



# EX LIBRIS

The Newsletter of the American Library in Paris  
December 2011



**IN THE ARCHIVES.** A volunteer project at the American Library has unearthed rare and forgotten documents and photographs from the archives, including this one-of-a-kind shot of three key players from the Occupation years. Read more about them and the project on page 5

## What giving makes possible

By now everyone receiving or reading this newsletter should have received a copy of the fall appeal for contributions to the Library.

The need is as strong as ever, and the message is simple. Keeping the Library open, making its facilities and staff available to hundreds of people every day, staying current with the latest in books, magazines and electronic resources, providing an active reading and activity center for children and young adults, bringing Paris a series of unparalleled evening programs — all these cost much more than membership revenues provide. And they are made possible by people like you.

Please consider being a regular donor. Beyond the deeper satisfaction of giving, those who respond to our fundraising appeals receive occasional invitations to private Library events with distinguished authors, from time to time off-site — for example, in early February at the George C. Marshall Center on the Place de la Concorde.

For a copy of the fall appeal letter, guidance on how to make a donation on-line, or any other information, please contact Samantha Gardner at the Library. And thank you in advance for your essential support.

**Charles Trueheart**  
Director

## At the Gala: Sebastian Faulks

Sebastian Faulks, author of critically-admired and best-selling novels, including his French Trilogy, *Birdsong*, *Charlotte Gray*, and *The Girl at the Lion d'Or*, and a leading man of letters in his native Britain, will be the guest of honor at the annual Gala Dinner of the American Library in Paris on **Thursday 31 May 2012** at the Four Seasons Hotel George V.

Faulks recently wrote and hosted an acclaimed BBC television series about significant characters in British novels, "Faulks on Fiction," which was then published as a book of the same name.

Invitations to the gala, the Library's major annual fundraiser, will be sent in early April to all members, and all are welcome. To reserve tables in advance, or to learn more about gala sponsorships, please call Samantha Gardner at 01 53 59 13 10 or write her at [gardner@americanlibraryinparis.org](mailto:gardner@americanlibraryinparis.org)



# INSIDE THE LIBRARY

## *A cocktail in Manhattan, the Library on film*

The Library threw itself a coming-out party of sorts in New York in late October — a cocktail gathering to introduce ourselves to a new audience of library-lovers and Francophiles in the United States and to bring old friends of the American Library in Paris up to date on all that is happening here.

Nearly 140 guests of the Library's USA Foundation attended the party at the Park Avenue residence of **Lisa Woodward**, a member of the Library's Advisory Council. They were the first audience to see a new Library film made by Paris filmmaker **Virginie-Alvine Perrette**.

This 7-minute film showcases the Library through current and archival images and the testimony of those, young and old, who know and love the Library, including youth librarian **Celeste Rhoads**, author **Adam Gopnik** and former US



Ambassador to France **Felix Rohatyn**. The film will be shown at various Library events in the coming months before

becoming available on our website in the spring.

The cocktail guests also heard from **Marshall Wais**, president of the Library's state-side entity, the USA Foundation; from **Charles Trueheart**, director of the Library; from **Christopher Buckley**, the novelist and humorist who was the Library's 2010 gala speaker; and from **William Torchiana**, chairman of the Library board of trustees. Among the authors in attendance were 2009 gala speaker **Laurent de Brunhoff**, **Phyllis Rose**, **Lisa Immordino Vreeland**, **Ted Widmer**, **Lily Tuck**, **Cullen Murphy**, **John R. MacArthur**, **Beth Brombert**, and **Victor Brombert**.



The cocktail party, which will become a regular event on the Library's development calendar, was designed to spread the word about the Library to potential contacts and sources of support and to test interest in the creation of a US-based friends of the Library organization.

## Ties that bind books

As you will read on page 7, the Library is happy to be participating this year for the first time in the Letters on Literature program sponsored by the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress. Young people across the United States — and now, in our Library community — are encouraged to compose letters to authors, which are then judged for prizes (books!)

The link with the Center for the Book and its dynamic leader, **John Y. Cole**, comes through the good offices of former Library board member **Betty Turock**, who as past president of the American Library Association has been helping to strengthen ties between the American Library and American libraries.

## Please welcome



The Library's newest staff member is **Hau Yan Wan**, who joined the Library as a circulation assistant in November. Yan, who was born and raised in Hong Kong, worked most recently interviewing asylum candidates for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and now studies law in Paris.

### Ex Libris

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

## Counsel from councils

In addition to its board of trustees and USA Foundation directors, the Library benefits from an Advisory Council, which meets occasionally to give us their counsel and connections to the wider world. Chaired by Ambassador **James Lowenstein**, the council includes **Lisa Woodward**, **Betty Turock**, **Pierre-Louis Roederer**, **Jean Perrette**, **Ishtar Mejanes**, **Walter Wells**, and its newest member, **Sophie-Caroline de Margerie**.

Another council that advises the board and director is the Writer's Council, chaired by **Diane Johnson** and composed of **Philippe Labro**, **Mavis Gallant**, **Adam Gopnik**, **Laura Furman**, and **William Jay Smith**. At their first meeting this year, four members of the Writer's Council discussed plans for a Library literary prize and discussed the Library's literary programs and collections over an informal lunch.



Left to right: Furman, Labro, Johnson, and Smith.

# SPECIAL EVENTS

## ART ON VIEW



### **The Day in Its Color: Charles Cushman's Photographic Journey** Tuesday 13 December 2011 - Sunday 5 February 2012

Cushman showed a dying world in living color: the crowded rooming houses and sidewalks of the old inner cities, the small-town main streets, the one-lane country roads. This exhibition offers highlights drawn from the forthcoming book, *The Day in Its Color: Charles Cushman's Photographic Journey through a Vanishing America*, by historian Eric Sandweiss.

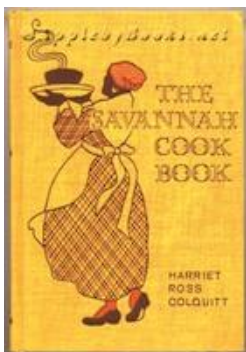
For its quantity, consistency, and breadth, we have no other collection of early color pictures like his. Come to the American Library in Paris and discover the story of an America that we have left behind, and of the man who devoted his life to revealing his day in its color.

*Special thanks to Eric Sandweiss, Carmony Associate Professor of History, Indiana University and Bradley D. Cook, Curator of Photographs, Office of University Archives & Records Management at Indiana University for making this exhibition possible. Select exhibit items have been donated by the John Baxter Collection.*

## **Following The Flavors of the African Diaspora**

**Tuesday 7 February 2012 - Sunday 4 March 2012**

Food is the most common way to approach the issue of identity. To a large extent what one eats can mean who one is, to which culture one belongs or even how one negotiates one's belongings. Through food, one can also reaffirm one's own culture.



Migrants often carried with them their taste memories, cooking techniques and the agricultural practices of the homeland. And while migrations can map the movements of ingredients, foodstuffs, or methods of preparation into new habitats unchanged, they also tell tales of adaptation, substitution, and indigenization.

In this exhibit, discover the flavors of the African Diaspora, from Africa to South and Central America, the Caribbean islands, and North America then consider how food has expressed and continues to express identity among groups with African ancestry throughout the world.

## **Book and discussion groups in February**

One of the Library's most popular programs will continue in the new year, beginning in February. Watch *e-Libris* for themes and dates of our book groups and other discussion groups.

Any member of The American Library in Paris may participate, and anyone who wishes to participate may join The American Library. There is no supplementary fee for the groups, which are led by volunteers with special skills and interests. For more information, please visit the website or contact Janet Skeslien Charles at 01 53 59 12 67 or [skesliencharles@americanlibraryinparis.org](mailto:skesliencharles@americanlibraryinparis.org).



## **The Paris Spelling Bee**

The fifth annual Paris Spelling Bee is set for **Sunday 25 March**. The bee is a community-wide enrichment event organized by Gifted in France in collaboration with the American Library in Paris. The event will be hosted at the American University of Paris.

The bee is open to children in CE2 through 4ème (3rd through 8th grade). Participants will be divided into two groups: Gazelles for CE2-CM2 and Cheetahs for 6ème- 4ème. Registration closes on Thursday 19 January 2012.

Please enroll by visiting the Paris Spelling Bee blog at: [parisfrancespelling-bee.wordpress.com](http://parisfrancespelling-bee.wordpress.com)

## **2012 Young Authors Fiction Festival**

*Young writers and their imaginations  
are invited!*

The American Library in Paris is proud to once again be the organizer of the Young Authors Fiction Festival in collaboration with the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). The Fiction Festival is open to all students ages 5 to 18 in the greater Paris area who write in English and is absolutely free of charge to enter. The deadline for submissions is midnight 1 April 2012.



To get the details and the submission guidelines, visit the American Library website - see Children or Young Adult program listings on the "Events and Programs" page: [www.americanlibraryinparis.org](http://www.americanlibraryinparis.org)

Questions? Contact the YAFF 2012 team at [yaff2012@gmail.com](mailto:yaff2012@gmail.com)

# BEHIND THE SCENES

## *Where do the books come from? Where do the books go?*

We're often asked these questions.

Every year the Library adds nearly 10,000 books and other items, such as DVDs, to the shelves. The selection, purchase, and development of our collection of more than 125,000 books is in the hands of our collections manager, Simone Gallo (pictured here), the senior member of the Library staff, and in the case of children's and young adult books, by Celeste Rhoads, who runs that department.

Approximately one third of the added books are purchased new from a major U.S. book wholesaler, Baker & Taylor, and in spot acquisitions from local booksellers and online suppliers. Another third or more are new books donated by Paris literary agencies and publishing houses that receive them from U.S. and U.K. publishers as candidates for French editions, or by authors and book reviewers or literary prize judges.

The rest of the additions to the collection are gifts to the Library from personal libraries with the understanding that only a fraction of them will be selected for cataloguing. Some of these books are new to the collection, or replacements for older or damaged editions. Some are reserved for the children's department as holiday gifts or contest prizes.

But the majority of these used-book donations (about 30,000 items a year!) are sold or given away, along with titles from the Library's collection. A continuous weeding process leads to the deletion of books that are damaged or out of date or show poor circulation history or prospects. About ten percent of our collection churns every year, as it does in all healthy public libraries.

Where do the books go?

Of the books that are leaving our shelves, the first buy-

ing opportunities for members are the monthly weekend book sales at the Library, an important stream of added revenue, and those books remain available for sale at the Library throughout the month.

At the end of the monthly cycle, some of those books go to the help-yourself trolley on the sidewalk outside the Library. Others are shipped to an online wholesaler, Better World Books, that sells them individually, paying the Library a small percentage as our titles are sold – and a small percentage to global literacy programs for all the books BWB sells.

Finally, and in many respects most importantly, the Library makes donations of many thousands of books every year to needy libraries and schools elsewhere. In recent years, the American University of Bulgaria, the National University of Rwanda, Oxfam, the Lycée des Pannevelles in Provins, l'Ermitage, have all been recipients of shipments of books from the American Library.



Jennifer Huxta

The Library is continuing to work with disparate organizations with a need for the books we can't keep that deserve a home – starting in the new year with two schools in Ethiopia. Our continuing relationship with Bibliothèques Sans Frontières will mean we will be sending books to the National University of Haiti as well.

The Library is grateful to all who buy our books – in 2011 we will reap more than €20,000 in sales – and to all who donate the books we sell, as well as the books we shelve and our members borrow, notably the agencies and publishers: Michele Lapautre, La Nouvelle Agence, Eliane Benisti, Lora Fontaine, Shelly Powers, Agence Littéraire Anne Confuron, Corinne Marotte, J.C. Lattès, and Editions Robert Laffont.

### Three holiday gift ideas

**1.** A bag of books. The Library's book sales are now two-day events on the first weekend of every month. Drop by on **Saturday 3** and **Sunday 4 December** to find used and nearly-new books priced at €1 or €2.

**2.** The Library's tote bags – in three classic colors – make useful stocking-stuffers. Or a roomier substitute for the stocking itself! €10.

**3.** An annual membership to the American Library in Paris for your favorite young reader or reading family is a gift that can make a difference in someone's life, and one that keeps giving all year long. Memberships start at €82.

### Moving?

Members of the American Library in Paris tend to move frequently – hundreds every year, fortunately replaced by hundreds more who join.

If you're leaving Paris or changing your address, please make a point of letting us know. Why? First, we'd like to be sure you continue receiving news from the Library wherever you go. And second, hundreds of renewal envelopes are returned to us every year because the member is no longer at the address in question. We prefer spending that money on books and programs than on wasted postage.

# VOLUNTEERS



## It takes a tribe

Many thanks to the hardworking crew who helped build the haunted house and host the Halloween party. With nearly 300 guests, our Halloween celebration was a great success, thanks to our participants and volunteers. We'd like to shine a spotlight on two of our volunteers.

Salomé has been a volunteer for a year and a member for eight. "What I enjoy most about volunteering is being able to offer my help to the community and the satisfaction it brings," she says. Salomé participated in the planning of the haunted house, worked as a tour guide, and sewed goodie bags.

Maya also helped plan the haunted house, create the tombstones, took photos of the event and worked as a fortune teller. She says she likes to volunteer because "It's fun and rewarding. I just like spending time at the library. Everyone is really nice and friendly."

**Thank you:** Jennifer Dobson, Salomé Mirigay, Maya Trifunonovic, Alex Boccon-Gibob, Cecily Spiers, Marcia Lebre, Chase Davis, Sophie Wilson, Angela Hin, Emma Chapman, Yaroslava Bhandari, Kiho Yamanaka, Ingrid Nickelsen, Victoria Robert, Reda Faid, Mika Kaski, Zoe Pons, Carole Black, Liyan Xu, Morgan Shafer, Marina Vernick, Colleen Olsen, Eileen Lee, and Liz Harkins.

## Inside the Library archives

The Library's institutional archives, chronicling the 91 years of its existence, have been getting a thorough going-over by a talented Library volunteer, **Kirsten Schlyder**. Originally from Australia, Kirsten has an interest in French and American history and has a background in documentary making and journalism. She has been volunteering three days a week since September.

Among the visual treasures she has unearthed are a photograph (on the cover of the newsletter) of General Adelbert de Chambrun and his wife, the American-born Countess Clara Longworth de Chambrun with the American Library's director (foreground) Dorothy Reeder.

The photograph, taken at the Library's then-home on the rue de Téhéran, is from the late 1930s. In 1941, with Paris under Nazi occupation, Reeder was forced to return to the United States, and Clara de Chambrun, a Shakespeare scholar, took over the running of the Library during its most perilous hours, keeping it



open throughout the war. Her husband performed similar heroism as head of the American Hospital in Paris. Their remarkable story, and the Library's, is covered in detail in Charles Glass's *Americans in Paris: Life and Death Under the Occupation*.

Another photograph in archive depicts the Left Bank branch of the American Library (when its main building was on the Right Bank), which was open from 1948 to 1956. The building, on the boulevard St. Germain near rue des Saint-Pères, has recently been transformed into a lavish Ralph Lauren boutique.

# THE YOUTH LIBRARY



## Winter Wonderland Saturday 3 December With activities for all ages from 11h00-18h30.

Be sure to check out the very special winter performance by Library Teens and caroling at 17h30.

11h00-11h30: Winter Tales Mother Goose lap-sit

12h00-13h30: Winter Crafts

14h00-15h30: Letters About Literature Workshop

15h00-16h00: Story Hour and a visit from Santa

17h30-18h30: Performance and Caroling

## Valentine's Day Hearts and Hugs, Signed with Love Saturday 11 February 15h00-16h30 Ages 5+

Join the children's librarian and volunteers for a special Valentine's Day event full of fact, fiction, and treats!

First, we'll learn all about Valentine's Day traditions and how they began, and then we'll get creative as we design and create cool valentines for family and friends. There will be stickers, stamps and glitter galore!

Children should be able to use scissors and glue or be accompanied by a caregiver who can help out.

## To Bee Or Not To Bee Mock Spelling Bee Saturday series: Intro- duction to spelling bees

Saturday 14 January  
15h00-16h00  
ages 8+

Join us for an introduction to spelling bees and learn more about the 2012 Paris Spelling Bee in English. We will discuss bee history and logistics and learn how to register for this year's competition. Then we'll have a practice spelling bee session to test your spelling smarts! Come in for a Mock Bee at the Library and get a head start on the fun! **Sign-up is required for this event.**



## Visit with Friends on the Farm

Thursday 12 January  
10h30-11h00  
Ages 1-3

Author and illustrator  
**Betsy Wallid** with be  
hosting a special read-  
ing and sing-along!



## Silly Songs with Matt Black

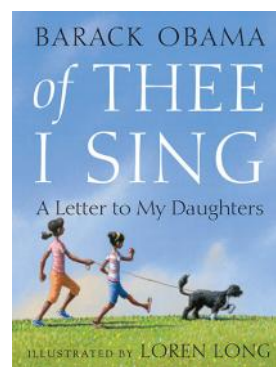
Saturday 7 January  
15h00-16h00

All ages!  
Parents Welcome!

Sing along with Library favorite **Matt Black** during an afternoon of musical madness.

## Black History Month Celebration Saturday 4 February 15h00-16h00 Ages 6+

Find out some cool facts and great stories about important people in American history. Take our quiz to test your knowledge and listen to great stories about some key figures in the Civil Rights movement.



## Reading aloud for the very young

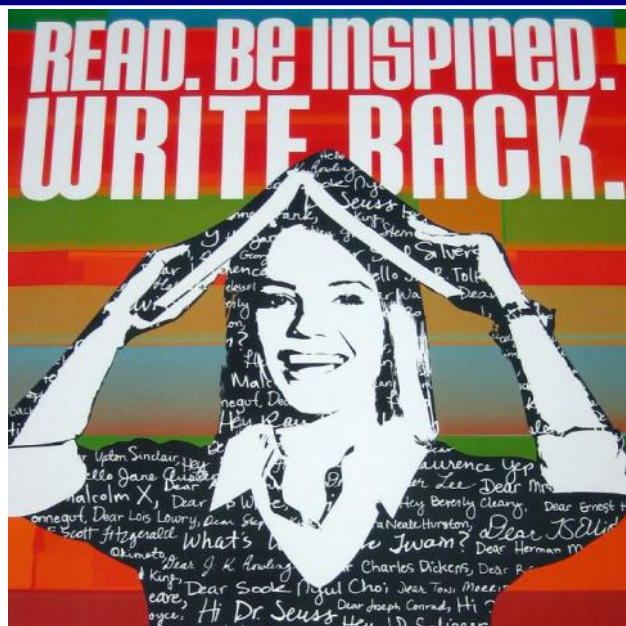
**Ages 1-3:** Mother Goose Lap-Sit on the first and third Thursday of the month from 10h30-11h00. **Sign-up required.** Each child must be accompanied by an adult lap.

In December, lap-sits will be held on the 1st and 15th.

**Ages 3-5:** Wednesday Story Hour. 10h30-11h30 and 14h30-15h30. Drop-in session: No sign-up needed.



# TEENS AND CHILDREN



The American Library in Paris is pleased to offer (for the first time ever!) a chance for our kids and teens to participate in this writing contest created by the Library of Congress (see item page 2). Letters About Literature is an opportunity to write a letter and express how one author's work changed you or your view of the world. We want to help everyone get down to the meat of reflective writing, so we have so workshops to help you out, but you can also just write your own letter and submit it to the children's librarian. We'll select one winner from each age group and then we'll send all entries on to the national contest. Check the full Children's Brochure or the website for complete rules and deadlines.

Letters About Literature Workshops:  
3 December (see below)  
10 December (see website)  
16 December (Teen Night — see website)

**14h00-15h30: Letters About Literature  
(A Reflective Writing Workshop)**  
Grades 4 - 6 / CM1 - 6ème

Bring in a book that has touched your heart and get ready to write to the author that made it happen. Marcia Lèbre will host this writing workshop, where we'll give you tips on authentic writing, and help get you started on a letter for the Center for the Book's Letters About Literature project.

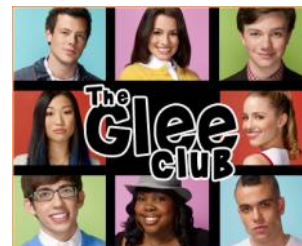
Marcia Lebre is a poet and translator. She holds an MFA from Bennington College in literature and writing and directed the Paris Writers Workshop for 12 years.

Sign-up is required for this event, as space is limited. For more information on Letters About Literature go to [www.lettersaboutliterature.org/](http://www.lettersaboutliterature.org/) or see the event page.

**Teen Glee Club**  
With Valerie Beatson  
Friday 2 December 19h00-21h00  
Ages 12+

Join us for a fun evening with professional singer Valerie Beatson. She'll share tips on how to get the most out of your voice, and we'll practice some winter tunes. For those who would like the chance to perform, you're invited to sing at the beginning of our caroling session 3 December at the Library's Winter Wonderland.

Sign-up is required for this event.



**Henry Ossawa Tanner**  
An African American Painter in Paris  
With Cheryl Ann Bolden  
Friday 9 December 19h00-21h00  
Ages 12+

Join curator Cheryl Ann Bolden for this workshop about American artist Henry Ossawa Tanner. We'll take a look at some images from this famous painter and see if we can find something in his works that speaks to us today, then we'll create our own pieces of art.

Sign-up is required for this event.



**TAG team**  
Saturday 10 December 13h00-14h00  
Ages 12+

The Teen Advisory Group will meet at noon to vote on new books for the collection, put up the teen bulletin board and begin the latest Teen Zine. Snacks will be provided. Bring in some writing, a piece of art you've done or a photo you've taken.

**Parent-Teen Pilates**  
with Anne Campbell-Crawford  
Friday 20 January 19h00-21h00  
Ages 12+ (Parents welcome!)

A Parent-teen pilates session followed by a meet-n-greet with refreshments.

Sign-up is required for this event.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday 7 December 19h30

*Evenings with an Author*

Screening of 'Roth on Roth'  
Journalist and literary critic  
**Livia Manera** interviewed  
Philip Roth. The documentary  
was directed by William Karel.  
Livia Manera will be present to  
answer questions after the  
screening.



Wednesday 14 December 19h30

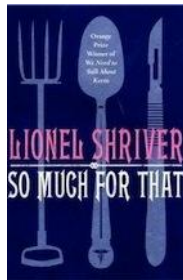
*Evenings with Gardens*

Our popular garden series continues to thrive.  
**Didier Wirth** will talk about his magnificent  
chateau and garden, Brécý, located in Normandy.  
Wirth is president of the *Comité des Parcs et  
Jardins de France*.

Tuesday 10 January 19h30

*WICE World Watch @ The Library*

**Jim Bitterman**, senior  
correspondent for CNN, and **Denis  
Lacorne**, professor at Sciences Po's  
School of International Affairs, discuss  
France's role in EU and US relations.



Wednesday 11 January 19h30

*Evenings with an Author*

Bestselling author and winner of the Orange Prize  
for her novel *We Have to Talk about Kevin*, **Lionel  
Shriver** presents *So Much For That*.

Tuesday 17 January 19h30

*Close Ups: Film through the Ages*

**Tama Carroll** looks at the  
presence of Blacks in film,  
examining their successes  
and challenges.



Wednesday 18 January 19h30

*Evenings with an Author: Princeton Alumni France*

**Beth Epstein** presents her book *Collective Terms:  
Race, Culture, and Community in a State-Planned  
City in France*.

Thursday 19 January 19h30

*Evenings with an Author*

**Cherie Burns** shares images from *Searching  
for Beauty -- The Life of Millicent Rogers*, a  
biography of the Standard Oil heiress and fashion  
icon. Raised in the Gilded Age of New York  
society, Rogers came of age as a debutante and  
flapper.

Tuesday 24 January 19h30

*Evenings with an Author*

Novelist **Arthur Phillips**  
discusses his latest book *The  
Tragedy of Arthur*.



Wednesday 25 January 19h30

*Evenings with an Author*

Journalist **Sophie Hardach** presents her debut  
novel *The Registrar's Manual for Detecting  
Forced Marriages*.

Tuesday 31 January 19h30

*WICE @ The Library - Writers on Writing*

Paris-based poet and teacher **Jeffrey Greene**  
talks about the craft of writing.

Wednesday 1 February 19h30

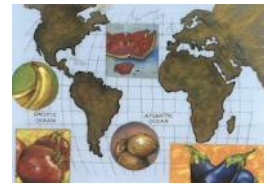
*Evenings with an Author*

**Fernanda Eberstadt** shares her latest book  
*Rats*.

Tuesday 7 February 19h30

*Evenings with an Author*

Food is a way to approach  
identity. To a large extent  
what one eats can define who  
one is. Following flavors and taste memories,  
**Monique Wells** serves up a great talk on the  
African Diaspora.



Tuesday 14 February 19h30

*Close Ups: Film through the Ages*

On Valentine's Day, **Tama  
Carroll** discusses famous  
Hollywood pairs and why they've  
had a lasting impact.



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[www.americanlibraryinparis.org](http://www.americanlibraryinparis.org)

Tuesday-Saturday, 10h00-19h00  
Sunday, 13h00-19h00



**Métro:** Ecole Militaire (line 8)  
or Alma-Marceau (line 9)

**Bus:** 42, 63, 69, 80, 82, 87, 92

**RER C:** Pont de l'Alma

**Vélib':** 43, av. Rapp station n° 7024