

FAMOUS MEN AND WOMEN

INFORMATIONS

Sources and bibliography

L'Encyclopédie du Pays Catalan
(Editions Privat)

Links

www.tourisme-pyreneesorientales.com

www.picasso.fr

www.raoul-dufy.com

www.museemaillol.com

www.libreriaatalana.com

“Once upon a time... There was a land of artists”

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“Some geniuses have passed through these parts, including Pablo Casala, Hyacinthe Rigaud, Matisse, Picasso, Soutine and Maillol, but today there is also a great number of artists, plastic artists, musicians and writers who work on their masterpieces every day in our Catalan Country, and who have become famous well beyond our borders.

The heart and soul of the Catalan Countries is also full of modernity. The sculptor Aristide Maillol was born in Banyuls-sur-Mer. The lights of Collioure inspired Fauvism artists: Matisse, Derain. It was in Céret, “The Mecca of Cubism” and bullfighting capital of Roussillon that “Picasso’s Gang” came to live, as well as Soutine and the avant-gardist musician Déodat de Séverac. It was in Prades that the greatest cello player in the world, Pablo Casals created his famous festival. It was in Salses that the Nobel laureate in Literature Claude Simon chose to live. It was Perpignan that Salvador Dali chose as the “centre of the universe”, which became the pivotal point of his fertile and delusional world...

It is in Roussillon, that many creators have chosen to live today, whether they were born there or not: painters, sculptors, musicians, singers, writers, dancers, actors, photographers and videographers. It is without a doubt this frenzy, this fervour that explains the success and continuity of numerous classical, religious, contemporary or jazz music festivals, and big cinematographic, choreographic, theatre, photography or sporting events...” (text by Joel Mettay).

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FAMOUS MEN AND WOMEN

Political and literary men and women

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ARTHUR CONTE (1920-2013)

Former minister and president of the ORTF (French agency for public radio and television), he is the author of an evocative novel about the Salses site: "la vigne sous le rempart".



FRANCOIS ARAGO (1786-1853)

Astronomer, physician and politician. He was entrusted to measure the arc of the terrestrial meridian between Paris and Valencia. Academician, then director of the Observatory. He made many discoveries in physics and astronomy. He was very popular and admired in Roussillon, and contributed to this region being integrated into France.



EMMANUEL BROUSSE (1866-1929)

Local politician for the department. In 1892, he was elected municipal councillor in Perpignan. In 1895, he was elected borough councillor for the township of Saillagouse and in 1898, he was elected general councillor. He published a book about French Cerdanya which helped his political career. In 1906, he became a deputy of Cerdanya



JOSEPH CASSANYES (1758-1843)

Deputy of the National Convention, he was sent as a representative on a mission with the Pyrénées-Orientales army and found himself alongside General Dagobert in the town of Puicerda. He was a member of the Council of Five Hundred in September 1797.



LOUIS COMPANYYO (1781-1871)

Doctor, naturalist, man of science, it is thanks to him that the Museum of Natural History was created in Perpignan. His most significant work: Histoire naturelle du département des P.O. (Natural history of the Pyrénées-Orientales department) in 3 volumes (1861/1864) printed by J.B. Alzine, can be seen at the CEDACC library.



VICTOR DALBIEZ (1876-1954)

Deputy Mayor of Perpignan, then president of the Conseil Général des Pyrénées-Orientales. Minister for the Liberated Regions.



LUDOVIC MASSE (1900-1982)

This teacher was born in Evol and participated in post-war mainstream literature alongside Henry Poulaille.



JULES PAMS (1852-1930)

Heir of a powerful dynasty of wealthy businessmen, grand bourgeois and art lovers, he was also the most important politician in Roussillon at the beginning of the 20th century.

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POMPEU FABRA (1868-1948)

As the Catalan language was disappearing and the culture was being resisted due to the Primo de Rivera dictatorship between 1923 and 1930, this qualified engineer was behind the standardisation of the Catalan language. Impeached and imprisoned two years after being appointed at the University of Barcelona, he took refuge in Prades from 1939, and stayed there until his death.



LOUIS NOGUÈRES (1881-1956)

Lawyer, deputy and president of the Conseil Général des Pyrénées-Orientales.



JEAN OLIBO (1909-2000)

Hero of the resistance, local politician for the department, friend of Jean Rous and François Desnoyer, Olibo was a humanist with a very strong character. Lawyer, deputy and president of the Conseil Général des Pyrénées-Orientales.



CHARLES RENOUVIER (1815-1903)

Philosopher born in Montpellier, he was the representative of French “néo-criticisme” with his work “La Science de la morale” (The Science of Morality).



ALFRED SAUVY (1898-1996)

A graduate from the Ecole Polytechnique and then statistician, he was one of the founders of INSEE and wrote for Combat, Le Nouvel Obs., Le Monde and L'Expansion. He served as advisor to French Minister Paul Reynaud and then for Mendès France, and founded the National Institute of Demographic Studies (INED). He was buried in Montalba-le-Château.



CLAUDE SIMON (1913-2005)

Master of the “Nouveau Roman” movement and Nobel laureate in literature in 1985. He lived in his family home in Salses.



EDMOND BRAZES (1893-1980)

Very popular writer from Roussillon. He took part in the foundation of Roussillon's Catalan Studies Group (GREC). An association created in around 1970 to promote the teaching of the Catalan language.

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Political and literary men and women

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SIMONE GAY (1898-1969)

she was the first female writer in the Catalan language and published several poems, as well as contributing to reviving the folklore of Roussillon..



JORDI PERE CERDA (1920-2011)

Writer and the most prominent Catalan author. It was under this alias that Antoni Cayrol, a native from Cerdanya, wrote poetic, theatrical and romantic works that were both rich and varied.



PAU CASALS (1876-1973)

Famous Catalan cello player and composer. At the end of 1939, he left Spain and took up exile in Prades, and there he founded the music festival that today bears his name.



JULI DELPONT (1865-1923)

Catalan poet who founded the magazine "Muntanyes regaladas". A well-known family of artists from Céret.



ANTOINE GUERRA

Under this one name, there are 3 painters. They lived in Perpignan and their artworks were displayed all over the Catalan Country. Antoni Guerra was the founder of the dynasty (1634-1705), his two sons would then successively take over the workshop. One of his sons, Antoni (1666-1711) became the official painter for King Philippe V of Spain. Francesc Guerra (1681-1729) then succeeded his brother while training other painters, such as Riudemond and his Negra nephews.



ARISTIDE MAILLOL (1861-1944)

Native of Banyuls-sur-Mer, painter and then sculptor, this artist was especially well-known for his nude women who were shapely and elegant. In Perpignan, his Venus can be seen at the Place de la Loge and La Méditerranée can be seen in the patio at the Town Hall. It is possible to visit his home and workshop.



ALEXANDRE JOSEPH OLIVA (1823-1890)

This sculptor founded his reputation on the quality of his marble busts. Just before his death, he was awarded the Legion of Honour and won first place at the Universal Exhibition.



HYACINTHE RIGAUD (1659-1743)

This painter was awarded a prize from the Royal Academy in 1682. He won the Rome Prize in 1685. He became especially well-known as a portrait painter. He excelled just as much in producing the physical appearance of his characters, as in the draperies and luxurious fabrics.

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Political and literary men and women **5**



ETIENNE TERRUS (1857-1922)

Etienne Terrus was a painter and watercolourist from Elne, and delicate colourist. He was a friend of Matisse, Derain and Maillol. He painted Catalan landscapes and bright skies. His artworks are on display at the Museum of Elne and the Musée Rigaud in Perpignan.



GUSTAVE VIOLET (1877-1952)

Sculptor and architect, graduate from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, but extremely attached to his Catalan country. He worked all materials but among his artworks are mostly objects made from terracotta. A friend of Maillol.



MARTIN VIVES (1905-1991)

Contemporary painter inspired by the school of Cézanne, gave a donation to the town of Prades. He taught at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts on rue Foch, he was curator of Musée Rigaud and reorganised it post-war. He contributed to the development and cultural offering of the city of Perpignan



HENRI MATISSE (1869 - 1954)

In 1905, Matisse arrived in the Catalan port. He was seduced by the light here and invited his friend André Derain to come and join him. The two “fauves” (nickname meaning ‘wild beasts’ given to them at the Salon d’Automne in 1905 due to their wild use of colour) were later joined by Vlaminck, Chabaud, Braque and native artists Terrus, Maillol and Daniel de Monfreid. Their paintings are displayed in the greatest museums in the world, really putting Collioure on the map, internationally.



ANDRE DERAIN (1880-1954)

Considered as one of the founding fathers of Fauvism, André Derain took part in the great adventures of modern art up until the First World War, then he chose to opt for a more figurative style of painting.



ELISABETH EIDENBENZ (1913-2011)

A teacher and nurse, this daughter of a Swiss pastor founded the Swiss Maternity Hospital in Elne at the Château des Bardou. Between 1939 and 1944, almost 600 children of refugees were born at the maternity hospital in good conditions. The Maternity Hospital in Elne was restored by the Town Hall and is now an exhibition centre and cultural venue.



CHARLES TRENET (1913-2001)

Known as the “Fou Chantant” (singing eccentric), this artist wrote a thousand songs, some of which are still highly popular today. His success was temporarily tarnished by questions about his attitude during the occupation, but he regained his popularity from 1981 when his work became popular with the younger generation. He was very popular right up until his death in 2001.

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ALBERT GISCLARD (1844-1909)

French graduate from the Ecole Polytechnique and designer of a suspended bridge system, he created Cassagne bridge which was designed and manufactured for the little yellow train of Cerdanya. He died in a tragic accident while working on the bridge in 1909 in Sauto.



RAOUL DUFY (1877-1953)

This artist, watercolourist, engraver and draftsman was invited to Céret in 1940 by Pierre Brune, then stayed in Perpignan. During this period of time, Dufy explored 3 favourite themes: reinterpretation of existing works, representation of music and paintings of flowers. Dufy also worked on decorative arts with Jean Lurçat's tapestries and became associated with a ceramicist.



PABLO PICASSO (1881-1973)

Spanish painter, draftsman, sculptor and engraver who spent most of his life in France, Picasso went to Perpignan several times and stayed with the Lazerne family between 1953 and 1955, while he was undergoing some changes in his personal life.



SALVADOR DALI (1904-1982)

This world-famous artist was born in Figueras. His eccentric way of life sometimes earned him more recognition than his already prolific work. When he was visiting the Pyrénées-Orientales with his muse and wife Gala, he famously declared that the train station in Perpignan was the centre of the universe. He died in the museum bearing his name in Figueras, that is just as famous world-wide as the artist himself.



FRANCOIS DESNOYER (1894-1972)

Born in Montauban, this artist left to fight in the war trenches and took to drawing for hours on end, to fight the boredom. He was demobilised following an injury and joined the Ecole National des Arts Décoratifs where he painted, created and met other artists. He left his vast collection to the town of Saint-Cyprien who then created the Desnoyer Museum.



CHARLES RENNIE MAC INTOSH (1868-1928)

This Scottish artist was the creator of the Modern Style movement (British Art Nouveau), architect, designer and watercolourist. He stayed in the Pyrénées-Orientales in the middle of the 1920s and along with his wife, devoted himself to interior design and painting. Permanent exhibition in Port-Vendres.



JACINT VERDAGUER (1845-1902)

This poet was a prominent figure of the Catalan Renaissance (Renaixença), priest and tutor for the Guell family, for wealthy businessmen and sponsors. He climbed to the peak of Mount Canigou in a cassock, and contributed to this site becoming the symbol of Catalan identity, with his poem "Canigo".



GEORGE-DANIEL DE MONFRIED (1856-1929)

French painter, sculptor, engraver, ceramicist and master glassblower, friend and confidant of Paul Gauguin. He is the father of writer Henry de Monfried.

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Dedicated men and women



LOUIS TORCATÍS (1904-1944)

This native of Tautavel and qualified teacher was a heroic figure of the resistance, thought to have been assassinated by the Germans in May 1944, after having saved his men.



ROSE BLANC, known as ROSETTE BLANC (1919-1943)

Born in Elne, died from typhus while being deported to Auschwitz in 1943. She was a communist activist and member of the French resistance.

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