

**arte**

**DISTRIBUTION**

# THE MANUSCRIPT'S *Secret History*

A 4x26' documentary series

Directed by Anne-Sophie Martin

Produced by Arte France and Little Big Story

PROVISIONAL DELIVERY: SEPTEMBER 2021





# Pitch

The Manuscripts Adventure traces the origin and journey of works of international significance or some major stories, the original manuscript of which came down to us.

In a world that is becoming a little more dematerialized every day, each of these works appears nowadays as a «wonder», constitutes a common wealth, our European heritage: those are the manuscripts of key works that are the foundation of our contemporary culture, and which have sometimes changed the course of history.

# Episode 1

## *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

Manuscript in the British Library, London



### PLACES

British Library, London

Christchurch University, Museum of Natural History, Thames – Oxford

### STAKEHOLDERS

Edward WAKELING, Former President of the Lewis Carroll Society

Franziska KOHLT, Teacher in English Literature

Mark DAVIES, Oxford Historian

Charles Lutwidge Dogson, Lewis Carroll, the author's name, is a dashing professor of mathematics at Oxford, holding the oars on this hot summer afternoon of 1862. He takes for a ride the three daughters of Liddell, dean of the college: Edith, Lorine and Alice (10 years old). For her, he invents a tale, along with the current, about a big white rabbit with pink eyes, who passes very close to a little girl named Alice. The curious little girl follows the animal into its burrow and then discovers a fantastic underground world, experiences extraordinary adventures...

The real Alice falls under the spell and asks the rowing club with this boundless imagination to write this tale for her. Dogson will tackle it for several months: thus was born *Alice in Wonderland*, or rather its original version: *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*. The manuscript was completed in the spring of 1863, but the author decided to draw the illustrations himself, which would take him another good year.

For Christmas 1864, Alice Liddell receives a divine gift in memory of this summer day. The book was to be published the following year, but this time around, illustrated by the most popular cartoonist of the time, John Tenniel, with resounding and almost immediate success. Alice will treasure Dogson's gift for the rest of her life. She entrusted it in 1885 to Lewis Carroll for a facsimile edition, before putting it on sale at Sotheby's in 1928. It was an American investor and bibliophile, A.S.W. Rosenbach, who bought it for £ 15,400. Then another businessman bought it back and his heirs sold it again in 1946. It was bought back by ... Rosenbach for \$ 50,000! It eventually passed into the hands of a group of investors, before being offered to the British in recognition of their bravery during World War II.





# Episode 2

## *The Trial* by Franz Kafka

Manuscript in the Literary Archives of Marbach, Germany



### PLACES

Literary Archives of Marbach, Germany

Prague, Czech Republic

National Library of Israel, Jerusalem

### STAKEHOLDERS

Ulrich VON BÜLOW, Curator of the manuscript, Germany

Vera KOUBOVA, Translator, Prague, Czech Republic

Stephan LITT, Curator, National Library of Israel

Benjamin BALINT, Writer, translator – Jerusalem, Israel

Kafkaesque! This is the right word to describe this incredible, even miraculous, journey of the work of the Prague German-speaking writer. When Kafka died at 40 in 1924, he ordered his friend and executor Max Brod to burn everything down, although he had only published short texts..Max Brod discovers and publishes Kafka's three great novels discovered in his boxes: *The Trial* (1925), *The Castle* (1926), and *America*, (1927). A betrayal that gives birth to masterpieces of the 20th century literature.

When the Germans invaded Prague in 1939, Max Brod went into exile in Israel, passing through Romania, with Kafka's precious manuscripts. Second rescue! He donated *The Castle* and *America* to the Oxford Library, but kept *The Trial*, which was given to him as a gift by Kafka in 1920. in 1968, when Brod died - he wanted to bequeath everything to the National Library of Israel but did not have time to finalize his bequest - it all went to his secretary, Esther Hoffe. She committed to entrusting this heritage to the German Literature Archives in Marbach (or LiMo). At the end of 1988, Esther Hoffe sold the manuscript of *The Trial* to them for \$ 1.7 million. It is still there today.

When she died in 2007, her two daughters, Eva and Ruth inherited the manuscript, but the National Library of Israel contested the inheritance and demanded *The Trial* to the German Archives, arguing a law which prohibited important archives from leaving the country before having been copied: Everything must return to the National Library's shelves, including «*The Trial*»... unduly acquired!

This is the first page of the most Kafkaesque judicial soap opera, which will end in... 2016. Germany and Israel are waging a «war of memory», as for today's Czech Republic, it simply is satisfied with some statues and commemorative plaques to the great writer...







# Episode 3

## *Don Giovanni* by Mozart

Manuscript kept at the BNF Richelieu

### PLACES

National Library of France (Richelieu), Paris

Estates Theater, Prague, Czech Republic

Vienna, Austria

### STAKEHOLDERS

Mathias Auclair, General Curator, Director of the Music Department - BNF

Mark Everist, British musicologist

Elisabeth Bauer, House of Music, Vienna, Austria

Constance Hell, Mozart House, Vienna, Austria

Emmanuel Reibel, French musicologist

It is the opera of Mozart that has the most erasures. Is it because the composer is under time pressure? When he was commissioned by the director of the Prague theater in January 1787, he had eight months left to create one of the most powerful operas in the repertoire. Or is it because his father dies while he is in the midst of creation and is devastated by it? Basically, isn't creative urgency Mozart's hallmark?

According to his wife Constance, Mozart must rejoin Prague in September for stage setting, before completion of the writing: the Overture will be written on site, 48 hours before the premiere... It takes place the 28th of October 1787, in front of a stunned audience: Emperor Joseph II calls for Mozart in Vienna to play his new opera. But new cuts and arias were requested so that Mozart was in a rush again. April 1788: Mozart's last note is penned.

Mozart himself said about his *Don Giovanni*: "This work is divine, it is perhaps even more beautiful than *The Marriage of Figaro*".

After his death in 1800, his publisher bought the manuscript of the work from Constance, then bequeathed it to his children. But when the son-in-law, Johann Baptist Streicher, decided to sell it in 1854, he could not find a buyer in all of Europe! A pianist of his acquaintance, Ernst Pauer, will find him a taker: the great French singer Pauline Viardot, who is one of his friends. She even sells her jewelry to pay the requested £ 150, a fortune at the time.

In 1902, the diva donated it to the Conservatoire national de Paris, and since 1964, it has been kept in the Music Department of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.



Don Giovanni  
 *ossia*   
Il Dissoluto Punito  
Opera  
 *per il*   
Clavicembalo  
Atto I<sup>mo</sup>

Handwritten musical score for Don Giovanni, Act I. The score is written on multiple staves, including vocal parts (Don Juan, Zerlina, Leporello) and instrumental parts (Clavicembalo). The notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The title "Don Giovanni" is written above the first staff, and "Ouverture" is written above the second staff. The score is signed "Mozart" and "M. 1782".



# Episode 4

## *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo

Manuscript kept at the BNF François Mitterrand

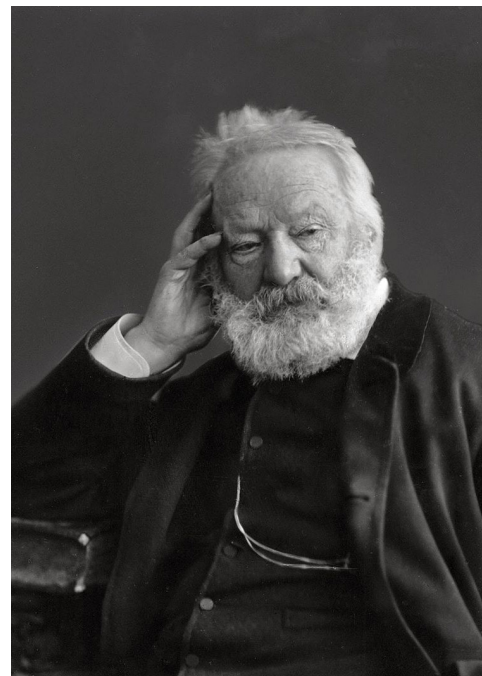
### PLACES

National Library of France (François Mitterrand), Paris

Victor Hugo's house, Paris

Hauteville House, Guernsey

Waterloo, Belgium



### STAKEHOLDERS

Mathias Auclair, General Curator, Director of the Music Department - BNF

Thomas CAZENTRE, Curator, BNF, Paris

Marva BARNETT, Professor at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA

Gérard AUDINET, Director of the Victor Hugo's Houses in Paris and Guernsey

Florence NAUGRETTE, Professor of Literature, Sorbonne University, Paris

Jean-Marc HOVASSE, Associate Professor of Literature, Sorbonne University, Paris

Victor Hugo spent 16 years writing "Les Misérables", between Paris, Guernsey and Waterloo. It was a long creative process and not only because the manuscript has 828 leaves. Victor Hugo took great care of his manuscripts all his life, which he stored away in a chest and chose to give to the library of France when he died in 1885. But before arriving in the quiet reserves of the BNF, the story of the writing of "Les Misérables" was a true serial novel, very 19th century style.

"Les Misérables" was created in scabrous circumstances to say the least. Hugo, the inveterate ladies' man, was caught in the act of adultery on the 5th of July, 1845, with Léonie d'Aunet, a very married woman of letters. She is thrown in prison in Saint-Lazare, while the already famous writer, peer of France protected by his parliamentary immunity, chooses to cloister himself at home to let the scandal fall ... A confinement conducive to writing: he embarked on the writing of «Jean Tréjean», which he later renamed «Les Misères». The 1848 revolution comes to interrupt the drafting.

In the aftermath of the coup d'état of «Napoleon the Little», Juliette Drouet, Victor Hugo's inspiring muse, literally exfiltrates her great man by train, then takes care of the famous «manuscript chest». This chest will follow Hugo and Juliette on the roads of exile. Inside, among the texts already published, the work in progress, the bundles of documents, and of course, «Les Misères». It was not until 1860, during his exile in Guernsey, that Hugo resumed writing.

When he went to Belgium the following year to write the end of «Les Misérables», Hugo had a waterproof bag made «to measure» to protect the manuscript in the event of a shipwreck! When he left Guernsey in 1870, Hugo left a wooden chest with other original manuscripts. Later, at the end of the 1870s, this is an iron cabinet that Hugo ordered for his apartment on Eylau Avenue, for the protection of his precious manuscripts which he had finally repatriated. To end up with the serial of the manuscript of «Les Misérables», Hugo the exiled will sell his book to a Belgian publisher for an astronomical sum, which will allow him to live until his death, free from want.



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*Guerre d'Orient : la Signature de la paix*, par M. Lix.  
**LES MISÉRABLES**, drame de CHARLES HUGO, d'après le roman de VICTOR HUGO, par M. Gerlier.  
*Joseph Neudilly*, par M<sup>me</sup> Rose Maury. — *Les Dames de Chambéas*, par M. Ferdinandus. — *Ce bon M. Ledoux*, par M. Gerlier.

VOIR SUR LES DEUX PAGES DU MILIEU

## LES MISÉRABLES

DE

VICTOR HUGO



Général Nepochentinsky.

Serber-Pasha.

Général Niliidow.

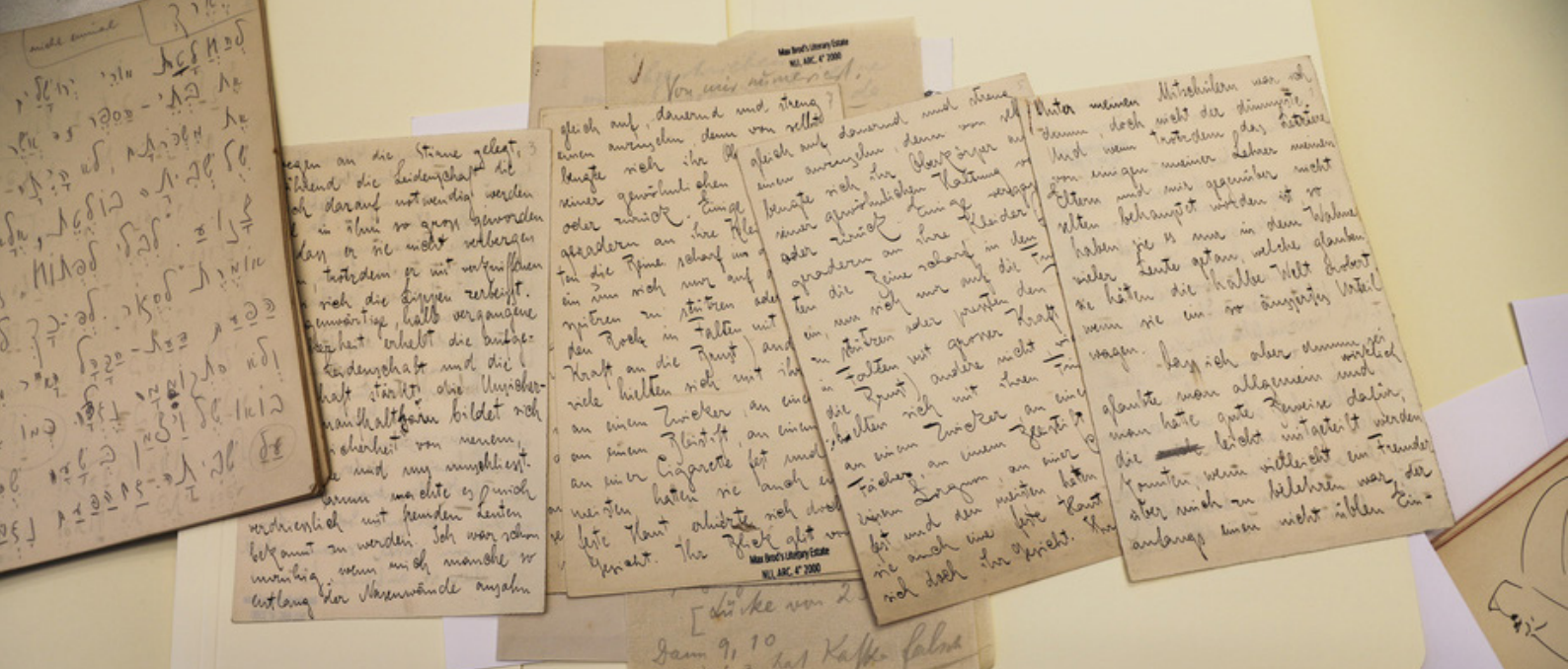
Le Grand-Duc Nicolas.

Nanyk-Pasha.

**GUERRE D'ORIENT. — LA SIGNATURE DE LA PAIX**

Dessin de M. Lix, d'après le croquis de M. Dica, notre correspondant. — Voir les DÉTAILS à l'intérieur.





# Director's note

## Structure

The episodes of the series follow the structure of a tale narrative: an initial situation – the discovery of the manuscript; the genesis of its adventure – its writing; the quest and the jolts of its completion – its author; the twists and turns of his journey – its adventure and, finally, the preserved manuscript, protected like a treasure.

## The opening scene is the start of the adventure

We film the place where the manuscript is kept from farthest to closest, to provide an insight into its history. We enter the building in a fluid and cinematic movement, we go inside, we follow the corridors, we go through the doors, we go down the stairs, we open a safe, a drawer or a box, until discovering the handwritten object in its «privacy».

## The manuscript, our hero

Before the Universal Work, there was a great draft. This exceptional object is filmed with the intention of revealing it. We focus on its thickness, the grain of the paper, the style of writing. The handwritten object is the common thread of our film. It is present at each stage of the story, the object of the adventure.

The places are very present and filmed with care, they are part of the story as characters in their own right. We do not use archives to evoke places of the past. The cities where the authors lived and created, are shown today, as they are (contemporary Vienna, Prague, Oxford or Paris), with today's filming facilities. The city is alive, palpable, we look at it as we imagine the author was able to look at it and experience it in his time. In the same way the key places of the story – either because they house the manuscript, or because they are decisive in its course, (BNF Tolbiac or Richelieu, the Maison Victor Hugo Place des Vosges or in Guernsey, the theater of States in Prague, etc.) - are dramatically staged, as if to say: a major event in our adventure happened here; There is a «treasure» in this monument.

## The speakers

They are writers, historians, biographers, art dealers or collectors, experts in manuscripts and autographs, heirs of the author or current owners. Above all, they wish to share and transmit their discoveries, their knowledge, and ultimately their enthusiasm.



**The sequence** is preferred over the static interview. It allows us to underline that we enter into the dynamic of creation of the evoked work in order to restore it in a «living» way. Thus, we seek to film the speakers in the very places of the story that they can decode, explain and reveal.

### **The archives are of various kinds**

The images of our characters: They first embody the authors of the manuscripts and their relatives: a photograph, an engraving, a painting depending on the period bring Mozart, Kafka, Hugo or Carroll to life throughout the story. These images appear on a slightly moving paper background. This sober setting makes it possible to overcome the static side of photography, while magnifying the heroes of our tales.

### **Adaptations of the work**

At the beginning of each episode, a very important place is given to the resonance of the work: theatrical, cinematographic, choreographic adaptations, immersive exhibitions tell about its universality in a rhythmic and lively montage. We are looking for iconic adaptation as the most unexpected, the oldest as well as the most contemporary. Finally, for each episode, a particular adaptation of the work will be chosen and called upon throughout the story whenever necessary to evoke an element in the author's life or a twist in the life of the manuscript.

**The graphics** are entrusted to Fanny Kauffer and borrows from the codes of paper, writing, manuscripts... Letters and scores dance on a paper whose grain we feel, which can be colored, stained, crossed out, folded or crumpled, according to a visual identity specific to the series. We rely on the creation of original illustrations, creating a unity of style. The graphic charter, by its simplicity, is universal and timeless.

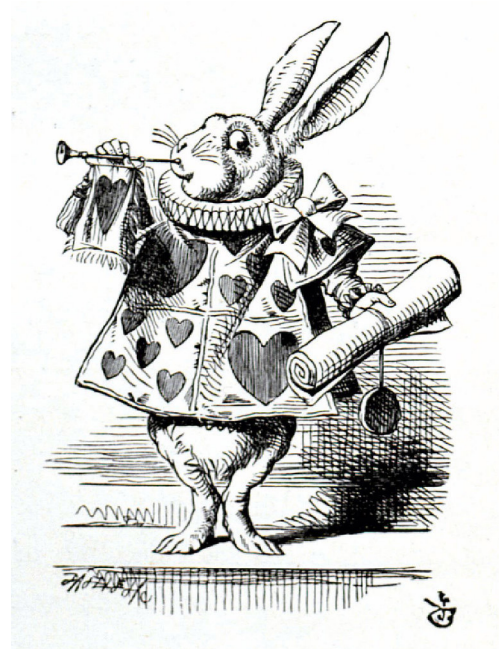
### **The animated sketches**

In each episode, we retrace the course of the manuscript: it changes hands, countries, places of conservation... Thus, each episode is punctuated by animated sketches marking these stages, and for which we carry out original illustrations.

**The music** of the series is entrusted to the musician Marek Hunhap, whose creativity and universe we appreciate (L'homme a mangé la Terre, by JR Viallet, Ervin, by Karolin Grindaker (Norway). We want the music to be light, uplifting, evoking the adventure of these manuscripts with what they count of twists and turns, travels, sometimes loss, and finally consecration ... Also, the music will be the same for each of the episodes of the series, punctuating the moments where the manuscript changes hands. However, we will also have for each episode one or two specific themes of the work, allowing to underline its universe.

**In conclusion**, we adopt a lively narrative, nourished by colorful anecdotes, small stories that make up the big one. We want to make this collection the embodiment of fables and tales of yesterday which have passed time and eras to become modern. Beautiful works, as if you were there, or rather as if you were witnessing live – whatever your origin, your cultural appetite, your educational qualifications, your tastes or your ambition - to their creation.

**Anne-Sophie Martin**





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