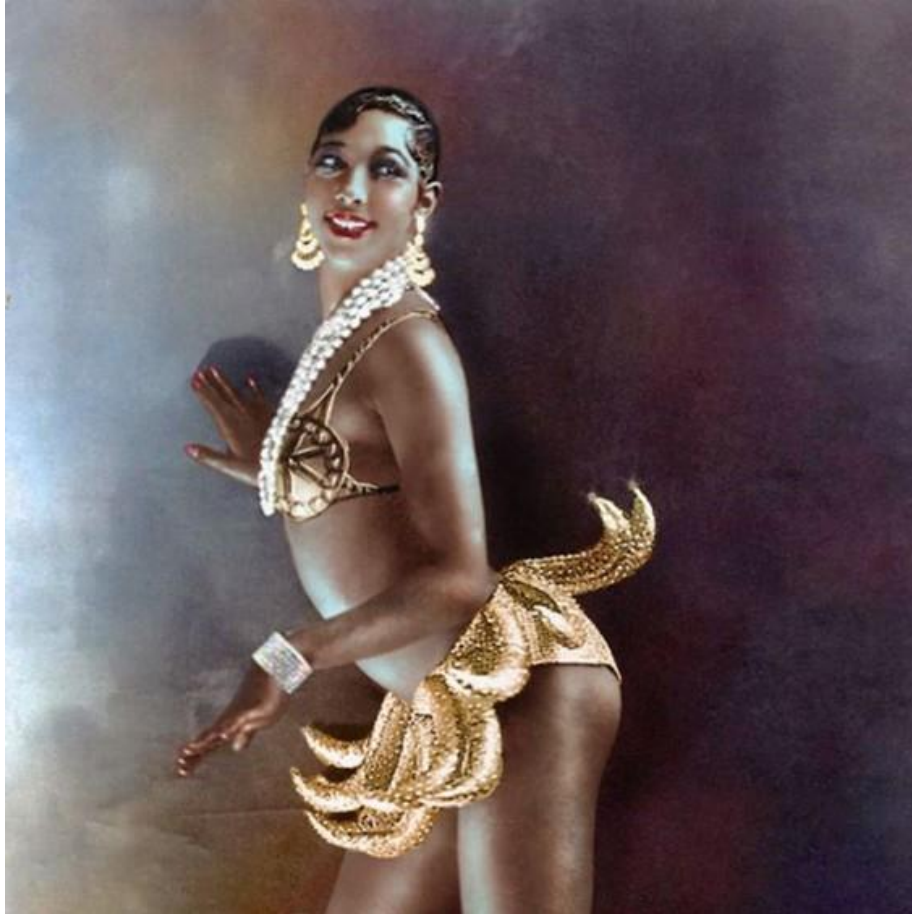


# Lecture Series

February / March 2023



## *Escaping to Paris*

Creative American Women of the Parisian Avant-Garde

*with Sylvia Sagona*

**Travels Through Time**

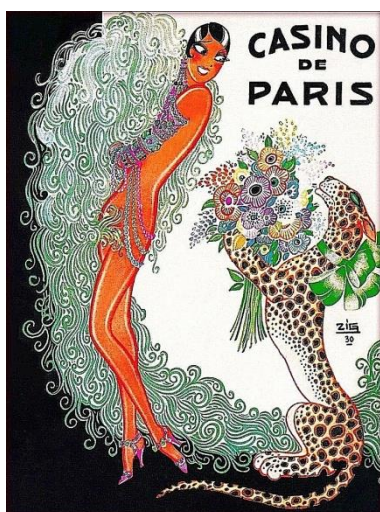
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## Escaping to Paris Lectures



**PARIS** of the Third Republic (1870-1940] was the artistic centre of the world and was a beacon to creative people chafing under the political or cultural constraints of their own country. This was especially true for American women whose innovative work was either ignored or considered scandalous. The Parisian artistic world also showed an amazing tolerance for same sex female couples and bisexuality.

This lecture series will look at the fascinating lives of American dancers, writers and painters who had to leave America and undergo the difficulties of negotiating a different language and social code in the cause of practising their art. Their determination and daring remain inspiring even today.

### Lecture Series Details

This lecture series will consist of 3 x 1 hour lectures plus discussion. The Friday stream will also be open for people to join by Zoom. Please select only one stream on the enrolment form.

#### Dates

Stream 1 : Wednesdays – Feb 22, Mar 1, 8

Stream 2 : Fridays – Feb 24, Mar 3, 10

#### Time

10:30-11:30AM (Doors open for coffee at 10:15)

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#### Cost

The cost for the 3 sessions is \$100 (incl GST)

#### Venue

In person – 5 Grattan St, Hawthorn

Zoom lectures (Friday's only) – details will be sent on enrolment

## Lecture 1 – February 22 / 24

### *Out of Step*

#### *The American dancers - Loie Fuller, Isadora Duncan and Josephine Baker*



This is the story of the groundbreaking careers of three remarkable women who fled the racial and artistic constraints of America to find freedom of expression in Paris. **Loie Fuller**, icon of art deco Paris, was a pioneer of modern dance techniques combining theatrical lighting and fluorescent chemicals on fabrics to create a breathtaking spectacle.

**Isadora Duncan**, aspired to unite poetry, art and dance in homage to Ancient Greece in her barefoot scantily clad interpretations of classical music. She defied all social norms and suffered a tragic private life.

**Josephine Baker** caused a sensation with her banana dance and became the icon of the Paris Jazz Age. Graduating from chorus line to movies and working for the Resistance, she became the first black woman to be interred in the Pantheon.

## Lecture 2 – March 1 / 3

### *Off the Page*

#### *The American writers and publishers - Gertrude Stein, Sylvia Beach and Natalie Barney*



**Gertrude Stein**, patron of Matisse and Picasso, and writer of experimental prose, established herself as the unofficial spokesperson of the Lost Generation of American writers in Paris in the early 1920s. Writers such as Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald and Ezra Pound met in her salon and frequented **Sylvia Beach's** little English language bookshop which became the epicentre of English language books in Paris. Beach would publish James Joyce's *Ulysses* when it was banned in America. Both Beach and Stein attended the weekly lesbian salon of **Nathalie Clifford Barney** in Saint Germain where same sex erotica was openly discussed in an atmosphere of Parisian tolerance, and where many of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most significant writers and painters of the Western world gathered. This is Left Bank Paris at its creative height.

## Lecture 3 – March 8 / 10

### *Out of Focus*

#### *American painters - Mary Cassatt, Romaine Brooks and Anna Klumpke*



**Mary Cassatt**, from a wealthy Pennsylvanian family, was influenced by the ideas of the New Woman and left for Paris after finding too few opportunities for female artistic freedom in America. In Paris she met the same restrictions with Salon art and so, influenced by Degas, began exhibiting with the Impressionists. Her insights into bourgeois female life are only recently being appreciated.

**Romaine Brooks**, lived most of her life in Paris where she was a major figure of the artistic counter culture. However, she remained aloof from all artistic trends, painting, in her palette of black, white, and greys, haunting portraits of socialites and intellectuals of the European and American upper class. She moved in brilliant circles and, while resisting companionship, was the object of violent passions.

**Anna Klumpke** spent extended periods in France and Germany as her parents tried to find a cure for her disability. As a child she had been gifted a doll representing the famous French animal painter, **Rosa Bonheur**, whom she finally met when she asked to paint her portrait. Despite the 34 year difference they formed a couple in the last year of Bonheur's life and Klumpke inherited her estate and preserved her legacy. Bonheur was a celebrity in her day and is at present the subject of an exhibition at the Musée d'Orsay.