

## NATIONAL FRENCH WEEK 1999 AT WHITTIER COLLEGE: PERFORMANCE OF FOUR PLAYS FROM JEAN TARDIEU'S *THÉÂTRE DE CHAMBRE*

About 350 Francophiles of all ages celebrated National French Week at Whittier College on November 10, 1999. There had never been so many French speakers on our campus in the history of the College. This large audience came from all parts of the larger Los Angeles region to see four plays from Jean Tardieu's *Théâtre de Chambre: Monsieur moi, La Sonate et les trois messieurs, Le Guichet*, and *Il y avait foule au manoir*. Veteran actor and director Claude Beauclair, who heads the theater group *Inter-Europe Spectacles*, led this performance brilliantly along with actors Françoise Majoret and André Nerman.

Clearly, this event marked one of the highlights of the first National French Week in the greater Los Angeles area. It was free to the public and broadly advertised in the print media (*LA Times*, *Whittier Daily News*, *Le Bulletin de l'AATF-SC*) as well as on the Internet. These two factors helped attract all these people to our celebration. The crowd, consisting mostly of high school, college, and university students and professors, as well as of members of Los Angeles Francophile associations came from as far as Westwood, Pasadena, Long Beach, and Fullerton.<sup>1</sup>

This celebration owes a great deal of its success to the enthusiasm, support, and philanthropy of several groups. The Southern California Chapter of the AATF and the National AATF through a Small Grant were absolutely instrumental through their generosity, as well as the *Alliance Française de la Riviera Californienne*. Additionally, Whittier College participated through its French Club, through the office of the Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and through the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. Several individuals deserve particular praise, namely Dean David Muller, Dr. Jayne Abrate, Dr. Véronique Flambard-Weisbart, Gail de Mallac, Véronique Sweat, David Palmer, Lina Katrova, as well as all my colleagues in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at Whittier College.

Our guests' enjoyment and enthusiasm coupled with all the positive feedback following the show, make us look forward to next Fall's performance during National French Week 2000! *Vive la Semaine du Français!*

Marie-Magdeleine Chirol  
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<sup>1</sup>Affiliation on record of some of the

attendees:

- from high schools: Warren High School, Compton High School, St. Joseph High School;
- from colleges and universities: Cerritos College, Pomona College, Whittier College, Biola University, Chapman University, Cal-State LA., Cal-State Fullerton, Cal-State Long Beach, Loyola Marymount University, University of Southern California;
- from Francophile associations: Canadian French Club, *Alliance Française de Pasadena*, *Alliance Française de la Riviera Californienne*.