

Fall in Paris Journal

September 18 - Exploring a new neighborhood and a concert

We took the metro to Place Nation, which is on the east side of Paris toward the outskirts. We walked around and didn't notice anything special. At the square, I saw a magnificent Chestnut tree and took a photo.



There was a magnificent statue in the center of this large circle where people were enjoying the good weather. I took a few photos but they didn't come out well and I deleted them. There are two obelisks up one of the boulevards leading from the square that each had a gilded statues at the top but they were too far in the distance for my little camera. I was trying to frame the statue between the gilded statues but it was all too grand a scale for me to manage it

This neighborhood is not upscale. It reminded me a little of the area around La Cité de la Musique. The restaurants probably charge less than in our neighborhood but we didn't stop for a meal but went on traveling around the city.

That evening at 7:30 p.m. we went to a concert at St. Julien le Pauvre, another ancient church. We arrived quite early to allow ourselves adequate time to find it. It was not so easy to find. Now that we have been there, it won't be hard the next time. It is very close to St. Germain de-Prés.

It was quite chilly and I started to shiver. The guy at the table selling tickets noticed and let us into the church early. I thanked him.

It is a Byzantine church with the ornate wooden wall that is separates the congregation from the priests. It has icons around it and gothic arches. It is quite small, similar to the St. Ephrem where we have attended other concerts.



As the musicians arrived, they went into a room at the back of the church. I saw a man carrying a motorcycle helmet and a violin case come striding into the church and then into the room. He turned out to be the featured soloist.

The group was a quartet called Les Violons de France and had a special soloist Frédéric Moreau who had recently won a prestigious prize. They played *Eine Kleine Nachmusik* (A Little Night Music) by

Mozart. The quartet was superb and the acoustics in this little church were good. We sat in the second row on the right.

When the guest artist came on after the intermission, he was regal and commanded the stage. They played two Bach concertos (BWV 1041 and 1042). Bach always carries me away and this performance was so good. It is amazing to me how a really fine musician can outshine the perfectly wonderful musicians in the quartet. He had something about him that set him apart. I wonder if I will ever be able to understand what it is. Fire?