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Edited by Sylvie Eve Blum-Reid

Impressions from Paris

Women Creatives in Interwar Years France

CURATING AND INTERPRETING CULTURE

“Impressions from Paris: Women Creatives in Interwar Years France,” edited by Sylvie Blum-Reid and published by Vernon Press, has gathered an inspiring gallery of talented women who, in the 1920s and the 1930s, lived, worked, and created in the culturally and socially vibrant environment that was Paris at the time. It shows convincingly how these exceptional women were able to make their marks with fervent originality. We meet both familiar and rediscovered figures: Josephine Baker, Colette, Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, Sonia Delaunay, Janet Flanner, Françoise Gilot, Irène Némirovsky, Anaïs Nin and Doria Shafik. Nine highly competent contributors participated in the project: Melba Joyce Boyd, Sherry Ann Buckberrrough, Dantzel Cenatiempo, Catherine R. Montfort, Clara Oropeza, Catherine Portuges, Adeline Soldin, and Samia Spencer. Their essays, all painstakingly researched and clearly written, succeed in presenting the life, the accomplishments, and the impact of these women in a variety of fields: visual and performance arts, design, gastronomy, fashion, literature, cinema, mythography, philosophy, academia and politics. The book is a valuable addition to cultural, gender, and women’s studies, and it deserves a place next to critically acclaimed works such as “Women of the Left Bank: Paris, 1900-1940” by Shari Benstock (1986) and “Paris was a Woman: Portraits from the Left Bank” by Andrea Weiss (1995).

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About the editor

Sylvie Eve Blum-Reid is the author of ‘Traveling in French Cinema’ (2016) and ‘East-West Encounters. Franco-Asian Cinema and Literature’ (2003). Her research interests include travel narratives, displacements, 1930s cinema and culture in France, expatriate female artists in interwar France, and fashion and photography. She earned a Ph.D. in French Literature and Film from the University of Iowa, where she studied 1930s French Culture and Film. She also did a year of research at Paris III - Sorbonne Nouvelle where she was enrolled in DEA classes in Film Studies. Her Ph.D. dissertation was devoted to Marguerite Duras, Patrick Modiano and Georges Perec, “Writing Nostalgia: Fiction and Photography” —an area that is still part of her ongoing research.

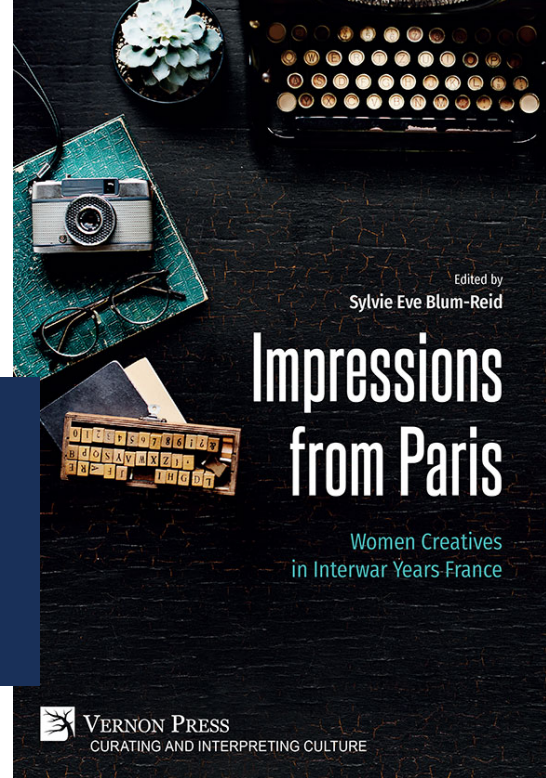
Summary

‘Impressions from Paris’ studies the contributions of various women artists and writers who lived in Paris during the Interwar Years, from the 1920s to 1940. The “Roaring Twenties” constituted years of experimentation and freedom to test new techniques and lifestyles at a time affected by serious political changes leading to World War II. Their trajectories have left traces that can be mapped out, studied, and addressed today, a hundred years later. The volume revisits their experiences through various lenses that include art history, gender, fashion, literary analysis, psychology, philosophy, as well as film and food. The volume revisits the artistic, literary, and journalistic contributions of women worldwide, including France, as they flocked to Paris from the 1920s to 1940. The overall principle lies in the inclusion of female painters, visual artists, and writers from diverse international and national backgrounds. Scholars who participate in the volume explore the possibilities presented in a modern literary and artistic history while building on previous scholarship. Two seminal books and a documentary film inspire this project: Shari Benstock’s ‘Women of the Left Bank. Paris 1900-1940’ (Texas UP 1986) and Andrea Weiss’s ‘Paris was a woman. Portraits from the Left Bank’ (HarperSanFrancisco 1995), which in turn produced an eponymous film (Greta Schiller/Andrea Weiss 1996). These works highlight the community of women artists, editors and writers during the interwar years in Paris. There is scholarship in the area, although most of it is scattered in single monographs, crossing various genres, and various languages, from (recent) graphic novels, to fiction, biographical studies, cultural histories as well as scholarly artistic and literary studies.

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