



The French Music & History

Lecture Series I

By *Miss Josie Gonot*,

**French Historian, Vocalist,
Language Instructor and Public Speaker**



Each of the following educational programs combines a topic of **French History** with intermittent **live piano/vocal performance**. Music pieces are sung in French and relate to the lecture content and/or the historical period.

***Note:** English-language vocal selections can be substituted upon request. These substitutions have been carefully chosen for each topic and are offered to maintain the interest of diverse and varied audiences.*

These unique programs include the following:

- 1) audience handouts for up to 25 guests. These “take-home” sets *may* include **French sheet music/lyrics, a Sources List used for the historical research, and suggested reading for further study, incl. trusted audio-visual materials,**
- 2) 3-4 selections live piano/vocal music,
- 3) Audio-video features (if applicable)
- 4) a display of topic-related materials through which guests may browse during intermission and immediately following each lecture.

✿ Two Pricing Structures ✿

🎵 This dramatic 5-part **series** may be purchased at the package price of \$1,500 payable in advance, *or*

🎵 All 2-hour programs may be purchased separately for the price of \$350 per lecture.

♥ Send inquiries to Josie.Gonot@Outlook.com

♥ See the full selection of French language and culture services available at www.ChateauGonot.com

♥ To schedule a program , contact *Miss Gonot* directly at (614) 209-3337.

Speaker Biography of...

Miss Josie Gonot



La Petite Josie first spoke French in the home of her Syrian/Lebanese grandmother, Hedia. Madame Gonot, a French historian, language teacher, vocalist, and public speaker, holds a BA in French Language (minor: Spanish) from Capital University and has completed graduate courses in Education at both The Ohio State University and Ashland University.

♥🎵🎵 A professional vocalist of over 30 years, she has performed various genres of French and American music in Ohio and North Carolina.

Ms. Gonot independently created and developed *The French Music and History Lecture Series*, as well as *A Taste of*

France, a series of authentic *dégustations*, or food-tasting programs. She teaches French and Spanish to both adults and young people at her home office in Gahanna.

French Love, Art, & MADNESS



Brilliance or Mental Illness?

This lecture examines the link between creativity and Manic-Depressive illness in the personal lives and careers of

Paul Gauguin

Van Gogh

Victor Hugo

and

**Charles
Baudelaire**

This biographical program examines the relationship between famous French artists and their documented struggles with mental illness. The lecture is, in large part, based upon the profound medical research of Dr. Kay Redfield Jamison in her best-selling book on creative genius, *Touched by Fire*.

🎵 Enjoy dramatic live vocal performances to highlight the biographies.

♥ Hear actual letters written from Vincent VanGogh to his financial mentor, best friend, and beloved brother “Theo”.

♠ Discover modern research examining the genetic link between Bi-Polar Disorder and creative productivity.

♥ Browse an extensive exhibit of books, poetry and paintings by various French tormented artists.

♠ Various audience handouts include a comprehensive list of famous composers, musicians, poets, playwrights, and artists who were known to be diagnosed and/or hospitalized due to struggles with mental illness.

The King, The Queen & The Mistress:
The Great Royal Mistresses
of the French Court

This French history lecture discusses the most powerful women of the French court. We examine the traditional roles and duties of both the queen and the official mistress. Within these great “divisions of power” surrounding the King, *anything* was *fair* in *love* and *war*.

Which royal mistresses sent strategic battle plans to generals at the front?

Which one received government money to build her infamous porcelain factory and private opera house?

Which queen received marriage counsel *and* a prediction of her husband’s death from Nostradamus?

At the top of the Versailles Palace Grand Staircase, which direction would *you* turn for the evening?

We will discuss the following celebrated and documented liaisons:

Louis XV & Madame de Pompadour

Henri II & Diane de Poitiers

“The Sun King” Louis XIV & Madame de Montespan

♣ Live vocal performances from Madame Gonot highlight each love triangle.

♣ Audience handouts include list of key figures and dates within each monarchy and a suggested reading list of biographical books that are available for check-out at the Columbus Metropolitan Library.

♣ Guests are invited to browse an extensive book and picture exhibit of the queens, their elegant rivals, and their many opulent chateaux residences of the Loire Valley.



“The story of France’s beloved “Little Sparrow” is a testimony to the endurance of the human spirit itself.”

-Paris Match Magazine, 1963

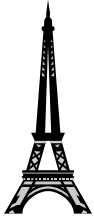


The Tragic Life and Death of Edith Piaf:

An intimate biographical lecture on the international music career of “The Little Sparrow”, legendary French singer, Edith Piaf (1915-1963).

Born into 1915 Paris poverty, Edith Giovanna became a street singer at age 15. By 1935, she met Louis Leplée, her first nightclub employer. Leplée was later murdered, resulting in public suspicion of Piaf. However innocent, Edith’s association with this crime launched her career. Soon she was in the best French music halls.

Her infamous songs about lost lovers, alcohol, and tragedy, delivered in her signature unique voice, made her an international star. In addition to numerous visits to prisoner of war camps during WWII, Edith also sang in the U.S. to tremendous acclaim.



Following a long fight with alcohol and drug Dependence, Piaf died in 1963. Her body was transported in secret back to Paris. Her best friend, Marlene Dietrich, was among the millions of mourners who crowded the streets of Paris that rainy morning of the funeral.

This intimate program features:

- 🎵 Live vocal performance of 4 popular Piaf songs, including “La Vie en Rose.” Ms. Gonot dresses *en caractre*, wearing traditional Edith Piaf clothing & jewelry.
- 🎵 30- min. video of interview footage & rare performance clips
- 🎵 An extensive collection of Piaf memorabilia, including original recordings, authentic French media publicity, books, magazines, newspapers, photographs, etc., through which the audience may browse and listen.



The Great French

Love Letters:

The French did invent Love, didn't they? *Ooo, La-La!* Hear the actual romantic details from some of the most famous love letters documented by biographers and once penned by the tormented ...



- ♥ novelist **Victor Hugo** (*Les Misérables*) to his public mistress of 40 yrs, French actress Juliette Drouet,
 - ♥ young army general, **Napoléon Bonaparte** to his wayward Joséphine,
 - ♥ poet **Charles Baudelaire**, who sent anonymous love letters for over 2 years to Parisian aristocrat and courtesan, Madame Sabatier,
 - ♥ scientist **Pierre Curie** to his only "intellectual equal" and future wife, Marie Sklodovska. (This beautiful Polish scholar went on to become the only woman in the world to win the celebrated Nobel Prize twice.)
- ◆ Live vocal performances from Madame Gonot highlight each story of romantic correspondence.
 - ◆ Audience handouts include colorful copies of actual love letters and a suggested reading list of books that are available for check-out at the Columbus Metropolitan Library.
 - ◆ Guests can browse an extensive exhibit of photographs, books, and letters by various French and American artists, writers, actors, political figures and musicians.



FROM NOSTRADAMUS TO NOTRE DAME:

The Miraculous in French History

In a single century, during a fevered pitch of Gothic and Romanesque construction, the French built 81 cathedrals and over 500 churches. In 1555, a well-known French physician named **Michel de Nostradamus**, risks his reputation in medicine *and his life* by publishing a book of supernatural prophecies. His family name, translated from the Provençal Latin dialect, means “Our Lady”.

This non-denominational lecture discusses historical events of unexplained, or “miraculous” nature that later impacted the modern economy of France. These may include the following:

♠ The short life of a peasant shepherd girl, **Jeanne d’Arc**, who changed the entire tide of French *and* British history by mysteriously winning the siege of Orléans. She chose death rather than to deny that her successful battle plans had been directed by the voices of St. Catherine and an archangel named Michael.

♠ The death of **King Henri II**, an unheeded prediction to Queen Catherine de Medici by a court physician named Michel de **Nostradamus**. How did information about this deadly jousting match later influence the bloody **St Bartholomew’s Massacre** all over France and years of Protestant backlash against the Crown?

♠ The world-renown city of **Lourdes**, which houses the grotto where the Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous on a chilly February day on 1858. There were 17 subsequent apparitions. During a national outbreak of public hysteria, French Emperor Napoleon III would experience his *own* miracle causing his sudden and unexpected order to re-open the mysterious grotto. Today it receives over 7 million visitors a year.

♠ On the night of July 18, 1830, a humble nun, **Catherine Labouré**, was led by a mysterious “guardian angel” into a chapel on the Rue de Bac in Paris where the (quote) “*Queen of Heaven*” appeared, directing her to strike a medal that is still worn today by pilgrims who continue to flock to this Paris street from all over the world.