

Café Philo

Tuesday September 15 | 5-6:30 pm | Zoom Meeting



Michel de Montaigne Of Friendship – De l’Amitié

Please join Café Philo
for a discussion of
Montaigne’s essay,
“Of Friendship”

Link to register and receive [Zoom invitation](#):

Link for the reading requirement:

For more information, please contact
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In his essay “Of Friendship”, Montaigne reflects on all kinds of friendships and loving relationship such as; our love for our children, relatives, acquaintances and the opposite sex. He considers them all a matter of circumstances and not the kind of true friendship which he experienced with the humanist and poet, Étienne de La Boétie and the author of “Voluntary servitude”. Comparing the rest of his life to the few years of his friendship with La Boetie, Montaigne says; “’tis nothing but smoke, an obscure and tedious night.” La Boétie died four years after they met and formed a friendship, but he remained a great influence on Montaigne and on his writing. He left all his writings to Montaigne.

Following is a quote by Montaigne on friendship in general and on his special friendship with de La Boétie:

“...what we commonly call friends and friendships, are nothing but acquaintance and familiarities, either occasionally contracted, or upon some design, by means of which there happens some little intercourse betwixt our souls. But in the friendship I speak of, they mix and work themselves into one piece, with so universal a mixture, that there is no more sign of the seam by which they were first conjoined. If a man should importune me to give a reason why I loved him, I find it could no otherwise be expressed, than by making answer: because it was he, because it was I.”

Michel Eyquem de Montaigne, also known as Lord of Montaigne, was born in the Aquitaine region of France, on the family estate Château de Montaigne, in a town now called Saint-Michel-de-Montaigne, close to Bordeaux. He was involved in politics and like his father, served as mayor of Bordeaux. Montaigne is one of the most significant philosophers of the French Renaissance, known for popularizing the essay as a literary genre. His work is noted for its merging of casual anecdotes and autobiography with intellectual insight. His massive volume “Essais” contains some of the most influential essays ever written. Montaigne died in 1592, at the age of 59, at the Château de Montaigne of quinsy, a disease that causes paralysis of the tongue, especially difficult for one who once said, "the most fruitful and natural play of the mind is conversation.