



Meet your hosts, Jeannette and Howard Aster

Jeannette Aster , Opera Stage Director and Artistic Director of l'Academie de la Roche D'Hys ,was born in Linz Austria and brought up in Montreal Canada. Initially trained as a dancer, she went on to study Music at McGill University and Opera production at the London Opera Centre in England. After 45 years of experience working in opera houses and arts institutions literally all over the world as stage director, artistic director, producer and docent, Jeannette had a dream to develop a creative oasis where artists from all disciplines could come and work, if only for a short time, in a peaceful, inspirational environment, away from the constraints and routine of daily life. The dream of every creative artist.

Howard Aster, was born and brought up in Montreal, Que. Canada. He received his B.A. at McGill University, his M.A. at Yale University and his Ph.D. at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He taught Political Science at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario for twenty-nine years prior to taking his retirement. As well as his academic career, he has served in numerous other roles, such as Executive Assistant to the Secretary of State, Government of Canada, Member of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the CBC, Parliamentary Intern, Consultant to the Canadian Conference of the Arts, consultant to Goldfarb Consultants, consultant to various Government of Canada Departments, including Employment and Immigration, Foreign Affairs. He has written over 100 articles and published eleven books, the latest one ***Affinity - Beyond Branding***, co-authored with Martin Goldfarb, published in Canada, the US, the UK, China and India. He is also the Publisher at Mosaic Press, based in Canada, now celebrating its 40th anniversary. Howard is chief chef and sommelier at La Roche D'Hys as well as horticultural designer and general manager.

In 2001 Howard and Jeannette discovered a secluded cattle farm tucked away in the magnificent rolling hills of Burgundy. The huge barns and rambling old house were perfect. After 3 years of visionary renovations the site was transformed into a working "Art Farm" and the Domaine des Arts was born.

Today, 15 years later, La Roche D'Hys is a dream come true thanks to the dedication and plain hard work of Howard and Jeannette, and the invaluable contributions of the hundreds of artists who have come to nurture themselves in the Burgundy terroir, the support and enthusiasm of the local community and the **association C.I.R.C.** which has established the **Centre International de Rencontres Culturelles** at La Roche D'Hys to connect the artists with the community and helps run the public programs and concerts.