

Renaissance Française – USA Awards Ceremony and Reception

at the residence of

His Excellency François Delattre
Ambassador of France to the United States
Honorary President of Renaissance Française – USA



Thursday, May 31, 2012

2221 Kalorama Road, NW
Washington, DC

History of La Renaissance Française

La Renaissance Française was founded in 1916 as a private cultural organization by French president Raymond Poincaré in anticipation of the allied victory in World War I. Its original mission was to facilitate a return to French language and culture in the regions of Alsace and Moselle after years of German domination. As this objective was accomplished between the two world wars, the association was recognized as a public non-profit organization benefiting from the patronage of the President of the French Republic and the French Ministries of Foreign Affairs, of the Interior, of Defense, and of Education.

In recent years, La Renaissance Française has broadened its mission to include the promotion of French culture generally, as a cradle of humanism and respect for all beliefs and nationalities. In the 1980s the organization extended its reach to include all French-speaking countries. Accordingly, delegations were formed in countries recognizing French as an official language such as Switzerland and Belgium, along with Argentina, Canada and Romania.

Today, under the presidency of Préfet Antoine Guerrier de Dumast, the organization combines chapters in France with those in francophone countries and regions. La Renaissance Française has recently established a delegation in the United States and has formed or is in the process of forming delegations in China, Italy, Lebanon, Madagascar, Morocco and Russia.

His Excellency François Delattre, Ambassador of France to the United States, serves as *Président d'Honneur* for the Delegation in the United States. Simone Veil, former *Ministre d'Etat*, past President of the European Parliament and current member of the Académie française, serves as *Présidente d'Honneur* of La Renaissance Française in Paris.

Founding in the United States

On October 9, 2009, the United States Delegation of La Renaissance Française held its first official meeting at La Maison Française at New York University, courtesy of Professor Tom Bishop. Renaissance Française – USA continues its cooperative tradition of Americans selecting honorees in the United States to be considered by La Renaissance Française in Paris.

In Memoriam

Christopher P. Pinet, 1944-2011

Recipient of *la Médaille d'Or du Mérite Francophone* – 2011
Lifelong advocate for French-American understanding and friendship

Awards Ceremony

Thursday, May 31, 2012 at 4:00 pm

Residence of the Ambassador of France to the United States

La Renaissance Française

Delegation in the United States

Program

Welcome by Ambassador François Delattre

Presentation of Medals by Jane Robert
President, Renaissance Française – USA

*Renaissance Française – USA extends a warm welcome
to members of the Congressional French Caucus.*

Medal Recipients

Médaille d'Or de La Renaissance Française

Mrs. Elizabeth Rohatyn – New York, New York

Médaille d'Or du Rayonnement Culturel

Mr. Ryan Brown – Washington, DC

Médaille d'Or de Solidarité et Valeur

Mrs. Robin Masee – Brooklyn, New York

Médaille d'Or du Mérite Francophone

Mrs. Mary B. Emory – Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Honoree selected by La Renaissance Française – Paris

Médaille d'Or de La Renaissance Française

Mr. Bruce Robert and Mrs. Jane Robert – St. Louis, Missouri



Elizabeth Rohatyn

Médaille d'Or de La Renaissance Française

This medal recognizes persons who have rendered eminent and exceptional service in areas supported by La Renaissance Française. Eligibility depends on previous awards bestowed by France.



Elizabeth Rohatyn, committed to a public service career that spans more than half a century, has been central to the cultural, educational and philanthropic life of New York City, where her vision and leadership have helped transform public education, redefine the role of public libraries in our communities and set new standards for American cultural diplomacy.

Recognizing the great potential of technology in education, Mrs. Rohatyn founded Teaching Matters, Inc., in 1996, and is currently its Chair Emeritus. Teaching Matters is a nonprofit organization that works in New York schools to improve the use of technology in the classroom and train teachers to create and implement web-based curricula. Mrs. Rohatyn also is Chair Emeritus of the New York Public Library, which she served for many years, including as chair of its board. When her husband, Felix Rohatyn, was U.S. Ambassador to France, Mrs. Rohatyn founded the French Regional & American Museum Exchange (FRAME), a coalition of 26 French and North American art museums that sponsors exhibitions, education programs and exchange projects. An international model of cultural diplomacy, FRAME has touched millions of people on both sides of the Atlantic.

In New York City, Mrs. Rohatyn also has served as Vice Chair of public television station WNET 13, and on the boards of New Visions for Public Schools, the Fund for Public Education and Lenox Hill Neighborhood House. She also has served on the New York Governor's Commission on Education and on the Dean's Council of Harvard University's School of Education. In 2007, the French government promoted her to the rank of *Officier de la Légion d'Honneur*.

Ryan Brown

La Médaille d'Or du Rayonnement Culturel

This medal recognizes persons who have rendered distinguished service in the following fields: French language, literature, fine arts, science and technology, artisans, promotion and visibility of the French patrimony (including traditions and artistic heritage).



Ryan Brown is the founder, conductor, and artistic director of Opera Lafayette, an early-music opera company established in 1995 and based in Washington, D.C. Through his work with Opera Lafayette, Mr. Brown has become a leading figure in the revival of 18th-century opera. His vivid explorations of the French repertoire in particular have earned him an international reputation, receiving the highest praise from critics in the United States and abroad.

Following a tour to New York City, Opera Lafayette made its debut at the Opéra Royal in Versailles in February 2012, performing Pierre-Alexandre Monsigny's *Le Roi et le fermier*. They included the same sets utilized for a performance of the same opera by Marie Antoinette at Versailles in 1780.

Opera Lafayette's performances have highlighted the various traditions of the *tragédie lyrique*, the *opéra-ballet*, the *opéra-comique*, the *pastorale*, and the *dramma-giocosso* genres. Mr. Brown's discography for Naxos includes masterpieces by well-known 18th-century composers as well as discoveries of their contemporaries (Gluck's *Orphée et Euridice* and Sacchini's *Œdipe à Colone*, Rameau Operatic Arias, and Rebel and Francœur's *Zélindor, roi des Sylphes*), works which exemplify traditions in the 17th century (Lully's *Armide*), and those which point the way toward the music of the 19th century (Monsigny's *Le Déserteur*).

Mr. Brown was raised in a musical family in California, and performed extensively as a violinist and chamber musician in New York and on tour before turning his attention to conducting. In 2012 he will make his debut with the Seattle Symphony.





Robin Massee

La Médaille d'Or de Solidarité et Valeur

This medal distinguishes persons who have devoted themselves to public service, or to social works of a charitable, philanthropic, civic or sporting nature, intended to improve the quality of life.



Robin Massee, an American who grew up in France, has made significant contributions to French-American relations in her various roles in New York, including: Vice President of External Affairs at the French Institute-Alliance Française, Director of Communications for French Tourism and Director of Public Relations for the French Cultural Services.

She has coordinated the official visits of two French Ministers of Culture (Jack Lang and François Léotard). She oversaw *France Salutes New York*, a ten-day performing arts festival at Lincoln Center, and acted as liaison for *Liberty Weekend*, the Statue of Liberty centennial celebration. She has been responsible for the largest Bastille Day festival in Manhattan, attracting over 15,000 New Yorkers every year.

Ms. Massee has provided leadership in the areas of tourism and French-American relations. In the exceptional spring of 2003, Ms. Massee was instrumental in creating the “Let’s Fall in Love Again” campaign and a video featuring Woody Allen, Wynton Marsalis, George Plimpton, and others, to restore American travel to France. In 2004, she created “Operation Open Arms” to commemorate the 60th anniversary of D-Day with testimonials from American veterans who landed on June 6, 1944 and from Norman French eyewitnesses.

Since founding Massee Productions, a communications and film production company, Ms. Massee’s commitment to both cultures has been at the core of her work. She directed *A Hero’s Welcome—A Story of Friendship, Gratitude and Remembrance*, showcasing the impact of D-Day on the French-American relationship. She is currently producing *Angels in our Midst: WWII Women Veterans in France* to capture the voices of the American women, mainly nurses, who were in France during the war. She is also developing a television series for the U.S. market, *French Encounters: On the Road with Robin Massee & Friends*, about the gastronomic and *art-de-vivre* pleasures of France.

In 2005, the French Government named Ms. Massee *Chevalier dans l’Ordre National du Mérite*. Her life’s work, which has bridged these two cultures, embodies the best of both.

Mary B. Emory

Médaille d'Or du Mérite Francophone

This medal recognizes those who devote themselves to the development or tightening of linguistic or cultural ties between France and other countries sharing the French language, or to the development of French language and culture in their country.



Mary Emory has an exceptional record of service to French cultural organizations. As president of the Alliance Française of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, she oversaw unprecedented growth in membership and established and raised the organization's first endowment fund. Several of her local AF initiatives have served as model projects that have been adopted by other chapters in the United States. As a member of the board of directors of the Federation of Alliances Françaises – USA, she edited the Federation's newsletter communicating with all the Alliances in the United States as well as editing the Federation's magazine *Le Mag*. She then served as vice president of the Federation, chaired its annual meeting program, and hosted an annual meeting in her home city of Milwaukee.

In 2009, Ms. Emory became one of the founding members of American Friends of Musée d'Orsay, which she currently serves as secretary. This group supports the mission of the Musée d'Orsay and Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris, which house one of the world's preeminent collections of Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and early modern French art.

Ms. Emory has also worked to improve her city and state by serving as president of Milwaukee's Skylight Theater; president of Milwaukee's Friends of the Conservatory of Music; volunteer for more than 30 years for the United Performing Arts Fund; co-chair of the Silver Renaissance Campaign to renovate the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts; president of the Woman's Club of Wisconsin; and member of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Foundation board and the University of Wisconsin-Madison School for the Arts Grand Viennese Ball Committee.

Ms. Emory was recognized in 1999 by the French government as a *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques*.





Jane M. and Bruce P. Robert

Médaille d'Or de La Renaissance Française

This medal recognizes persons who have rendered eminent and exceptional service in areas supported by La Renaissance Française. Eligibility depends on previous awards bestowed by France.



Jane and Bruce Robert were recognized by La Renaissance Française – Paris in October, 2011, principally in recognition of the couple's endowment of *The Jane M. and Bruce P. Robert Professorship of French and Francophone Studies* at Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. At the ceremony, the award was also presented to M. Abdou Diouf, *Secrétaire Général* of the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, by Antoine Guerrier de Dumast, President of La Renaissance Française – Paris.

Mr. Robert has been active in Francophile projects for more than forty years. He has been a patron and participant in the Alliance Française, Sister Cities, American Friends of the Musée d'Orsay, Opera Lafayette, French Heritage Society and American Friends of Blérancourt. On a more direct level, in 1980 he accompanied Mrs. Robert on a high school exchange of French and American students, and in 1997 he organized and accompanied their son's seventh-grade class to Toulouse, the Bourges region, and Paris.

Mrs. Robert, a former French teacher, has served as president or board member for many Francophile organizations, including the Federation of Alliances Françaises – USA. New initiatives include her role as a founding board member for the American Friends of the Musée d'Orsay and for St. Louis Language Immersion Schools, which offer full immersion programs in French and Spanish for disadvantaged students in the city of St. Louis. The French government has distinguished Mrs. Robert as an *Officier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques* and a *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur*.

*Photo taken at the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie in Paris ~
L to R: Président de Dumast; Mr. and Mrs. Robert; Secrétaire Général Diouf*

His Excellency François Delattre **Ambassador of France to the United States**

Honorary President ~ Renaissance Française, Delegation in the United States

Ambassador François Delattre was appointed Ambassador of France to the United States by President Nicolas Sarkozy on January 19, 2011. Prior to his present appointment, Mr. Delattre was Ambassador of France to Canada, a position he had held since 2008, following four years as French consul general in New York (2004-2008), two years as deputy director of the French Foreign Minister's Office (2002-2004), and four years as press and communications director at the French Embassy in Washington, D.C. (1998-2002).

A career diplomat, Mr. Delattre was on the foreign policy team of President Jacques Chirac from 1995 to 1998, with particular responsibility for security and defense issues. Before coming to New York, he was deputy chief of staff to Dominique de Villepin, then foreign minister. In his career at the French Ministry, which he joined in 1989, he has held posts at the French embassy in Bonn and in the Foreign Ministry's Department of Strategic Affairs and Disarmament.

Mr. Delattre holds a degree in international law and is a graduate of the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, of which he is a former honorary president, and the Ecole Nationale d'Administration.

Simone Veil de l'Académie française

Honorary President – La Renaissance Française

Simone Veil is acknowledged as one of the world's most courageous, powerful and influential women and is one of the most popular public figures in France. She was the first elected President of the European Parliament, and also served as President of the Judicial Commission for this powerful group. From 1973 to 1979 she served as France's Minister of Health. In France she continues to exert significant political, legislative and social influence.

The recipient of honors in France, the Ivory Coast, Spain, Morocco, Germany, Greece, Venezuela, Italy, Belgium, Israel and the United States, Simone Veil is known for her work on behalf of women's rights, adopted children, older adults and immigration.

When Simone Veil was 17 years old, she and her family were deported to the Nazi concentration camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau and Bergen-Belsen. They suffered unimaginable atrocities. Her parents and her brother died in the camps. Simone Veil and one sister survived. This tragic experience has given her exceptional lifelong personal courage. Her autobiography has been published in English: *A Life: a memoir of Simone Veil* – Haus Publishing.

Congressional French Caucus

Co-Chairs

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
The Honorable John Boozman
The Honorable Dan Burton
The Honorable John Campbell
The Honorable Russ Carnahan
The Honorable Michael Michaud

The French Caucus is a bipartisan, bicameral congressional member organization, dedicated to enhanced US-French relations in the spirit of partnership and cooperation. Since its inception in 2003 under the leadership of the Honorable Amory Houghton, the Caucus has fostered dialogue and multicultural understanding around both policy debates and cultural events that contextualize the depth and dynamic nature of French-American relations. (Courtesy: *News From France*, Dec. 23, 2010)

Renaissance Française – USA Past Honorees

Médaille d’Or de La Renaissance Française

Ambassador Craig Roberts Stapleton – Greenwich, Connecticut ~ 2011
Amory Houghton – Corning, New York ~ 2010
Rebecca Valette – Newton, Massachusetts ~ 2010

Médaille d’Or du Rayonnement Culturel

Katharine Branning – New York, New York ~ 2011
Hugh Macdonald – St. Louis, Missouri ~ 2010

Médaille d’Or de Solidarité et Valeur

Reid Henri Lewis – Elgin, Illinois ~ 2011
Lance Armstrong – Austin, Texas ~ 2010

Médaille d’Or du Mérite Francophone

Christopher Paul Pinet – Bozeman, Montana ~ 2011
Albert Valdman – Bloomington, Indiana ~ 2011
Adam Steg – New Orleans, Louisiana ~ 2010
Robert L. Miller – New York, New York (selected by the Delegation in Italy) ~ 2010

Delegation in the United States

Jane Robert – St. Louis, Missouri, *President*
Liza Forshaw – St. Louis, Missouri, *Secretary*
Bernard Duhaime – Omaha, Nebraska, *Treasurer*
David Black – Chappaqua, New York
Elyane Dezon-Jones – Sarasota, Florida and Paris, France
Thomas E. Horn – San Francisco, California
Margot Steinhart – Glenview, Illinois
President, American Association of the French Academic Palms
Guy Wildenstein – New York, New York
President, American Society of the French Legion of Honor

Renaissance Française – USA gratefully acknowledges

Retiring Delegation member Marie-Christine Koop – Denton, Texas

La Renaissance Française Delegation in the United States

Mission Statement

Renaissance Française – USA, the American Delegation of La Renaissance Française, founded in Paris in 1916, aims to recognize persons who have raised awareness of the French language and francophone cultures among people living in the United States. The American Delegation will act at all times in harmony with the policies of La Renaissance Française.



*The Residence of the Ambassador of France to the United States
Washington, DC*

*For information on La Renaissance Française
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