

# *Explora International Conference*

## Insects and Texts: Spinning Webs of Wonder

Vladimir Nabokov, both writer and entomologist, once explained that he could not “separate the aesthetic pleasure of seeing a butterfly and the scientific pleasure of knowing what it is” [Interview with Robert H. Boyle, *Sports Illustrated*, 1959]. This interdisciplinary conference proposes to examine man’s fascination with the world of insects as reflected not only in the rich history of entomological research, from amateur or professional collecting to scientific expeditions, but also in more artistic forms of expression—myth, literature, literary theory, painting, and cinema. Whether insects stimulate man’s curiosity or inspire fear, whether parallels or contrasts are seen between human society and the astonishing skills of insects, this conference explores the relation between man and insects. Through the study of either scientific and technological developments in entomology, or artistic concerns with insects, specialists of entomology and/or the arts will reconsider the relationship of man to nature through the magnifying glass of an entomologist.

### *Conference organizers:*

Laurence TALAIRACH-VIELMAS

Catherine LANONE

Marie BOUCHET

Francis DURANTHON

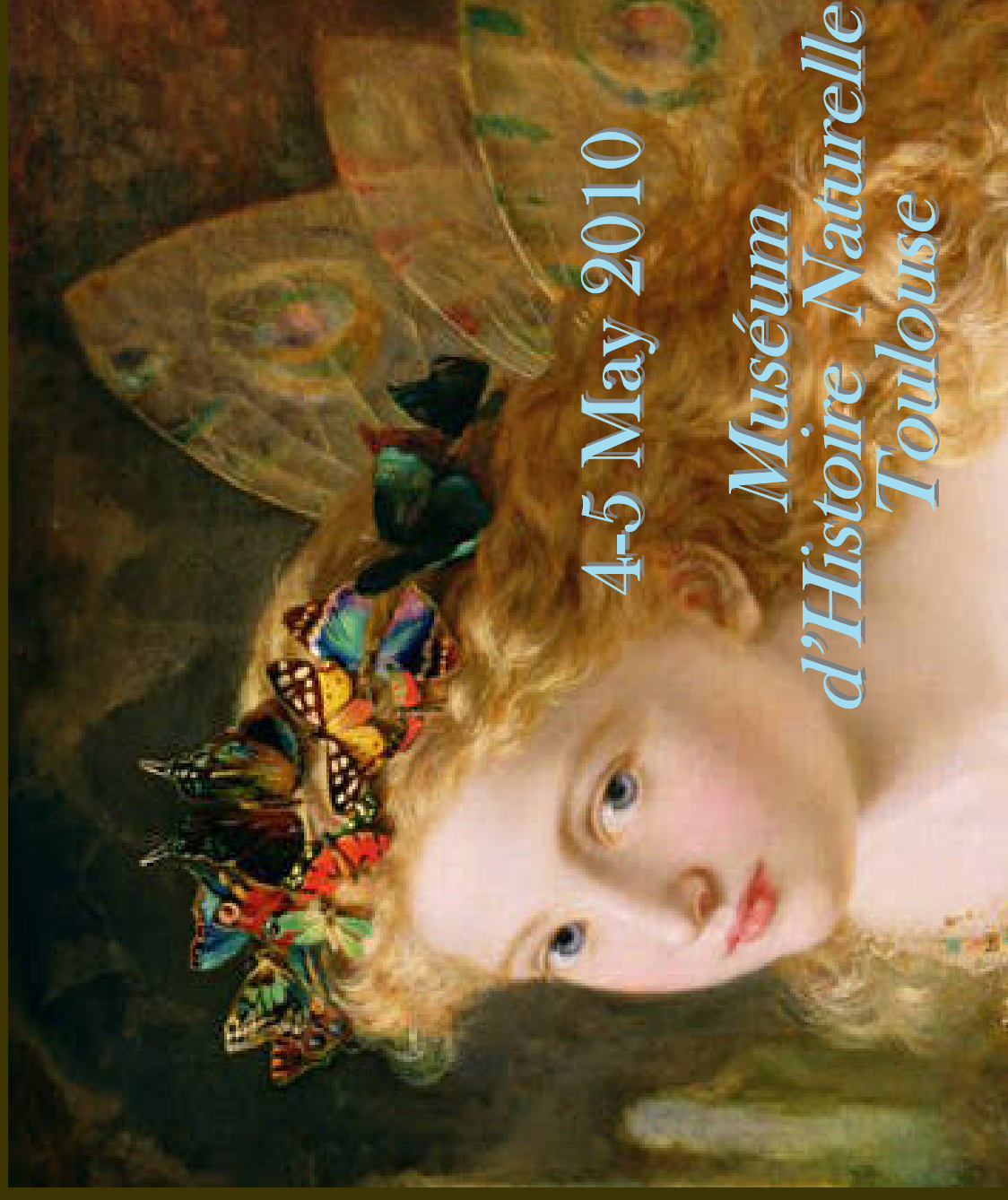
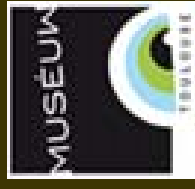
### For more information:

[exploraentomology@gmail.com](mailto:exploraentomology@gmail.com)

### Registration form and program available on the Conference website:

<http://w3.cas.univ-tlse2.fr/spip.php?article160>

### *International Conference organized with the support of:*



4-5 May 2010

Muséum  
d'Histoire Naturelle  
Toulouse

*Take the Fair Face of Woman, and Gently Suspending, With Butterflies, Flowers, and Jewels Attending, Thus Your Fairy is Made of Most Beautiful Things* by Sophie Anderson (1823-1903)

# PROGRAMME

# Tuesday May 4, 2010

Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Toulouse  
Auditorium Picot de Lapeyrouse

8.45 Registration  
9.00 Welcome speech

*Chair:* Wendy HARDING, Université Toulouse II-Le Mirail, France

9.30-10.00 Marie BOUCHET, Université Toulouse II-Le Mirail, France  
“Nabokov’s Text under the Microscope: Textual Practices of Detail in Both his Lepidopterological and Fictional Writings”

10.00-10.30 Brigitte ZAUGG, Université Paul Verlaine-Metz, France  
“From Revulsion to Fascination: William H. Gass’ ‘Order of Insects’”

10.30-11.00 Carlos Augusto RIBEIRO & Ana Paula GUIMARÃES  
Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal  
“Enchanting Webs of Ants and Beetles in Oral Stories”

COFFEE BREAK

11.30-12.00 Catherine LANONE, Université Toulouse II-Le Mirail, France  
“A Way of Seeing: from Eleanor Ormerod’s Injurious Insects to Virginia Woolf’s Butterflies”

12.00-12.30 Yvonne REDDICK, University of Warwick, England

“The Hanged Man and the Dragonfly’: Aquatic Insects and Metamorphosis in the Works of Ted Hughes”

LUNCH BREAK

*Chair:* Marie BOUCHET, Université Toulouse II-Le Mirail, France

14.00-15.00 Nicolas WITKOWSKI, Editions Gallimard, Paris, France  
“A Cultural History of the Butterfly: An Illustrated Overview”

15.00-15.30 Hélène PERRIN, Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France  
“Insects and Hagiography”

15.30-16.00 Meyssa BEN SAAD, Université Paris VII, France  
“Insects in Al-Jāhiz’ Classification of Animals in the 8th-9th Centuries: Between Myth and Reason”

COFFEE BREAK

16.30-17.00 Laurel STEELE, Department of State, Washington DC, USA  
“The Myth of the Moth and the Flame: Insect Metaphors in Urdu Poetry”

17.00-17.30 S. Romi MUKHERJEE, University of Chicago, USA  
“Love, Cannibalism, and the Sacred: Roger Caillois and the Myth of the Praying Mantis”

17.30-18.00 Virgil BROWER, Northwestern University, USA  
“Sex, Sects, Insects, Insurrections: Bugging Continental Theory”

20.30 Public lecture (*in French*)  
Yves CAMBEFORT, Chargé de recherche CNRS, Université Paris-Diderot, Paris VII  
‘Des Scarabées et des hommes : Histoire des coléoptères de l’ancienne Egypte à nos jours’

# Wednesday May 5, 2010

Muséum d’Histoire Naturelle, Toulouse  
Auditorium Picot de Lapeyrouse

*Chair:* Laurence TALAIRACH-VIELMAS, Université Toulouse II-Le Mirail, France

9.00-9.30 Jean-François AUGER, Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands  
“Science, Culture and Society through the History of Leon Provancher’s Insect Collections”

9.30-10.00 Laurence ROUSSILLON-CONSTANTY  
Université Paul Sabatier Toulouse III, France  
“‘Beesiness’, John Ruskin’s Treatment of Bees in *Fors Clavigera*”

10.00-10.30 Virginie MEZAN-MUXART, Université de Limoges, France  
Alberto SENDRA MOCHOLL, Universidad de Valencia, Spain

“When Literature Sublimates and Popularizes the Most Villainous of Entomology: The Invertebrates of Cellars and Caves”

COFFEE BREAK

11.00-11.30 Hélène MACHINAL, Université de Bretagne Occidentale, Brest, France  
“Conan Doyle’s ‘The Beetle Hunter’”

11.30-12.00 Gilles MENEGALDO, Université de Poitiers, France  
“Ants on Hollywood Screens: Monstrous Mutations and Projected Fears”

LUNCH BREAK

*Chair:* Catherine LANONE, Université Toulouse II-Le Mirail, France

14.00-14.30 Wendy HARDING, Université Toulouse II-Le Mirail, France  
Jacky MARTIN, Université Paul Valéry Montpellier III, France  
“Encounters of the Third Kind: the Representation of Insects in Nature Writing”

14.30-15.00 Tracey A. CUMMINGS, Lock Haven University, USA  
“The Bee as Emblem and Critique of American Industriousness in Thoreau’s *Walden* and Alcott’s *Work*”

15.00-15.30 Emilie VERGÉ, Université Paris III Sorbonne Nouvelle, France  
“Naturalism and Modernism: *Mothlight* (1963) by Stan Brakhage”

COFFEE BREAK

16.00-16.30 Ana Isabel QUEIROZ, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal  
“Biological Invasions and Literature: Looking for the Argentine Ant”

16.30-17.00 Anne MCCRARY SULLIVAN, National-Louis University, USA  
Poet-in-Residence in Everglades National Park and Big Cypress National Preserve  
“Insects through the Eyes of a Poet”

VISIT OF THE TOULOUSE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

20.30 Conference Banquet



Bother the Gnat by Duncan Carse