

SYBIL CANAC
RENÉE GRIMAUD | KATIA THOMAS

111
PLACES IN
PARIS



THAT YOU
SHOULDN'T
MISS

emons:

1 Adzak Museum-Workshop

The home of an illusion artist

The fate of Royston Wright, otherwise known as Roy Adzak, was a strange one. Born in England in 1928, he was an engineer, sculptor, painter, photographer, and globetrotter. During archaeological digs in Afghanistan, he noticed that when the sun hit the concave curves of pottery, it gave the illusion of convex reliefs. Adzak spent the rest of his life trying to recreate this optical illusion. In 1962, not far from Montparnasse, he moved into an old house with a garden and a garage that would be his atelier. Twenty years later, he built it up into a building of four floors. At the top of the façade, he put the casting of his head and on the ground, the imprint of his hands.

Since 1955, Adzak worked on prints, fossilizations, and other “negative objects” – concave designs in anthropomorphic or otherwise nature-inspired forms. He also plastered living models. His atelier contains his own mummified body, wrapped in medical bandages and plaster, along with other astonishing works: columns supporting silhouettes in relief and counter-relief, prints of human body parts, animal and vegetable dehydrations, a pyramid containing the cadaver of a raven.

During his lifetime, his work was shown by well-known gallerists such as Iris Clert. But the artist who'd worked on the traces of time was its first victim. Adzak often practiced complicated medical techniques on himself – which is how he died in 1987 at the age of 59. Buried in the Montparnasse cemetery, his grave is crowned with a little pyramid where you can see his reflection. His atelier and his house have remained intact. The little garden is home to ceramic chickens, owls, and cats by his nephew Nicholas Wright. His house is occupied by artists in residence.

Adzak's friend and fellow Brit Margaret Crowther created the museum thirty years ago, and today organizes art shows and poetry readings in the space.



Address 3 Rue Jonquoy, 75014 Paris, +33 (0)1 45 43 01 98 or +33 (0)9 61 23 20 91 |

Getting there Metro to Plaisance (Line 13) | **Hours** Sun 3pm–9pm and by appointment.

Free entry. | **Tip** In the Plaisance neighborhood, at number 19bis Rue Jonquoy, you can also find the home and atelier of the artist Zao Wou-Ki. The great Chinese painter, who died in 2013 at the age of 93, lived there from 1960 to 2011.



2 The Animal Cemetery

A pet cemetery for the dearly departed

Seeing the number of people who come to pay homage to their departed pets, leaving a bouquet of flowers or a little souvenir, you may be surprised to find yourself moved to the point of forgetting that you are not in a human cemetery. Besides dogs, which take up most of the plots, many other creatures have lucked into this chic final resting place: cats, birds, rabbits, hamsters, fish, horses, and even a monkey.

The names on the epitaphs attest to the affection that their owners felt for them: Bibi, Fury, Tendresse, B.b., Veinard, Pupuce, Sultan, Mouchette, etc. There's even one headstone expressing the love of a mother for her dog Loulou, who saved her child from drowning in the Garonne River in 1985.

There are also some animal celebrities here: Rintintin, the valiant young hero of the TV series of the same name; Prince of Wales, who appeared 406 times on stage at the Théâtre du Gymnase in 1905 and 1906 (as you can read on his epitaph). Then there is Barry, who belonged to the monks of the Hospice du Grand-Saint-Bernard. On the monument erected at the entrance of the cemetery, the inscription references the legend according to which "after saving the lives of 40 people, [Barry] was killed by the 41st."

The cemetery came into being at the end of the 19th century thanks to two animal-lovers: Georges Harmois, a publicist, and Marguerite Durand, the founder of the newspaper *La Fronde*. Until then, the bodies of departed pets were tossed in the trash or in the Seine. On June 21, 1898, a law was passed allowing pets to be buried "in a grave situated as often as possible one hundred meters from the dwellings of their masters and in such a way that the cadaver would be covered by a layer of earth having at least one meter of thickness." The only condition was that the tombs not resemble human graves. Since then, we may have forgotten this rule a bit!



Address 4 Pont de Clichy, 92600 Asnières-sur-Seine, +33 (0)1 40 86 21 11 | **Getting there** Metro to Gabriel Péri (Line 13) or RER to Gare d'Asnières-sur-Seine | **Hours** Every day but Mon, Mar 16–Oct 15, 10am–6pm; off-season 10am–4:30pm. Closed for all holidays except Nov 1. | **Tip** On the platform at the foot of the cemetery you can hop on a boat that will take you down the Seine – with music! – all the way to Saint-Cloud and back. It is a great way to discover the banks of the river and Île de la Jatte and its “Temple of Love” (Temple de l'Amour, www.tourisme92.com).

3__Anis Gras Cultural Center

A liqueur with history

For those who've tried it, Anis Gras is a Proustian liqueur evocative of nostalgic memories, because it is no longer made in the red brick factory whose long wall borders one of the main streets of Arcueil. Remaining almost perfectly intact, the factory was constructed by the initiative of Émile Raspail in the 1870s. This Paris-trained engineer was the son of François-Vincent Raspail, the socialist deputy and biologist-doctor who gave his name to the famous boulevard in Paris. He devoted himself in service to the poor and ultimately invented a curative camphor-based digestive liqueur.

When Émile Raspail took over, he placed the factory right next to his house in Arcueil to better run the place. The factory kept growing to over 40,000 square feet, reaching all the way to the corner of Avenue Laplace and Rue Lénine.

Émile Raspail was mayor of the city from 1878 until his death in 1887, and he left his mark on the city, bringing it a great number of modern constructions. After his death, his family continued his work for some time before selling the business to the Erven Lucas Bols establishment, producers of “hygienic” liqueurs. It wasn't until 1963 that the famous Frères Gras arrived, who commercialized the long-reputed Anis Gras anisette.

The factory, bought back by the town in 1981, was given to the association “Le lieu de l'autre” in 2005. The entry pavilion, the orangery, the beautiful glass window walls, and the old ateliers were well-conserved and now house a number of avant-garde artists. The beautiful industrial property is coming back to life with performances, exhibitions, concerts, and other events, not to mention a cafeteria that serves up its specialties every Friday from noon to 2:00pm: a house couscous dish and irresistible pastries washed down with a nice mint tea. Attention all foodies: reservations are required!



Address 55 Avenue Laplace, 94110 Arcueil, +33 (0)1 49 12 03 29, www.lieudelaautre.com |

Getting there RER to Laplace | **Tip** At 52 Avenue Laplace, you will find the chapel of the Immaculate Conception Franciscan nuns (*les franciscaines de l'Immaculée Conception*). Also known as the Auguste-Perret chapel, it was built by the Perret brotherhood between 1927 and 1929 and is a beautiful example of modern architecture. It was landmarked in 1999. Masses on Sundays and visits on heritage days (you can look up the yearly calendar of *les journées du patrimoine*).





Address 65 Rue Montmartre, 75002 Paris, +33 (0)1 83 95 46 77, www.lespadanslenoir.com | **Getting there** Metro to Sentier (Line 3) | **Hours** Mon–Fri noon–8pm, Sat 10am–8pm, some Thursday nights (*les nocturnes jeudis*) until 9pm | **Tip** Have you ever tried eating in total darkness? At first it is disorienting – you cannot see anything or anyone, and you lose your bearings. Here, the surprise menu is also served by the blind or visually impaired. Another trippy experience that sharpens the senses. (Dans le noir? 51 Rue Quincampoix, 75004 Paris, +33 (0)1 42 77 98 04)



105 — Square de la Roquette

The doors of the penitentiary

The two sentry boxes at the entry to the Square de la Roquette recall the more tragic days of French history. They're vestiges of the former Roquette prisons, built in 1830 and 1836 on either side of the street. The first, called Petite Roquette, was reserved for young convicts. The second, called Grande Roquette, was a *dépôt de condamnés*, or a "depot" for the condemned awaiting either prison time or the death penalty. The latter didn't have to walk more than a few steps to start their final voyage as, from 1951 on, the guillotine was installed on five slabs of stone right at the entry of the prison. You can still see them, encrusted in the asphalt of the road, at the intersection of Rue de la Roquette and Rue de la Croix-Faubin.

The Grande Roquette also undertook the killing of hostages by the *Fédérés* during the Commune de Paris in 1871. But shortly after the last execution, on February 2, 1899, it was closed and demolished.

The Petite Roquette, meanwhile, stayed open. The writer Jean Genet, an orphan and a young delinquent, was imprisoned there during three months in 1925, at the age of 15, before being sent to a "camp" (more like a prison for children) near Tours. From the 1930s on, it was reserved for women. Later, as the stone inscriptions attest, 4,000 women resistance fighters were jailed here from 1940 to 1944 for having battled against the occupiers.

Both Roquettees were demolished in 1975 and gave way to a square. The space itself was the site of another piece of history – that of Olympe de Gouges, the pioneer of feminism born in 1748, after whom the cultural center in the basement is named. The author of the *Déclaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne* (1791) was accused by the Jacobins of neglecting her domestic duties to get mixed up in politics, and was guillotined in 1793, at the height of the Reign of Terror.

106 — The Street Art of Montreuil

An open-air art gallery

The Street Art movement that made its début in France in the 1980s now has its own celebrities – Espion, Invader, Art of Popof, Nemo, Mosko and associates and Jérôme Mesnager, to name a few.

The little city of Montreuil has a great deal going on. It counts almost 800 working artists living within its walls. So it is neither a surprise that this pioneer town has turned into an open-air art gallery, with more than 80 large-scale graffiti works, nor that it launched its first Street Art Festival in September 2015.

Artists of all expressive forms convene over two days of outdoor performances and exhibitions all over the city's walls, which are temporarily proffered by willing owners to host works of graffiti, stencils, mosaics, or stickers. Street art is by nature ephemeral, but the style of each artist is generally quite distinct and recognizable. On one wall you will find the works of plastic artist JBC, a resident of Montreuil, who mostly creates collages.

Further on to the right on the same wall, a fresco called *La Compagnie du cinématographe* recalls that this was once the site of Pathé film studios. Charles Pathé chose the former enclosed market, covered entirely in glass windows, because it was the perfect place to have studios that would be flooded with natural light throughout the year. The place still exists today, although Pathé outgrew it in 1928, when he handed it over to a metalworking company. Under the splendid glass windows, which were named historical monuments in 1997, these mythical studios have been brought back to life since 2002, when the site was transformed into artist ateliers and, once again, film studios. Studio Albatros, run by Lucien and Lily Chemla, has become a performing arts workshop for young artists, writers, dancers, designers and filmmakers.

107 — The Suresnes Vineyards

The little white wine of the west

Who knew that on the building-covered hillsides of Suresnes, every year they harvest a nice fruity little white wine? With its southeast exposure on the slopes of Mont Valérien, the Clos du Pas Saint-Maurice vineyard is the biggest in Île-de-France, stretching over just one hectare of land. Run by the municipality itself, it is the only one in the region that produces a wine for sale, and the vinification takes place right on the premises.

Each year, the 4,800 vine plants produce between 4,500 and 5,000 bottles of a semi-dry wine, made from 85% Chardonnay and 15% Sauvignon grapes. The presence of the vineyard is hinted at in the names of the streets, including Rue des Vignes, Impasse des Vignerons, Rue des Bons-Raisins, and Rue du Port-aux-Vins.

At the beginning of the Middle Ages, Suresnes was a small village of vintners: Nicolas de Hacqueville, who ran the Hôtel-Dieu hospital, had patients drink the wine for its curative properties. And until the 17th century, Suresnes wine was considered one of the best vintages of the Île-de-France. It was even served at the tables of royals. But in 1709, a harsh winter came along and destroyed all the grapes, so that the entire vineyard had to be replanted. By the 19th century, the vineyard was back in action, producing a *p'tit bleu* made from black grapes, and an excellent white, both of which were the drink of choice in the *guinguettes* dance halls.

In 1926, the mayor of Suresnes, Henri Sellier, managed to save the vineyard at a time when the area was giving way to rapid urbanization. Other mayors followed his lead, and today the white wine of Suresnes continues to make residents and tourists alike very happy. After all, there's always a reason to indulge: salons, flea markets, open house days for the galleries, not to mention the Festival des Vendanges, which takes over the streets of Suresnes at the beginning of each October.

Authors



Renée Grimaud, the primary author of this guidebook, first came to Paris over forty years ago to study Classics, history, and art history, and has lived and worked here ever since. She is the author of many thematic and historical texts of the French capital. She has also collaborated on several guidebooks on Paris and Île-de-France.



Born in the heart of Paris, journalist **Sybil Canac** loves making new discoveries about her city, whether she's crossing it on foot, on her bike, or on the metro. She is the author of several books on the history and heritage of Paris. A dedicated Parisian for life, she also shares her findings on her blog: paris-de-toujours.over-blog.com.



Katia Thomas studied art history at the Sorbonne and began working as a guide in Paris in 2000. Since then, from neighborhood to neighborhood, from museum to museum, she's been traipsing all over the capital to discover its secrets and share them with others. The history and culture of the City of Lights continues to fascinate her!



Translator

Hadley Suter is a writer and translator living in New York. She teaches French at Columbia University and holds a Ph.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles.