THE FUTURE
MUSÉE NATIONAL DE LA MARINE

A major maritime museum for France
# CONTENTS

## MAKING THE MUSÉE NATIONAL DE LA MARINE

A SHOWCASE FOR A CULTURAL AND MARITIME INSTITUTION  

- A networked museum  
- A new scientific and cultural purpose  
- A new identity in harmony with the sea  

2017 - 2022: A NEW MUSEUM IN PARIS  

- The architectural project  
- The museographic project  
- The visit route  
- The renovation project: key figures and dates  

THE NEW CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE CENTRE  

- A tool for the management, conservation, restoration and circulation of the collections  
- The collections project  
- The restoration workshop
On 15 October 2015, the Defence Minister set the Musée national de la Marine the magnificent task of transforming our noble institution, created during the reign of Louis XV and inspired many maritime careers, into a museum of the future. An institution which can help the general public become more familiar with the maritime aspect of our country, passing an interest for the sea and raising awareness of its related challenges while also protecting its heritage. A museum which strengthens the bond between the military and the nation, nurturing a spirit of defence, particularly through the Marine nationale [French Navy].

The sea and everything which happens in it will doubtlessy be one of the new frontiers shaping the world of tomorrow. As a great maritime nation and a leading naval power, France deserved a museum in keeping with its history and its maritime role. This required a cultural project underpinned by great ambitions, which is the key challenge for the future Musée national de la Marine.

The challenge was certainly an impressive one! How do you reinvent the Musée national de la Marine, giving it a fresh new identity without losing its soul? How do you transform a museum, which, for more than 250 years, has told the story of the French royal and later national navy into a museum of the future, which, for more than 250 years, has told the story of the French identity without losing its soul? How do you transform a museum, which can help the general public become more familiar with the sea and its richness, the latest aspects of marine biodiversity and ecology, the sea’s influence on the climate, the potential offered by renewable marine energy, the leisure economy, the maritime transport, the development of ports and, naturally, the challenges related to France’s defence and security.

As a contemporary maritime and cultural showcase, the future Musée national de la Marine is intended to make the sea and our country’s maritime adventure a fascinating subject of interest to all.

In just a few months, an incredible project has been launched to adapt the museum to the modern era, based on an architectural project involving an in-depth redesign of the interior at Chaillot, matched by a new, bold, spectacular and innovative scenography, reflecting the diversity of our visitors aged from 7 to 77 years old, from the uninitiated to maritime and naval enthusiasts.

An incredible project which completely reinvents the cultural experience, the layout of the different areas and the variety of the visit routes corresponding to different audiences’ interests while taking account of their level of knowledge and relationship with the sea: four permanent areas focusing on four permanent areas focusing on the museum’s “treasures” will showcase the finest pieces from the collections, three semi-permanent galleries will cover the most emblematic themes from our history and our future, while two temporary exhibitions a year for all audiences will deal with universal themes central to the human maritime adventure, in addition to an immersive introductory “Orientation” area, a new, fully modular 200-seat auditorium and a socially-committed and open “News area” where all contemporary maritime issues will be displayed and debated, enabling visitors to really “experience the sea” and its most topical issues. This complex will offer a dynamic event programme, which seeks to astonish and surprise as well as to captivate and entertain.

This incredible project also involves redesigning the museum’s visual identity with a progressive graphical design connected to the maritime aspect. This new branding exercise will mirror the future museum itself: innovative, sensible and lively!

Its future visitors will be invited to “Take to the sea” with immediate boarding, with many exciting stop-offs along the way.

Let’s set sail for 2022!

Geneviève Darrieussecq
Minister Delegate to the Minister of the Armed Forces, in charge of Memory and Veterans
MAKING THE MUSÉE NATIONAL DE LA MARINE A SHOWCASE FOR A CULTURAL AND MARITIME INSTITUTION
A NETWORKED MUSEUM

The Musée national de la Marine is a public administrative establishment operating under the auspices of the Ministry of the Armed Forces. It is comprised of six sites open to the public and a conservation and resource centre.

It is a museum of art and history, science and technology, human adventures and popular traditions. It is also a maritime cultural centre open to all, which seeks to be a showcase and a heritage conservation centre for all navies.

It also aims to raise awareness among the public of the oceans’ current and future challenges by showcasing their heritage.

To achieve this, the museum has the task of preserving, presenting, enhancing and expanding its collections in all marine-related fields, including those of the French Navy, the merchant navies, fishing, oceanographic research, water sports and pleasure boating. It can also organise or support the organisation of any exhibitions or events likely to maintain and encourage people’s love of maritime history.

The Musée national de la Marine is present in Paris but also along the Atlantic coast in Brest, Port-Louis and Rochefort — on two sites — in addition to the Mediterranean coast at Toulon. Along with its conservation and resource centre at Dugny, this network of six sites enables it to maintain strong links with local maritime cultures and to promote an active exhibition policy.

Paris: bringing the sea to the French capital

The Musée national de la Marine in Paris has one of the finest and oldest collections in the world, tracing back 300 years of French maritime and naval history. In 2015, it was tasked with undertaking an ambitious transformation project by the Minister of Defence. It is one of the last great French museums to undergo renovation and the last on the Palais de Chaillot site.

Outside view of the Palais de Chaillot ©Musée national de la Marine/Y. Bourgeois

The museum’s restoration workshops.

View of Brest castle ©Musée national de la Marine/Le Sall

Brest: a castle with seventeen centuries of history

Located on the tip of the Brittany peninsula, Brest castle bears witness to a destiny closely linked to that of the sea, the story of a city, of a region and of our whole country. The museum’s collections trace back the history of the French Navy, exploring its close links with the city. A visit to the castle also provides an opportunity to discover some incredible views across the harbour, the Penfeld, the city and its ports.

Outside view of the Penfeld ©Musée national de la Marine/M.Le Gall

Aerial view of the Port-Louis fortress ©Musée national de la Marine/M.Le Coz

Port-Louis: a museum in a fortress

Situated on the Atlantic coast at the entrance of Lorient’s harbour, the fortress of Port-Louis is a fascinating site built in 1618. Located in the heart of this fortress, the Musée national de la Marine presents an outstanding collection of vessels, antique navigation instruments and historical models. Its museum design and visit route, which is organised around two thematic areas — one dealing with the history of maritime rescue and the other with ships lost along the route to the Indies — make it a leading museum site.

Drawing room at the Hôtel de Cheusses ©Musée national de la Marine/G.Lazennec

A genuine memorial to the arsenal, the museum traces back the manner in which Toulon gradually emerged as the largest military port in the Mediterranean from the reign of Louis XIV onwards. Featuring huge models, relief maps, paintings and scientific instruments, it tells the story of the creation of its arsenal and the incredible destiny of the military port over the last 350 years.

Figureheads ©Musée national de la Marine/Le Sall

Dugny: a state-of-the-art conservation and resource centre

With its new conservation and resource centre situated in the district of Dugny, in Seine-Saint-Denis, the Musée national de la Marine has a state-of-the-art site using the latest conservation techniques. This facility contains the warehoused collections, the library, documentation, a photo library and the museum’s restoration workshops.

Restoration period at the Musée national de la Marine ©Musée national de la Marine/Le Coz

Rochefort: discovering the maritime adventure through two museums

In Rochefort, the museum is housed in a historical monument, the Hôtel de Cheusses, one of the town’s oldest civil buildings. Once home to the last Lord of Rochefort, it became the main place of residence of the squadron commanders when the arsenal was established in 1666. Both the collections on display and the building itself bear witness to the exciting historical adventure of Rochefort’s arsenal. Since July 2019, the Musée national de la Marine in Rochefort has been part of the major “Arsenal des Mers” project which includes among others the Hermione and the Royal rope factory. The museum in Rochefort also offers the chance to discover the former Naval Medical School. Opened in 1722, it was the first of its kind in the world and can today still be viewed exactly as it was in the mid 19th-century. It serves as both a museum, a historical monument, a scientific library and a commemorative site.

Figureheads ©Musée national de la Marine/Le Sall

Restoration period at the Musée national de la Marine ©Musée national de la Marine/Le Coz

Toulon: the port of the Levant

©Musée national de la Marine/M.Tric

©Sébastien Chenal/Marine Nationale/Défense

©Musée national de la Marine/A.Fux

©Musée national de la Marine/Y. Bourgeois

©Musée national de la Marine/F.Le Livec

©Musée national de la Marine/G.Lazennec

©Musée national de la Marine/M.Le Gall

©Musée national de la Marine/M.Le Coz

Page 4: Torpedoes of the ocean-going patrol boat Commandant Devin, at sea during operation Triton ©Gilles Leclerc/Marine Nationale/Gillimage

Page 5: Figurehead of the Royal Louis ©Musée national de la Marine/Le Sall
A NEW SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL PURPOSE

In 2015, in its scientific and cultural project (SCP), the Musée national de la Marine outlined five founding principles underpinning all of the activities undertaken on its different sites:

• making the sea and the great maritime adventure a subject of interest for the French population by telling the story of the sea and of sailors, explaining and showcasing France’s maritime identity

• passing on the memory but also what are seen as the intrinsic values of seafaring communities: courage, boldness, curiosity, freedom, solidarity and a team spirit

• showcasing the national collections, putting them into perspective to make them more accessible to the public and particularly for non-specialists

• making a visit to the museum an exciting experience and a source of pleasure, meeting the public’s expectations in terms of cultural mediation resources

• making the Musée national de la Marine part of a wider approach aimed at strengthening the relationship between the military and the nation and fostering a spirit of defence.

As the first stage in the restructuring of the Musée national de la Marine, the Paris site provides an opportunity to rethink the establishment’s overall organisation on the six sites.

The future museum will encourage genuine complementarity between the experiences offered on all sites. For historical and geographical reasons, each museum provides a slightly different viewpoint and contributes to raising the standing of France’s maritime cultural heritage. By building bridges between its different sites and emphasising their specific characteristics, the Musée national de la Marine of tomorrow will be the leading maritime cultural site for the 21st-century.

Telling the story of France and the sea
The aim is to help make the general public and especially the younger generations more familiar with France’s maritime aspect, by raising the profile of the collections containing no fewer than 35,000 items and artistic pieces.

Presenting, illustrating, explaining and showcasing France’s maritime history
The future museum will tell stories of the sea and of sailors, whether those of yesteryear or of today. They will all encourage the visitor to question the current situation with the sea and its future challenges.

Raising awareness of issues and challenges concerning all aspects of the sea: historical, geographical, environmental, economic, scientific and cultural
Heightened geostrategical challenges concerning the seas and a real lack of knowledge of these challenges by the public all justify the creation of a museum designed to emphasise the maritime aspect of France’s history.

Helping develop a taste for the sea
In Paris and in the ports, the Musée national de la Marine will be a living, interactive site conveying excitement, emotion and knowledge, taking visitors on an unforgettable journey.
A NEW IDENTITY
IN HARMONY WITH THE SEA

MUSÉE NATIONAL DE LA MARINE

MAKING THE SEA A WORLD APART

Taking the renovation of the Paris site as its starting point, the Musée national de la Marine has joined forces with the Carré Noir agency (Publicis) to design a new visual identity as part of a skills-based sponsorship arrangement. The objective was to build a new brand identity reflecting the future museum’s position and ambitions, both in Paris and at the coastal ports.

The skills-based sponsorship arrangement with the Carré Noir agency concerned the construction of a strategic platform and its creative expression, the creation of a new visual identity and a redesign of the museum’s graphical identity. This image transformation process is an integral part of the museum’s wider transformation.

An identity intrinsically - and continuously - linked with the sea!

The chosen visual identity is directly linked to the museum’s founding aspect and its very lifeblood: the sea. Thanks to artificial intelligence, the museum’s new logo and its whole brand identity will be closely connected with the oceans.

In partnership with the Shom, (the Hydrographic and Oceanographic Service) the museum will gather various sea-related data such as changes in the swell for example. The museum’s new logo will be able to visually interpret this data, reflecting it through differences in vibrations, movement effects or contrasts. As a result, the museum’s new logo will never be completely the same, reflecting the diversity of ocean life.

Though constantly changing, this logo will nevertheless be a stable aspect of the museum’s identity. It will be clearly identifiable regardless of its changes and its current “state”.

The range of blue colours, the chosen typeface and the wave-shaped patterns incorporated in the very name of the museum (inspired by optical art) are key elements of this new identity, with the result being that the Musée national de la Marine is immediately recognisable.

This new visual identity mirrors that of the new museum: sensible, constantly changing and lively.

“Making the sea a world apart”

This signature underlines the importance of the sea to the future of humankind and of the planet. For a long-term future on the earth, 70% of which is comprised of oceans, above all mankind must be able to build on the sea! This encourages us to work together to create a new world, one which the museum is keen to help as many people as possible to discover through its collections, exhibitions, activities and concrete actions.
A NEW IDENTITY
IN HARMONY WITH THE SEA

Carré Noir

Carré Noir is a graphical design and brand strategy agency founded in 1973, which has been, since January 2011, part of Publicis Activ France (the leading national network of communication agencies).

The agency today has more than 130 employees in France, located throughout the country: Lille, Strasbourg, Lyon, Marseille, Montpellier, Bordeaux, Nantes and Brest. It proposes a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to communication: brand strategy, positioning and architecture, brand, corporate and product identity, brand interactivity, etc. Carré Noir’s cross-cutting vision enables it to provide high quality solutions in terms of identity coherence and a complete system of brand markings.

Carré Noir has worked with many major brands and in particular has assisted La Monnaie de Paris (Paris Mint) during the redefinition of its visual identity. Carré Noir also produced the new corporate identity for the City of Paris, unveiled in February 2019.

The Shom

The Shom, a public establishment operating under the auspices of the Ministry of the Armed Forces, has the task of describing and forecasting the ocean, from the high seas to the coast. It is the successor to the world’s first official hydrographic service, the Dépôt des cartes et plans de la marine, founded on 19 November 1720 and will therefore be celebrating 300 years of French hydrography in 2020.

In its capacity as the national hydrographic service, the Shom collects, processes, archives and circulates maritime and coastal geographic information of use to public stakeholders and all users of the sea.

Its areas of expertise include among others: bathymetry, sedimentology, coastal hydrodynamics, oceanography and maritime acquisition systems engineering.

www.shom.fr

“PASSING ON THIS VITAL MESSAGE TO OUR FUTURE VISITORS: THE SEA IS MANKIND’S FUTURE”
The Musée national de la Marine in Paris is one of the last great French museums to undergo renovation and the last on the Palais de Chaillot site.

Lively and interactive, the future museum will make use of the most innovative technology. Drawing upon its own history and its collections, unique in the world and dating back to 1748, it tells the story of the navy, of the sea and of sailors. Creating a desire to travel, the museum will be a source of emotion and knowledge, a powerful tool for raising awareness among all audiences, helping them better understand the maritime challenges of our world.

As a meeting point for scientific knowledge and dialogue open to the rest of the world, it will help raise France’s standing internationally. Backed by a new organisation concerning both its message and its facilities, and by scenography adapted to the expectations of a rightly demanding and constantly changing audience, the museum will consolidate its position among the world’s leading maritime museums.

A visit route specially redesigned to appeal to everyone

As a multifaceted museum with a focus on science and technology, history, the fine arts and civilisation, the Musée national de la Marine has a duty not to neglect any of these aspects, which make it so unique among French museums. Its very history demonstrates the numerous different approaches which have underpinned the creation of its collections. Originally comprised of the maritime aspects of the royal and imperial collections, under the subsequent management teams they were successively imbued with ethnography before assuming a predominantly military narrative during the 20th century. It was therefore decided to create a semi-permanent visit route offering a variety of themes, featuring new presentations at regular intervals, and to regularly replace and update the subjects covered.

The future museum will be organised around several galleries which have been designed to meet the needs of different audiences:

• An “Orientation” area at the start of the visit route, an immersive area providing basic information needed to understand maritime challenges.
• Three “semi-permanent” areas replaced every three to five years dealing with the more emblematic themes of our history and future
• Areas known as “studios” which will highlight the collections’ finest works
• A new area, which will make it possible to host two temporary exhibitions a year for all audiences, dealing with major topics related to current maritime news and events
• Additional areas designed to promote contact and dialogue: a new 200-seat auditorium, working areas, a resource centre, an extended shop, a restaurant open to all and a current news area where all major current maritime topics will be presented and debated

The project’s main strategic focuses

• Renewing the presentation of the permanent collection, the museum’s key asset, and adapting the temporary exhibitions to the major maritime themes of today and tomorrow
• Organising events for the general public, for which the challenge is to make the museum the key focal point for discovering the sea and seafarers in Paris
• Developing a new business model and new operating and management methods for the establishment, ensuring that genuine synergy is developed between Paris and the coastal museums as well as the conservation and resource centre at Dugny

The project’s challenges

• Designing a friendly and dynamic facility for welcoming the public and ensuring orderly management of visitor flows
• Improving the museum’s overall attractiveness thanks to spectacular and innovative scenography, redefining its different areas to diversify its cultural attractions
• Improving the museum’s autonomy by increasing its resources – with areas dedicated to restaurant facilities, gift shop, seminars and conferences
• Upgrading the whole museum to the latest standards from both a technical and regulatory viewpoint - ensuring safety, security and accessibility for all.

“The Musée national de la Marine is a truly magnificent museum. It inspired our childhood imaginations and provides a beacon for all of our sailors sailing the oceans to maintain and extend France’s influence. The museum is transforming and transcending itself. It will soon become a great 21st-century maritime museum while also retaining all of its original spirit. It will forge a link between the glorious history of the French Navy and the treasures which the sea still conceals for future generations”

Florence Parly, Armed Forces Minister
To manage this renovation project, an international architectural competition was launched which attracted 117 applications under the delegated prime contractorship of the OPPIC (Opérateur du Patrimoine et des Projets Immobiliers de la Culture) with the eventual winner being the Parisian agency h2o architects, working as a consortium with the Norwegian architects Snøhetta. The heritage project management aspects were assigned to Lionel Dubois, Chief Architect of Les Monuments Historiques.

The proposed project is based on a form of composition and restoration of the galleries from the international exhibition of 1937, while at the same time respecting the architectonic continuity of the interior layout. It provides an opportunity to once again appreciate the fundamental architectural characteristics of this palace while respecting its history and adapting it to host the future museum’s prestigious collections over the long term.

The exhibition areas are minimalistic, uncluttered and retain their proportions, being both exceptional in view of their size and simple when we consider their treatment. The area is shown to best effect by the light. The project uses wood to emphasise the surfaces. These materials are transformed and emphasised, reinforcing both their contemporary and contextual character.

The new developments contribute to refreshing the venue’s image, being incorporated in an articulated manner to the right of the galleries’ former pavilions. Their design results from a delicate geometric dialogue with the existing features, which do not affect the overall perception and which retain the large, empty yet occupied spaces. The public and the collection are therefore the central features of these wide-open rooms offering practical, flexible and adjustable areas.

Two highlights should be noted during the visit sequence to the galleries. The entry sequence proposes generous reception areas providing high quality usage and a layout scalable to the visitor. At the far end of the galleries, the project reaffirms the primary role of the Pavillon d’About in the museum’s contextual mission, its vertical nature and the view over Paris both feature here once again. It becomes the natural convergence point for the elegant galleries forming a loop in which the exhibitions are gradually discovered.

The project provides an opportunity to once again appreciate the fundamental architectural characteristics of this palace while respecting its history and adapting it to host the future museum’s prestigious collections over the long term.

The new Musée national de la Marine in Paris is a living, bright, powerful facility assimilable by the public as they discover its world.
h2o architects
h2o architects is a design and redevelopment agency for architectural, heritage and urban sites. Founded in February 2005 by Charlotte and Jean-Jacques Hubert along with Antoine Santiard, it is comprised of around 20 people. In 2017, the three shareholders were joined by two additional partners, Noémie Bercot and Nestor Ivanov. The agency produces architectural projects of various scales, ranging from housing to cultural facilities or public areas. It includes architects and heritage architects. Among others, h2o architects redeveloped the area around the Familistère de Guise and the main courtyard at the French National Assembly. Since 2013, the agency has coordinated the urban redevelopment of the Reuilly barracks in Paris. It is currently completing the renovation project for the City of Paris’s Museum of Modern Art and recently delivered new working areas at the Institut National de l’Audiovisuel. For each project, whatever its scale, the agency’s contextual work involves skilfully striking the right balance between predetermined uses and open-access situations. h2o architects have been winners of the Albums de la jeune architecture and have scooped the European “40 under 40” award from the international magazine Wallpaper* after beating off competition from 30 emerging agencies. For this particular project, h2o architects have joined forces with the Snohetta agency, which carried out development work in the design phase and more specifically for the reception phase.

Snohetta
Named after one of Norway’s highest mountains, Snohetta is an agency founded in 1989 by Craig Dykers and Kjetil Thorsen. Snohetta is mainly based in Oslo, New York and Paris. The agency includes architects, landscape architects, interior designers and graphical artists. The result is an architectural design process characterised by an holistic approach with a particular focus on multidisciplinary solutions. With 300 staff worldwide, another key aspect of this agency’s identity is its cosmopolitan character. Over the last 30 years, Snohetta has been regularly involved in cultural projects. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the Oslo Opera or the World Trade Center memorial in New York rank among its best known projects. In France, Snohetta is or has been involved in numerous projects including the International Centre for Parietal Art of Lascaux-Montignac, in Dordogne (2017), the construction of the future headquarters for the Le Monde group in Paris’ 13th arrondissement and the renovation of the Nanterre-Amandiers theatre. The agency is also involved in the renovation and restructuring project for the Carnavalet Museum in Paris.

Lionel Dubois
Lionel Dubois has been the Chief Architect of Les Monuments Historiques since 1992. He has restored numerous listed monuments including the Place Ducale in Charleville-Mézières, the belfries of Calais and Arras, the church of Notre-Dame de Calais, the former cathedral of Boulogne-sur-Mer, the Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte and around 250 other historical monuments.

Oppic
The Oppic or “Opérateur du patrimoine et des projets immobiliers de la Culture”, is a public establishment handling prime contractorship on behalf of the State and its establishments. It specialises in prime contractorship for cultural facilities and the restoration and enhancement of historical monuments. It chiefly works for the Ministry of Culture and its operators but can also carry out assignments for other ministries.

Lionel Dubois has been the Chief Architect of Les Monuments Historiques since 1992. He has restored numerous listed monuments including the Place Ducale in Charleville-Mézières, the belfries of Calais and Arras, the church of Notre-Dame de Calais, the former cathedral of Boulogne-sur-Mer, the Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte and around 250 other historical monuments.
THE MUSEOGRAPHIC PROJECT

In February 2019, an initial selection panel shortlisted five applicant scenographers out of the forty applications submitted. In July 2019, a second panel comprised of professionals from the museums and heritage worlds and representatives from the Armed Forces and Culture ministries made their choice, this being the agency Casson Mann.

The winning team’s approach chiefly lay in their wish to make the museum a living and lively institution, tying the history of the sea to the deep links the nation enjoys with it, and to convey this to a wide audience. Their approach was organised around the need to captivate and inspire as many people as possible, to make the museum meaningful in the present day and in the lives of those visiting it. The project will show the collections to best effect, including numerous never-before or rarely presented works, carrying the message that the sea is part of us all and plays a role in our lives.

The future museum will therefore be presented as a modern and living institution, and not only a facility for exhibiting historical items. The goal is to tell stories, to entertain and delight our visitors. Here, the sea will be presented in its wider social and cultural context. Accordingly, the chosen design will enhance the sober and elegant areas created following the architectural renovation process. It will use the curve of the building to ensure that the visitor’s journey through it feels natural and intuitive. As part of the same process, by making optimal use of the building’s rooms and proportions, visitors will be encouraged to explore areas in which large-size sculptural exhibits have been placed.

The visitor experience is central to the scenographic design, with the idea being that the visitors must be able to understand, have fun and relax during their journey through the museum. To achieve this, the public will have the option to make their own choices, to choose their own route and to experience a visit in the form which suits them best, in line with their interests and wishes at the time. The visit plan will encourage visitors to follow the building’s natural curve into the far extremities of the exhibition areas, but they will have a great deal of freedom to admire the richness and diversity of the collections.

The museum needs to attract a wide and diverse audience including families, young people, enthusiasts, the uninitiated, individual visitors, disabled people and groups.

Accessibility is a key aspect of the future museum, which is keen to go beyond the legal requirements in this area. The visitors will include persons with reduced mobility, people with hearing or eyesight problems, those with learning difficulties or mental health issues. A number of practical considerations will be taken into account, such as, for example, ensuring that the visit route is clearly marked out so that persons with reduced mobility or those with seeing difficulties can move around easily, systematically providing areas where wheelchairs can turn around, setting the size and contrast of text to ensure that it can be read by everyone, or proposing multi-sensory experiences suitable for the largest possible number of visitors.

The art of navigation

INTRODUCTION SPACE

STUDIO – LA RÉALE

GALLERY 3 – EMOTIONS

STUDIO

GALLERY 2 – THE ECONOMY

STUDIO

Naval sculptures studio

© CASSON MANN/LMNB

Casson Mann

Recognised as one of the world’s best museum design and scenography agencies, Casson Mann is a British agency specialising in interpretive design. Casson Mann create tailored, innovative projects for their international clients. The agency is involved in designing museums, exhibitions and interpretation centres, whether in the case of new buildings or as part of work on existing heritage sites and historic monuments. Adopting a resolutely visitor-centric approach, Casson Mann considers content, shape and space as an indivisible whole. Whatever the story to be told or the message to be conveyed, from collection-rich displays to digital ones, Casson Mann seeks to propose a varied and unforgettable experience, surpassing the visitors’ expectations. Following the success of its two award-winning French projects – Lascaux IV, Centre International de l’Art Pariétal and the Cité du Vin in Bordeaux - an office was opened in France in 2018. Among the projects currently underway in France, we should mention:

• The Cité Internationale de la Gastronomie in Lyon, opened in October 2019
• Le Pressoir, a sensory interpretation centre for wine and Champagne in Aÿ, the opening of which is scheduled for January 2021

The Musée national de la Marine will be their first project in the French capital.
THE VISIT ROUTE

The “Orientation” area:
the sea as a shared horizon

As an entry point for visitors, this 300 m² area will offer them a general introduction to the maritime world, providing basic historical, geographic, geopolitical, economic or aesthetic information to help them gain a better understanding of the subject.

A number of approaches are used: fun and interactive, cognitive and immersive. The messages will be clear, educational and concise, to prepare the visitors for the historical information and the visit route awaiting them in the museum’s different sections.

The three semi-permanent galleries

The museum’s visit route takes the visitor through three galleries of approximately 500 m² each. Treated as semi-permanent exhibitions, they will each be renewed in turn every 3 to 5 years according to the themes, the items exhibited and the scenography, taking account of the public’s expectations and topical issues. They will each feature very different identities in terms of their subjects and message type.

The three galleries are designed to:
• Examine a topic by focusing on it and treating it as a subject for exploration, just as we would do for a temporary exhibition, thereby forgoing the classic “collections route” seen in most museums
• Place it in perspective through “storytelling”
• Use human imagery and/or accounts to successfully portray the maritime adventure
• Identify the current stakes and challenges related to the sea for each particular issue and to encourage each visitor to examine his or her conscience as a citizen.

Each gallery will cover a particular theme which, based on an opening subject, will make it possible to widen the dialogue to ensure that by the end of the visit route the whole collection will be treated as showcases housing the museum’s most emblematic collections.

It is this aspect which makes them so different from the galleries or engage in “storytelling”. They are there to present the public with a chronological overview of the development of the French Navy from the 17th-century to the present day, with a particular emphasis on innovation. Through stories and historical information concerning both the vessels and the sailors, their many different jobs and skills, and tactical or technological inventions, the visitor is taken on a journey to understand the role of the French navy and State activity at sea.

A number of approaches are used: fun and interactive, cognitive and immersive. The messages will be clear, educational and concise.

The four studios

These areas, each measuring 150 to 200 m² will be treated as showcases housing the museum’s most emblematic collections.

It is this aspect which makes them so different from the galleries. Their display renewal rate will depend on the renewal of the semi-permanent galleries.

Illustrated by the displayed works, these thematic studios are not intended to deal with specific issues in the same way as the galleries or engage in “storytelling”. They are there to display the museum’s star items and the treasures from its collection to best effect.

THE SEMI-PERMANENT GALLERIES’ THEMES

GALLERY 1 – HISTORY:
France as a naval force, with strength and innovation

Examining the history of the French Navy is a natural aspect of any museum belonging to the Ministry of the Armed Forces and many of the key works in our collections deal with this subject. The link between the military and the nation is a major theme of the museum’s scenography.

The purpose of this gallery is to present the public with a chronological overview of the development of the French Navy from the 17th-century to the present day, with a particular emphasis on innovation. Through stories and historical information concerning both the vessels and the sailors, their many different jobs and skills, and tactical or technological inventions, the visitor is taken on a journey to understand the role of the French Navy and State activity at sea.

GALLERY 2 – THE ECONOMY:
the maritime economy and consumption routes

Drawing upon the historical collections, the purpose of this gallery is to present contemporary challenges related to the sea, whether economic, ecological or social, and to discuss the future, including environmental challenges.

The goal is to make the visitor aware of the omnipresence of maritime economies in their day-to-day lives and the key ecological challenges generated by our consumption.

It considers the origin of the products we consume and helps visitors discover the maritime trade routes, the key stakeholders involved and the circuits enabling them to benefit from these products.

GALLERY 3 – EMOTIONS:
man and the sea, storms and solidarity

The principle behind the gallery is to help the visitors experience something really special thanks to large-sized works, items salvaged from shipwrecks (undersea archaeology) and eyewitness accounts. They will discover the sea from a whole new angle.

This gallery presents the sea as a source of questions for the individual, in relation to himself and his relationship to others. Aspects related to spirituality and solidarity will be covered, as well as exploring disappearance at sea, the past and the way it is understood, particularly through undersea archaeology.
THE STUDIOS

The Vues des ports de France (Scenes of the harbours of France) by Joseph Vernet

The Vues des ports de France series by Joseph Vernet together comprise an outstanding heritage-related collection. As political tools used by the Royal authorities, these paintings are also remarkable artistic works. The visibly busy port life seen in these maritime and port scenes bear witness to the lively activities of the coastal communities in the second half of the 18th-century. This gallery makes it possible to present works by Vernet and his successor Hue from 1791. Portraits and prints propose a new look at the context in which this exceptional order was fulfilled and what subsequently became of it.

The well-known and not-so-well-known history of the “models”

From the Trianon collection, ordered by Napoléon I, to the toy boats, the Musée national de la Marine’s extremely extensive collection of models had a wide variety of uses. The goal is to show that a model can have both aesthetic and technical value, and help people appreciate the diversity of the models from a chronological, typological and functional viewpoint and finally to present the models as European and extra-European historical items with varying dimensions.

The splendours of naval sculpture

Featuring a varied and multifaceted range of styles, naval sculpture covers many different uses: decorative purposes, means of identification, in a prophylactic role or as a means of representing the powers in place at the time. Its aesthetic, technical and political aspects will be presented in a studio organised around ornamental features from La Réale, the flagship for the Sun King’s royal aspirations and one of the museum’s star items.

Finding your way at sea: the art of navigation

The history of navigation is a long and complex one, built on a variety of experiments and ingenious inventions. Initially based on oral tradition then further developed thanks to scientific books and instruments, the art of navigating has constantly improved over the centuries. Through its rich collections, the Musée national de la Marine seeks to look back on this proud history and show the visitor that modern technology alone is not sufficient to find your way about at sea and replace man. A genuine beacon along the visit route!

THE RENOVATION PROJECT

Key figures for the renovation project

A 6-YEAR renovation process

8,000 M² TO BE REDESIGNED and 2,500 m² of semi-permanent visit routes

MORE THAN 800 WORKS of all kinds exhibited, using all media forms (models, scientific and technical items, weapons, paintings, graphic and decorative arts, audiovisual exhibits, etc.) along the semi-permanent visit route

MORE THAN 35,000 ITEMS from the collections to be conserved and enhanced:
- 2,822 models of boats
- more than 7,000 paintings and drawings
- 5,220 photographs

ALMOST 50 CULTURAL PROMOTION FEATURES effects, digital, immersive and interactive attractions, etc.

Cost of the project

65.3 MILLION EUROS

Participants in the renovation process

Contracting authority: Musée national de la Marine

Contracting authority’s representative: L’Opérateur du patrimoine et des projets immobiliers de la Culture, Oppic

Project management:
- Historic Monuments Chief Architect Lionel Dubois
- Architectural renovation: H2o consortium (appointed architect)
  - Snøhetta (architect)
  - Casson Mann (appointed scenographer)

Scenography: Casson Mann (appointed scenographer)

Key dates in the renovation process

2016

October: launch of the competition for the architectural aspects of the Palais de Chaillot building

2017

March: closure of the museum to the public
April: appointment of the architect for the building
November: beginning of the collections project

2018

October: removal of the Canot de l’Empereur
December: end of the collections project

2019

February: launch of the museum design project
July: launch of the competition for the general and specific signage
September: appointment of the scenographer
October: start of the buildings project

2021

Autumn: end of the buildings project
Winter: end of the scenography project

2022

Autumn: opening of the museum
The New Conservation and Resource Centre

Conserving, passing down and enhancing its rich collections are just some of the Musée national de la Marine’s fundamental activities. Beginning in 2016, the transfer of the collections to the conservation and resource centre at Dugny, one of Europe’s most modern, was the first stage in the renovation of the museum at Chaillot.

This ambitious project will have a significant impact on the collections policy, including taking a fresh look at our heritage and setting new guidelines for acquisitions.

After being moved from Chaillot in 2000, the Musée national de la Marine’s reserve collections were housed at the Fort de Romainville (Seine-Saint-Denis). The decision by the Ministry of Defence to sell the site required a further move, providing the impetus for a planned conservation centre adapted to modern day needs. This meant:

- Conservating and managing all the collections to the highest possible standards, with these collections today being stored entirely in the Dugny storerooms
- Creating new restoration and photography workshops and a home for all of the documentation concerning the collections (files for the works)
- Providing offices for the museum’s scientific staff and the research and study areas for the collections

The choice was made to use a storage hanger built in 1995 at Dugny, the surface area of which has been extended from 7,140 to 9,700 m². The prime contractorship was delegated to the Oppic, and the company Hugues Fontenas Architectes was chosen in June 2012 to handle the project management.

The work, which began in September 2014, was completed a year later. The completed building was formally accepted in early 2016.

A second phase of the project involved fitting out additional storerooms in an unused part of the existing hanger, to house very large items and paintings from the museum. Work on this second phase, which got underway in February 2018, took 8 months.

The storerooms were made available to the Musée national de la Marine on 23 November 2018 and have held works from the Palais de Chaillot since December 2018.

The museum now has a fully-functional, state-of-the-art conservation facility, for its own teams but also for researchers or students.

Open to specialised audiences throughout the year (researchers, model makers), the centre could be opened more extensively to the public during special events such as the European Heritage Days.
THE COLLECTIONS PROJECT

In view of the future relocation of the collections to the conservation and resource centre in Dugny, a collections project was launched, firstly in the former Romainville storage facility, and subsequently at the Palais de Chaillot.

The task involved seizing this historic moment in the life of our collections to further enhance the quality of the documentation (identification, proofing, measurements, photographic coverage) and to improve the conservation of the most fragile items during the relocation and over the long term in the new storage facilities.

These tasks were successfully completed, both by the staff from the conservation department and by outside conservator-restorers who had particular responsibility for dealing with the models (packing and mounting of 150 models), the synthetic materials and rubber (diving suits for example) in addition to organic items (chiefly leather) and non-organic ones (glass and ceramics).

In all, more than 3,800 items from the collections were moved from the Chaillot site to the conservation and resource centre, and 36,000 works underwent dust removal and curative conservation.

This project ended in July 2018 for the items and December 2018 for the works from the library processed on the Chaillot site.

THE RESTORATION WORKSHOP

The Musée national de la Marine has its own restoration workshop. The conservation and restoration of antique models of 18th and 19th-century sailing vessels are both key areas of excellence for the Musée national de la Marine thanks to the presence of a team of model makers/restorers, whose skills and experience are widely recognised nationally.

Today based at Dugny, the restoration workshop enables the museum to consolidate its position in this "niche" area of the museums and heritage sector.