

« Genre, Arts, Société : 1900-1945 »
Études réunies et présentées
par Patricia Izquierdo

Avant-propos d'Anne E. Berger

REMERCIEMENTS

Nous tenons à exprimer ici toute notre gratitude à celles et ceux qui ont permis la réalisation du colloque « Genre, Arts, Société : 1900-1945 » qui s'est tenu les 22 et 23 janvier 2010 dans le magnifique lieu du Reid Hall, rue de Chevreuse, dans le 6^e arrondissement de Paris. Ce volume présente les contributions effectuées lors de ce moment chaleureux et passionnant. Je remercie tous les personnes qui sont intervenues pendant ces deux jours, pour une communication, une participation à la table ronde et pour les prestations vocales et musicales.

Tout d'abord, merci à Anne E. Berger, professeur de littérature française et d'études de genre, responsable du centre d'études féminines et d'études de genre à l'Université Paris 8, Vincennes Saint-Denis, et à l'Université Paris 8, dont la générosité et la gentillesse sont à souligner, et au dynamique centre d'études féminines et d'études de genre (<http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/ef/>).

Nous souhaitons remercier nos autres partenaires financiers : l'Association des Amis de Lucie Delarue-Mardrus créée le 19 septembre 2007 (<http://www.amisldm.org/>), tous ses membres (nous sommes 39 déjà) pour leur gentillesse, et certains plus particulièrement pour leur implication, déjà lors de la journée d'études du 26 novembre 2008 que nous avons organisée à Nancy. Beaucoup ont participé à ce colloque en tant qu'intervenant, soit pour une communication, soit pour la table ronde, soit les deux.

La Société des Amis d'Axieros à l'origine des éditions *Inverses* (<http://www.inverses.fr/>) dont le directeur, Patrick Dubuis, a accepté la publication de ces actes dans lesquels il présente aussi une contribution.

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écrivaine, critique d'art, sculptrice - choisirent la pluridisciplinarité comme stratégie de contournement et de détournement afin de pouvoir prétendre à une visibilité et à une légitimité dans le champ des arts visuels de leur temps. Si leurs carrières respectives sont aujourd'hui bien connues du champ littéraire et théâtral de l'époque, elles demeurent marginales d'une histoire de l'art restée, pour cette période, encore peu travaillée par les études de genre. L'analyse jusqu'à inédite de la pluridisciplinarité comme stratégie permet une relecture de leurs carrières qui furent presque toujours étudiées sous le prisme du modèle dominant (Sarah Bernhardt actrice, Judith Gautier écrivaine) en intégrant rarement la diversité de leurs pratiques, autrement que dans la rubrique du « Violon d'Ingres » ou de l'amateurisme.

Marjan Sterckx (Professeur d'histoire de l'art, Université de Ghent et PHL University College, Belgique) : « Lucie, Yvonne and Camille. A chain of women (sculptors) in Paris, 1900-1945 »

Gabrielle Réval's booklet *La chaîne des dames* (Paris, 1924), sketching the portraits of sixteen feminist women in Paris during the interbellum, is the starting point for this article; it will pay special attention to two of them: Lucie Delarue-Mardrus (1874-1945) and Yvonne Serruys-Mille (1873-1953). Both women had much in common and must have known each other. Their social network consisted of both influential (feminist) women (a.o. Marcelle Tinayre, Anna de Noailles, Myriam Harry, Rachilde, Colette) and men (Delarue and Serruys both married famous writers-travellers and could count leading sculptors such as Auguste Rodin and Antoine Bourdelle among their acquaintances). Both women also sculpted, albeit not equally active; this is the discipline this contribution focuses on. The most direct link between both women is that Lucie posed for Yvonne for a nude sculpture that is identified in this article. The sculptural production of Lucie Delarue, now largely unknown, is looked at, as well as the (possible) links between Lucie Delarue, Yvonne Serruys and Camille Claudel as sculptresses. Jenny Serruys and Natalie Barney must have played a role as go-betweens in this. This contribution thus partly reveals a complex chain of relations that must have been important for the artistic careers of Lucie Delarue-Mardrus and Yvonne Serruys.

Andrea Oberhuber (Professeure agrégée, Montréal, Canada) : « De la Baroness Elsa à Unica Zürn : autoreprésentation, collaboration interartistique et fil(l)iation dans les avant-gardes de l'entre-deux-guerres »

Depuis les travaux de Lea Vergine, Caws-Kuenzli-Raaberg, Renée Riese Hubert, Susan Rubin Suleiman, Whitney Chadwick, Georgiana Colville et Katherine Conley, entre autres, on cerne mieux l'apport des femmes aux avant-gardes dites historiques (le Futurisme, Dada, le Surréalisme). On sait surtout que bon nombre de ces créatrices ont largement dépassé le triple rôle de muse-modèle-maîtresse dans lequel la pensée traditionnelle aurait voulu les confiner.

L'article propose une réflexion sur les pratiques artistiques élaborées par les femmes auteurs et artistes au sein ou en marge des avant-gardes Dada et surréaliste, en convoquant les exemples de la *Baroness Elsa*, de Hannah Höch, d'Emmy Hennings, de Sophie Taeuber et de plusieurs auteures-artistes surréalistes telles que Claude Cahun, Bona de Mandiargues ou Unica Zürn. Il s'agit, dans un premier temps, d'évaluer la contribution d'un certain nombre de ces auteures-artistes à la mise en place d'une nouvelle esthétique « révolutionnaire », située le plus souvent au croisement des arts et des médias, entre l'autoreprésentation et le goût du spectaculaire, entre la transgression des règles de l'art et la déstabilisation du lecteur/spectateur. Dans un second temps, nous nous interrogeons sur la nature et les enjeux des collaborations interartistiques, variables selon les divers centres que représentaient New York, Zurich, Berlin et Paris.

Alexandra Bourse (Doctorante, Paris 13) : « Images et imaginaire subversifs dans *Aveux non avenues* de Claude Cahun »

Lorsqu'on évoque son nom, c'est à la photographe que l'on pense d'abord, mais tout laisse à penser que c'est à une carrière littéraire que se destinait Claude Cahun. La pratique photographique et notamment celle de l'autoportrait, n'était souvent vécue chez elle que comme une expérience intime, à préserver du public, et participait d'une complicité amoureuse avec son amante, Suzanne Malherbe. Par ailleurs, l'ascendance de Claude Cahun (en réalité Lucy Schwob) l'engageait dans la voie littéraire, moyen peut-être de s'affranchir de la célébrité pesante de son oncle Marcel

Illustrations :

- Figure 1 : Lagraine, *Sarah Bernhardt et son modèle en plâtre* Après la Tempête, [s. d.], Paris, BnF, département des arts du spectacle (© DR.).
- Figure 2 : Judith Gautier, *Le Lettré lisant (Liao-Sy-Khong)*, encier en bronze à cire perdue, 1905-1910, 24 cm x 34,2 cm, Paris, galerie André Lemaire, Caroline Lemaire (© DR.).
- Figure 3: Mélandri, *Sarah Bernhardt sculptant*, Paris, BnF, département arts du spectacle (© DR)
- Figure 4: André Gill, Caricature de Sarah Bernhardt, en costume de peintre-sculpteur aux pieds de sphinx, parue dans *La Lune rousse*, 1878, Paris, BnF, département des arts du spectacle (© DR.).

Lucie, Yvonne and Camille : A chain of women (sculptors) in Paris, 1900-1945

Lucie & Yvonne

Gabrielle Réval's 1924 book *La chaîne des dames* mentions that the sculptress Yvonne Serruys (1873-1953) made a sculpture of Lucie Delarue-Mardrus (1874-1945), author and sculptress herself. (Réval, 1924, p. 57) This article takes a closer look at the connection between these two contemporaries – with only one year's difference between them¹. Within the relatively numerous publications on Lucie Delarue and the more limited literature on Yvonne Serruys, this connection remained hitherto unknown and unstudied. This text is therefore a case study on the links between both women by means of some of their sculptures, and within the context of a wider (feminist) network of society women and sculptresses in Paris which they formed part of, with Réval's booklet *La chaîne des dames* as a starting point².

One of the first encounters between the two women may have been at the Paris *Salon d'Automne* of 1906. There, Yvonne Serruys undoubtedly saw Lucie Delarue's bronze bust by Swiss sculptor Maurice Reymond de Broutelles, as she was a member of the sculpture jury. When coming to see her portrait in the exhibition, Lucie may have seen the five sculptures by Yvonne Serruys, as well as her ten decorative vases in

¹ The author wrote her Master's thesis and a book on Yvonne Serruys. (Sterckx, 2000, 2003) Both artists appear in the author's Ph.D. thesis on sculptures by women artists in the public space. (Sterckx, 2006-to be published end 2010).

² The book portrays 16 feminist women in Paris: Mesdames Aurel, Colette, Alphonse Daudet, Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, Myriam Harry, Louise Hervieu, Gérard d'Houville, Jeanne Landre, Jane Mortier, Anna de Noailles, Rachilde, Yvonne Sarcey, Yvonne Serruys, Séverine, Simone and Marcelle Tinayre. On Réval (pseudonym for Gabrielle Logerot) see a.o. (Izquierdo, 2009; Van Slyke, 2002). Réval also wrote regularly on women artists. See e.g. (Réval, 1903a, 1903b).

cooperation with Georges Despret's glass factory³. Whether the two actually knew each other at the time is unclear, but at least they must have come across each other's names. Both Lucie Delarue and Yvonne Serruys must have heard and read about each other – they were the subjects of frequent articles and photos in newspapers and magazines – and their paths must have crossed more than once in early twentieth-century Paris.

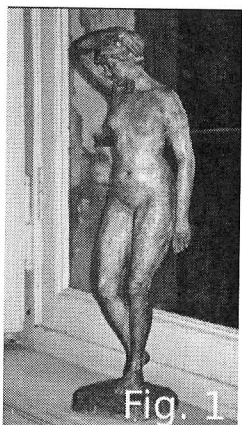


Fig. 1

Moreover, they had quite a few things in common on a personal level: neither Lucie nor Yvonne had any children, and they were married to fairly well-known men, with whom they travelled widely and discovered North-Africa and the East. Pierre Mille (1864-1941), whom Yvonne married in 1909, was indeed a renowned French colonial writer, diplomat and journalist, among others for *Le Temps*. Jean-Charles Mardrus (1868-1949), Lucie's husband between 1900 and 1915, was a physician and the well-known translator of *One Thousand and One Nights* from Arabic into French. Both Lucie and Yvonne spent time in Belgium:

Lucie gave a few 'conférences' there, and for Yvonne it was where she was born, spent her childhood, married and realised two monuments.

Both women wrote, painted and sculpted occasionally. The focus will lay on the sculpting here. As it happens, women sculptors as a phenomenon were first studied in Paris in 1905 by feminist Maria Lamers de Vits in her book *Les femmes sculpteurs, graveurs et leurs oeuvres*, in which Lucie Delarue and Yvonne Serruys are absent however. Writing was of course Lucie's main pursuit, but she also drew, painted and sculpted. For Yvonne, sculpting was the foremost activity – she created nearly two hundred sculptures, yet she also wrote her memoirs, as well as

³ *Société du Salon d'Automne. Catalogue des ouvrages de Peinture, Sculpture, Dessin, Gravure, Architecture et Art décoratif, exposés au Grand Palais des Champs-Élysées, du 6 Octobre au 15 Novembre 1906*, Paris: Compagnie Française des Papiers-Monnaie, no. 1472 (bust of Lucie Delarue-Mardrus), nos. 1534 up to 1539 (Yvonne Serruys).

articles on widely diverse subjects for French and foreign periodicals (Serruys, 1926, 1932, 1934, 1937a, 1937b, 1947, 1953), and countless letters.

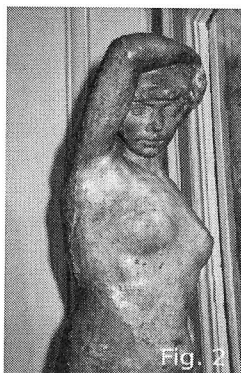
Unfortunately, no letters between Yvonne Serruys and Lucie Delarue could yet be traced, but Yvonne did write, in one of her undated notebooks called "Pensées", about Lucie's character, body, network, and artworks, as well as of the sculpture she herself made of her :

Lucie Delarue-Mardrus dont je fis une statuette nue avait une superbe corps d'androgynie. La nature l'avait vraiment marquée pour le rôle qu'elle joua parmi ses contemporaines. C'était par ailleurs une femme parfaitement bonne et indulgente qui, sous l'influence de Mardrus, traducteur des *Mille et une nuits* et de moeurs fort dissolues, était devenu la reine de Lesbos-Paris. Bien qu'elle fût une Normande avisée, réaliste, fleurant le verger natal, elle avait accepté le rôle d'almée et le contraste entre ses costumes orientaux, ses modulations de muezzin, ses attitudes langoureuses et la verte saveur de ses propos était vraiment imprévu et amusant. Comme c'est le cas pour la plupart des femmes artistes, son oeuvre ne la dépasse point⁴.

⁴ Menen (Belgium), private collection: Yvonne Serruys, paragraph on Lucie Delarue-Mardrus in her notebook with *Pensées*, s.d., s.p. [p. 60]. According to the somewhat unsteady handwriting and the positioning of the notice towards the end of the notebook, it can probably be dated rather at the end of Serruys' life. There are two similar, more elaborate notebooks with *Pensées* and some drawings in a private collection in Paris. A selection of 'pensées' was published in *La Kahéna* in 1947 (Serruys, 1947) and Yvonne Serruys apparently had the aim to publish more of them, as in one of the notebooks she noted on April, 24, 1948 "pensées en cours de publication, transcrites pour Monsieur et Madame Le Quang Thanh". (with thanks to Mr. Yves Serruys, grandnephew of the sculptress).

Lucie sculpted by Yvonne

That Lucie Delarue posed for one of Yvonne Serruys's sculptures, as mentioned by the sculptress in her *Pensées* and by Gabrielle Réval in her *La chaîne des dames*, is the most concrete link between the two women. From Serruys' own description, here above, it can be deduced that it concerns a nude in a rather small format, as she calls it "a statuette". Réval gives a more precise description of the sculpture, in her portrayal of Lucie Delarue: "debout, robuste et fière, comme l'Ève qui vient de naître, coiffée de ses cheveux en couronne, taillée dans la pierre, comme un antique par le ciseau habile d'Yvonne Serruys". (Réval, 1924, p. 57) Also in Yvonne Serruys's portrayal, Réval mentions the sculpture: "c'est une artiste de grand talent. Elle signe sa sculpture de son nom de jeune fille : Yvonne Serruys. Rappelez-vous la statue d'après Lucie Delarue-Mardrus". (Réval, 1924, p. 195).



The year before that, Émilie de Villers already mentioned the sculpture in her monograph on Lucie Delarue as "Statue en pied par Yvonne Serruys", apart from portraits of the author by other sculptors: R. Schwartz (1914), André Sinet (1922) and Maurice Reymond de Broutelles. (Sirieyx de Villers, 1923, p. 40) Myriam Harry, another of the women discussed in Réval's *La Chaîne des dames* and author of a monograph on Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, confirms that it concerns a nude sculpture and that Lucie also posed for others: "N'a-t-elle pas posé pour sa statue nue chez Yvonne Serruys-Mille et, autrefois, ne fut-elle pas le modèle bienveillant d'une Académie de jeunes filles?" (Harry, 1946, p. 113).

For the moment, it is difficult to state with certainty which statue exactly is the one that Lucie posed for. Not a single title in Yvonne's oeuvre relates to her, or at least she never exhibited a sculpture under such a title, which is not unusual in the case of nudes, though. From the

just quoted contemporary descriptions, however, a fair amount of information can be deduced: it concerns a statuette in stone of a standing and fairly robust nude with a hairdo resembling a crown, and the 1923 mention can be seen as *terminus ante quem*. Except from the material, one sculpture from Serruys' oeuvre, *Contemporaine* from 1918, is a good match. (fig. 1) Moreover, the head, with the fairly pointed chin and the characteristic hairdo with a headband (fig. 2), shows a resemblance with Lucie Delarue as she can be seen in a picture from about the same period. (fig. 3) Maybe Serruys even used this picture – a far from unusual practice in artist circles.



A contemporary commentary strengthens the assumption that Lucie Delarue actually posed for this *Contemporaine*. On the occasion of its showing at an exhibition in 1918, a critic in *Les Arts* indicated that he recognised 'a notorious Paris face' and 'identified' the body as that of a 'young Normandy woman' – Lucie was born in Honfleur :

Madame Yvonne Serruys nous dévoile l'académie toute nue d'une Contemporaine, dont j'ai bien cru reconnaître le charmant visage notoire à Paris, mais il est remarquable comme l'apparition du corps rejette au second plan la figure, [...]! Celui que nous voyons ici est un corps de jeune Normande, robuste et plein, un peu lourd du bassin et des jambes, mais ferme et émouvant dans les rondeurs du torse et les harmonieuses masses musculaires du dos. L'artiste et son modèle pourront en être également fiers. Notez qu'à la différence du marbre, qui déshabille, le bronze, avec sa patine sombre, demeure une sorte de maillot très convenable. (De Waleffe, 1918)

The author thus describes a bronze statuette, whereas Réval writes about a stone sculpture. So far, only a plaster and a bronze copy (*cire perdue*, with a foundry mark of F. Carvillani) are known, both 40 cm in height, and in a private collection⁵ (figs. 1 and 4).

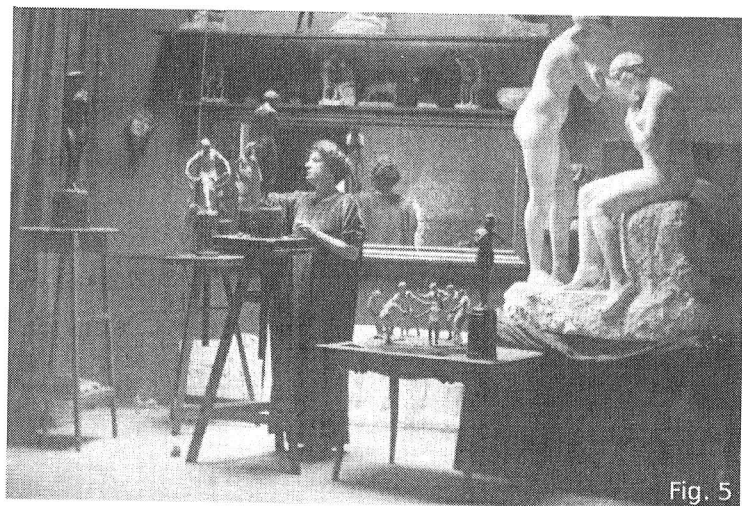


Fig. 5

On a photo of Serruys in her studio around 1920 (fig. 5), once more probably the bronze version can be seen, mounted on a wooden stand and a small pedestal, which is missing from the sculpture in the private collection⁶. The bronze statuette was exhibited on several occasions: at the *Exposition organisée sous le patronage de la ville de Paris au profit des œuvres de la guerre de la S.A.F. et de la S.N.B.A.* in Paris in 1918, at the second exhibition of the *L'arc-en-ciel* gallery in the same year, at the *Salon Triennal des Beaux-Arts* in Liège in 1924, and at the *Salon des Artistes Décorateurs* in Paris in 1935⁷. Was Réval mistaken

⁵ The present owner bought the bronze statuette on 8 February 1993 at the former Galerie Maltier-Vercher, rue de Verneuil, in Paris (7th arr.). The owner of the gallery had allegedly bought it shortly before at an auction near Drouot. It is unknown where the sculpture had been before that. With all my thanks to the private owner for allowing me to photograph the works and for all information.

⁶ The small pedestal is also to be seen on the 1918 reproduction in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*. (Mille, 1918).

⁷ *Exposition organisée sous le patronage de la ville de Paris au profit des œuvres de*

then in the description of the material, or was a stone copy possibly commissioned later, that is now lost or in a private collection?

Contemporaine was considered a work with some importance in Serruys' oeuvre by her contemporaries, because of its own 'feminine' representation of the contemporary or 'new' woman⁸. Pierre Mille, who covered the 1918 *Salon* for the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, provided a picture of the bronze *statuette* of his wife in his article and briefly referred to this particular representation of the female body: "Mme Serruys a un sens particulier de la statique des formes féminines". (Mille, 1918, p. 215) Three years later, another critic commented on it in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*:

C'est ce qu' Yvonne Serruys semble avoir cherché avant tout avec une conscience et une sorte de chasteté saine que seule peut-être une femme pouvait y mettre, témoin le délicieux torse de jeune fille qui se trouve ici reproduit et sa statuette 'Une Contemporaine' que la 'Gazette' mit naguère sous les yeux de ses lecteurs. (Dumont-Wilden, 1921, p. 350)

In 1930, in a lecture on Serruys, Garnier said the following about it:

Peu à peu elle prit sur elle la mission de donner au monde la forme authentique de la femme contemporaine. Le long effort culmina dans un chef-d'œuvre 'La Contemporaine' qui se dévoile avec la franchise candide d'un esprit et d'une sensibilité nouvellement libérés, disant à sa génération en paroles simples, en gestes ouverts et vrais comme la nature: 'Me voici'. (Garnier, 1930, s.p.)

la guerre de la S.A.F. et de la S.N.B.A., Parijs, 1918, no.749; *L'arc-en-ciel, deuxième exposition*, [Paris], 1918; *Salon Triennal des Beaux-Arts, Liège, Palais des Beaux-Arts*, Liège, 1924, p.56, no. 528; *Salon des Artistes Décorateurs*, Paris, 1935.

⁸ On the representation of the new woman by another Parisian sculptress, Jane Poupelet, see (Mitchell, 2002).

This specific character is not so much found in the pose –which is a fairly common position, somewhat similar to Rodin’s *L’âge d’airain* (1875-76)– but more in the sex-specific representation of the female body, which Serruys as a woman sculptor knew inside out. Réval explained this *statue féminine* as “l’équilibre propre à la construction d’un corps féminin”. (Réval, 1924, p. 201) Serruys did not hesitate to communicate her own feminist opinion concerning the representation of the nude, both in interviews and letters, among others to her godchild in Tunisia. Besides, it was the feminist writer Marcelle Tinayre⁹, who is also portrayed in Réval’s book, who was responsible for the opening speech to Serruys’ second individual exhibition in the Paris gallery Barbazanges in 1905, and for the preface in the catalogue, in which she wrote for example: “Yvonne Serruys a osé voir la nature, l’aborder sans prudence, sans prévention, s’affranchir des préjugés féminins et rester femme”. (Tinayre, 1905, p. 6) Réval spoke of the “femme garçon” as concerned to her female nudes, and named *Contemporaine* in this context too :

Qu’on pense à la femme garçon, ou pour mieux dire à ces jeunes Grecques du musée des Antiques [...] Mais la force, l’harmonie, l’élégance, la beauté de ces corps ne sont pas les seuls caractères de la statuaire d’Yvonne Serruys. Son *Ève*, sa *Nageuse*, sa *Contemporaine*, son *Offrande*, son torse de jeune fille, sa *Cantatrice*, sa *Déesse des Jardins*, son *Faune aux enfants* révèlent des êtres qui pensent, qui aiment et qui agissent. Ils ont une vie spirituelle qui rayonne de leurs visages de pierre. (Réval, 1924, p. 200)

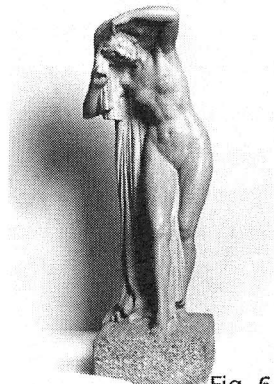


Fig. 6

⁹ Serruys, Tinayre and Anna de Noailles, who are all included in Réval’s book, were guests too at the salon of Mme Arman de Caillavet, where Serruys met her later husband Pierre Mille. On Tinayre and de Noailles, see a.o. (Collado, 2003; Izquierdo, 2009)

Or is it still another statue that Lucie posed for, despite the commentary that seems to point to *Contemporaine*? Two possibilities in stone are a signed but undated *Baigneuse* (97 cm in height, in Menen, Belgium) (fig. 6), about which very little is known, and *Jeunesse* in Lorraine stone, that was much discussed and immediately bought by the French State during the 1920 Salon and accordingly exhibited in the *Musée du Luxembourg*¹⁰ (fig. 7). A resemblance between these two and *Contemporaine* is the headband, but their faces look less like Lucie. And however standing, *Jeunesse* is not a full-length statuette, and in the many favourable reviews about this statue, there is no mention of the identity of the model. Besides, Lucie was already 45 when this statue was made; not such an obvious age to pose for a statue entitled *Youth*, one would think. Yet she successfully posed in the nude for artists even later, according to Myriam Harry, who states that at nearly sixty years old, Lucie still had the body of an adolescent and was admired by connoisseurs¹¹. Maybe Lucie Delarue posed for more than one sculpture for Yvonne Serruys then?

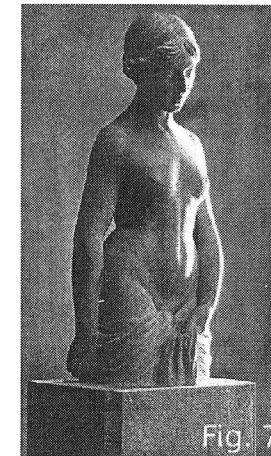


Fig. 7

¹⁰ The stone statue was temporarily placed in the Paris’ *Jardins du Sénat*, in a small place forbidden for the public, but to be seen from the *Jardins du Luxembourg* (according to Yves Serruys), before it was transferred in 1968 to Forcé (Mayenne), and around 2004 to a garden at Rosendhal, a German sister-town of Forcé. (Information furnished by Fabrice Courteille, of the Forcé administration.) A gilded plaster version of this statue is in Stadsmuseum’t Schippershof in Menen, Belgium. Camille Mauclair linked it to the work of other sculptresses: “Mme Yvonne Serruys avec sa *Jeunesse* si largement taillée dans la pierre, et Mlle Jane Poupelet avec sa petite *Toilette* de bronze d’un sentiment si fin? Elles ont toutes deux des talents qui les placent auprès de leurs émules non encore admises ici, comme Mme de Bayser, Camille Claudel, si prématurément disparue, ou Mme Albert Besnard”. (Mauclair, [after 1926], p. 12).

¹¹ “Lucie se lève, disparaît derrière la porte d’un des petits ateliers, revient quelques instants après, drapée dans une simarre pourpre et monte sur la table à modèle. D’un mouvement lent, elle laisse couler l’étoffe et apparaît dans toute

Lucie as a sculptress

It was around the time of Lucie Delarue's posing for Yvonne Serruys, at the end of World War I, that she began sculpting herself. Maybe Serruys inspired her to do this? Several artists' lexicons list Lucie Delarue as a draughtswoman, painter and sculptress, known for her 'dancers and figurines', that are frequently compared to the ancient little Tanagra figures. (Bénézit, 2006, p. 629, vol.4; Petteys, 1985, p. 190; Sagner-Düchtung, 2000, p. 382) Particular works mentioned are *Dame Patricia, son nègre et son galant, Pegasus* and 36 sculpted candles, among which the statuette of Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923), who was herself a sculptor too¹² (fig. 8). From several contemporary articles devoted to Lucie Delarue, it appears that her candles, dolls and sculptural works, some of which she liked to call herself her "passe-temps", are considered as the amateur work of a writer rather than as the work of a professional sculptor, as is the case for Yvonne Serruys¹³. Yet, a thorough search for and analysis of Lucie Delarue's sculptures is still to be undertaken.



Fig. 8

son éclatante nudité. [...] Jean Boucher et Despiaux (*sic*) se sont approchés, leur pouce de sculpteur, affleurant la chair, dessinent des modelés idéals. On admire les hanches d'androgyné, les jambes d'Apollon, les muscles longs des bras, la rondeur des épaules [...] Avoir, à près de soixante ans, le corps impeccable d'une adolescente! Être admirée par des connaisseurs!" (Harry, 1946, p. 113).

¹² The candles were reproduced in *L'Illustration* (Bachet, [unknown] [in Bibliothèque Marguerite Durand]) and bequeathed to the Paris Musée Carnavalet. Harry (1946) describes them on pp. 116-117. Women sculptors know a long tradition of working in wax. (see a.o. Sterckx, 2007) In June 1923, her watercolour *Pour des yeux* was auctioned. (Bénézit, 2006, p. 629).

¹³ Several such articles (not all with full references) are kept in the Bibliothèque Marguerite Durand in Paris. (a.o. Kim, 1933; Lefèvre, 1934; R.-L., 1914; Van Loo, 1931).

In the Paris church of Saint-Germain-de-l'Auxerrois, there is a statue by Lucie Delarue of her contemporary Saint Therese of Lisieux (1873-1897)¹⁴ (fig. 9). This is no doubt her largest undertaking (180 cm in height, with pedestal). It is a plaster, signed and dated 1927, of the French Carmelite with the adopted name *Thérèse de l'Enfant-Jésus et de la Sainte-Face* and the given name Thérèse Martin, beatified in 1923. Lucie Delarue depicted the saint in prayer, lifting her face towards heaven, her hands folded, with a rosary and toys, a doll and roses on the pedestal. Lucie developed a special interest in this saint; she already sculpted a candle after her and published a biography about her in 1926 – one year after her canonization¹⁵.

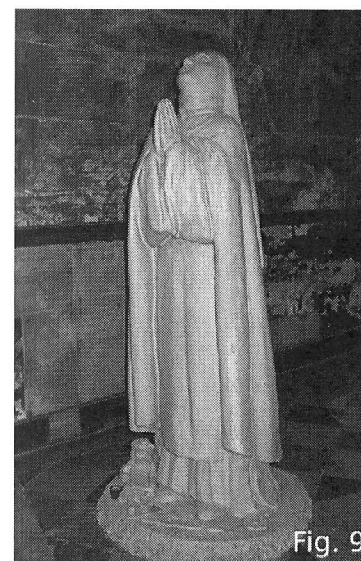


Fig. 9

she could count on the studio and apparently also the aid of French sculptor Carlo Sarrabezolles (1888-1971), known for monumental pieces

¹⁴ Paris, Centre de Documentation de la Conservation des Œuvres d'art Religieuses et Civiles de la Ville de Paris (COARC): File religious sculpture: 86 G.AU7/47x.

¹⁵ This biography would also be published in English three years later, and was followed by another one in 1937. (Delarue-Mardrus, 1929, 1937).

and a method of direct carving in setting concrete¹⁶. Harry describes the cooperation between the two artists as follows: “Il l’aide dans tout le matériel et la technique qui comporte l’art plastique, mais lui laisse la partie spirituelle et miraculée de l’œuvre: la face”. (Harry, 1946, p. 115) During this period, Sarrabezolles’ studio was in the fifteenth *arrondissement*, and he was working on the monumental sculptures for the facade of the church of *Sainte-Thérèse de l’enfant Jésus* at Elisabethville (Yvelines) (1927-28)¹⁷. ([coll.], 2008; Dautriat, 1999; Sarrabezolles-Appert & Lefèvre, 2002) In gratitude, Lucie featured Sarrabezolles in the novel *Rédalga* she was then writing¹⁸ (Delarue-Mardrus, 1928; Harry, 1946, p. 115).

After she had exhibited her statue at the *Salon du Bois* at the *Porte Maillot*, and the abbot had expressed his satisfaction, it was inaugurated in the church of *Notre Dame* in Le Havre. On that occasion, the abbot called Delarue “la bienfaitrice de Notre-Dame” (Harry, 1946, p. 115). Reductions of the statue were also made, in gilded and silver-plated bronze, but none of these could yet be traced. The databases Mérimée and Palissy (*Patrimoine de France*) contain no less than four statues of Saint Therese of Lisieux in Le Havre, one of which is of interest here: a life-size statue of the saint, formerly in the parish church *Saint-Léon*, so not *Notre-Dame*¹⁹. The author is recorded as unknown, but the description

¹⁶ Nevertheless, Réval refers to a studio that Lucie Delarue-Mardrus is supposed to have had at the Quai Voltaire (6th arr.), on the left bank, close to the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts: “Je la vois encore dans son atelier du quai Voltaire se reposant d’avoir écrit, en prenant son violon”. (Réval, 1924, p. 58).

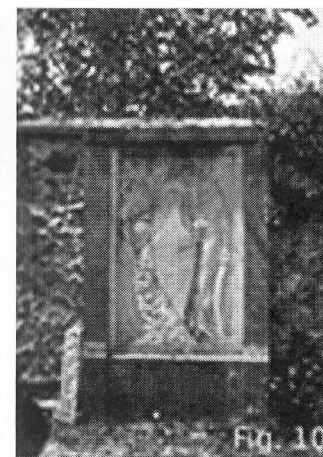
¹⁷ A documentary film (1’46”), dated 1/01/1928, has been preserved, showing Sarrabezolles on scaffolding, chipping away at the sculptures. (<http://www.ina.fr/art-et-culture/beaux-arts/video/AFE00001027/aubergenville-sculpture-sarabassol.fr.html>, retrieved 8/01/2010) The church is by architect Paul Tournon.

¹⁸ On this novel, in which Lucie Delarue-Mardrus puts her opinions on sculpture, see the contribution of Melanie Collado in this volume. According to her, the sculptor-protagonist in this novel, who falls in love with his model Rédalga, is one of the few positive masculine roles Lucie Delarue depicted in her books. (topic discussed during the Paris conference in Jan. 2010).

¹⁹ Databases Patrimoine de France (Mérimée & Palissy), Sculpture à Le Havre, ref. IM76004030: <http://www.patrimoine-de-france.org/richesses-42-13214-92372-P145154-225920.html> (retrieved 8/01/2010),

shows many similarities with the signed statue in Paris: it is a plaster statue of 180 cm in height, and as iconographical attributes roses and a rosary are mentioned, not the doll, though. The database mentions that the whereabouts are unknown since the destruction of the church in 1981²⁰. Whether it concerns indeed Delarue’s work, that must then once have been transferred from the Notre-Dame to the Saint-Léon church and then to Paris, if the Paris statue is actually the original, or whether it is a cast of the original, needs further investigation.

Lucie Delarue subsequently became a member of the *Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts*, and took part in a few *Salons* as a sculptress (Bénézit, 2006; Harry, 1946, p. 115; Sagner-Düchtung, 2000). From then on, “elle peut se croire un sculpteur de carrière”. (Harry, 1946, p. 115) Yet she would never make as many monumental works as did Yvonne Serruys, who realised as much as ten statues for the public space, three of which in Paris: her *Baigneuses* (1910-13) in the front garden of the *École Normale Supérieure* in the *Rue d’Ulm*, her *Faune aux enfants* (1911-30) in the *Rue Louis Blanc*, and her *Fontaine adossée* (1913) for the *Jardin de Bagatelle*, only the latter no longer in place.



Lucie, Yvonne & Camille

A next link between Lucie Delarue and Yvonne Serruys can be found in the June 1925 issue of *Mercure de France*. In the ‘Échos’, the periodical prints the programme of the official memorial ceremony for

http://www.culture.gouv.fr/public/mistral/palissy_fr (retrieved 19/01/2010)

²⁰ “On ignore ce qu’est devenue l’œuvre, exécutée au début du 20^e siècle, après la destruction de l’église en 1981”. Database Patrimoine de France, Sculpture à Le Havre, ref. IM76004030. (<http://www.patrimoine-de-france.org/richesses-42-13214-92372-P145154-225920.html>, retrieved 8/01/2010).

Albert Samain on 7 June 1925 in Magny-les-Hameaux (Yvelines). It shows that during the inauguration of a monument in honour of Samain (fig. 10), created by Yvonne Serruys, an unpublished poem by Lucie Delarue was recited by Caristie Martel of the *Comédie-Française*: “À 14 heures 30, inauguration officielle du monument, œuvre de Mme Yvonne Serruys, et de la plaque commémorative. [...] Un poème inédit de Mme Delarue-Mardrus sera dit par Mme Caristie Martel, de la Comédie-Française”²¹ (Vallette, 1925). Did Serruys possibly play a role in this? Her complete statue for Albert Samain, with the visual representation of the title of his collection of poems *Aux flancs du vase*, was inaugurated in the Jardin Vauban in Lille a few years later, in 1931, after serious delays (fig. 11).

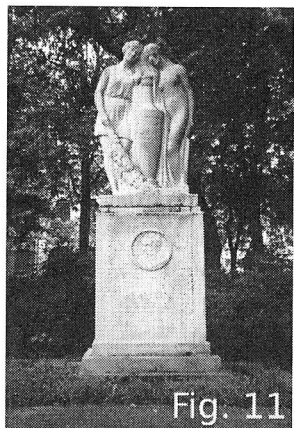


Fig. 11

When, immediately after the death of the Lille poet in 1900, the initiative to erect a statue in his native city was taken, another sculptress was approached first, though: Camille Claudel (1864-1943), nine years older than Serruys. In 1901, she thanked the painter Eugène Carrière (1849-1906) in a letter for recommending her to the committee, but, she wrote, “Je ne pourrais [vraiment?] donner une réponse à ce sujet que lorsque je connaîtrai exactement le prix que ce buste serait payé et les noms du groupe d’amis qui me le recommanderait” (Rivière & Gaudichon, 2003,

p. 165). Maybe Claudel did not like the financial conditions, or she suspected an intervention by Carrière’s good friend Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), with whom she no longer wanted any involvement after their separation? Or was the long delay of the project the explanation? Whatever Claudel’s reasons may have been, it was not her, but Serruys who finally got the commission. Possibly, her husband Pierre Mille played a role; like Samain, he was a Lille-born writer, and a member of the founding committee from the start. Anyway, at the inauguration of the

²¹ The monument is in the cemetery. There is also a commemorative plaque on Samain’s house. The author prepares an article on the monuments for Albert Samain by Serruys for *Revue du Nord*, to be published in 2012.

Lille statue, Claudel was not mentioned at all, whereas there was nothing but praise for Serruys (Sterckx, 2000, pp. 22-35, vol. 2).

Yvonne Serruys and Camille Claudel repeatedly did display their works at the same exhibitions, though. Réval wrote about it as such :

Je me souviens d’un salon où, devant le classicisme d’Yvonne Serruys, j’avais pensé au romantisme de Camille Claudel parce que ces deux tempéraments d’artistes si différents donnaient la mesure de ce qu’on peut attendre du génie féminin, quand il s’applique à cet art si difficile qu’est la sculpture (Réval, 1924, p. 196).

They were briefly neighbours too, on the Ile Saint-Louis. Between 1899 and 10 March 1913, Camille Claudel lived on the ground

floor of 19, Quai de Bourbon. Two houses down the road, at no. 15, Yvonne Serruys and her husband Pierre Mille took up residence in the second half of 1912 or the beginning of 1913, in the property where also painter Émile Bernard (1868-1941) lived (fig. 12) (Sterckx, 2003, pp. 5-6; 2004). Claudel and Serruys were certainly



Fig. 12

no strangers for each other. Camille Claudel was somewhat on her way down at the time, but she was still a well-known and much-discussed personality in Paris. Serruys followed her achievements with admiration, as she later told an interviewer, interrogating her about the late access of women to the sculpture profession: “Depuis Camille Claudel, la sculpture doit aux femmes des oeuvres d’une belle tenue humaine et d’une science incontestable” (N.N., 1926).

After all they both belonged to the relatively small, but since the mid-nineteenth century steadily increasing group of women sculptors who were exhibiting in Paris and elsewhere, among them the Duchess of Uzès (1847-1933), with as pseudonym Manuela, Laure Coutan-Montorgueil (1855-1915), Charlotte Besnard (1855-1930), Marguerite

Syamour (1857-1945), Blanche Moria (1859-1926), Jeanne Itasse (1867-1941), and Jane Poupelet (1874-1932), to name but a few. With Poupelet, Claudel and Serruys were the only women among the fifteen sculptors selected for an exhibition of French art in Zürich, opening in February 1913, just before Claudel's internment and probably just after Yvonne moved to the Quai de Bourbon (N.N., 1913, pp. 18-20).

Even if Camille Claudel herself did not frequent the Mille's, her younger brother, the poet, dramatist and diplomat Paul Claudel (1868-1955), did. He was a friend of Daniël Serruys (1874-1950), Yvonne's younger brother and a classical philologist. As such, Paul Claudel was a regular guest at the 'Salons du samedi' hosted by the couple Mille-Serruys at their home and frequented by a profusion of French and Belgian prominent figures, among them supposedly Anatole France, Anna de Noailles, Antoine Bourdelle, Auguste Rodin, Émile Claus, Jenny Montigny, Léon Blum, Charles Seignobos and Émile Vandervelde²² (Sterckx, 2003). The last, a known socialist politician in Belgium, was acquainted too with Lucie Delarue, who wrote an article about him and mentioned him in at least one other. (Delarue-Mardrus, 1916a, 1916b) Philippe Berthelot, writer and diplomat, was one of the guests as well at the Mille's. Serruys created his bust, and later he was best man at the wedding of her niece, Yvonne Serruys junior. Berthelot was also a friend of Paul and Camille Claudel. He owned a few of her best sculptures, among them *Vertumne et Pomone*, *Les Causeuses* and *L'Âge mûr*, but later she would reproach him for being partly responsible for her internment. The art critic Louis Vauxcelles was probably one of the guests too at the 'Salons du samedi'. Artist Louise Hervieu (1878-1954), who is mentioned in Réval's book as well and originated from a Normandy family just as Lucie, thanked Vauxcelles for having

²² Yvonne Serruys described their 'Salons du samedi' in her *Les cahiers du samedi*, but these books unfortunately did not remain, or they are not yet discovered. In her book *Promenades d'Anatole France* (1927) author Sándor Kéméri (pseudonym of Mme Bölöni) dedicated the chapter "Deux extrêmes se rencontrent: la visite de Rodin", in which France and Rodin talk about art from the classical antiquity, to Yvonne Mille-Serruys. The same author also wrote a positive review about the sculptress in 1932.

introduced her to "l'admirable Pierre Mille et l'admirable Yvonne Serruys"²³.

Maybe Lucie Delarue, too, was on the guest list some time? In any case, she knew most of those people too, and with her husband she also lived on the Ile Saint-Louis for some time (before 1915), on the first floor of the former house of the poet Felix Arvers, at 17, Quai d'Orléans, so parallel with the dwellings of Yvonne Serruys and Camille Claudel. (Harry, 1946, pp. 33-34; *La Cité*, 1922, p. 237; Miquel-Régnault, 1999, p. 227; Payen-Appenzeller, 1980, p. 44) Apparently the house contained many works of art, amongst them of Odilon Redon, Kees Van Dongen and Rodin, who was a frequent visitor there as well, interested in Lucie's body:

Les Mardrus occupèrent le premier étage, au balcon ventru comme une commode de l'époque, aux hautes pièces lambrisées. On n'y voyait plus Notre-Dame, mais trois majestueuses fenêtres du salon s'ouvraient sur la Seine qui luisait entre des peupliers touffus. [...] Autour, un tableau d'Odilon Redon, composé selon les vers de Lucie, un autre de Van Dongen, plusieurs dessins à la sanguine de Rodin, et, au milieu de la pièce, assis sur un socle de bois, le plâtre original de son premier Balzac nu. Rodin, à cette époque, venait souvent à la maison du sonnet d'Arvers, attiré par la petite tête de l' 'Aurige couronné de nattes' et rêvait de sculpter son corps, 'aux jambes apolloniennes d'Hermaphrodite' (Harry, 1946, pp. 33-34).

²³ Paris, Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, Aut 1074: Letter of Louise Hervieu to Louis Vauxcelles, [1920]: "Mais en attendant, laissez-moi vous remercier de m'avoir permis d'approcher de l'admirable Pierre Mille et de l'admirable Yvonne Serruys. Nous n'avons pas mis longtemps à nous connaître... à nous reconnaître. Je les aime déjà beaucoup, il me semble qu'ils m'aiment un peu. Ceci est votre oeuvre, cher Vauxcelles, je ne l'oublie pas." At the Paris conference Gender, Arts & Society in Jan. 2010, Guillaume d'Enfert told me of a book Louise Hervieu dedicated to Yvonne Serruys ("À Yvonne Serruys, la marraine du Bon Jardinier"). On Louise Hervieu, see his two booklets (d'Enfert, 2004, 2006).

Jenny & Natalie as go-betweens

The quiet peninsula in the middle of Paris was loved at the time by artists and writers. Also Yvonne's younger sister Jenny Serruys (1886-1983) and her American husband William Aspenwall Bradley (1878-1939) lived there; in 1923 they opened their influential Literary Agency at the Quai de Bethune, only a few yards from the property once occupied by the Mardrus²⁴. In its heyday, in the 1920s and 1930s, the William A. Bradley Literary Agency was a pre-eminent literary agency in Paris, representing mostly American, English, and French authors, on both sides of the Atlantic, and bringing new and experimental European literature to the American audience. It could boast James Joyce, Jean-Paul Sartre, Anaïs Nin, and Gertrude Stein among its many clients. Stein characterized Bradley in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* as "the friend and comforter of Paris authors". Sylvia Beach and Adrienne Monnier, the noted lesbian booksellers of the Paris *Shakespeare & Company*, allegedly advised William and Jenny to get to know the Irish author James Joyce²⁵. Before her marriage in 1921, Jenny Serruys already became a friend and quasi-patron of Joyce, lending him a bed and table, on which he supposedly completed *Ulysses*, and she eventually (in 1950) translated his *The Exiles*.

The Bradley-Serruys couple also hosted a literary 'salon' to which they invited many of their famous friends and acquaintances, among them Ernest Hemingway, André Malraux, Francis Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas. Many among those were also part of the network of Lucie Delarue. Indeed, Lucie herself also knew the Bradley-Serruys couple. Bradley mentioned her in the book *Contemporary French literature* he published with René Lalou in 1924

²⁴ After Bradley's death in 1939, Jenny took over responsibility for the agency, which kept her husband's name until her death. 1923 also saw the foundation of the publishers *Contact Editions* of Robert McAlmon and Bryher on the island, at the Quai d'Anjou. For more information on Jenny Serruys and The William A. Bradley Literary Agency, see among others (Vanraes-Van Camp, 1987); <http://research.hrc.utexas.edu:8080/hrcxtf/view?docId=ead/00300.xml>, retrieved Dec. 2009).

²⁵ Beach and Monnier, two of the many American and British – often lesbian – women involved in literature, extensively feature in Shari Benstock's *Women of the left bank, Paris 1900-1940* (Benstock, 1988, pp. 194-229).

(Lalou & Bradley, 1924), and they exchanged many letters concerning Lucie's publications²⁶. Apart from letters by Lucie Delarue and by Yvonne Serruys, the William A. Bradley Literary Agency Records in Austin, Texas, contains an impressive list of correspondents of Jenny and William Bradley-Serruys, among them Martin Luther King, Winston Churchill, Georges Clemenceau, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Ezra Pound, Alexandra David-Neel, Maurice Maeterlinck, Vladimir Nabokov, Igor Stravinsky, Romola Nijinsky, Isadora Duncan, Josephine Baker, Peggy Guggenheim, Aristide Maillol, Marc Chagall, Georges Rouault, Colette, Alice Toklas, Djuna Barnes and Natalie Barney²⁷.

The latter, the American writer Natalie Clifford Barney (1876-1972) must also have been an important link between Lucie Delarue and Yvonne Serruys. Lucie –called "the queen of Lesbian Paris"²⁸ by Yvonne– had a brief lesbian affair with Natalie, and based a fictitious character in a novel on her. Yvonne Serruys was one of the guests too at the weekly salon on Friday that Natalie Barney organised, as is mentioned by Réval in her *La chaîne des dames* :

²⁶ Approximately 75 pages of letters are preserved in Austin, Texas, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The William A. Bradley Literary Agency Records, TXRC06-A20, Lucie Delarue-Mardrus folder. Delarue-Mardrus and Bradley got into a little dispute about offering her book on *William the Conqueror* to Longman's, and their request for many changes. (with thanks to Elizabeth L. Garver of the Harry Ransom Center) Columbia University Library also keeps four boxes with correspondence of William Bradley: Rare Book & Manuscript Library, MS#0144: William Aspenwall Bradley Papers 1900-1966.

²⁷ The index of The William A. Bradley Literary Agency Records (<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/uthrc/00300/hrc-00300p1.html>, retrieved Dec. 2009) also mentions the expatriate Australian painter Stella Bowen (1893-1947), who exhibited in 1925 a portrait of 'Madame Serruys' –Jenny or Yvonne– at the *Société Nationale des Beaux Arts*. (Paris, *Catalogue. Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, 1 May – 31 August 1925*, no.53; <http://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/stella/article.asp#21>, retrieved January, 19 2010)

²⁸ Menen, private collection: Yvonne Serruys, paragraph on Lucie Delarue-Mardrus in her booklet *Pensées*, s.d., s.p. [p. 60].

Je l'ai connue pendant la guerre au cours des réunions qui se tenaient chez Miss Barney, dans un délicieux petit temple grec situé entre cour et jardin. [...] Yvonne Serruys fut l'une des dernières à venir chez miss Barney. [...] Cette nouvelle venue au Temple de l'Amitié avait une parole brève et autoritaire, elle parlait avec une éloquence concise, en femme qui ne se paie pas de mots ou d'images, et qui n'a point de temps à perdre²⁹ (Réval, 1924, pp. 191, 194-195).

An anecdote Serruys later noted in her *Pensées* also attests of her presence at these gatherings: "L'autocab de Miss Barney vint me prendre un jour pour m'amener à l'un des vendredis si amusants de la rue Jacob"³⁰. In a letter to Yvonne, Natalie Barney referred to their mutual meetings, on Fridays and Saturdays:

Je suis toujours au dur service de l'amour ce qui ne me laisse que trop peu de temps pour moi –et vous!– mais l'amitié est si délicieuse pour vous que j'irai l'embrasser prochainement en votre personne. [...] Je reste dans ma chambre (seule pièce chauffée) vendredi et serai chez vous un samedi entre autrui. Mais venez ici afin que je vous puisse vous (sic) voir. [...] Et toujours votre très aimante amie³¹.

²⁹ Among the cultural celebrities visiting Barney's salon were, among others, Auguste Rodin, James Joyce, Rainer Maria Rilke, Colette, Paul Valéry, Anatole France, Count Robert de Montesquiou, Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, T.S. Eliot, Ford Madox Ford, Isadora Duncan, Ezra Pound, Jean Cocteau (of whom Yvonne Serruys made the bust, now in the collection 't Schippershof in Menen, Belgium), Djuna Barnes, Janet Flanner, Peggy Guggenheim, Marie Laurencin, Paul Claudel, Adrienne Monnier, Sylvia Beach, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Truman Capote, Françoise Sagan, Marguerite Yourcenar, etc.

³⁰ Menen, private collection: Yvonne Serruys, paragraph on Lucie Delarue-Mardrus in her booklet *Pensées*, s.d., s.p. [p. 68].

³¹ Austin, Texas, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The William A. Bradley Literary Agency Records, 3.8.: Natalie Barney folder: Letter from Natalie L. Barney to 'Yvonne', 8 December [year unknown]. It concerns indeed Yvonne Serruys, as Natalie notes down the letter a sentence concerning Serruys'

The affectionate letters they sent each other are telling for their lasting friendship –or in Serruys' words: "Nous sommes, vous et moi, accordées depuis longtemps"³². In April 1934, Yvonne proposed to draw Natalie's portrait: "Je fais paraît-il de très bons dessins en ce moment. Apportez-moi votre belle tête, une heure seulement"³³. The month after Yvonne's death, in June 1953, Natalie wrote some consoling words to her sister Jenny Serruys :

Et je joints (*sic*) à ce mot cette phrase ou deux copiées de la dure écriture d'Yvonne. Et qui saura peut-être ramener un sourire. Si ce sourire dure le temps de venir chez moi un vendredi prochain que je serai contente de vous revoir – ou quand vous le pourrez ou le voudrez ou chez moi ou chez vous dans l'intimité³⁴.

Even if there are still quite few direct traces between Lucie Delarue and Yvonne Serruys that can be pointed out, there are a fair number of references, objects, common elements, shared contacts and 'go-betweens' that link both women. Lucie Delarue posed for sculptor Yvonne Serruys, probably for the statuette *Contemporaine* (1918) that received a good press, in which Lucie was implicitly referred to. Maybe Lucie was even inspired by Yvonne to start sculpting herself? Anyhow,

husband: "J'exige que le Pierre Mille porte les petits mocassins pour mon retour".

³² Paris, Bibliothèque Jacques Doucet, Fonds spécifiques, Fonds Natalie Barney, NCB C 1353: Letter from Yvonne Serruys to Natalie Barney, October, 18, s.a.

³³ Paris, Bibliothèque Jacques Doucet, Fonds spécifiques, Fonds Natalie Barney, NCB C2 2866: Letter from Yvonne Serruys to Natalie Barney, April, 16 1934. It is unknown whether this portrait was ever made. This Fonds Natalie Clifford Barney preserves several letters from Serruys to Barney: NCB C 1350-NCB C 1359 (6 letters and 1 postcard from Yvonne Serruys to Natalie Barney, 1924-1937), NCB C2 2866 (2 letters from Yvonne Serruys to Natalie Barney, 1939). Also letters have been preserved here between Natalie Barney and, among others, Lucie Delarue, Jenny and William Bradley and Sarah Bernhardt.

³⁴ Austin, Texas, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The William A. Bradley Literary Agency Records, 3.8.: Natalie Barney folder: Letter from Natalie C. Barney to 'Chère amie Jenny', 9 June 1953.

almost ten years later, she created her own lifesize *Sainte Thérèse* in plaster. Lucie and Yvonne thus definitely knew each other and partly shared the same network that also proved to be useful for their artistic careers. Several figures in this network have been included in Gabrielle Révals booklet *La Chaîne des dames*, which sketches the portraits of sixteen women, most of them feminists, in Paris during the interbellum period. Yvonne Serruys and Lucie Delarue formed vital and 'delicate' links within this chain, to use Serruys own terminology :

Ce serait [...] très grand dommage pour ceux et celles qui nous suivront de ne pas connaître cette petite chaîne dont les maillons délicats relient nos heures et nos vies en un temps où elles sont si fragiles et incertaines³⁵.

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³⁵ Paris, Bibliothèque Jacques Doucet, Fonds spécifiques, Fonds Natalie Clifford Barney, NCB C 1352: Letter from Yvonne Serruys (and Pierre Mille) to Natalie Barney, Sept, 22.

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Illustrations :

- Fig. 1. Yvonne Serruys, *Me Voici*, plaster, 1918, Paris, private collection. (Photo: Marjan Sterckx)
- Fig. 2. Yvonne Serruys, *Me Voici*, plaster, 1918, Paris, private collection. (Photo: Marjan Sterckx)
- Fig. 3. Unknown photographer, Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, photograph, ca. 1918 (?). (<http://www.amisldm.org/biographie/>).
- Fig. 4. Yvonne Serruys, *Me Voici*, bronze, 1918, Paris, private collection. (Photo: Marjan Sterckx)
- Fig. 5. Unknown photographer, Yvonne Serruys in her studio, photograph, ca. 1920. (Vanraes-Van Camp, 1987, p. 32).
- Fig. 6. Yvonne Serruys, *Baigneuse*, stone, s.d., Menen, Stadsmuseum 't Schippershof. (Photo: Paul Stuyven).
- Fig. 7. Yvonne Serruys, *Jeunesse*, Lorraine stone, 1920, Paris, *Musée du Luxembourg* (now in public garden in Rosendhal), (photographer unknown; published in Paul Vitry, 'La sculpture au Salons', *Art et Décoration* (1920) p. 179).
- Fig. 8. Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, *Four Chandelles*, s.d., Paris, Musée Carnavalet. (Harry, 1946).
- Fig. 9. Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, *Sainte Thérèse de l'enfant Jésus*, plaster, 1927, Paris, St. Germain de l'Auxerrois. (Photo: Marjan Sterckx).
- Fig. 10. Yvonne Serruys, *Monument Albert Samain*, stone, 1925, Magny-les-Hameaux, Cimetière. (Photo: photographer unknown; <http://www.magny-les-hameaux.fr/content/content25576.html>, retrieved 25/01/2011).
- Fig. 11. Yvonne Serruys, *Monument Albert Samain*, stone, 1928-31, Lille, Jardin Vauban. (Photo: Marjan Sterckx).
- Fig. 12. Paris, Quai de Bourbon, with the former dwellings of Yvonne Serruys and Pierre Mille (on the left, nr. 15) and of Camille Claudel (on the right, nr. 19). (Photo: Marjan Sterckx).

**« De la Baroness Elsa à Unica Zürn :
performance, collaboration interartistique et fil(l)iation
dans les avant-gardes de l'entre-deux-guerres »**

Depuis les travaux de Mary Ann Caws, Rudolf Kuenzli et Gwen Raaberg, Renée Riese Hubert, Susan Rubin Suleiman, Whitney Chadwick, Georgiana M.M. Colville et Katherine Conley, on sait que bon nombre des créatrices surréalistes ont largement dépassé le triple rôle de muse-modèle-maîtresse dans lequel la pensée hégémonique des chefs de file surréalistes aurait voulu les confiner¹. Ce constat s'applique surtout à la première génération d'auteures ou d'artistes tentant de s'affilier à cette dernière avant-garde de l'entre-deux-guerres. Afin de comprendre la redéfinition de leur place et de leur apport au Surréalisme, il suffit d'évoquer les œuvres protéiformes de la deuxième voire la troisième génération du mouvement, soit les créations de Belen/Nelly Kaplan, Bona de Mandiargues, Leonora Carrington, Claude Cahun, Lise Deharme, Leonor Fini, Frida Kahlo, Valentine Penrose, Gisèle Prassinos, Kay Sage et Unica Zürn. On se rend vite à l'évidence que la « part du féminin » de l'avant-garde surréaliste fut considérable entre les années 1930 et 1970, garantissant justement aux idées surréalistes leur longévité au-delà des limites historiques du mouvement. Pour toutes ces auteures-artistes, il s'agissait moins de révolutionner l'art et la vie que de *s'écrire* et de *représenter* le monde à leur image, selon leur imaginaire féminin, en développant diverses postures autoréflexives, en élaborant une esthétique « transfrontalière » dans la mesure où leurs œuvres s'affranchissaient le plus souvent des limites artistiques et génériques. Cette esthétique entre les arts et les médias s'avère en réalité l'héritage de diverses pratiques

¹ Voir à titre d'exemples les ouvrages de Mary Ann Caws, Rudolf Kuenzli et Gwen Raaberg (dir.), *Surrealism and Women*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1991 ; Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Subversive Intent : Gender, Politics and the Avant-garde*, Cambridge-London, Harvard UP, 1990 ; Renée Riese Hubert, *Magnifying Mirrors. Women, Surrealism & Partnership*, Lincoln-London, Nebraska UP, 1994 ; Whitney Chadwick, *Les femmes dans le mouvement surréaliste*, Paris, Thames & Hudson, 2002 [1985] ; Georgiana M.M. Colville et Katherine Conley (dir.), *La femme s'entête : la part du féminin dans le surréalisme*, Paris, Lachenal & Ritter, 1998.