutional archives?

Throughout our rich 102-year history, we've carefully amassed scores of archival boxes filled with photographs, letters, reports, announcements, and other ephemera that reveal details of the brave librarians who kept the Library open through two world wars and witnessed technological shifts, spectacular galas, renovations, relocations, and many other remarkable events, both dire and joyous, mundane and extraordinary, in the Library's history.

Assistant Director and Head of Collections Abigail Altman is also our resident archivist. Over her many years with the Library, she has led a team which combs through the archives—both our own and those held elsewhere—to gather facts and piece together not only the Library's historical record, but also the life stories of our constituents.

One of the Library's most fascinating eras is that of the Second World War. Our loyal staff worked through danger, hunger, deprivation, and injury, believing that the solace provided by literature, information, and community was worth risking their lives for.

And one of the most gripping mysteries of that period is that of 1930s serials (periodicals) librarian Jeanette Ettliger. Altman and her team recently unearthed proof that this Jewish librarian from Chicago survived the Occupation. We were thrilled to share this evidence with author Janet Skeslien Charles, whose 2020 best-selling novel *The Paris Library* features fictionalized versions of our real-life cast of characters. [Skeslien Charles's Opinion essay in the *Chicago Tribune*](#) recounts Jeanette's perilous true story.

Tracking a century of historical leads and hunting down the truth behind tantalizing clues in the archives is some of our most rewarding behind-the-scenes work, and we always look forward to sharing our latest finds.



How Can You Help the American Library?



As an independent, non-profit institution, we rely on the support and generosity of our community. How can you help the American Library in Paris throughout the year? Renew your Library membership, make a donation online, become a volunteer, and tell your friends about the Library.

RENEW

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The American Library in Paris is an independent, non-profit institution that receives no regular government funding. Your generosity is essential in keeping the Library vibrant and creative.

All contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

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