Recently, the New York Times ran an online forum asking professors and journalists to answer the question: “Do Colleges Need French Departments?” The answers were thoughtful, for the most part, and emphasized that the advanced study of French, and foreign languages in general, is a crucial part of an education in the Humanities. Having a second or a third language gives students direct access to new worlds. It allows us to read, to study, to enter into historically and geographically different cultures and systems of thought. Learning another language is also, for some of us at least, a great source of pleasure. This is something that college students across the country have already figured out. The Modern Language Association, which regularly tracks these data, has just released a study showing that across the United States, course enrollments in languages other than English has reached a new high. While the percentage increase in the study of certain languages, such as Arabic and Chinese, was extremely robust, from 2006 to 2009 enrollments in French were up nearly 5% and they have continued to rise in the last two years. There are now some 215,000 students enrolled in French classes in colleges and universities across the United States and French remains the second most studied language in the US after Spanish. What is more, what the MLA calls the “ratio of introductory to advanced undergraduate course enrollments” is also extremely high in French, meaning that more students are continuing beyond the first two years of college French into advanced courses on literature, film, culture and history. This is good news indeed.

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The MLA survey is accessible online: http://www.mla.org/pdf/2009_enrollment_survey.pdf.

Even the French press got involved when they ran a series of articles on the state of French Studies in the US. Shanny Peer, Director of the Maison française, was quoted in the French daily Libération, making an eloquent defense of why French matters today. http://www.liberation.fr/monde/01012

All this does not mean that we should take it for granted that students will continue to take French. Budget cuts are sometimes inevitable and small departments are the most vulnerable. But French Studies have evolved into an extremely dynamic field today, bringing together forms of knowledge and research methods that not so long ago had been held apart. The Department of French at Columbia is leading the way in this reconfiguration of the field.

From their very first French classes students here are introduced to a wide variety of topics: literature and film, but also journalism, political speeches and the social sciences. Faculty research here has also opened up onto ever expanding fields of knowledge, including anthropology, history, history of science, philosophy, religious studies and visual culture.

The groundbreaking research of our faculty has been widely published and recognized in the recent past.

Professors Joanna Stalnaker, Vincent Debaene, Madeleine Dobie, Sylvie Lefèvre and Bachir Diagne all published important books over the last two years, which taken together give a good sense of the new interdisciplinarity in our Department. Professor Stalnaker's book The Unfinished Enlightenment (Cornell, 2010) is a study of description during the Enlightenment, not just in literary texts but in a wide range of writings that include the Encyclopédie, geometry, and scientific poetry. The Unfinished Enlightenment is a truly interdisciplinary work that challenges the separation between science and literature that we so often take for granted today. In May, The Unfinished Enlightenment was awarded the Keshshur prize, a prize given “for an outstanding monograph of interest to eighteenth-century scholars working in a range of disciplines.”

Professor Vincent Debaene’s new book L’Adieu au voyage (Gallimard, 2010) also puts into question this separation between science and literature by looking at the writings of French anthropologists in the first half of the 20th century. Debaene’s starting point is that anthropologists such as Alfred Métraux, Michel Leiris and Claude Lévi-Strauss often wrote two books, a scientific treatise and a literary narrative. What this study reveals is not so much two separate universes—literature on the one hand and ethnology on the other—but the rich and complex interchange between these two traditions, and the need we have today to rethink our relation to both literature and science. Professor Debaene’s book was recently awarded two prizes, the 2011 Louis-Castex prize in history and sociology by the Académie française and the 2011 Joseph-Saillet prize by the Académie des Sciences morales et politiques.

In her new book, Trading Places (Cornell, 2010), Professor Madeleine Dobie also draws upon a wide range of works to study the representations of slavery in 18th century France. Professor Dobie studies well-known works, such as Montesquieu’s Spirit of Law, as well as laws, economic theory, furniture and fabric design. Professor Dobie is one of the first scholars to reveal the close ties between slave labor and the literature and arts of 18th century France.

Professor Sylvie Lefèvre led a team of some 100 scholars who contributed to Translations médiévales, cinq siècles de traductions en français au moyen-âge, a landmark study on translation in the 11th-15th centuries. This three volume study was published by Brepols this year and will change the way scholars think about the theory and practice of translation in the Middle Ages.

Finally, in his new book Bergson Postcolonial: L’élan vital dans la pensée de Léopold Sedar Senghor et de Mohamed Iqbal (CNRS, 2011) Professor Souleymane Bachir Diagne looks at the place of Henri Bergson’s thought in the writings of Senghor and Iqbal, both of whom were world leaders and both of whom found in Bergson a rigorous questioning of the Western episteme. First delivered as a series of lectures at the Collège de France, Bergson Postcolonial is an examination of how philosophical revolutions cross national borders, religious lines and disciplinary boundaries.

The international reach of the faculty in our department is also confirmed by two recent translations of their earlier works. Professor Elisabeth Ladenson’s early book Claude Lévi-Strauss: l’homme au regard éloigné was recently translated into Turkish.

I cannot, in so small a space, do justice to the far-reaching research led by faculty in the Department, but these new books and new translations serve as brilliant examples of the type of innovative work done by scholars who are redesigning French studies from the inside.

It was an extremely busy year, and this newsletter is an opportunity for me to thank all the individuals, foundations and corporations who have so generously contributed to our mission. I especially want to thank the members of the Advisory Board of the Maison Française and, in particular, Dr. Paul LeClerc, a PhD from our Department, who took time from his position as President of the New York Public Library to chair the Maison Française’s Advisory Board and help guide us into the new decade. It is a pleasure working with you Paul! Our thanks also go to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their continued generous support of our Centre pluridisciplinaire. The Department is also extremely grateful to the Grand Marnier Foundation and Mr. Guy Wildenstein of the American Society of the French Legion of Honor, for their generous support.

I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate Professor Pierre Force who was named Dean for Humanities in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. We are all delighted to have Pierre as our dean and look forward to working with him in the future.

This year marked a momentous anniversary. 25 years ago this fall, Antoine Compagnon and Isabelle Chagnon both arrived in Columbia’s Department of French. I want to thank both Antoine and Isabelle, on behalf of the entire Department, for their dedication to making this Department one of the leading centers of French Studies in the world and, thanks to Isabelle’s green thumb, a garden of delights.

One final note. In June, I will step aside as chair and Professor Elisabeth Ladenson will take over as Department Chair. This is my chance to thank publicly Elisabeth for taking on this task. I leave the Department in good hands. It has been an honor for me to serve as chair and I want to thank all my colleagues for their support and patience! My greatest thanks go to Benita Dace, Meritza Moss and Isabelle Chagnon for their tireless work on behalf of us all.

—PHILIP WATTS
Department Chair
LAURE ASTOURIAN defended a Masters essay on the role of literary inspiration in Claire Denis's *White Material* in May 2011. She argued that Denis reads the literature she adapts in the same way that she hopes the spectator will engage with her film. The essay focused on the political implications of Denis's eschewal of traditional literary adaptation. In March 2011, Laure presented a paper, “Montage, juxtaposition, récit: Hiroshima mon amour,” at Columbia’s FGSA Conference.

ROD COOKE recently presented a paper on free indirect style in the minor naturalists at the AIZEN conference in Busan, South Korea. He is currently organizing a panel on *Filming the Nineteenth Century Novel* for the 2012 NeMLA convention, having presented a paper on Maurice Barrès and the Dreyfus Affair at the previous edition. His article, “Corroding the Canon in Tintin and the Naturalist Novel”, appeared in *European Comic Art* last fall.

JONATHAN ESKEW presented a paper entitled “Un Élément Étranger: Apollinaire, Reverdy, and the Modernist Domestication of Chinese Visual Poetics” at the annual meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association. His paper was part of a panel named “Redefining art: Artistic genres in literary works” and was nominated for the Horst Frenz Prize, awarded each year for the best paper presented at ACLA by a graduate student.

CASSIANA IGNITA received a summer pre-dissertation fellowship from the Council for European Studies, which allowed her to conduct research in Paris for her dissertation on cinema and pedagogy in early twentieth-century France. In the fall, she presented a paper entitled “The Theatrical Commune” at the Nineteenth-Century French Studies colloquium in Philadelphia. In March, she will speak at the International Conference of Europeanists about how French schoolteachers defined and used cinema in the 1920s.

DIANA KING received a FLAS fellowship for the Academic Year 2010-2011, and the Master’s of Philosophy degree in French and Comparative Literature in October 2011. This past summer, she was granted departmental funding to research French feminist representations of Chinese women.

SARAH LAZUR passed the Masters of Philosophy and is spending the year in France on the ENS fellowship.

JOHANNA MAGIN presented a paper entitled “Contempler le vide chez Pascal: de la physique à la métaphysique” at the NYU Graduate Students Conference in February 2010. At the end of spring 2010, she received her MA and travelled to Japan thanks to a departmental research grant and a grant from the Weatherhead East Asian Institute. She was awarded the 2010 Jeanne Varney Pleasants Prize for excellence in teaching. In 2010-2011 she served as Rapporteur of the University Seminar on Early Modern France.

ANA OANCEA recently presented a paper on “Matters of Life and Death: Thirst as an Adaptation of Thérèse Raquin” at the Association Internationale pour l’Etude de Zola et le Naturalisme conference. Earlier this year, she organized a panel on the subject of degeneration in 19th century literature at the NeMLA Convention, where, next year, she will chair a panel discussing “Fictional Readers of French Literature”.

In 2010, she participated in the NCFS Colloquium, giving a presentation on “Naturalizing Anticipation in Zola’s Travail”.

That summer, she spoke on Villiers de l’Ile-Adam and decadence at a conference in Tromsø, Norway, where her work is being published in the university’s literary journal.

YOHANN RIPERT was accepted to the inaugural Summer Institute of the Institute for World Literature organized by Beijing and Harvard Universities, held this year in Beijing, July 4-29, 2011. At the end of spring 2011, he received his M.A, and became the new rapporteur of the Early Modern Seminar –now chaired by Professor Joanna Stallknecht. Since September 2011, Yohann is also the research assistant of University Professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Meanwhile, he is involved in the organization of the ICLS Graduate Student Conference (November 2011) and the FGSA annual conference (March 2012). Finally, Yohann will perform piano recitals in France, Switzerland and Eastern Europe in late 2012.

BENJAMIN YOUNG is currently a Lecturer (with rank of regular faculty) in the Department of French and Italian at Princeton University. In 2010-2011, he was appointed as a Lecteur at the École Normale Supérieure de Lyon (Enseignements transversaux). He was Marc Fumaroli’s research assistant in 2009 and his translation of an article by Antoine Compagnon will appear in an upcoming issue of Yale French Studies. In 2010, Benjamin also received a Presidential Service Award from Lee Bollinger and a NYC Service Leadership Award from the City of New York.

For the academic year 2010-2011, the Department has had the great pleasure of welcoming eight graduate students: THIBAULT COURTOIS, who completed a master’s at Université de Paris IV-Sorbonne, MATT TRUMBO-TUUL who graduated from the University of Virginia, EMILY YAO who just completed a master’s at Yale after graduating from the London School of Economics, YOHANN RIPERT who graduated as a pianist from the Juilliard School in Music and did literary research in ICLS at Columbia, MAX McGUINNESS who graduated from Oxford University, ANDREW BRANCH who graduated from Reed College, MADELINE BEDECARRE who graduated from Bowdoin College, GABRIELLA BADEA who has a BA from the university of Bucharest and an MA from Université de Poitiers.

This year SARAH MYERS and SARA AHMAD have also joined our Graduate Program. Sarah Myers graduated from Dartmouth while Sara Ahmad has her BA from Williams College.

We are all happy that such brilliant and highly motivated students have decided to become members of our community at a time when the Department has undertaken important reforms to continue to offer one the very best MA and PhD programs in the country.

SOULEYMANE BACHIR DIAGNE
Director of Graduate Studies
In 2010 and 2011, VINCENT AURORA taught the summer session both here at Columbia, and in Paris at Reid Hall. He published articles on the French literature of each year for the Encyclopedia Britannica Yearbooks of 2010 and 2011. His article “Riffaterrean Confessions”, on Michael Riffaterre is due to be published in the Romanic Review this month. He also developed and implemented a new accelerated course combining the present year-long Intermediate French requirement (1201 and 1202) into a single semester (1205). He is currently working on the 1929 "excommunication" of Robert Desnos, among others, from the Surrealist movement.


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He received a doctorate honoris causa from King’s College, London, in October 2010.

Peter Connor was Visiting Professor at Reid Hall in Spring 2010, where he taught in the French Cultural Studies in a Global Context Masters program. Since Fall 2011 he has returned full time to Barnard. Recent publications include: “Translation Theory,” in The Encyclopedia of the Novel, Peter Melville Logan, ed. (Blackwell Publishing, 2011); “Georges Bataille and the College of Sociology,” in The History of Continental Philosophy, vol 5, Alan D. Schrift, ed. (Acumen, 2010); and a review of Antoine Berman’s Toward a Translation Criticism: John Donne, in Translation Review, Issue 4, no. 2 (2011). He continues to direct the Barnard Center for Translation Studies; notable forthcoming events include a two-day international conference on The Pedagogies of Translation: Current Methods and Future Prospects (4-5 May, 2012).

Pascale Crépon, second-year lecturer in the department directed a theatre workshop for non-French students at Columbia last Spring.

Vincent Debaene was on research leave in 2009-2010, being a fellow both at the Columbia Institute for Scholars at Reid Hall and at the Institute of Advanced Studies (IEA) in Paris. During his stay, he finished a book on the relationship between anthropology and literature in 20th-century France, which came out in November 2010 in Gallimard “Bibliothèque des sciences humaines” series, under the title L’Adieu au voyage. L’ethnologie française entre science et littérature. Since then, L’Adieu au voyage has been awarded the 2011 Louis-Castex prize in history and sociology by the Académie française, and the 2011 Joseph-Sauillet prize by the Académie des Sciences morales et politiques. In the Spring 2010, Debaene also published an article on Lévi-Strauss’ stay in New York between 1941 and 1947, as well as an answer to the criticisms raised in the anthropological field by the entry of Lévi-Strauss’ work into the Pléiade series. During his leave, he gave several talks at the Collège de France, at the Ehees, at the University of Liège and at the University of Naples.

In 2010-11, Professor Debaene taught the survey class on French literature after 1700 as well as an undergraduate seminar on surrealism and a graduate seminar on Rimbaud. He published an article on the role played by literature in recent historiographical debates and he gave talks about Lévi-Strauss and/or French anthropology at Columbia’s Maison française and NYU’s Maison française. His small 2009 intellectual biography of Lévi-Strauss, co-authored with Frédéric Keck, was translated into Turkish in June 2011. In June, Prof. Debaene also became associate editor of the Romantic Review.

In the fall 2011, Professor Debaene taught the survey class on French literature after 1700 as well as an undergraduate seminar on the avant-gardes in France. He gave the first Franz Boas lecture of the year in Columbia University department of anthropology, and he gave talks at Yale and in Reykjavik, Iceland. In the spring, he will teach a graduate seminar on surrealism and give papers at Berkeley and Chicago. This year, Prof. Debaene is working with a student-led committee to revive the Modern Salon, which hosts scholars in 19th to 21st-century French and francophone literature twice a semester.

This year the Department of French is delighted to welcome Paul LeClerc back to Columbia as a Visiting Scholar. Dr. LeClerc received his PhD from the Department of French in 1989, with a dissertation titled “Voltaire et Crébillon, père: History of an Enmity.” The Department and GSAS formally granted distinction to this exceptional dissertation, an honor reserved for only 10% of all PhDs. Dr. LeClerc began his academic career as a Professor of French at Union College, and then served successively as University Dean for Academic Affairs, and Acting Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the City University of New York, and as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs of Baruch College. Dr. LeClerc then served as President of Hunter College from 1988 to 1993. But it is as President and Chief Executive Officer of the New York Public Library from 1993 until 2011 that Paul has made an unparalleled contribution to the life of New York City and to readers and scholars around the world. Under Paul’s leadership the NYPL made stellar acquisitions of collections, including the John Cage Archive, the Lillian Gish Personal Archive, the Papers of Malcolm X, the Williams Burroughs Archive, the New York Times archives, and the Martin J. Gross Collection of Voltaire and His Contemporaries Rousseau and Diderot. Through this last collection Paul was able to renew his lifelong passion for Voltaire and make the NYPL one of only two libraries in the world to own all 17 first edition copies of Voltaire’s 1759 masterpiece Candide. When Paul organized the 2009 exhibition Candide at 250: Scandal and Success, many thousands of New Yorkers had a once in a lifetime opportunity to see the first editions and manuscripts of this great writer. Through his work renovating the main branch on 5th Avenue for its Centennial in 2011, expanding the branch libraries, and bringing the NYPL into the digital age, Paul has made this great library’s collections accessible to millions of new readers. Paul is also the author and co-editor of five scholarly volumes on writers of the French Enlightenment and his contributions to French culture earned him the Order of the Academic Palms (Officier) in 1989 and the French Legion of Honor (Chevalier) in 1996. His many other distinctions include the Order of Isabel La Católica and honorary doctorates from eleven colleges and universities, including Oxford and the University of Paris. Paul LeClerc has been providing invaluable leadership to the Maison Française as Chair of its Advisory Board since March 2010, and his return to the Department as a Visiting Scholar further strengthens his renewed ties to Columbia. He is also returning to his lifelong work as a scholar of early modern France through a book project on the 19-year relationship between Louis XV and Madame de Pompadour. We are delighted to welcome Paul back to the Department.

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The Department of French and the Maison française had the great honor of hosting three Sheffer lectures during the 2009-2010 academic year. In 2005, an endowment was established by a generous gift from the family of Ralph Sheffer, in honor of his brother Eugene Jay Sheffer (1905-1981). The gift was meant to create a distinguished lecture series at the Maison française, which Eugene Sheffer had directed from 1942 to 1966. A native of Long Island, Eugene J. Sheffer arrived at Columbia College as a Freshman in 1922 and remained at Columbia virtually his whole career until his retirement in 1966. As director of the Maison française, Mr. Sheffer hosted talks by many of France’s leading writers including Albert Camus, André Malraux, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Jules Romains, George Simenon and Vercors. His enthusiasm and efforts as director helped make the Maison française one of the leading cultural institutions in New York for all things French. Past speakers in the Eugene J. Sheffer lecture series have included Azouz Begag, Marc Fumaroli and historian Patrick Weil.

On April 15, 2010, we were honored and delighted to welcome the celebrated Senegalese writer AMINATA SOW FALL who gave a talk entitled “Là où nos destinées se croisent en un seul lieu.” Aminata Sow Fall is the author of numerous books, including La Grève des Bâtu (1979), winner of the Grand Prix Littéraire d’Afrique Noire, L’Appel des arènes (1982), winner of the Alioune Diop Prize and L’ex-père de la nation (1987). Many students in our classes had read and studied Aminata Sow Fall’s writings prior to her lecture, and the East Gallery in Buell Hall was standing room only on that night. The author generously gave of her time and the discussions went on late into the evening. The event was co-sponsored by the Institute of African Studies.

In April, we also had the honor of welcoming the philosopher BERNARD STEIGLER who gave a lecture titled “Transitional Objects and Systematic Infidelity,” on radically new forms of infidelity and disbelief brought on by the financial crisis of 2008. In recent years, Bernard Stiegler, currently Director of the Institut de recherche et d’innovation at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, has emerged as a leading thinker of the complex relation between philosophy, technology, cinema and television in particular with his landmark study, the three volume La Technique et le Temps. Bernard Stiegler’s talk was co-sponsored by Columbia’s Department of Religious Studies.

The financial crisis was also the topic of the lecture delivered by Jacques de Larosière, former Governor of the Banque de France (1987-1993) and a member of the Committee on the Reform of the European Financial Regulatory Structure (2008-2009). In his talk Mr. de Larosière examined the role that monetary policy played in triggering the worldwide financial crisis in 2007-2008, and proposed solutions for a healthy worldwide economic recovery in the coming years. The event was co-sponsored with the Jerome A. Chazen Institute of International Business and Program for Economic Research.

With the Sheffer Distinguished lectures, the Sheffer family, the Department of French and the Maison française continue to honor Eugene Sheffer’s legacy and indefatigable spirit.

SOULEYMANE BACHIR DIAGNE was a visiting professor at the College de France in December 2009 and January 2010. He gave four public lectures on the influence of Henri Bergson (1859-1941) on the thought of two poets and philosophers: the Senegalese and Catholic Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001) and the Indian and Muslim Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938). The lectures explored the role played by the important Bergsonian concepts of Vitalism, time as duration, intuition as another approach of reality, in the thoughts of both Senghor and Iqbal. The first lecture on “Bergson and Senghor’s thought” took place on December 18, 2009 and examined Senghor’s appropriation of Bergson’s concept of intuition to develop his philosophy of African art. The second lecture was given on January 4, 2010. Entitled “L.S. Senghor and the philosophy of African socialism” it was devoted to Senghor’s political philosophy, examining, in particular, the role played by Bergson and Teilhard de Chardin’s vitalist conceptions on Senghor’s reading of Marxim as a philosophy of liberation from alienation. The topic of the third lecture, on January 11, was “Bergson and Iqbal’s philosophy of ijtihad”. It showed the profound influence that Bergson’s concepts of individuation and of time as duration have exerted on Iqbal’s project of a “reconstruction” of the religious thought in Islam, through a reconnection with its principle of movement. The fourth lecture, “Leibniz, Bergson, Iqbal and fatum mahometanum” was an analysis of Iqbal’s response, based on his Bergsonian reading of the cosmology of the Quran, to Leibniz’s characterization of Islam as a fatalist worldview. The lectures have since been published as a book by CNRS editions under the title: “Bergson postcolonial: l’élan vital dans la pensée de L.S. Senghor et Mohamed Iqbal”. On November 14, 2011, Bachir attended the opening session of the French Académie des sciences Morales et Politiques which has awarded its 2011 Dagnan Bouveret Prize to “Bergson Postcolonial”.

In spring 2010 MADELEINE DOBIE taught an advanced undergraduate seminar on translation and Introduction to French and Francophone Studies I, one of the core courses of Columbia’s interdisciplinary French major. She gave a number of lectures and talks at conferences in the US and abroad. In January 2010 she spoke on “Immigration, Integration, and the Politics of the Literary Field,” at a conference on ‘The Language of Difference: Mechanisms of Inclusion and Exclusion of Migrants, 1945-2005,” held at Leiden University in the Netherlands. In April she spoke on “Race, Feminism, and Colonial family Romance in Olympe de Gouges,” at the Kentucky Foreign Languages Conference, and on “Writing Creole History” at the American
Comparative Literature Society. She also participated in several research workshops and roundtable discussions in 2010. She spoke on “The Paradigm of Colonial Discourse” at the “Colonialisms and Imperialisms Workshop” organized by her colleague Emmanuelle Saada at the Maison française in March, 2010, and on recent trends in literary and historical scholarship on eighteenth-century colonialism in a discussion of “Current Trends in Eighteenth-Century Studies,” held under the auspices of the New York Eighteenth-Century seminar at Fordham University in May 2010. In collaboration with Emmanuelle Saada she organized an international conference on “Thinking the Postcolonial in French: History, Politics, Literature,” held at the Maison française in March 2010. The proceedings of this conference will appear in Romainic Review in 2012.

In the fall Professor Dobie offered a graduate seminar on Literature and Cinema of the Maghreb, and, for the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, a newly designed course on “Gender and Diaspora.” In October she interviewed author Tahar Ben Jelloun on his new book, Leaving Tangier for the NYU Transitions Seminar in Comparative Literature and Middle-Eastern studies and delivered a lecture based on her new book project on captives and hostages -- “The Hostage in Contemporary Culture: Lebanon, Algeria, France” -- at UMASS Amherst. In December she spoke on “Monde et république dans La république mondiale des lettres” at the conference “Littérature du monde II: De la tradition à la création,” held under the auspices of INALCO at the Fondation Singer Polignac in Paris. In collaboration with her French Department colleague, Joanna Stahnaker, Al Coppola of John Jay College and the University Seminars on Early Modern France and Eighteenth-Century European Culture she launched a new cross-disciplinary roundtable series, “Dialogues between literature and History in Eighteenth-Century Studies.” Each roundtable invites a group of speakers to address themes/questions that run across the fields of literature and history. In 2010 roundtables were devoted to authorship and science. In September 2011 the first of two roundtables devoted to Orientalism, colonialism and slavery were held.


In spring 2011 she had the pleasure of teaching two seminars in Paris, one a joint seminar for Columbia and Sciences-PO undergraduates titled “France and the Middle East since 1997: History, Politics, Culture,” the other a graduate level team-taught course between Reid Hall and the École des hautes études en sciences sociales on the “Social and Cultural History of Slavery and Post-Slavery societies.” While at Reid Hall she organized a lecture series for students and faculty that introduced new work by Columbia faculty and scholars from affiliated French and American universities, including among others, Andreas Huyssen, Michael Gorra, Jean Hébrard and Mary Sheriff. During her semester in France she gave a number of talks, including: “Le patrimoine mobilier entre orientalisme et colonialisme,” at the conference Les patrimoines de la traite négriére et de l’esclavage organized by the French Ministry of Culture and held at the University of La Rochelle (this talk will be published in the journal, Situ); “Joséphine Baker et Mayotte Capécia: race et genre dans des biographies transcoloniales” (with Myriam Cottias), at the conference Questions de genre: sexe et race entremêlés held at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales. She is currently working with Myriam Cottias of the CNRS/EHESS on a critical reedition of the autobiographical novels of the Martinican author, Mayotte Capécia. The book is scheduled for publication by Armand-Colin in 2012.

This fall 2011 Madeleine taught the graduate level introduction to comparative literature and society seminar for ICLS. In addition to the interdisciplinary roundtable on orientalism and colonialism, she organized, on October 17, a half-day conference to mark the 50th anniversary of the Paris massacres of October, 1961. The event included talks by her colleague Phil Watts and Seth Graebner, a roundtable discussion and an evening dialogue with choreographer Rachid Ouramdane about his performance piece, Ordinary Witnesses. A few days after the conference the New York premiere of Jacques Panjél’s banned 1962 documentary film, Octobre à Paris was hosted. In October 2011 she gave a talk at Brown University in their New Directions in French Studies series, titled, “Reading Slavery between Discourses and Disciplines,” drawing on her book, Trading Places. She organized an interdisciplinary conference on “Transcolonial Fanon: Trajectories of a Revolutionary Politics” that was held in December to mark the 50th anniversary of the death of Frantz Fanon. She is also writing a

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paper on language and captivity in Assia Djebar’s novel, *Vaste est la prison*, and in the wider context of Algerian literature and politics. She will present this work at a conference on world literature to be held at NYU Abu Dhabi in mid December.

**Pierre Force** was a Guggenheim fellow in 2009-2010. He worked on his project on novelty claims in early modern French literature and science. He also conducted an extensive study of the careers of École normale supérieure alumni in the United States. The results have been published under the title “Les normaliens aux États-Unis” in the journal of the ENS alumni association *L’Archicube*. *Supplément historique* 2010. His article on “Philosophes” appeared in the *Encyclopedia of Political Theory*, edited by Mark Bevir (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2010). Another article entitled “The Teeth of Time: Pierre Hadot on Meaning and Misunderstanding in the History of Ideas”, appeared in *History and Theory* 50:1 (2011). He spoke on “Voltaire, Women, and the Writing of History” at Rutgers University, and gave a talk on a similar topic for the alumni of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. He and Emmanuelle Saada designed and launched a new MA in History and Literature that is now offered at Reid Hall, and taught in cooperation with EHESS and ENS. He continued serving on the governing board of the Association internationale des études françaises and on the scientific council of the Institute for Advanced Study, Paris. In July 2011 he began serving as Dean of Humanities in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

2010-11 saw the publication of **Kaiama L. Glover**’s book *Haiti Unbound: A Spiralist Challenge to the Postcolonial Canon* (Liverpool UP), as well as the publication of articles for *The French Review*, *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*, *Research in African Literatures*, *Small Axe*, and the anthology *Ecrire Haïti Aujourd’hui* (1986-2006). In conjunction with the publication of her book, Professor Glover was invited to lecture at Liverpool University as part of the Modern Languages Seminar Series and at the Institut Français in London. Having been asked to join the editorial board of *Small Axe* this year, she is co-editing with Martin Munro two special issues of the journal, titled *Translating the Caribbean*, which will appear in the fall of 2012 and spring of 2013. Additionally, with monies awarded to her by the Willen Seminar Initiative at Barnard, Professor Glover founded in 2010 and continues to chair the Transnational and Transcolonial Caribbean Studies Research Group, a forum for the discussion of work-in-progress among Caribbeanists throughout the country and a collaborative research endeavor actively involved in New York City based intellectual programming.

**DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES NEW MA PROGRAM IN PARIS**

The Department of French and the Department of History have created a new MA in History and Literature, which is offered at Reid Hall, Columbia’s Global Center in Paris, starting September 2011. The program is taught in collaboration with the École normale supérieure and the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, two of the top graduate schools in Europe. Students have full library privileges at the ENS, which has the only open-stack research library in France. The goal of this new one-year MA program is to explore the many new developments in the fields of history and literary studies. Students in this degree program are trained in historical approaches to the study of literature and in the interpretation of texts for the study of history. Students also have the opportunity to take courses at the EHESS and the ENS and to develop their knowledge of other languages used in Europe, including Hebrew and Arabic. The program is located in Columbia’s new Global Center at Reid Hall, and the focus is distinctly European. The degree prepares students seeking admission to a doctoral program in history or literature, and serves as sound preparation for applications to professional schools. “The initial feedback we received about this new program has been very positive,” says Pierre Force, founder of the MA: “This program is unique, both intellectually and in terms of its location.” The MA was launched in September 2011, with an entering class of 7 students from top colleges and universities across the U.S. Professor Joanna Stalnaker recently took over as director of the new program and looks forward to its expansion in coming years.

Reid Hall remains one of the most popular destinations for Columbia and Barnard undergraduates who wish to study abroad. Reid Hall, which is located in the Montparnasse neighborhood, near the Jardin du Luxembourg, was established as Columbia’s campus in the 1960s and now serves as Columbia’s European Global Center. The undergraduate programs at Reid Hall, including the Columbia-Penn undergraduate program, draw on the limitless resources of the city, its universities and its cultural institutions, as well as on Paris’ historical role as a gateway to Europe and to Africa. The new Global Scholars Program at Reid Hall, set to kick off in spring 2012, gives students the opportunity to develop independent research projects alongside faculty as well as to take classes at Reid Hall and in the French university system.


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related to Caribbean studies.

As she has been doing since 2002, Pascale Hubert-Leibler organized the August 2009, 2010, and 2011 two-day workshops for new language Teaching Fellows. She also gave short presentations at the Orientation Workshop for New Teaching Fellows, offered by the Teaching Center at the beginning of the Fall semester, in 2009, 2010, and 2011.

On February 19th, 2010, she gave a presentation with Dr. Mariame Sy titled “Developing Teaching Materials”, which was part of a series of workshops organized by the Columbia Language Resource Center. She gave a presentation on the novel Entre les murs and its screen adaptation at the annual colloquium for high school teachers of French organized jointly by the Maison Française at Columbia and the AATF in 2010. She continues to work on the Teach Project, a Website of resources for the training of language instructors. In the fall of 2009, she created and taught a new course, French 1105, Accelerated Elementary French, which has been offered every fall since then. In December 2010, she was made Chevalier de l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques.

Elisabeth Ladenson gave graduate seminars on “Theory of Literature” in Spring and on Proust in Fall 2010, while continuing to teach the ever-challenging Literature-Humanities, as well as sponsoring a number of successfully completed MA essays and ongoing PhD research. She continues as general editor of Romanic Review, much of her energy in that regard being devoted to bringing out the forthcoming proceedings of last year’s centenary conference. Fall 2010 saw the publication of Lesbianismo en Proust, Martín Pérez’s Spanish translation of Proust’s Lesbianism (1999), published by Me Caya el Veinte in Mexico City, where she attended a book launch event at the Alianza Francesa. Other recent publications included “L’insoutenable légereté de Colette,” in Le Magazine littéraire’s September 2010 dossier on “Les Romancières françaises” (no.500); “Proust, Balzac, et la morale publique,” in the Cahiers de littérature française special issue on Morales de Proust, edited by Antoine Compagnon; and the “Censorship” entry in The Classical Tradition (Harvard UP, ed. Anthony Grafton). In addition, a stint of jury duty inspired her London Review of Books blog post “Twelve Hungry Manhattanites” in July 2010. She has given a number of conference papers and invited lectures in 2010-11: “Flaubert and the Novel of Inertia” at the 2010 NCFS conference; “The Subversive Spinner” at the MLA in Los Angeles in January 2011, where she also chaired a panel on “Literature and Opera”; “La Censure à l’usage des censeurs” at a conference on censorship in Paris jointly sponsored by the Ecole Normale, the Société des gens de lettres and the University of Chicago in Paris in June; “Proust et le temps qu’il faut” at the Université populaire d’Avignon in July; and, most recently, “Girard’s Proust” at a conference in honor of the 50th anniversary of Girard’s Deceit, Desire and the Novel at Yale, and “Violence in Literature from Homer to Bolaño,” the keynote speech at the conference “Vida y resistencia en la frontera norte. Ciudad Juárez en el entramado mundial” sponsored by El Colegio de la Frontera Norte to protest the violence in Ciudad Juárez in Northern Mexico, both in October 2011. In 2010 she served as secretary of the MLA Executive Committee on 19th-century literature, and 2010-11 marked her third and last year on the Society of Fellows governing board. She also served on the GSAS Executive Committee, as well as on the Literature-Humanities curriculum review and exam committees. In Fall 2011 she is teaching a seminar on “The Realist Novel in Context” at Reid Hall under the aegis of the new MA program in History and Literature. She will also be on sabbatical leave in France during the Spring 2012, during which time she plans to finish her book on Proust and Colette.

Thanks to a delayed Newsletter, Sylvie Lefèvre is able to announce the three new publications. Eventually, after years of intermittent work, she has finished the new critical edition of L’Heptaméron de Marguerite de Navarre in collaboration with Nicole Cazauran (ed. Champion). The manuscript was sent in January. The papers of the conference she co-organized with Elisabeth Ladenson in October 2009, to celebrate the centenary of the Department’s flagship publication: Romanic Review: 1910-2010. 100 years of Romance Studies. The Return to

(Continued on page 10)
Beginning in the Fall of 2010, I took the responsibility of director of undergraduate studies from Pierre Force, Joanna Stalnaker and Madeleine Dobie who together were DUS for the past eight years. The program owes its strength in no small part to their leadership and dedication. Needless to say, they helped me a lot to understand the intricacies and subtleties of our two Majors and Concentrations, to answer to the many questions asked by students already in the track or by aspiring students. After a year, I am now able to manage almost all the worries and the hopes on my own. Even if the requirements for both majors have already been streamlined and made easier to understand, in the past Spring we decided to add some modifications. Our first goal was to lessen the imbalance between our two Majors: in the French one we had 8 required courses and 3 electives while in the French and Francophone major we had only 5 required and 6 electives. So taking into account earlier modifications as the creation of 3600 (French Past and Present, an History of French civilization mandatory class) and the suppression of 3406 which was on the same line as 3498 and 3200, we ruled that: in the French Major, 3498 or 3200 will no longer be requirements but will be retained as electives; in the French and Francophone Major, same thing, but in lieu of becoming another elective, we maintain a requirement for an upper-level Literature course in the French department.

In short, the French Major now counts 7 required courses (but 2 of them have to be chosen between a wide range) and 4 electives while the French and Francophone Major still has 5 requirements and 6 electives.

Teaching the first semester of Introduction to French Literature (W 3333), I am also extremely impressed with the linguistic competency of the students, many of whom come directly from the Department’s own language program. The number of currently enrolled majors and concentrators is at a historic high: 34 in French, 26 in French and Francophone Studies. This is twice the number we had ten years ago and we have high hopes for the future: at the Orientation Fair, late August, Madeleine Dobie, Pascale Hubert-Leibler and myself met more than 70 students eager to learn about our programs. Last spring, at the annual awards ceremony, I had the pleasure of awarding Departmental Honors to three graduating seniors, Scout Katovich and Genevieve Kaunitz (Columbia College), Cassia Burke Phillipps (General Studies). Scout wrote her senior thesis under the direction of Phil Watts and Emmanuelle Saada, Cassia with Bachir Diagne and Genevieve at Reid Hall. The Senior French Prize went to another graduating senior, Nicola McElDowneY, who wrote his senior essay at Reid Hall. The Prize for Excellence in French Studies was awarded to Frederic Dulson. Last May, twenty students with a Major or a Concentration in the French and Romance Philology Department graduated. Congratulations.

French keeps its place as the second most popular language major, not far behind Spanish, and far ahead of all other languages. The dedication of the faculty and teaching fellows, the excellence of the language program, and the ability to study in Paris for at least one semester, all contribute to the success of the French and the French and Francophone majors.

On a last note, we held a French theater performance at the Maison française last semester. It was the result of a workshop and a class taught by Joanna Stalnaker for undergraduate students. They acted a broad range of scenes from Molière and Marivaux to Ionesco and Marie Ndiaye, all dressed in black, with a few props (a scarf, a hat and a necklace). They performed to an appreciative audience. Another show, sponsored by the Department and also by the French Department of Barnard, but on Pascale Crépon’s initiative with Noémie Ndiaye directing, will take place at the Glicker-Milstein Theatre on February 3 and 4: Salina, a play by Laurent Gaudé.

—SYLVIE Lefèvre
Director, Undergraduate Studies
control, as is often assumed, French, Algerian and Vietnamese communists because of their divergence of opinion on colonialism. This article will be published in the scholarly review Communisme. In March, she was invited by the Canadian Slavonic Papers to review Leonid Livak’s last book on Russian Émigrés in the Intellectual and Literary Life of Interwar France. In May, she took part in an international conference hosted at the Sorbonne and devoted to the history of Soviet and Eastern-European foreign policy. In her paper, she challenged the idea that decolonization and revolution in the Third World were a core issue in the Sino-Soviet split. This article, relying on Chinese and Russian documents, as well as the memoirs of a dozen Russian diplomats who witnessed bilateral negotiations between 1949 and 1960 will appear in Relations Internationales in winter 2011. Finally, Céline Marangé has been revising and expanding for publication her dissertation on Vietnamese communism and its relation to the Russian and Chinese models (1919-1991). The book that contains 9 chapters and numerous Vietnamese translations offers a transnational history of contemporary Vietnam. It explores how the Vietnamese regime faced (and defeated) most superpowers of the Twentieth century while increasingly divesting itself of Chinese and Soviet influences. It will be published by Sciences Po Press in 2012.

Sophie Queunel continues to teach the Intermediate French class that she designed for SIPA students. She coordinated 1201 and 3405 for all sections and participated in the committee on the undergraduate curriculum as well as on the latest French lecturer search. As part of the mentoring program organized by the Language Resource Center, she gave a presentation on how to write a teaching philosophy. She also spoke two years in a row at the French Department’s (CERI, Paris) and with the help of the latest collaboration with Romain Bertrand teachers of French on “Les portraits officials des Présidents de la République française” and l’adaptation musicale: ce que la musique apporte à l’étude d’un poème en classe”. She was also invited by the AATF of Connecticut to present the talk on l’adaptation musicale” in May 2011. In April 2011, she spoke at the Northeast Association for Language Learning Technology in Philadelphia on “Designing the New Instructional Space: Hybrid Learning in Language Online.” For the first time this year, she teaches French Online for Graduate and Professional students, an elementary French course that she co-authored at Carnegie Mellon University. Besides receiving the 2007 Access to Language Education Award for best publicly available on-line instructional materials for language, French Online was also mentioned in the Education section of The New York Times as one of the “12 Open Courses Worth a Click” (April 2010).

Etienne Balibar and Gilles Philippe

We were delighted once again to welcome to the Department Professor Etienne Balibar who in the Fall 2011 semester taught a graduate course on “Human Rights and the Institution of the Citizen” under the auspices of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. By all accounts the course was a great success. In early November, Professor Balibar also gave a lecture titled “Strangers as Enemies: Walls All Over the World and How to Tear Them Down.” Etienne Balibar is one of today’s leading political philosophers. His numerous books include Spinoza and Politics (1998), Les frontières de la démocratie (1999), We, the People of Europe? (2003), Masses, Classes, Ideas (2004), Violence et civilité (2010) and with Immanuel Wallerstein, Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities (1992). His most recent book Citoyen Sujet was published this year at the Presses universitaires de France. Balibar’s writings span the history of moral and political philosophy in Europe and his ongoing dialogue with Marxism and with critical theory has made his work one of today’s most significant reflections on the possibilities of transformation and emancipation. We are delighted that he taught with us this fall and we look forward to welcoming Professor Balibar back to the Department in fall 2012.

In spring 2012, we will welcome back to the Department Professor Gilles Philippe, who will teach our graduate course in Stylistics. Gilles Philippe is Professor at the Université Paris III and one of the leading authorities on literary style. He is the author of several books, including Flaubert savait-il écrire? (2004), Roland Barthes (1996), Le français, dernière des langues (2010) and the general editor of La langue littéraire: Une histoire de la prose en France de Gustave Flaubert à Claude Simon (2009). Most recently, Professor Philippe has edited the complete works of Marguerite Duras in Gallimard’s prestigious Pléiade edition. We are delighted to welcome Gilles Philippe back to Columbia and back to the Department this spring.

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The Modern Salon has held a number of successful events over the last two academic years, coordinated by Jonathan Eskew in 2010-2011 and for 2011-2012 by Elizabeth Marcus, Diana King and Matthew Trumbo-Tual. We invite two speakers for each semester, and the conversations are always productive and spirited, involving faculty and graduate students both from the French and other departments.

We held our first event of Fall 2012 with Nick Nesbitt (Princeton) who presented a working paper entitled ‘From Jacobinism to Black Jacobinism: The Politics of Equality in the Age of Revolutions’. Our second speaker, Rachel Mesch (YU), will be attending at the beginning of December. Previously, the Salon has hosted Göran Blix (Princeton) Peter Consenstein (CUNY), Maurice Samuels (Yale) and Columbia Professor Elisabeth Ladenson.

research workshop, entitled Colonialisms and Imperialisms: Comparisons, Confrontations, Connections in the Study of Imperial Power Formations, on March 12, 2010. In collaboration with Madeleine Dobie, and with the help of Erin Twohill and Alexandra Perisic, she organized an international conference Thinking the Postcolonial in French on March 26, 2010. She also worked closely with the new director of Maison Française, Shanny Peer, to organize some of the lectures held at La Maison Française, contributing to a very busy and productive season of events. Finally, she was a member of the faculty group, led by Pierre Force, that organized a new Masters Program in “History and Literature” at Reid Hall, in collaboration with the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales and The Ecole Normale Supérieure. In this context, and in collaboration with Professor Force, she organized a roundtable at La Maison Française entitled History and Literature. The State of Play (October 9, 2010) in which panelists discussed the main issues and themes addressed in the future masters program.

As part of her ongoing research on the French empire and colonial experience, Emmanuelle delivered a paper at an international conference on decolonization at the University of Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona in June 2010. The paper she presented “The Absent Empire: The Colonies in the French Constitutions” will be published in 2011 in the collective volume entitled Endless Empires: Spain’s Retreat, Europe’s Eclipse, and America’s Decline edited by Alfred W. McCoy, Josep M. Fradera and Stephen Jacobson published by the University of Wisconsin Press. Later that month, she gave a talk entitled “France’s Colonial Past: A History of the Present” at the Columbia’s Café Social Science alumni lecture series at PicNic Café. In the fall 2011, with Gregory Mann, Samuel Mouny, Robert Paxton and Judith Surkis, she participated in a roundtable discussion on “The Past and Future of French History”. In October, Emmanuelle Saada gave a paper at the “Civility, Virtue and Emotions” conference organized by the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin. Finally, in November 2011, she presented her new research on the “invention of the native” in 19th century Algeria at a conference in Paris on “Le régime de l’indigénat et ses métamorphoses: histoire d’un dispositif impérial répressif”.

Emmanuelle Saada contributed a chapter called “le passé colonial” to a volume edited by Christian Delacroix, François Dosse, Patrick Garcia and Nicolas Offenstadt, called Historiographies. Concepts et débats, published by Gallimard in September 2010. With Hélène Blais and Claire Fredj, she co-edited a special issue of the Revue d’Histoire du XIXe siècle on the history of Algeria in the 19th century, which appeared in December 2010. She also co-wrote the introduction to this volume, entitled: “Un long moment colonial: pour une histoire de l’Algérie au XIXe siècle”.

Her 2007 book, Les enfants de la colonie. Les métis de l’empire français entre sujétion et citoyenneté, was awarded a grant from the French cultural services, which facilitated its translation by Arthur Goldhammer. It was published by the University of Chicago Press in February 2012. During the year 2011, Emmanuelle Saada was on a research leave during which she worked on a book on the writing of the history of European colonization and on a new project on the “invention of the native” in 19th century Algeria. She spent the summer 2011 in Paris and Aix-en-Provence exploring the archives of the French presence in Algeria.

Samuel Skippon continues as a Lecturer and as the Director of the summer session for the French Department. In 2010 he developed a new section of Advanced Grammar and Composition using texts taken in social sciences only. As in previous years, he helps organize and contributes to the annual FLTA (Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant) orientation held at Columbia University. In 2011-2012 he will be serving as a Fulbright Campus Committee member for the Office of Global Programs at Columbia University.

Joanna Stalnaker gave the Thomas and Catherine McMahon Lecture at Wesleyan and the biennial GAFS lecture at Yale this year, in addition to invited talks at NYU, Fordham, Bryn Mawr and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She spoke at a number of conferences, including Translating the Encyclopédie in the Global Eighteenth-Century and La poésie scientifique, de la gloire au déclin. She has organized an ongoing series of interdisciplinary roundtables in eighteenth-century studies at Columbia; this past year’s topics were authorship (co-organized with Madeleine Dobie) and science (co-organized with Al Coppola). She was elected to the MLA Division Executive Committee on Eighteenth-Century French Literature for a five-year term and was named President of the ASECs Society of Eighteenth-Century French Studies. She has also been appointed as Director of Columbia’s new Paris-based MA program in History and Literature and as Chair of the Columbia University Seminar on Early Modern France. Her article “Buffon on Death and Fossils” was published in the Summer 2011 issue of Representations and her book.
The Unfinished Enlightenment (Cornell 2010), won the Kensur Prize from the Center for Eighteenth-Century Studies at Indiana University. Her current project, Enlightenment Endings, is under contract with Yale University Press.

Phillip John Usher (French, Barnard) recently published two books: Errance et cohérence: Essai sur la littérature transfrontalière (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2010) and Ronsard’s “Franciadi” (1572), a translation with notes and introduction (New York: AMS Press, 2010). Over summer 2010, he taught in the Miami University/Université de Bourgogne summer exchange program in Dijon. He recently finished a manuscript about the interaction of epic literature and the sister arts in the French Renaissance, now under review with publishers. He is spending the 2011-12 academic year on sabbatical in Paris, where he is pursuing new research on French Renaissance tragedy. Related talks are scheduled throughout the year at the University of London, Harvard University, Université de Paris-Sorbonne, and Durham University. Anyone passing through Paris should stop by for coffee (pu2116@columbia.edu).

Phil Watts is Chair of the Department of French. He continues to teach Literature Humanities as well as graduate and undergraduate courses on film and 20th century literature. In Fall 2011 he taught a graduate seminar on the work of Jacques Rancière. He has published several articles recently: “Godard’s War” in L’Esprit Créateur (Winter, 2010), “The Eloquent Image” in Opening Bazin, a volume of new writings about film critic André Bazin edited by Dudley Andrew at Oxford University Press (2011), “Heretical History and the Poetics of Knowledge” in Jacques Rancière: Key Concepts, ed. Jean-Philippe Deranty (Acumen, 2010), and “Rififi and the Politics of Silence” in L’Esprit créateur (Fall 2011). A version of his talk on “Camus and Film” was published in the Camus Now conference proceedings (Winter 2010-2011) at New York University. He gave talks on the urban pastoral at the University of Pittsburgh, on Jacques Rancière at the Columbia University Seminar on Cinema, on Godard at the University of Minnesota’s Center for Holocaust Studies, and at the Maison française on Jacques Panijel’s landmark film Octobre à Paris.

Caroline Weber recently signed a 2-book deal with Knopf; the first book, PROUST’S DUCHESS, is a group portrait of the three principal models for the Duchesse de Guermantes in Proust’s RECHERCHE, + is slated to come out in fall 2013. Her last book, QUEEN OF FASHION, has just been translated into Chinese for publication in Taiwan + mainland China. During the fall 2011 semester, she was a visiting professor in the Dept of French + Italian at Princeton. She continues regularly to contribute essays on French culture, literature, + history to the NY Times Book Review + W magazine, among other publications.

News from the Language Program

The Language Program continues to thrive and attract a large number of undergraduate and graduate students. With a view to better serve their needs and match their interests, the language lecturers of the department have created four new courses in the past two years. Vincent Aurora created an accelerated intermediate course covering in one semester the material of 1201 and 1202. Sophie Queuniet is offering for the first time in 2011-12 a two-semester online elementary sequence aimed at students in graduate and professional programs. Heidi Holst-Knudsen created French Language, Culture, and Society Through Film (an advanced course for non-majors) and Samuel Skippon a version of 3405 (3rd-Year Grammar and Composition) for students in the social sciences. In order to enrich the extracurricular experience of our students, and with the gracious assistance of the director and staff of the Maison Française, Pascale Hubert-Leibler instituted a weekly café conversation session for beginners in Spring 2011, while Pascale Crépon, who joined the department in Fall 2010 as a lecturer, and Noémie Ndiaye, one of the ENS exchange students in 2010-11, boldly launched a French-language theater club, which is proving increasing popular and successful in its second season. In 2010-11, in addition to Noémie Ndiaye, Morgan Labar (also from ENS Paris) and Dr. Crépon, the following new instructors joined the department: Cathy Leung and Dr. El-Hadj Malick Ndiaye, both as adjunct professors, as well as Dr. Michael Meere and Dr. Céline Marangé, both as lecturers, while Dr. Denise Carroll returned as an adjunct professor, and Dr. Marie-Hélène Koffi-Tessio as a lecturer. In 2011-12, three adjunct professors, Dr. Clarissa Béhar, Tracy Higgins and Dr. Denise Carroll are teaching in the department, along with Nastassia Gallian and Gaétan Bruel, from ENS Paris, and lecturers Dr. Koffi-Tessio, Dr. Marangé, Dr. Ndiaye, Dr. Alexandra Borer, and Dr. Bérénice Baudry.

—Pascale Hubert-Leibler
French Language Program Director

Maison Francaise Book Club

By October, 2011, the Book Club was entering its 11th year of existence. Meetings are monthly. Nine books (fiction and poetry) were presented with discussions led by faculty in the Department of French.

“Chagrin d’école”, a text on pedagogy, was presented by Sophie Queuniet, and Natalie Sarraute’s classic nouveau roman “Le Planétarium” was moderated by Vincent Aurora. From Barnard came Kaima Glover with Marie NDiaye’s “Rosie Carpe” and Serge Gavronsky with Ponge’s “Le Parti pris des choses”. Mohammed Mack touched on francophonie with Abdellah Taïa’s “Le Rouge du tarbouche” and Andrew Branch pitted Marie Darrieussecq’s “Tom est mort” against Camille Laurens’s “Philippe”. Finally, Professor Emeritus Henri Mitterand honored the Book Club during his trip to the US by presenting Julien Gracq’s “Un Balcon en forêt”.

—Daniele Lasser, M. Phil. ’84
Coordinator of the Book Club
The Columbia Maison Française is thriving under the leadership of Director Shanny Peer and Advisory Board Chair Paul LeClerc, who is also currently a Visiting Scholar in the French Department. (See page 5). The new members elected to its Advisory Board since the last Department newsletter are: Consul General Philippe Lalliot, French Cultural Counselor Antonin Baudry, Mrs. Elizabeth Rohatyn, Cécile Scherer for BNP Paribas, and Professors Bachir Diagne and Kristina Orfali. Lindsey Long started as program coordinator in September 2011 and Romain Rancurel is the French intern for 2011-2012.

The Maison Française is undergoing a major renovation in preparation for its upcoming Centennial in 2013. Renovation of the second floor has been largely completed, with beautiful new wood panel flooring, new paint and light fixtures, and antique furnishings, funded by a generous grant from the Florence Gould Foundation and by Columbia Arts & Sciences. A much-needed renovation began in December 2011 in the East Gallery on the ground floor of Buell Hall. Thanks to a very generous gift from LVMH, whose Chairman Renaud Dutreil sits on the Maison Française Advisory Board, and to additional gifts from Board members Paul LeClerc and Elizabeth Rohatyn, the renovation of this "public face" of the Maison Française will transform it into a beautiful showcase for French culture, featuring custom designed oak floors, chandeliers designed and manufactured by French artisan Jean Wiart and Les Métalliers Champenois, and additional pieces created by French artisans specializing in wood and textiles. The Maison Française plans to celebrate its Centennial with a physical and online exhibition and publication about its 100-year history, and with a series of lectures, events and performances in 2013. Financial donations from alumni of the Department to the Maison Française in honor of the Centennial would be gladly welcomed.

Among its distinguished visitors in 2010-2011, the Maison Française organized talks by French philosophers Bernard Stiegler, Senegalese writer Aminata Sow Fall, former IMF director Jacques de Larosière (all three were Eugene Sheffer Distinguished Lecturers), and by Etienne Balibar, film directors Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Claire Denis, and French President Nicolas Sarkozy. Other events included a roundtable discussion on the "brain drain" of French academics to the U.S. and a full day of events celebrating Pierre Boulez’ 85th anniversary, culminating in a concert and reception at Columbia’s Miller Theatre.

2011 was also an excellent year for the Maison Française. Spring highlights included the U.S. avant-premiere of Yann Arthus-Bertrand’s film HOME, followed by a panel with the director and scientists invited by the Earth Institute, a conference on Jewish Rescue in France and its Empire during World War II, and a roundtable about Why French Matters featuring Antonin Baudry, Adam Gopnik, Charlie Kolb, Bachir Diagne and Rosemary Feal. In April 2011 we celebrated the retirement of Paul Leclerc from the New York Public Library with a dialogue between Dr. LeClerc and Bruno Racine, president of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France about The Future of Libraries, in an event hosted and co-sponsored by the NYPL. Events in Fall 2011 included a first-time outdoor movie screening on Low Library Plaza as part of the Films on the Green Festival with French Cultural Services, a roundtable on The Past and Future of French History, and a conference marking the 50 anniversary of Frantz Fanon’s death.

On October 20, 2011, the Maison française screened Jacques Panijel's landmark 1962 film Octobre à Paris. After having been nearly invisible for fifty years, Panijel’s film finally had its New York premiere before a packed house in the Maison’s East Gallery. Professor Phil Watts presented the film and led a discussion with students and faculty after the screening.

Octobre à Paris is an extraordinary documentary that recounts the massacre of hundreds of French Algerians by the Paris Police on the night of October 17, 1961. Panijel’s film combines interviews of victims, photographs by Elie Kagan and historical reconstructions to produce a stunning film on a key moment of the Algerian war of independence.
Advisory Board to the Maison Française

Department of French and Romance Philology, and Center for French and Francophone Studies

The Maison Française benefits from the leadership of its distinguished Advisory Board, chaired by Dr. Paul LeClerc.

- Paul LeClerc, Former President & CEO of the New York Public Library, Advisory Board Chair
- Antonin Baudry, Cultural Counselor, French Embassy in the U.S.
- Henriette Beilis
- Pierre-André Chiappori, Professor of Economics, Columbia University
- Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Professor of French and Philosophy, Columbia University
- Nicholas B. Dirks, Executive VP for Arts and Sciences and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University
- Jean-François Dubos, Executive VP and General Counsel, Vivendi
- Renaud Dutreil, Chairman, LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton Inc.
- Pierre Force, Dean for Humanities and Professor of French and History, Columbia University
- John Goelet, Goelet Corporation
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- Philippe Lalliot, Consul General of France in New York
- Diony Lebot, CEO, Société Générale Americas
- Kristina Orfali, Associate Clinical Professor of Bioethics in Pediatrics, Department of Pediatrics, Columbia University
- Robert O. Paxton, Mellon Professor Emeritus of Social Science, Columbia University
- Jeanine Parisier Plottel, President of the Maurice Parisier Foundation, Inc.
- Shanny Peer, Director of the Maison Française, Columbia University
- Elizabeth Rohatyn, Co-President and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, French Regional and American Museum Exchange (FRAME)
- Patrick Roux, Senior Vice President, Air France KLM, the Americas
- Emmanuelle Saada, Associate Professor of French and Director of the Center for French and Francophone Studies, Columbia University
- Jean-Jacques de Saint Andrieu, Manager Community Relations, Air France KLM, the Americas
- Cécile Scherer, Managing Director of Merchant Banking-Structured Finance, BNP Paribas
- Thierry Simon, Head of the Coverage and Investment Banking Division, Crédit Agricole CIB
- Edouard Tétreau, Director of Mediafin Consulting
- Philip Watts, Chair of the Department of French and Romance Philology, Columbia University
- Guy Wildenstein, President, American Society of the French Legion of Honor

Director of the Maison Française, Shanny Peer, Ph.D.

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COLUMBIA MAISON FRANÇAISE CENTENNIAL APPEAL TO DEPARTMENT ALUMNI

The Columbia Maison Française relies for its ongoing activities on the generosity of its friends and sponsors. We would be honored to receive financial contributions of any size from alumni of the Department of French in celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the Maison Française in 2013. Larger gifts would come with sponsorship recognition and could be directed towards particular kinds of activities at the Maison Française. Contributions can be made online at www.maisonfrancaise.org, or by check and mailed to: Shanny Peer, Maison Francaise, 515 West 116th Street, Mail Code 4990, New York, NY 10027.

We would also gladly welcome participation from Department alumni interested in volunteering to help us research the history of the Maison Française and plan the Centennial exhibitions and events. Some volunteer work could even be done remotely. Please send an e-mail to Lindsey Long at ll2787@columbia.edu if you are interested in learning more about volunteer possibilities.

Please provide your addition to the next “Alumni News” feature by emailing, byd1@columbia.edu. For information on the Department or the graduate program, please write to or call the Department of French and Romance Philology, 515 Philosophy Hall, Mail Code 4902, 1150 Amsterdam Avenue, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, tel. (212) 854-2500; or contact the Admissions Office of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 107 Low Library, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, tel. (212) 854-4737. You may also visit the Department’s website: www.columbia.edu/cu/french.