



ALLIANCE FRANCAISE DE DARWIN

NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2010

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Mardi Gras



Firstly, we must all thank Zoe, Dick and Oscar for inviting members to celebrate Mardi Gras at their beautiful home. It was wonderful to meet so many long term members and to be able to greet so many new faces. As usual, it was a very successful event and has always been one of the highlights of the year for Alliance members. Thank you again Zoe and Dick. We are already looking forward to next year.



Membership

Please note that membership are now due. It is still at a very affordable \$20 for singles and \$30 for families. Membership entitles you to discounted entry to all of our social activities and to receive the newsletter.

French Movie Night and Wine & Cheese

The discount for Bastille Ball is quite often nearly the amount of the membership.

Please note our film nights on **Thursdays**

- **March, 25th 2010**
- **April, 29th 2010**
- **May, 27th 2010**
- **June, 24th 2010**
- **August, 26th 2010**
- **October, 28th 2010**

\$15 for non members
\$12 for members



Our next film night is on **Thursday March 25th** at the Theatrette of the Museum and Art Gallery of the NT, beginning with wine and cheese at 18.30pm with the movie starting at 19.00hrs. This month we will be showing the award winning film “Coco Avant Chanel” or “Chanel, The Early Years”. This film was written and directed by Anna Fontaine and with the lovely Audrey Tautou playing Chanel. The story being Chanel’s rise from obscurity to the world of high fashion. This film was an Oscar nominee, winning two awards and seventeen world awards altogether.

Unfortunately I will not be able to see this film as I am going to Canberra to see the “French Treasures” exhibition. Just how unlucky can I get!

Barbara

Starring: Audrey Tautou, Benoit Poelvoorde, Alessandro Nivola, Marie Gillain, Emmanuelle Devos, Regis Royer, Etienne Bartholomeus, Yan Duffas, Fabien Behar, Roch Leibovici

Director: Anne Fontaine

Runtime: 1 hr 50 mins

Genre: Dramas

The production was given the support of the Maison CHANEL, who opened their archives and collections. --
© Sony Pictures Classics.

Euthanasia article

The last French movie on Thursday March 25th, “I have loved you so long” was on the so sensitive topic of euthanasia which remains an important preoccupation, very controversial. Find below a short item detailing the situation in France.

France Approves Euthanasia Law Allowing Refusal of Treatment

by Steven Ertelt
April 13, 2005

Paris, France (LifeNews.com) –

A law in France comes just short of allowing euthanasia. The French Parliament approved a law allowing patients to refuse lifesaving medical treatment, though it doesn't allow doctors to engage in so-called "mercy killing."

The bill says medical treatment should not include "unreasonable efforts" and that a terminally ill patient should be able to "limit or stop all treatment."

Doctors can stop giving treatment when it "seems useless, disproportionate or has no effect other than maintaining life artificially."

The measure allows patients to request that doctors remove them from life-sustaining machines or medicines and critics call it a passive euthanasia bill by allowing doctors to halt treatment upon request.

The bill allows doctors to prescribe pain-relieving drugs, even if they could hasten the patient's death. It also authorizes family members to end support for unconscious relatives.

Still, the measure does not go as far as laws in the Netherlands and Belgium that permit active euthanasia under certain circumstances. Because of that, pro-life groups in France and the Catholic Church do not oppose it.

Though the bill received a strong vote, lawmakers in France and the nation's top doctors group opposes active euthanasia.

Health Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy proposed the provision, which also prevents taking doctors to court when they grant a request for passive euthanasia.

"With this law, the end of life in France will have another face: It will be a moment of choice and no longer a moment of submission," Douste-Blazy said, according to an Associated Press report.

Douste-Blazy agreed that French citizens are not looking to legalize active euthanasia.

The issue of legalizing euthanasia in France was advanced when 22 year-old Vincent Humbert, a paralyzed man, took his life with his mother's help. Humbert's mother allegedly injected him with a fatal dose of sedatives that placed him in a coma and doctors then agreed to cut his life support.

Just a day earlier, Vincent's book - *I Ask For the Right to Die* - which he dictated letter-by-letter to his mother by pressing his thumb against her hand to indicate each letter of every word - was published. In 2002, Vincent had written to President Jacques Chirac, requesting the right to die, but to no avail.

Master Pieces from Paris

Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne and beyond feature 112 of some of the best-known works of modern art from the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, one of the great museums of 19th-century art. Famous works include Van Gogh's *Bedroom at Arles* 1889, Cézanne's beloved *Mount Saint-Victoire* c 1890, Gauguin's *Tahitian women* 1891, as well as many other great examples of Post-Impressionist art. A collaboration between the Musée d'Orsay and the National Gallery of Australia, this extraordinary exhibition is one of the most spectacular to come to Australia

For further information, visit the website: www.nga.gov.au/Exhibition/MasterpiecesFromParis
(Season extended to 18 April)

New committee members

Once again, the Alliance has a full Committee with **Judy Moran** coming on board as our Treasurer (was that breeze that wafted through my home a sigh of relief from Natalie and Linda?) Also **Jill Mortimer** has taken on the position of grants coordinator.

We are all very grateful to Judy and Jill for joining our Committee and hope they will enjoy their time with the Alliance. I am sure that Lea will have told them how friendly we are!

We also take this opportunity to thank Linda for staying so long while we tried to replace her. She had been a real champion!

Paris Match article



Paris Match is one of France's most successful and influential weekly magazines. It covers major national and international news along with celebrity lifestyle features. It was founded in 1949 by the industrialist Jean Prouvost.

I found this delightful article in a travel magazine and thought I would pass it on:

PARIS MATCH BRETON ST

It strikes me as odd that a bride should take a pair of scissors and cut up her dress at her wedding reception. Could it be that this is the essential difference between a British and a French wedding. But there are other distinctions to be considered. I was at the wedding of a young Parisian couple in Tregorm, a village in Brittany's Cotes D'Armor. Formality was shunned. They were married by a farmer, the groom doubled up as a parking attendant, there were no boring speeches or wedding cake. "Le Mariage" is a non-secular affair in France, signed and sealed in ten minutes at the town hall in Tregorm. The Farmer is the Mayor and it is his job to rubber stamp the union. But Tregorm's chunky grey stone 15th century church fine photo opportunity for camera laden guests. The bride, a literature student at the Sorbonne, her stylish white halter-neck bodice and flouncy skirt still intact wandered down the aisle unannounced while her groom (an Engineer) finished a cigarette outside. Just before the blessing, the priest signaled those with cameras to step up to the altar so they may have a better view. I looked around the church at the 100 or so present and the congregation wore mainly casual clothes. Some wore colourful suits, but there were few hats and no tails. A Breton band called Les Plouaret- a trio of chubby pensioners from a nearby village, with ruddy smiling faces led the procession from the church.

The next time I saw the groom he was standing in a muddy field. We had been part of a convoy of cars which weaved its way through tiny country lanes to the reception. In keeping with French tradition, we tooted our horns loudly at any thing that moved, an oncoming tractor, nonchalant farmers, lively sheep dogs and grazing cows. The convoy halted sharply. We had arrived. It was chaos. Too many cars and not enough field. There was the groom waving arms and directing cars into hedgerows. Meanwhile, an apparently unperturbed Chef was sitting in a pit roasting a pig. We were in a large romantic valley at a large converted 15th century mill house, owned by the bridegroom's family. The river Leguer flows through the forest turning a large wooden wheel. Another English guest asked me "Do you think it will be like one of those French Films where you find clandestine couples in every corner?" I could find no evidence of free love but plenty of free champagne, enough to occupy 200 guests for two hours. But something was definitely going on in the mushroom house! A psychedelic orgy? No it was the venue for a delicious five course feast. This vast construction had been converted into an ornate dining hall with a dance floor and a bar at one end. Even the concrete floor had been hand decorated by the bridegroom's sister. The happy couple sat with friends-older family members were relegated to other tables. We ate ham, chicken, pate, salad with prawns, rice and salmon, the roasted pork, camembert and chevre, chocolate gateau and red currant and black currant mousse, all this washed down with copious quantities of Muscadet and Chateau Larcharas. Whenever anybody felt like it, they would jump up

and sing a song. Most of them were rowdy old school numbers. After the bridegroom had performed a tangled ceremony with several guests which involved drinking several bottles of the “good red” and then wiping their mouths on their sleeves the bride jumped up and declared “Le Mari est propre”. This is a soul-cleansing exercise and not just an excuse to get inebriated. The bride turned to me adding “Il boit comme un trou”. I will not forget the scene at 5am. The bride was dancing freely with her adulterated wedding dress cut to above the knee and a cluster of inebriated men were bobbing around with the remains of her skirt draped a round their heads.

Humour

La blague du mois:



Un ours, un dauphin et un crocodile parlent de leur prochaines vacances.

L'ours dit :

- Vu que toute ma famille possède une bonne fourrure, nous avons décidé de partir dans un pays froid et ça sera le pole nord...

Le dauphin dit :

- Vu que toute ma famille possède des nageoires, nous avons opté pour les vacances au grand large dans l'océan Atlantique....

Le crocodile quant à lui :

- Ma femme a une grande gueule, mes enfants ont une grande gueule, en ce qui concerne la mienne n'en parlons pas, elle est encore plus grande. c'est pour cela qu'on a décidé de passer nos vacances en France !

Cartoon “Le Chat” by Geluck

Phillipe Geluck is a Franco-Belgian artist very famous in France. He make comments about the news on TV, radio and newspapers with a lot of humour and a great sense of analysis. Since 1983, he had created the cartoon character “Le Chat” who is his best friend to make satire.



You can visit his website on www.geluck.com

*Have a lovely Easter.
Barbara*



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Jack Douzmanian
Vivienne Blandy

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