



## ***Belle Époque***

Élizabeth ROSS

ROBERT LAFFONT

### **ELIZABETH ROSS**

I was extremely honored that my novel, *Belle Époque*, was selected as a finalist for Le Prix des Incorruptibles. Having my book recognized by a French organization, in particular, was appreciated because the novel was inspired by an Emile Zola short story and takes place in Paris.

Thanks to les Incos I was lucky enough to connect with two different classes on opposite ends of the French-speaking world: in France near the Swiss border, and in La Réunion. What a gift to be able to have an in-depth discussion about my novel with young readers across the globe!

I was impressed with the students' close reading and interpretation of the novel. One group even re-wrote a scene in my book from another character's perspective – it was totally illuminating for me, the author. Each week it was refreshing to read their questions and give thoughtful answers – it helped me rediscover my own book.

When I revealed that I was writing the screenplay of my novel, one group was very vocal about which actors should be cast and I received many suggestions and casting photos.

Aside from discussing the novel, the kids were very generous in sharing details about life in their area – I even learnt some phrases in Creole! They were curious about life in Los Angeles and also Scotland (where I'm originally from). We exchanged some pictures and it was nice for me to visualize them in their classroom.

How wonderful that my book has traveled the world and connected with young readers. Un grand merci to Les Incos team for introducing new books to French school kids in such a meaningful and original way. I'm delighted that *Belle Époque* was included.

Elizabeth Ross,  
Author of *Belle Époque*  
Los Angeles, California