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# The American Library in Paris

ESTABLISHED 1920

*e-Libris* 26 April 2022

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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.



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Contributors: Abigail Altman, Alice McCrum, Kirsty McCulloch Reid, Pallas-Amenah Morgan, and Celeste Rhoads

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## Library Lore: Designer Elsa Schiaparelli

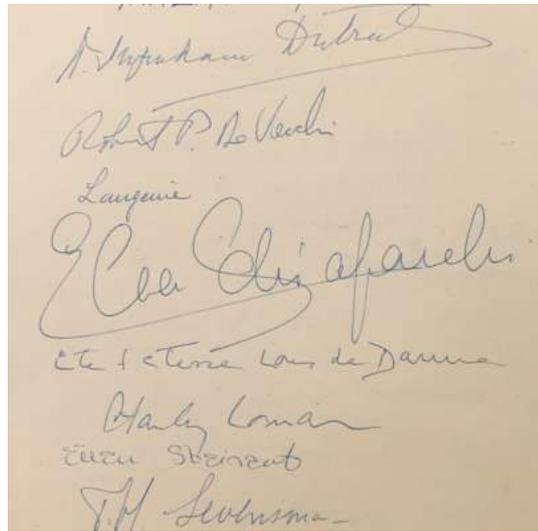
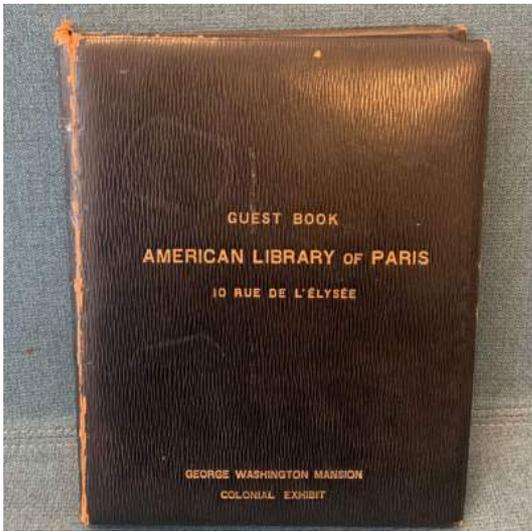


Take a close look at the woman in this ad for Shocking de Schiaparelli perfume, featuring an illustration by Marcel Vertès, from the 1 April 1943 issue of American *Vogue*. What has caught her eye?

Elsa Schiaparelli was known for her eccentric, and sometimes surrealist fashion and fragrance collections. She even coined the name Shocking Pink for the bright color she used frequently in her designs and ad campaigns. Italian by birth and later a naturalized French citizen, she launched her design house in Paris in 1927, instigating a bitter rivalry with Coco Chanel. She continued working through the start of WWII and the Occupation, only leaving for New York in 1942. In her autobiography (*Shocking Life*, J.M Dent & Sons, 1954), Schiaparelli stated that she was under pressure to leave because of her Italian heritage. Based on review of her FBI file by biographer Meryle Secrest (*Elsa Schiaparelli: A Biography*, Knopf, 2014), it's very likely she was a spy for the Vichy regime, though she was never charged. Secrest shared her research in 2015 at an *Evenings with an Author* event.

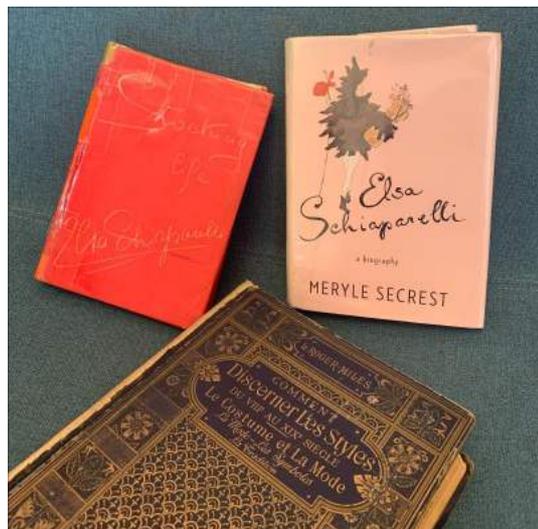
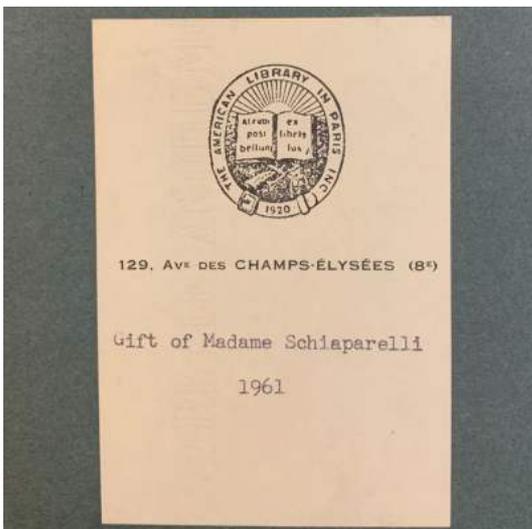
Schiaparelli stayed in New York through the end of the war, and, heavily in debt, closed her business in 1954. We know that she returned to Paris by the end of the 1950s, as she attended at least two American Library events, a benefit in 1958 (see the captioned black and white photo) and signed the guestbook at a 1960 event, with flourish. She also gave the Library an antique French costume design book in 1961, *Comment discerner les styles du XIIIe au XIXe siècle*, by Roger Milès. This book resides in the Library's Special Collection.





If you'd like to see items from the Library's Institutional Archives, Special Collection, or Fashion Periodical Archives, including *American Vogue* from 1943 to today, you can make an [archives appointment](#) on our website. Appointments are free for Library members.

Both the autobiography *Shocking Life* and the biography *Elsa Schiaparelli* are in the Library's collection and available for checkout.



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## Press Room



Read about writer Diane Johnson's visit to the Library on 30 March in Janet Hulstrand's article for the website *Bonjour Paris*:

["Evenings with an Author: Diane Johnson and Alan Riding at the American Library in Paris."](#)

Library Director Audrey Chapuis is profiled in the May issue of *Transfuge*, a leading French cultural magazine. Read "Texas, Paris," by Damien Aubel, when it appears on newsstands at the end of this week. The magazine is available for purchase now on the [Transfuge website](#).



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## 2022 Read-a-thon for Kids and Teens



**Read-a-thon**  
**1 May–7 May**  
**Ages 0–18**

The American Library in Paris and Message Paris are co-organizing a Read-a-thon, to encourage vacation reading and to raise funds for the Library. From Sunday 1 May to Saturday 7 May, participants are encouraged to read as much as possible and to collect donations based on the number of minutes that they read. Readers who turn in a completed Read-a-thon pack and at least one donation will be entered into a prize drawing. A Read-a-thon celebration event will be held at the Library on Saturday 14 May, during which we'll announce the top readers.

[SIGN UP TO READ](#)

[SPONSOR A READER](#)



See the Library's Instagram feed to see reading recommendations from staff and volunteers.

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## Programs for Adults

*Evenings with an Author*, sponsored by GRoW @ Annenberg

*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.



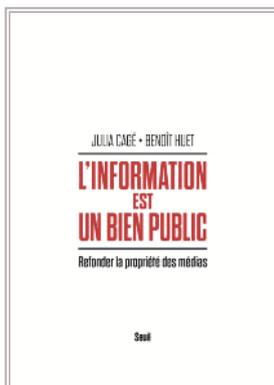
**TONIGHT**

**The French Election, Analyzed**

**Hybrid Event: In person at the Library; Live on Zoom  
Tuesday 26 April at 19h30 CEST**

The **Overseas Press Club of America** (OPC) and the American Library in Paris convene to discuss the outcome of the 2022 French presidential election. Broadly seen as a litmus test for the rising tide of populism across Europe, the results of this election may determine the future of the European Union and its international vision. At stake is the identity of the Fifth Republic: Will the French people align themselves with Macron's image of France as the center of European partnership, or with the nationalist picture of a once-strong France in decline? What will happen to immigration, secularism, security, and social cohesion in France in the election's wake?

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



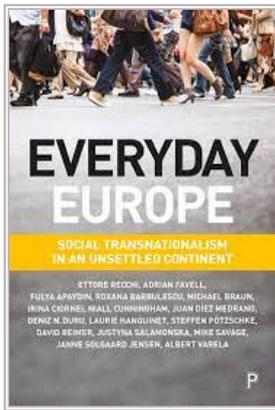
**TOMORROW**

**News as a Public Good  
with Julia Cagé**

**Hybrid Event: In person at the Library; Live on Zoom  
Wednesday 27 April at 19h30 CEST**

We face a crisis of faith in the media. From fake news to online misinformation campaigns, the knowledge economy arrives at a pivotal moment. In her work *L'Information est un bien public* (2021), Sciences Po economist **Julia Cagé** addresses this broken relationship between the media and the public, and offers a radical, structural solution. Arguing for a change in tax rules on the basis of the media's role as a public good, Cagé offers a stabilized and decentralized solution for an industry constantly in flux. At stake is the free press, which is to say, democracy itself.

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



**Critical Conversations Meeting 2 of 3**  
**Free Movement in the EU: A Success Story?**

**In person at the Library**

**Thursday 28 April at 19h00 CEST**

This series is limited to Library members.

For the second session of the spring 2022 *Critical Conversations* series with **Ettore Recchi**, we will turn our discussion of migration toward a very particular phenomenon: the European Union. The freedom to move and settle across twenty-seven different sovereign states is a singular feat of the EU, and one which comes with its own set of difficulties and advantages. How was this degree of freedom of movement achieved? What does it mean to be a European citizen? What could the model of ‘Europeanization’ tell us about the future of human mobility?

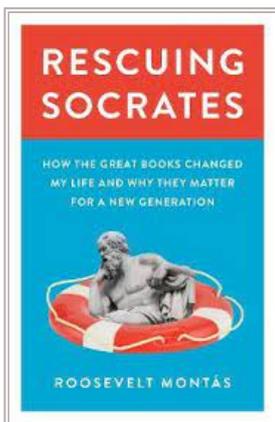
Advance registration and payment (price includes all three sessions) is required:

Regular rate: 50€ per participant

Reduced rate: 25€ (exclusively for students/seniors/unemployed)

Please email Alice McCrum, Programs Manager,  
mccrum@americanlibraryinparis.org with any questions.

[RSVP to attend in person](#)



**Entre Nous: The Future of the Humanities**  
**with Roosevelt Montás**  
**and Andrew Delbanco**

**Online Event: Live on Zoom**

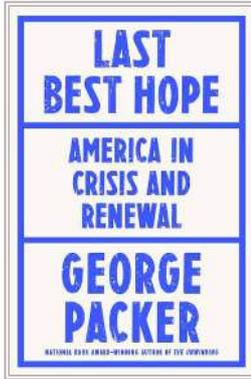
**Friday 29 April at 19h30 CEST**

As we enter 2022, the humanities have a problem: what to do with ‘the canon’, which is hard to define and has been criticized for its exclusivity. In his newest work *Rescuing Socrates*, Columbia University Professor **Roosevelt Montás** draws from his own experience as a Dominican-born, low-income undergraduate at Columbia to argue that the humanities must not relinquish its Great Books.

Joining Montás is Professor **Andrew Delbanco** who, in his work with the Teagle Foundation, aims to strengthen liberal arts education by increasing its accessibility. In conversation, the two will consider the role of the humanities today: the challenges it faces, the ways it needs to change, and what it offers in the contemporary age.

The *Entre Nous* programming series is presented in partnership with [Columbia Global Centers | Paris](#) and the [Institute for Ideas and Imagination](#).

[RSVP to attend on Zoom](#)



### Last Best Hope

with George Packer and Thomas Chatterton Williams

Hybrid Event: In person at the Library; Live on Zoom

Tuesday 3 May at 19h30 CEST

Library members attend free.

For nonmembers: 5€ to attend on Zoom and 10€ to attend in person.

If there is one thing all Americans can agree on, it is that something is wrong in current-day America. This is the premise of journalist **George Packer**'s newest release, *Last Best Hope*. Observing the series of politically charged events which struck America in 2020—the pandemic, the racial reckoning, the election and its aftermath—Packer seeks to offer a diagnosis. Adopting a truly democratic stance, he stresses that no American is exempt from responsibility for what the country has become, and that all Americans are called to collaborate on what it can be. Packer will be in conversation with journalist **Thomas Chatterton Williams**.

RSVP to attend in person or on Zoom



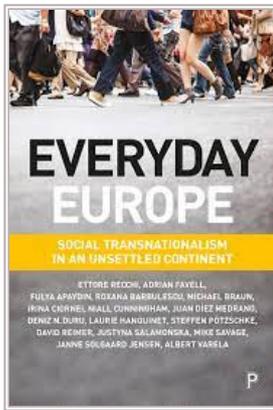
### Panel: Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

Online Event: Live on Zoom

Wednesday 4 May at 19h30 CEST

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has shocked the globe, with images of brutality against civilians and stories of Ukrainian resistance broadcast by major US news outlets. What will be the global consequences of this war? What will it mean for NATO, and for Europe? How might this crisis end? Three eminent journalists will discuss the political history that preceded the invasion, the multiple forces at play in mitigating the crisis, and the possible directions the conflict might be taking. **Robin Wright** (the *New Yorker*), **Steven Erlanger** (the *New York Times*) and **Serge Schmemmann** (the *New York Times*) will tune in virtually.

RSVP to attend on Zoom



### [Critical Conversations Meeting 3 of 3](#) [A World Without Borders?](#)

**In person at the Library**

**Thursday 5 May at 19h00 CEST**

This series is limited to Library members.

For the third and final session of this *Critical Conversations* series, we will investigate the possibility of a world without borders. This conversation will consider in equal parts the increasing quantity of obstacles preventing migration and the political and economic realities of global free movement. With readings on realistic utopias and videos offering differing perspectives on the future of borders, we will confront both the allures and drawbacks of such a vision. Can we imagine a world with open borders? What would be the economic, social, and cultural impact of such an endeavor?

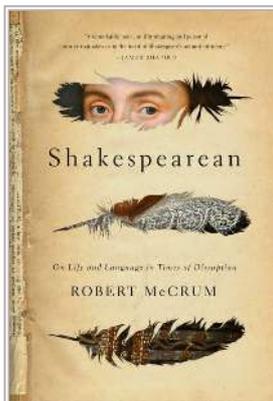
Advance registration and payment (price includes all three sessions) is required:

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Reduced rate: 25€ (exclusively for students/seniors/unemployed)

Please email Alice McCrum, Programs Manager, [mccrum@americanlibraryinparis.org](mailto:mccrum@americanlibraryinparis.org) with any questions.

[RSVP to attend in person](#)



### [Robert McCrum on Shakespearean](#)

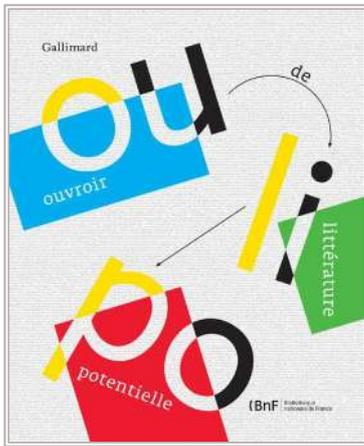
**Hybrid Event: In person at the Library; Live on Zoom**

**Tuesday 10 May at 19h30 CEST**

Describing reading Shakespeare while recovering from a life-altering stroke, author and editor **Robert McCrum** writes in his newest release *Shakespearean: On Life and Language in Times of Disruption* that “during convalescence, the *Complete Works* became my book of life.” Written in the contemporary age of chaos and crisis, McCrum’s project is to demonstrate the relevance of the Shakespearean corpus to a convalescent world. What can reading Shakespeare teach us about being mortals, living through uncertainties with limited time? The book argues both for the humanity permeating the Shakespearean world, and for the process of reading, rereading, rediscovering, and reinterpreting Shakespeare as a source of solace and creativity.

Copies of *Shakespearean* will be for sale after the event, thanks to the [Red Wheelbarrow Bookstore](#).

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

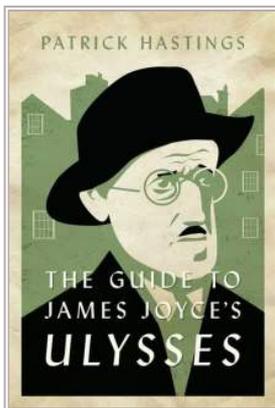


### [OuLiPo and Urbanism](#) [with Daniel Levin Becker](#)

**Online Event: Live on Zoom**  
**Wednesday 11 May at 19h30 CEST**

The OuLiPo (Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle) group is known for its experimental literature, and for its work inventing playful new literary styles. In a recent report published in [Arcade](#), a "digital salon" from Stanford University, urbanists and OuLiPo members described their work bringing OuLiPo to urban policy. They hoped to find new ways to describe sustainable (and unsustainable) cities through imagination and mathematical modeling. Giving policy experts and scholars the space to dream new and unexpected cities, this experiment brings the stakes of creative urbanism into focus. Join OuLiPo member and report author **Daniel Levin Becker** as he considers new terrains upon which alternative cities could be built.

[RSVP to attend on Zoom](#)



### [The Guide to James Joyce's Ulysses](#) [with Patrick Hastings](#)

**Hybrid Event: In person at the Library; Live on Zoom**  
**Thursday 12 May at 19h30 CEST**

In his new release, *The Guide to James Joyce's Ulysses*, author and educator **Patrick Hastings** makes *Ulysses* accessible without condescending to the reader or compromising the intellect and humor of the work. Rather than dictating how to interpret the novel, Hastings provides the reader with the tools for constructing their own interpretations: relating historical context, explaining the myriad allusions and Joycean vocabulary, and even producing detailed maps of each episode. With his enthusiasm and rigor, Hastings has made the challenge of reading literature's most daunting book surmountable.

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

-  Past programs are on YouTube, including Eduardo Kohn on How Forests Think; Helen Lewis & Christia Mercer on Alternative Narratives; and Julia Frey & Beverly Held on Édouard Vuillard.
-  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**  
**ANNENBERG**

*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.

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## 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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