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VISUAL ART

See Art, Visual, Photography.

VIVIEN, RENÉE (1877–1909)

Anglo-French poet and novelist.

Born in London of an English father and an American mother as Pauline Mary Tarn, Vivien was taken to Paris when she was one year old. There she mainly educated herself by reading French books. Her first love was a neighbor, Violet Silletto, whom she was later to recall in her writings. After her mother removed her again to London, Vivien finally achieved her independence, which was cushioned by a substantial inheritance.

In 1899 she met Natalie Clifford Barney in Paris and began a relationship that is chronicled in *Un femme m'apparat* (1904). Although both women had achieved success in their writings in the French language, Barney recognized that Vivien had a real vocation, while her own works were more adjuncts to her opulent life and public persona. It is a mark of Vivien's seriousness that in the last ten years of her life she wrote nine volumes of poetry, two novels, and two books of short stories. Her first poems were published under the name of R. Vivien, and critics who had hailed the "young man's" passionate poetry to women were dismayed when Vivien went public with her real identity as a woman. In fact her work became increasingly gynocentric, addressing women as a group apart from men.

The relationship with Barney was a stormy one. Both women had affairs with others, Vivien with the colorful Baroness Hélène de Zuylen de Nyevelt, who also wrote novels. Vivien and Barney visited the island of Lesbos together; the impressions gained here in Vivien's company were probably responsible for Barney's founding of her Academy of Women many

years later. Vivien's work was always concerned with death and in her last years she gradually starved herself to death, a victim of anorexia, which was not recognized as a disease at the time. In the 1970s her work was revived by both French- and English-speaking feminists and lesbians, and today it forms part of what appears almost as a golden age of lesbian creativity in Paris in the early decades of the twentieth century.

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VOGEL, BRUNO (1895–1987)

German writer. The details of Bruno Vogel's biography are obscure; the little that is known comes mainly from an autobiographical sketch by the author himself and conversations that he had with Wolfgang U. Schutte and Manfred Herzer and others in the last years of his life. Vogel belongs to the comparatively few authors, at least in the German-speaking world, whose treatment of homosexuality is not only explicit and overt, but also clearly positive. Moreover, in Vogel this stance melds with his socialist-anarchist politics. After his first volume of stories, *Es lebe der Krieg!* (1924), antimilitarist and gay themes ran to some extent parallel in *Ein Gulasch* (1928). Vogel gained a reputation with his short novel *Alf*, first published in 1929 and reprinted in 1977 in its third edition, in which a critique of the horrors of war combines with a critique of a society that will not grant young men the appropriate form of friendship, tenderness, and sexuality: Alf becomes a victim of the war, because as a victim of incomprehension and of his own confusion in regard to the impossibility of his feelings he has sought out the war as a volunteer.

In *Alf*, Vogel makes one of the protagonists, Alf's young friend Felix,