



Palazzo Contarini Polignac

Week-end Musical et Littéraire
15 - 16 décembre 2017, Venise



*En hommage à Winnaretta Singer
Princesse Edmond de Polignac*

1865 - 1943

Les Amis de Winnaretta Singer

L'association « Les Amis de Winnaretta Singer » a été créée en 2015 à Paris par Henri-François de Breteuil et Daniel Popesco, avec le concours de la famille de la Princesse Edmond de Polignac.

L'association « Les Amis de Winnaretta Singer » s'inscrit dans la continuité de son héritage moral, artistique et intellectuel. L'association souhaite rappeler l'action importante de Winnaretta Singer pour la science, la littérature, les arts, la culture en général et la philanthropie. Son objet est de faire connaître et de faire vivre cet héritage par tous les moyens, spécifiquement dans les domaines suivants : musique, arts graphiques, littérature, architecture, y compris à travers des démarches d'innovations et de recherches, dans l'esprit qui est celui de Winnaretta Singer.

Le temps fort de ces manifestations culturelles est le week-end musical annuel au palais Contarini Polignac qui a lieu en novembre.

La fonction du salon est de réunir gens du monde, artistes, écrivains. Chacun d'eux a ses habitués, ses règles, ses passions, si bien montrés par Balzac que Proust le pastiche dans la page qui ouvre la description du salon Lemaire. Il cite aussi le salon de S.A.I. la princesse Mathilde et le salon de la princesse Edmond de Polignac.

Je signale enfin qu'après de nombreux échanges avec l'administration fiscale, notre ténacité a porté ses fruits : notre association est désormais habilitée depuis le 1^{er} août 2017 à émettre des reçus fiscaux pour les dons et cotisations versés par les membres. Ces dons et cotisations peuvent être déduits de l'impôt sur le revenu à hauteur de 66 % et de l'ISF à hauteur de 75 %. Je tiens à remercier tous les membres de notre association ; leur soutien généreux à notre action est essentiel.

Henri-François de Breteuil

Président de l'association « Les Amis de Winnaretta Singer »

Les Amis de Vinteuil

Les Amis de Vinteuil (www.amisdevinteuil.fr) sont une association loi 1901 d'intérêt général, qui, autour de l'œuvre, la vie et la personnalité de Marcel Proust, construit des événements culturels, des actions pédagogiques, qui imagine et enregistre des disques, coédite des livres. Ces réalisations reposent toujours sur un socle musical comme le nom de Vinteuil, le compositeur de *A la recherche du temps perdu*, le laisse deviner. Parmi les réalisations marquantes des Amis de Vinteuil depuis la création de l'association en 2009, citons notamment :

- les Journées Musicales Marcel Proust, festival devenu référence internationale. Elles ont lieu tous les deux ans à Cabourg, les années paires. La quatrième édition, sur le thème « Proust et la peinture » se déroulera les 5, 6 et 7 octobre 2018.
- le livre-disque Marcel Proust une vie en musique (toujours disponible en version numérotée avec suppléments numérotés et signés) avec des articles de Pierre Boulez, Raphaël Enthoven, Luc Fraisse, Anne Queffélec, Didier Sandre..., des pièces musicales interprétées par le Trio George Sand, la chanteuse Juliette...
- le CD L'oreille de Proust qui a donné lieu à un spectacle labellisé « événement commémoratif de la première guerre mondiale » par le Ministère de la culture, avec une tournée aux Etats-Unis en 2017.
- des projets pédagogiques réalisés sur une année scolaire avec des collèges et lycées, le CRR et le CNSMD de Paris et des partenaires comme le Louvre (en 2017-2018). Sa réalisation fera l'objet d'une présentation spécifique lors des Journées Musicales Marcel Proust 2018.

Les Amis de Vinteuil... ce sont des centaines de personnes qui aiment et apprécient ce que nous faisons, plusieurs amis et bénévoles qui nous aident lors du festival, et un couple passionné, enthousiaste et complémentaire qui imagine puis met en œuvre des projets proustiens qui se veulent riches et originaux : la pianiste Anne-Lise Gastaldi, professeur au CNSMD et au CRR de Paris, cofondatrice du Trio George Sand, présidente des Amis de Vinteuil, a les idées artistiques et proustiennes, imagine des programmes musicaux tandis que Pierre Ivanoff, son époux, directeur de la société Even & Arts spécialisée dans l'évènementiel artistique, trésorier des Amis de Vinteuil, met en œuvre les idées et les projets, les fait connaître aux Proustiens, aux médias, et aux partenaires susceptibles d'être intéressés.

Luc Fraisse

Luc Fraisse est professeur de littérature française à l'université de Strasbourg, membre senior de l'Institut universitaire de France, et spécialiste de l'oeuvre de Proust à laquelle il a consacré une dizaine d'ouvrages et une centaine d'articles.

Il co-dirige la collection "Bibliothèque proustienne" aux Classiques Garnier et dirige la Revue d'études proustiennes ; il est correspondant de la Proust-Kolb Archive (Université de l'Illinois) et membre fondateur de la revue Marcel Proust aujourd'hui (Amsterdam). Ses deux premières monographies, *Le Processus de la création chez Marcel Proust* (Corti, 1988) et *L'oeuvre cathédrale - Proust et l'architecture médiévale* (Corti, 1990), ont été couronnées d'un grand prix par l'Académie française. Après Proust au miroir de sa correspondance (SEDES, 1996) ou Proust et le japonisme (Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 1997) et un recueil d'études sur Proust en devenir (French Forum, Baltimore, 2006), il a publié *La Petite musique du style - Proust et ses sources littéraires* (Classiques Garnier 2011, prix du Cercle littéraire proustien de Cabourg), et *L'Eclectisme philosophique de Marcel Proust* (PUPS, 2013 - Grand prix de la critique de l'Académie française). Il a commencé en 2013 une réédition des oeuvres complètes de Proust (t. V, La Prisonnière).

Luc Fraisse est Chevalier dans l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

Marie-Laure Garnier

Nommée Révélation Classique 2013, la soprano Marie-Laure Garnier débute son parcours artistique par la flûte traversière, le piano, l'orgue et les percussions en Guyane puis au CRR de Paris. C'est en 2009 qu'elle intègre le Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris pour étudier le chant lyrique avec Malcolm Walker. Elle étudie également auprès d'artistes de renom tels qu'Anne Le Bozec, Susan Manoff, Jeff Cohen, Stephan Genz, Claire Désert, Ami Flammer. Elle obtient son Diplôme d'Artiste Interprète en juin 2016 ainsi qu'un Master de Musique de Chambre avec mention et les félicitations du Jury.

Marie-Laure Garnier obtient le 2nd prix au Concours International de Chant de Mâcon en 2014, le 1^{er} prix du Concours de la Fondation Cziffra. Aux côtés de la pianiste Célia Oneto Bensaid avec qui elle forme le Duo Nitescence depuis 6 ans, elle remporte le prix de la mélodie au Concours International de Musique de Chambre Nadia et Lili Boulanger en octobre 2017.

Marie-Laure Garnier donne de nombreux récitals sur de prestigieuses scènes nationales et internationales (Théâtre des Champs Élysées, Philharmonie de Paris, Folle Journée de Nantes, Maison de la Radio, Théâtre du Bolchoï à Moscou, Maison de Schumann à Bonn ...).

Si elle a joué, en tant que soprano, des rôles hauts en couleurs à l'opéra (La Cantatrice dans Reigen de Boesmans, Tosca de Puccini), elle affectionne particulièrement le répertoire de musique de chambre pour raconter, incarner le mot, déployer une palette de couleurs. Elle apprécie énormément le répertoire de musique contemporaine et a créé notamment des oeuvres de Nicolas Bacri, Benoît Menut, Camille Pépin, Giacinto Scelsi, Fabien Touchard.

Parmi ses projets, on entendra Marie-Laure à l'Abbaye de La Prée en décembre prochain; en février 2018, elle incarnera le rôle de Gerhilde dans la Walkyrie de Wagner au Capitole de Toulouse.

Outre son amour pour la scène, Marie-Laure Garnier est très sensible à la transmission et au partage. Utiliser le chant comme un vecteur de lien social lui tient particulièrement à cœur et elle intervient dans des établissements scolaires en partenariat avec la Philharmonie de Paris. De plus, elle a fondé un chœur de Gospel avec lequel elle offre depuis sept ans des concerts caritatifs.

Clément Hervieu Léger

Formé au Conservatoire du X^e arrondissement de Paris dans la classe de Jean-Louis Bihoreau, Clément Hervieu-Léger alterne les rôles au théâtre, au cinéma et à la télévision et s'intéresse à la mise scène, en étant notamment le collaborateur de Patrice Chéreau sur sa mise en scène de Tristan et Isolde de Wagner à la Scala de Milan en 2007 après *Così Fan Tutte* de Mozart au Festival d'Aix-en-Provence en 2005. C'est cette même année qu'il rejoint la troupe de la Comédie-Française au sein de laquelle il joue sous la direction de Jean-Pierre Vincent (*Dom Juan* ou *le Festin de pierre* de Molière, *Ubu roi* d'Alfred Jarry), de Lilo Baur (*La Tête des autres* de Marcel Aymé, *Le Mariage de Gogol*), d'Anne-Laure Liégeois (*La Place Royale* de Corneille). Il est Xavier Lechat dans *Les affaires sont les affaires* d'Octave Mirbeau mises en scène par Marc Paquien et Oreste, fils d'Agamemnon dans *Andromaque* de Racine par Muriel Mayette-Holtz, rôle qu'il avait déjà interprété pour Nita Klein.

Il est dirigé par Denis Podalydès dans *Fantasio* de Musset, Pierre Pradinas dans *Le Mariage forcé* de Molière, interprète Valère dans *le Tartuffe* de Marcel Bozonnet et Acaste dans *Le Misanthrope* de Lukas Hemleb – avec qui il avait travaillé pour *Une visite inopportune* de Copi.

Il joue également sous les directions de Robert Wilson, Éric Génovèse, Andrzej Seweryn, Andrei Serban. Il retrouve au sein de la Comédie-Française Anne Delbée lors de sa mise en scène de *Tête d'Or* de Claudel, qui lui avait confié le rôle-titre d'Hernani de Victor Hugo.

En tant que metteur en scène, Clément Hervieu-Léger a dirigé les comédiens de la troupe en 2014 dans *Le Misanthrope* de Molière, en 2016 dans *Le Petit-Maître corrigé* Salle Richelieu après *La Critique de l'École des femmes* en 2011 au Studio-Théâtre. Outre la lecture d'*Esther* de Pierre Du Ryer, il crée dans le cadre des cartes blanches le solo *Une heure avec...* sur un texte de Vincent Delecroix. En 2016/2017 il était Acaste dans *Le Misanthrope*, Jeppo Liveretto dans *Lucrece Borgia* et Günther Von Essenbeck dans *Les Damnés*.

Professeur de théâtre à l'École de Danse de l'Opéra national de Paris, il signe en 2011, la dramaturgie du ballet *La Source* (créé en 1866) chorégraphié par Jean-Guillaume Bart. En 2016, il met en scène *Mithridate* de Mozart sous la direction musicale d'Emmanuelle Haïm au Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. En dehors de la Comédie-Française, Clément Hervieu-Léger a entre autres travaillé en tant qu'acteur aux côtés de Daniel Mesguich (Antoine et Cléopâtre), Jean-Pierre Hané (Britannicus), Bruno Bouché (Ce sont des choses qui arrivent), Brigitte Lefèvre et Daniel San Pedro (Les Cahiers de Nijinski) et tourné au cinéma avec Catherine Corsini (*La Répétition*), Guillaume Nicloux (*La Reine des connes*). En plus de sa collaboration en tant qu'assistant avec Patrice Chéreau, il tourne dans son film *Gabrielle* et joue dans *Rêve d'automne* de Jon Fosse, créé au musée du Louvre puis au Théâtre de la Ville. Il codirige avec Georges Banu un ouvrage qui lui est consacré, *J'y arriverai un jour*, aux éditions Actes Sud. Auteur de plusieurs articles sur Racine, Haendel ou Wagner, il signe la dramaturgie de Platée de Rameau pour la mise en scène de Mariame Clément à l'Opéra du Rhin, sous la direction musicale de Christophe Rousset avec les Talents Lyriques. Il met lui-même en scène l'opéra *La Didone* de Francesco Cavalli, avec William Christie à la direction musicale et Les Arts Florissants.

Citons *L'Épreuve* de Marivaux et *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* de Molière avec les musiciens des Arts Florissants parmi les pièces de théâtre qu'il monte avec la Compagnie des Petits Champs, qu'il a cofondée avec Daniel San Pedro à Beaumontel.

Il a parallèlement créé dans ce village de Normandie, l'Étable, établissement accueillant une diversité d'activités culturelles, des stages de théâtre et de danse, des expositions et des résidences d'artistes.

En 2014, il écrit sa première pièce, *Le Voyage en Uruguay*, présentée en avant-première au Festival de théâtre français de Princeton avant d'être créée, dans une mise en scène de Daniel San Pedro, au CNDC de Châteaueuillon. En 2016, il monte également *Impromptu 1663* d'après Molière au Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique.

Duo Sand : Virginie Buscaïl, Anne-Lise Gastaldi

Virginie Buscaïl et Anne-Lise Gastaldi sont, entre autres, deux membres du Trio George Sand que l'on retrouve à la Folle Journée de Nantes et dans la plupart des festivals français (La Chaise-Dieu, Montpellier, Besançon...) mais aussi au Festival international de Saint-Petersbourg, au Théâtre de la Fenice à Venise, à la Société de Musique Contemporaine du Québec..., qui a enregistré plusieurs disques mêlant pièces du grand répertoire et des découvertes comme les trios de Lili Boulanger en première mondiale, ou, le véritable trio de Ravel en parallèle de sa parution chez Barenreiter en 2010. Le dernier disque du Trio George Sand, consacré à Fanny Mendelssohn, est sorti fin 2016.

Virginie Buscaïl

Après des études au Conservatoire de Nice dans la classe de Daniel Lagarde, Virginie Buscaïl a obtenu ses premiers prix de violon et musique de chambre au CNSMD de Paris dans les classes d'Alain Moglia et Roland Pidoux puis suivi le cycle de perfectionnement et entré en virtuosité avec Jean-Pierre Wallez au Conservatoire de Genève. Elle est actuellement violon solo de l'Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio-France. En soliste, on la retrouve aussi bien dans la Chaconne de Bach dans la saison du musée du Louvre que dans la Sequenza VIII de Berio au théâtre de la Renaissance à Lyon.

En dehors du trio George Sand, elle s'est également produite au sein de formations constituées tel que l'ensemble Métamorphosis, et dans de nombreux festivals aux côtés d'Augustin Dumay, de Marielle Nordman, de Roland Pidoux, d'Anne Queffélec.

Virginie Buscaïl participe volontiers à des projets mêlant les arts : elle a enregistré avec le comédien Lambert Wilson et joué avec Christiane Legrand et avec de nombreux comédiens au sein du trio George Sand.

Entrée en 1996 à l'orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France sous la direction de Marek Janowski, elle a connu le directorat de Myung-Whun Chung et aujourd'hui celui de Mikko Franck. Cela lui a permis de se produire dans les plus grandes salles : Philharmonie de Berlin, Musikverein de Vienne, Suntory hall à Tokyo, Carnegie hall à New York ... Elle a travaillé sous la direction de grands chefs tels Pierre Boulez, Valeri Guerguiev, Armin Jordan, Gustavo Dudamel, Esa Pekka Salonen...

Elle enseigne au CRR de Paris et à l'Académie internationale d'été de Nice

Elle joue actuellement un violon de Domenico Montagnana de 1729.

Anne-Lise Gastaldi

Lauréate de concours internationaux dont le prestigieux ARD de Munich en musique de chambre, Anne-Lise Gastaldi forme, en dehors du Trio George Sand, un duo à quatre mains avec le pianiste David Saudubray. Leur programme L'oreille de Proust a notamment été choisi comme évènement commémoratif pour le centenaire de la première guerre et a donné lieu à plusieurs représentations en France et à une tournée aux Etats-Unis.

Anne-Lise Gastaldi aime imaginer et se produire et concevoir des spectacles et des disques qui marient les arts. Elle a ainsi enregistré avec le comédien Michaël Lonsdale et avec la chanteuse Juliette, s'est produite avec Benoît Poelvoorde et, récemment, avec Loïc Corbery, Anny Duperey, Marianne Denicourt et Didier Sandre. Lauréate du réputé programme "Villa Médicis Hors les Murs", elle a conçu le spectacle Escales Romaines qui raconte les séjours à la Villa Médicis de Berlioz, Gounod, Bizet, Massenet, Debussy, Dutilleux ... en Italie en tant que Prix de Rome : ce spectacle a fait l'objet d'un reportage télévisé sur LCI. Sa passion pour la littérature et Proust en particulier l'ont amené à monter, avec Pierre Ivanoff, les Journées Musicales Marcel Proust qui ont lieu à Cabourg.

Elle est aussi directrice artistique du festival ClassicaVal de Val d'Isère.

La discographie d'Anne-Lise Gastaldi comprend de nombreux titres récompensés dans Classica, Le Monde de la Musique, Diapason et Télérama.

Professeur de pédagogie au Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris, elle y enseigne également le piano aux côtés de Florent Boffard. Anne-Lise Gastaldi est aussi professeur de piano au Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Paris.

Elle est, avec Valérie Haluk, à l'origine de Piano Project, puis de Univers Parallèles, recueils de pièces pour piano écrites spécifiquement pour des élèves par de grands compositeurs de notre époque dont P. Boulez, P. Eötvös, M.Jarrell, G. Kurtag, B. Mantovani, W. Rihm... (Universal Edition). La création du premier a été saluée par France 2, France Culture et Le Monde. La création du second recueil a eu lieu en juin 2014 à la Cité de la musique à Paris avec le musée du Louvre comme partenaire principal. Anne-Lise Gastaldi est également directrice de collection aux Editions Billaudot.

Programme 15.12

16.12

Conférence

Palazzo Contarini Polignac
Vendredi 15 décembre 2017

8h30-10h45

Promenade sur les pas de **Marcel Proust**
avec lectures de **Camille Devernantes**

17h00 -21h30

Porte ouverte **Magazzino Gallery**

21h30

Conférence de **Luc Fraisse**
Proust vénitien, à la croisée de deux familles

Conférences & Concert lecture

Palazzo Contarini Polignac
Samedi 16 décembre 2017

8h30-10h45

Promenade sur les pas de **Marcel Proust**
avec lectures de **Camille Devernantes**

17h00

Salon de thé **Proust**

17h00 -21h30

Porte ouverte **Magazzino Gallery**

19h00

Conférence de **Caroline Weber**

21h30

Conférence de **Isabelle de Vendevre**

22h00

Concert lecture

De la Venise vécue à la Venise révélatrice

Gustav Mahler
Reynaldo Hahn
Reynaldo Hahn
W.A. Mozart
Reynaldo Hahn
G.F. Händel
Marcel Proust
Saint-Saëns

5^{ème} Symphonie - Adagietto, pour violon et piano

Journal

"La Barcheta" et "L'avertimento" (Venezia)

"Porgi, amor" (Le nozze di Figaro)

"Watteau" (Portraits de peintres)

"V'adoro, pupille, saette d'Amore" (Giulio Cesare)

A la recherche du temps perdu

Sonate pour piano et violon op.75

(Allegro agitato - Adagio / Allegretto moderato - Allegro molto)

Duo Sand : Virginie Buscail, violon,

Anne-Lise Gastaldi, piano

et la soprano Marie-Laure Garnier

(en partenariat avec le Centre International Nadia & Lili Boulanger).

Les lectures sont de Clément Hervieu-Léger de la Comédie-Française.

Isabelle de Vendevre

Isabelle de Vendevre est ancienne élève de l'École normale supérieure de la rue d'Ulm, agrégée d'anglais et docteur en littérature générale et comparée.

Elle est membre du Centre de Recherche sur les Relations entre Littérature, Philosophie et Morale, « République des savoirs » (USR 3608) et travaille en littérature comparée sur la satire, la naïveté, l'écopoétique et la zoopoétique.

Ses travaux portent sur Marcel Proust, Henry James, Joaquim Machado de Assis et João Guimarães Rosa.

Caroline Weber

Caroline Weber is Professor of French and Comparative Literature at Barnard College, Columbia University, where she specializes in the literature, history, and culture of the ancien régime, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution. Educated at Harvard and Yale Universities, she has also held faculty positions at the University of Pennsylvania and at Princeton University. She is the author of one edited volume, *Fragments of Revolution* (2002), and three books: *Terror and Its Discontents* (2003); *Queen of Fashion: What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution* (2006), an *LA Times* bestseller and *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year; and, most recently, *Proust's Duchess: How Three Celebrated Women Captured the Imagination of Fin-de-Siècle Paris*, which will be published by Alfred A. Knopf/Random House in May 2017. Her work has appeared in a variety of academic journals in the United States and Europe, as well as in such publications as the *New York Times*, the *Financial Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, *W* magazine, *New York magazine*, *Town and Country*, and *Vogue*. She spent nine years reviewing regularly for the *New York Times Book Review*.

Proust in Venice

Your invitation to give the inaugural annual Proust Lecture at Palazzo Contarini Polignac is a great honour. This is a cosmopolitan gathering, for the most part comprised of Frenchmen, at least half a dozen of whom I can immediately see are descended from people who were the inspiration for many of the characters in *À la recherche*. I stand before you painfully aware that I am an Englishman, and mindful of Proust's famous remark to Sydney Schiff following the publication of Charles Scott-Moncreiff's translation of *Du côté de chez Swann*: "I value my work too highly to allow an Englishman to demolish it". However, and it is a big however, there is rather more to this remark than meets the eye, and before we begin to explore Proust's connection with Venice, and with Winnaretta and Edmond de Polignac, the background bears relating.

Sydney Schiff was an English novelist and a good friend of Proust's. He was dismayed to learn that Gallimard had commissioned Scott-Moncreiff to undertake a translation, feeling that he alone of all English men of letters was best qualified for the job. He wrote to Proust, pointing out amongst other things that Scott-Moncreiff's chosen title for the oeuvre as a whole, *Remembrance of Things Past*, a quotation from Shakespeare's *Sonnet 30*, was wholly unsuitable. It failed, he said, to capture the double meaning of *perdu*, the sense of time wasted as well as of time past, and irretrievably lost.

Unfortunately, in the course of the letter, Schiff revealed some embarrassing schoolboy misconceptions about his own language, far worse than Scott-Moncreiff's imaginative recourse to Shakespeare, which I shall later touch on and celebrate. Among these were his suggestion that "Swann's Way", if you were to translate it back into French, really means *à la manière de Swann*: Swann's Way of doing things. Of course, it doesn't. *Swann's Way*, and *The Guermantes Way*, are two perfect translations, clearly conveying the two very different walks - "ways", routes, paths - that one can take in the fictional topography of Combray. Naturally Proust, ever a volatile soul and by now seriously ill, was dismayed, rather more by Schiff's misunderstandings than Scott-Moncreiff's choice of title. Anyway, to borrow further from Shakespeare, "All's Well that Ends Well": Proust and Scott-Moncreiff exchanged complimentary letters, and Schiff was eventually to become a good friend of Scott-Moncreiff's. The whole affair blew over quickly enough. When I think of it, I always recall Proust's excellent observation that, in any case, "Beautiful books are always written in a kind of foreign language", in other words, by a means of communication operating at an intuitive level way beyond the challenges we normally think of when we consider the task of translation. If this is true - and personally I think it is - then let the translator always remember that he is the servant of that language, and no other.

Turning to Venice, I would like to begin with a *divertissement*, a little-known story that would very likely have entertained Proust, had he been aware of it. It says much about the antics of the expatriate colony here in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and brings to light an unusual act of vandalism inflicted on the first edition of *À la recherche*. It should be noted that there are two palaces in Venice that bear or bore the name Contarini del Zaffo, Winnaretta's here in Dorsoduro, and another in Cannaregio, with a large and beautiful garden overlooking San Michele. If one had been invited to stay or dine at Winnaretta's, it would have been a grave mistake to have shown up at the other palace by accident, since it was by no means the haven of stimulating and creative *laissezfaire* one would encounter then or now here in Dorsoduro. The other Contarini del Zaffo was owned by an eccentric and extremely strait-laced American couple, Annie and John Humphreys Johnstone. So, if you were ever inclined to write a Proustian pastiche of life in Venice in the 1900s, you have two ready-made titles: *Du côté de chez Winnaretta*, and *Le Côté de Johnstone*. John Humphreys Johnstone was a painter of decidedly post-Biedermeier inclinations: gemütlich street scenes with decorative Venetian urchins, heavy interiors with silk-upholstered maiden aunts, the occasional tulip or kitten. Though a native New Yorker, he was a great Anglophile and a scion of what used to be called in England an old "court family", with a lineage tracing back to the Plantagenets and further. Annie, in startling contrast, was born Annie Lazarus, in Rhode Island. She was the younger sister of the poet Emma Lazarus, a notable forerunner of the Zionist movement and a hardworking champion of the rights and welfare of Jewish immigrants in America. Annie, to her family's surprise and dismay, converted from Judaism to Anglo-Catholicism, a rarefied sect that emphasizes the Catholic rather than the Protestant heritage of the Church of England. Like the more conservative branches of Judaism, Anglo-Catholicism places great emphasis on ritual, observance and outward moral propriety. Unluckily for some, the

combination of these two intense strains of piety turned Annie into the scourge of the expatriate colony. Following the death of Arianna Curtis, Annie had rapidly established herself as the queen bee of Venice. Expatriate social life soon became centred on the Contarini del Zaffo rather than the Palazzo Barbaro, where the Curtises had held court since the mid-1880s. None but the pure in heart were invited to Annie's or allowed to see the garden, with the occasional exception of visiting royalty. Homosexuals - Charlistes, as Proust amusingly called them, after Charlus - and unmarried couples were absolutely verboten. Moreover, Annie did not restrict moral censorship to her guests. Before sending her copy of *À la recherche* to her bookbinder, she tore out and tore up every page bearing the name of the baron de Charlus. The few who passed regularly through the eye of Annie's home-forged needle at Contarini del Zaffo included Canon Knollys, the benign but grave English Chaplain of Florence, and Sir Hubert Miller, an English baronet who outwardly seemed a fairly typical example of his kind - Eton, the Coldstream, the City. However he, like Annie, was a devout Anglo-Catholic. He had accumulated over a hundred gilded baroque carvings of angels, that he kept in his dining-room in Venice along with a collection of chasubles, dalmatics, copes and other edifying church objects. Eventually he brought all this paraphernalia back to England, where he presented it to his parish church in Froyle, Hampshire. Since Sir Hubert was Lord of the Manor of Froyle, this was not a gift the incumbent could easily refuse, and with the consensus of the Parish Council a full-time deputy sacristan was appointed to take care of it. Happily, the collection is still intact and the vestments still in use. In 1900 Marcel Proust travelled to Venice with his mother, an interlude that forms the basis of the Venetian episode in the third chapter of *Albertine disparue*: 'My mother had brought me for a few weeks to Venice and — as there may be beauty in the most precious as well as in the humblest things — I was receiving there impressions analogous to those which I had felt so often in the past at Combray, but transposed into a wholly different and far richer key.' The passage that shortly follows, a series of impressionistic comparisons of Combray and Venice, constitutes a masterclass in writing that anyone who feels the urge to write about Venice would do well to consider. Venice is a tremendously overwritten city, and for centuries there have been ever-oncoming tidal waves of largely unreadable prose that trot out all the deadeningly familiar themes: the labyrinthine alleys, the constantly-changing light, the sense of mystery and menace, the antics of Casanova, decadence and decay, torrid romance, love requited or unrequited, and so on ad nauseam. The Combray-Venice interlude is a gift to anyone who teaches creative writing, since it hammers home the important rule that if you're challenged with writing about a totally overdone topic, such as Venice, always try to come at it from a slightly improbable angle. Proust does just this, beginning with a deceptively simple meditation on shadows: "Like at Combray, the worthy folk of the Rue de l'Oiseau, so in this strange town also, the inhabitants did indeed emerge from houses drawn up in line, side by side, along the principal street, but the part played there by houses that cast a patch of shade before them was in Venice entrusted to palaces of porphyry and jasper, over the arched door of which the head of a bearded God (projecting from its alignment, like the knocker on a door at Combray) had the effect of darkening with its shadow, not the brownness of the soil but the splendid blue of the water. On the piazza, the shadow that would have been cast at Combray by the linen-drapers' awning and the barber's pole, turned into the tiny blue flowers scattered at its feet upon the desert of sunscorched tiles by the silhouette of a Renaissance façade, which is not to say that, when the sun was hot, we were not obliged, in Venice as at Combray, to pull down the blinds between ourselves and the Canal, but they hung behind the quatrefoils and foliage of Gothic windows." Those "tiny blue flowers". One can never forget them. The Combray-Venice comparisons are brief, but nonetheless very powerful. They fix in our minds how our first reactions to this city are not solely driven by the city itself, but by the very different surroundings in which most of us have grown up. Simple but effective. After this, Proust permits himself to plunge into the good old labyrinth along with the rest of us: "My gondola followed the course of the small canals. Like the mysterious hand of a Genie leading me through the maze of this oriental city, they seemed, as I advanced, to be carving a road for me through the heart of a crowded quarter which they clove asunder..." I should say at this point that if anyone here has not yet been in a gondola, they really should, since the experience will bring to life the wonderful observation that Proust makes as he expands further on the gondola ride: "We returned up the Grand Canal in our gondola, we watched the double line of palaces between which we passed reflect the light and angle of the sun upon their rosy surfaces, and alter with them, seeming not so much private habitations and historic buildings as a chain of marble cliffs at the foot of which people go out in the evening in a boat to watch the sunset. In this way, the mansions arranged along either bank of the canal made one think of objects of nature,

but of a nature which seemed to have created its works with a human imagination.": "...a chain of marble cliffs..." - I suggest that with the exception of some passages in Thomas Mann, there are few better descriptions hinting at the hidden, elemental qualities that energise this city. And when you are low in the water, defenceless in an engineless gondola, the buildings do indeed take on the immense, sometimes rather frightening, characteristics of a natural rock formation. One ceases to think of them as Gothic, Renaissance, Byzantine, Palladian. They become gigantic dominant forms, put here by some scarcely imaginable and wholly miraculous process. Of course I do not for a moment wish to suggest that the Combray-Venice comparisons are a mere trick, a clever writer's sleight of hand. There is more to it than that. What I very inadequately described as the necessity of coming at the familiar from an improbable or unexpected angle, was immaculately elaborated by Proust in the closing passages of *À la recherche*: "By art alone we are able to get outside ourselves, to know what another sees of this universe which for him is not ours, the landscapes of which would remain as unknown to us as those of the moon. Thanks to art, instead of seeing one world, our own, we see it multiplied and as many original artists as there are, so many worlds are at our disposal, differing more widely from each other than those which roll round the infinite and which, whether their name be Rembrandt or Vermeer, send us their unique rays many centuries after the hearth from which they emanate is extinguished. This labour of the artist to discover a means of apprehending beneath matter and experience, beneath words, something different from their appearance, is of an exactly contrary nature to the operation in which pride, passion, intelligence and habit are constantly engaged within us when we spend our lives without self-communion, accumulating as though to hide our true impressions, the terminology for practical ends which we falsely call life." "Spend our lives without self-communion..." that, I suggest, is the phrase worth retaining above all others from this passage, a signal warning to be heeded.

As they travelled to Venice in 1900, in an endearing fit of motherly zeal Mme Proust spent a large part of their train journey through Lombardy reading to her son: she read him the preface to Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice*, a work he was later to translate, with her encouragement and the help of Reynaldo Hahn's British cousin, Marie Nordlinger. When challenged on his qualifications for such a task, he said, "I do not claim to know English; I claim to know Ruskin." It was a bold claim, and it is interesting to observe how closely-attuned Proust demonstrably was to Ruskin's way of looking at the world. The common ground, I suggest, lay in a love of books. Proust wrote an introduction to his translation of Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*, to which he also supplied footnotes which read as a reaction to Ruskin's discourse. At a certain point Ruskin touches on the idea of friendship, saying that too often our choice of friends is restricted by circumstances. Proust remarks, in a footnote, that "the idea seems very beautiful in truth because we can feel the spiritual use to which Ruskin is about to put it..." - and sure enough, Ruskin then advances the idea that books might be seen as friends, a notion Proust then amplifies in his introduction: "In reading, friendship is restored immediately to its original purity. With books there is no forced sociability. If we pass the evening with those friends—books—it's because we really want to. When we leave them, we do so with regret and, when we have left them, there are none of those thoughts that spoil friendship: "What did they think of us?"—"Did we make a mistake and say something tactless?"—"Did they like us?"—nor is there the anxiety of being forgotten because of displacement by someone else. All such agitating thoughts expire as we enter the pure and calm friendship of reading." Ruskin finally unfolds his own credo, which fully harmonises with that of Proust: "A book is essentially not a talking thing, but a written thing; and written, not with a view of mere communication, but of permanence ... The author has something to say which he perceives to be true and useful, or helpfully beautiful ... this, the piece of true knowledge, or sight, which his share of sunshine and earth has permitted him to seize. He would fain set it down for ever; engrave it on rock, if he could; saying 'This is the best of me; for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved, and hated, like another; my life was as the vapour, and is not; but this I saw and knew: this if anything of mine, is worth your memory.'" "...helpfully beautiful...."; what a wonderful phrase. The whole heady experience of Proust's Venetian baptism was further intensified by the arrival of his lifelong friend and sometime lover, Reynaldo Hahn, who put Winnaretta's yacht piano to good use, giving a moonlit song recital in a gondola on the Grand Canal. Since he was not to compose his Venetian song cycle, *Venezia, 6 Chansons en dialecte vénitien*, until 1901, it seems likely Hahn would have sung his famous setting of Verlaine's poem, *L'Heure exquise*. We do not know for certain, but it is pleasing to recall Verlaine's words, given the moonlit setting and the presence of Proust:

Rêvons, c'est l'heure.
Un vaste et tendre
Apaisement
Semble descendre
Du firmament
Que l'astre irise...
C'est l'heure exquise.

Following her first visits to Venice in 1890 and 1891, this 1900 trip was Winnaretta's next, in the company of Edmond. She again rented the Casa Wolkoff, as she had done in 1891 when she spent the summer here with Gabriel Fauré and other friends. Her fellow travellers in 1900 included Marcel Proust and Reynaldo Hahn. During this visit, Edmond and Winnaretta were invited to dinner by Daniel and Arianna Curtis at the Palazzo Barbaro, which you can see on the other side of the Grand Canal. Edmond de Polignac, standing on the balcony, caught sight of the Palazzo Manzoni, as this palace was then known. "Ah! that is the place to live in," he exclaimed. "We must manage to get it one way or another!" Winnaretta acted briskly and decisively, as she tells us in her memoirs:

The next morning I went to see an agent, who told me that there would be no question of buying the Palazzo, which was inhabited by a rich South American who was living there very happily with a great friend. But the course of true love rarely runs smooth, and a few months later the same agent came to see me in Paris and revealed that as the result of a quarrel the South American was leaving Venice, and the sale of the Palazzo was not impossible. For more than forty years I spent several months each summer within the walls of the Palazzo Manzoni, which had become the Palazzo Polignac. Sadly Edmond did not live long enough to enjoy this tremendous gift to the full. He died in 1901, and as is well known, Winnaretta devoted much of the rest of her life, here and in Paris, to keeping his memory alive by acts of patronage, largely though not wholly in the realm of music. Edmond's magnificent funeral, at the Église de l'Annonciation in Paris in August 1901, is generally considered to be the model for Saint Loup's funeral in *À la recherche*. It is not within my scope to discuss that here, but we should certainly look at an illuminating article Proust wrote about Edmond in *Le Figaro* following his death. It is a superb piece and truly brings to life the fragile personality and charming presence of this gentle man, bringing us closer to an understanding of Winnaretta's profound and protective love for him. Knowing what we already know of Edmond, it is difficult to imagine a more acute character study than this: For those who recall how many of the prince de Polignac's ideas - not only in literature and art, but even in politics - were very advanced, more advanced even than those of the most advanced young minds, it is quite miraculous to think that he was the son of the reactionary minister under Charles X, who signed the famous Ordinances, and who was imprisoned in Ham in 1830. It was while he was in Ham that prince Edmond was born. Nature, which promotes continuity of blood and does not forecast individuals, had given him the slim figure and the fine energetic countenance of a military man and a courtier.

Little by little the spiritual flame that inhabited prince Edmond de Polignac sculpted his appearance to the shape of his mind. But his physiognomy had remained that of his lineage, anterior to his own individual essence. His figure and his face were like a disused keep that has been rebuilt as a library. I remember how, on that grievous day of his funeral in the church, the great black palls carried, in proud scarlet and within an enclosed coronet, a single letter P. His individuality had been effaced, he had returned to his family. He was no longer anything but a Polignac.

A wonderful insight: "a disused keep that has been rebuilt as a library". These remarks illuminate Edmond's delicate personality, rekindle the 'spiritual flame'. Here was a gentle, unworldly man, unfit to assume the feudal responsibilities of his ancestors, incapable of handling his financial affairs with the assurance, control and sense of entitlement an aristocrat is supposed to possess. One calls to mind his lonely childhood at Wildthurn, the château in Bavaria built by his exiled father: the unwelcome instruction in fencing, riding and shooting, the ridicule he endured from his hearty brothers. He took to staging his own plays in the château's theatre, and showed a growing interest in music and art. Some might uncharitably say that such a privileged child deserves comparatively little pity; but, unhappiness is unhappiness: Edmond's formative years were lonely and unhappy, and this is undoubtedly what brought him to penury and near breakdown in the years preceding his marriage to Winnaretta. As well as giving a valuable insight into Edmond's personality, the reflections in *Le Figaro* double as

a reproach to those - and there are many - who consider Proust to have been something of a snob, an elaborate and fawning chronicler of the upper class: he was not. True, he had what sometimes amounted to an obsession with title and lineage, but this was no more harmful a peccadillo than an interest in Gothic ornament or Gregorian plainchant. What he so often closely observed, clearly understood and eloquently described was the dreadful undertow that runs deep beneath the pages of the *Almanach de Gotha*: the poison that so often lurks dormant in blue blood, the paralysing effect it sometimes has on those in whose veins it flows. As to Winnaretta, she was moved by Proust's remarks. Unhappily, in a way, one of their final exchanges did not redound entirely to her credit. Prior to the publication of *À la recherche*, Proust wrote to Winnaretta asking if he might dedicate the work to Edmond. She refused, it is generally agreed because she feared this might draw unwelcome attention to the fact that he was a Charliste, and that there was precious little more to him than that. Proust wrote again, and again she refused. "That," she said, ruefully telling the story against herself, "is how I failed to have our name on the frontispiece of one of the greatest novels of the century."

I would like to close with a personal tribute to Charles Scott- Moncreiff, who is something of an old friend in the sense meant by Ruskin and Proust. He was a pupil at my old school, Winchester, where a reproduction of his portrait by Edward Stanley Mercer hung in one of our Modern Languages classrooms, to spur us on to greater things. It was hung near a large window overlooking Meads, a playing field planted with massive plane trees and enclosed by a medieval wall. Decades of sun had bleached a triangular section of the portrait on the lower right-hand side, but the sensitive face had lived in the shade and was still vivid, seeming to issue, as I later came to feel, some kind of friendly challenge. We were a group of precocious fourteen-year-olds who knew next to nothing but were very wily, always on the lookout for ways of diverting our French teacher from the matter in hand, which was at this point either French grammar or the life and work of Prosper Mérimée. Our teacher, Count Nicholas Sollohub, was a Russian aristocrat. He was an exotic character, very much a product of old Europe. A portly man in his sixties, he was always immaculately dressed - and I recall his lively, humorous eyes below a set of remarkably luxuriant and bristling eyebrows. Among other adventures in his colourful life he had, as a baby, been smuggled out of Russia in his mother's cello case. The Count, as we called him, was usually quite happy to be persuaded to embark on some voyage into his own past or to take a stroll into the anecdotal byways of belles lettres. One morning, in our daily bid for diversion, we focused on the portrait. "Please, sir! Who is the soldier, sir?" "Is he you when you were young, sir?" "Did you win all those medals yourself, sir?" And so on, in this facetious schoolboy vein - until someone hit on just the right question: "Please, sir! Was he a hero, sir?" At this, the Count brightened: "Yes, he was, in a way. Today we shall abandon our investigation of the *sobjonctif plus que parfait*, and I shall tell you all about him." And he did, which was the beginning of my intermittent but lifelong engagement with Proust, now happily renewed in the course of my work at this great house, Du Côté de chez Winnaretta.

I have to say I think it is nothing less than a disgrace that Charles Scott-Moncreiff's title, *Remembrance of Things Past*, has been abandoned in favour of *In Search of Lost Time*, an embarrassing vulgarity. It sounds like the translation a timid petty official might make, someone with a lifelong fear of offending some pedantic suburban schoolmaster who had extinguished whatever glimmer of imagination he might once have had. *Remembrance*, as well as being a beautiful word, is a big word. In the sense in which Shakespeare used it, and in which other of our great authors have used it, including Edmund Spenser, John Milton, Alexander Pope and Jane Austen, it fully encompasses the complex grandeur of the act of memory, whether voluntary or involuntary, that Marcel Proust sought to explore. And nowhere is the power of the word more resonant than in its current usage in English, the *Remembrance* of those who died in two world wars. Is that act of memory simply a routine process of flipping through a family photograph album and reminding oneself of relatives who served or were sacrificed in those conflicts? No, it is not: it is a complex process of researching and discovering the intricacies of the past, of making and keeping oneself open to hidden triggers and suggestions which, if we unearth them and submit to them, will illuminate the past and present in ways we hardly dared think possible. That is *Remembrance*. That is Proust. "In Search of", in English, evokes little more than a lost handbag, a mislaid library card, an accidentally deleted Excel spreadsheet of last year's electricity bills. It is a sorry betise. As we look to the future, let *Remembrance of Things Past* be our watchword.

Prince j'ai été ravi de "un pays où se fait
la guerre" que mon ami Halim qui l'a accompagné
l'autre soir à la Trompette lui avait chanté
et que j'ai réentendu par lui-même Remacle.

Marcel Proust
C'est d'une exquise couleur gothique.
La persistance du son (et ce un son la note
sur laquelle est ce dans-guerre) et une
trouvaille et ^{une} ~~une~~ ex-treme
Boulevard Mulashorbes

distinction à l'harmonie une couleur
moyenne très fidèle. C'est de la musique
d'une élégance princière et qui ne peut
pas dire de la musique de prince (au sens
malveillant du 14^e siècle) mais de la
musique de musicien rare, non d'un
musicien-noté, mais d'un noble musicien.
Mes respectueux hommages pour le Prince
et pour tous.

Lettre de Marcel Proust au Prince Edmond de Polignac - publiée
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