

Journey in literature with the festival Transversales 2022



Clarisse Pedron, Gaëlle Debeaux and Thaïs Levard, organizers of the Transversales 2022 festival.

Can you remind us what the Transversales project is?

Gaëlle Debeaux: It is a festival supported by the Literature Department of Rennes 2 University, which has been held every year since 2011. The challenge is that it is both a pedagogical project that brings together teachers, researchers and students, and at the same time a real cultural proposal on the campus and beyond. We are fortunate to be able to rely again this year on many loyal partners both externally - the Champs Libres, the Théâtre National de Bretagne (TNB) cinema and the bookshop La Nuit des Temps - and internally - the Cultural Office, the organizations Ciné Tambour and Ad Hoc, the association of young researchers from the Centre d'Études des Littératures et Langues Anciennes et Modernes, the Common Documentation Service (SCD) and the EUR CAPS graduate school.

The festival is therefore largely supported by the students via the FTR2 association, from the proposal of the theme to its realization.

After having chosen dance in the previous edition, this one is dedicated to roaming. How was this theme chosen?

Clarisse Pedron (Master 1 student in General and Comparative Literature and Co-president of FTR2): I was inspired by last year's theme. In a way, dance made us travel, there was this idea of movement from a point A to other points. I thought of itinerancy by making two categories of subjects: physical on the one hand, with travel, exile, migration, tourism, pilgrimage; spiritual or psychological on the other hand with religious conversion, the motif of the quest, the learning novel... When you look at your library, you can always find books that lead you to travel. At the meeting to choose the theme in February, I brought books such as Pierre Bottero's *Ewilan's Quest*, Voltaire's *Candide*, Louis-Ferdinand Céline's *Journey to the End of the Night*, and Karine Giébel's *Satan était un ange*. After discussion, the theme was voted on almost unanimously, and the ideas kept coming!

Did this unifying theme attract volunteers? How was the work organized afterwards?

Thaïs Levard (Master 1 student in General and Comparative Literature and Co-president of FTR2): Yes, I joined the organization in March even though the festival had been attractive to me for a while. I read a lot of travel literature and I had the opportunity to travel a bit, to Cuba for example - it's really another world! So we met once a month before the summer to work on a pre-program, and since the beginning of the school year we have been organizing the events. It's a job that allows me to see the tricks of the trade of researcher, which I intend to pursue. I spend at least several hours a week on it - and it is the subject of a VEE (Validation of Student Engagement).

What are the events in the program that you look forward to the most?

G. D.: This year again, the program is very rich and varied, and even extended in time since it runs for two and a half weeks, and there will even be a second highlight the first week of April 2023! This fall, we will have two literary encounters in amphitheater E3: on November 24, we will welcome Velibor Čolić, a writer of Yugoslav origin who fled the war to settle in France when he was 20, who will speak about this exile as a writer, about writing in another language. On December 6, we will discuss ecofeminism with activist Corinne Morel-Darleux, who writes novels about the dynamics of homelessness in post-apocalyptic worlds: where to go when you don't know where to stay? How to recreate a space for life and survival in a destroyed world? She will be joined by the illustrator Aurore Chapon, author, along with Jeanne Burgart-Goutal, of the graphic novel ReSisters.

C. P.: Yes, this year we have a common thread in the festival around drawing - my passion along with literature. So I am particularly looking forward to the meeting "Drawing the Journey" with Paul Echegoyen, author of the comic strip Gulliver's Travels, on December 2nd at the Champs Libres.

T. L.: Another highlight will be a reading at EUR CAPS in Bois Perrin on December 3: Annie Rolland, a retired lecturer in psychology, traveled to southern Algeria with Tuaregs of the Sahara and kept logbooks that she will read in Tuareg with students. As Tuareg poetry borrows heavily from the lexicon of the senses, we have imagined an immersive format with her watercolors displayed, tea to smell and taste, and Saharan sand to touch.

G. D.: There will be other global experiences around works such as the musical and drawn show on December 9, *Les Oiseaux ne se retournent pas*, film screenings with Ciné Tambour and the TNB, wanderings in the city of Rennes, sort of poetic visits...

And what about the mystery project?

G. D.: This is a project that we wanted to launch before the summer, to begin to bring the festival to life in people's minds: we invited all the people who wanted to, thanks to a communication on social networks and a dissemination of postcards of the festival in the city, to write us one, or several postcards. No other instructions: write us what you want, what comes to your mind, and come to discover it all from November 14th at the Mezzanine space of the Tambour (O building)! To be a little more precise, we are currently working with a small group of students on the realization of an exhibition from all the cards received (but also from the collection of postcards of the Cultural Office), an exhibition that should be participative and that we will inaugurate on Wednesday, November 23rd at 8pm. There is still time to write to us, if you wish! We have already received about 40 cards, which are all funny, moving, and sometimes very inventive!

14 November 2022