

H-France Salon

Volume 14, Issue 8, #4

### **An Interview with Florence Ladd**

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This interview was conducted by Gülru Çakmak (Associate Professor, University of Massachusetts Amherst) with Florence Ladd, whose two-part epic poem ***Le Chevalier de Saint-Georges and His Mother*** appears in this current H-France Salon Special Issue. Joseph Boulogne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges (1745-1799) was born in Guadeloupe, then a colony of France, to an enslaved mother, Nanon, likely of Senegalese origin, and a French father, Georges, a plantation owner and slaveholder. Ladd's poem begins in the Caribbean, and continues in Paris, where Georges moves with Nanon and the eight-year old Joseph in the aftermath of a lethal duel. In the interview, Ladd and Çakmak discuss Ladd's process of bringing Joseph and Nanon to life, and the role of poetry and creative fiction in ascribing agency to historical personages whose lived experiences have been neglected, silenced or suppressed by the available archival sources.

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ISBN 2150-4873

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