

THE CENTER FOR FRENCH AND FRANCOPHONE STUDIES,  
AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH AND ROMANCE PHILOLOGY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
PRESENT

# ORDER DISORDER & FREEDOM

SATURDAY  
NOVEMBER 16, 2002  
9:30AM - 7PM

## AN HOMAGE TO MARYSE CONDÉ



Maryse Condé was born in Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe. She moved to Paris in 1953 and traveled to West Africa in 1960, where she witnessed the turbulent optimism of the newly independent African states, described in *Heremakhonon*. Having spent over a decade teaching in Guinea, Ghana and Senegal, she returned to France and received a doctorate in Comparative Literature in 1976 from the *Université de Paris III* (Sorbonne Nouvelle). She started her literary career as a dramatist. She took to the novel as her preferred mode of expression, publishing *Heremakhonon* in 1976. Since then, she has been a prolific writer and has published numerous novels, plays and short stories, as well as scholarly articles, for which she has received many awards and literary honors. Most recently Maryse Condé was conferred France's most prestigious award for literature and the arts: she was inducted *Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*.

The defining characteristics of her work are the capacity to cross borders and boundaries, to nomadize among cultures, centuries, languages and geographies, to challenge conventions, and to defy dogmatism and totalizing myths of all kinds. Maryse Condé writes very pointedly as a citizen of the world, remaining above the ideological fray in the local literary wars of the Francophone Caribbean. She avoids the tyranny of identity politics in the French West Indies not by ignoring it but by writing against and beyond it.

Since the mid-1980s, Maryse Condé has taught in various universities in the United States. She has been pivotal in the founding of the Center for French and Francophone Studies at Columbia University. She has been an integral part of both the graduate and the undergraduate programs at Columbia and through her seminars, she has offered students the opportunity to discover and explore the literatures of the Francophone Caribbean and Western Africa.

After seven years at Columbia, Maryse Condé will retire from full-time teaching in December 2002. This colloquium is an opportunity for Maryse Condé's colleagues, students, former students, and friends, to pay tribute to a truly great writer and scholar.

Organizers: **Pierre Force** (Columbia University), **Kaiama Glover** (Barnard College) and **Nayana Abeysinghe** (Columbia University)

Coordinator: **Nayana Abeysinghe** (Columbia University)

**Please register online; for more information: [www.maisonfrancaise.org](http://www.maisonfrancaise.org) or 212.854.4482**

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