

Languedoc-Roussillon Region - Communications Service - © David Maugendre - Fish Eye - August 2015

PRESS KIT

mémorial

du camp de rivesaltes

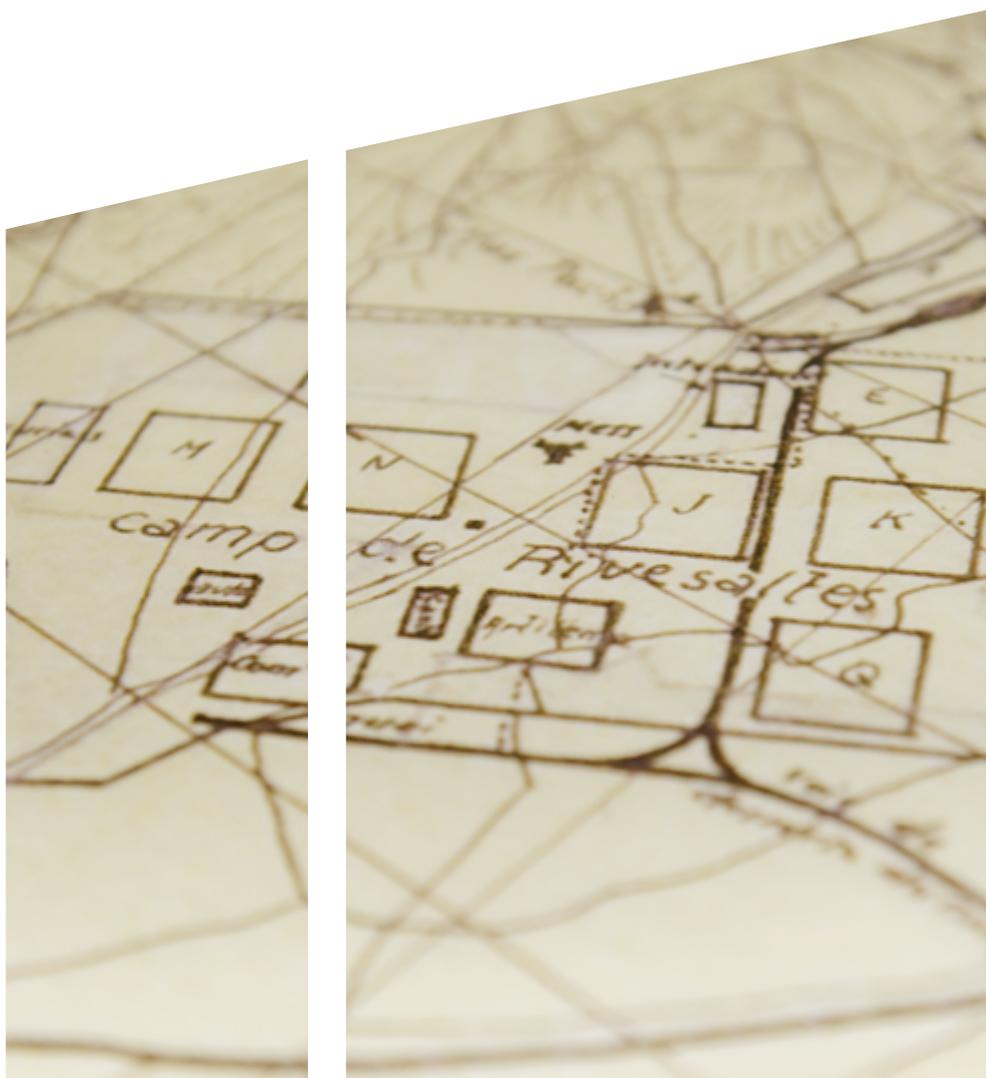
INAUGURATION, ON OCTOBER 16TH 2015



TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	5
President of the Languedoc-Roussillon Region President of the EPCC / Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes	
PRESS RELEASE	7
THE HISTORY OF THE CAMP	9
THE MEMORIAL	
AN IMPORTANT PLACE OF REMEMBRANCE	13
THE HISTORY OF THE PROJECT	15
THE SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH COUNCIL	17
THE AIM OF THE MEMORIAL	
THE PERMANENT EXHIBITION	21
PROGRAMMING 2015/2016	21
LEARNING LABS	24
THE BUILDING	27
PERCENT FOR ART PROGRAMME	32
THE BUDGET	36
THE ENDOWMENT FUND	37

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Fish'Eye for the Region



FOREWORD

For many years, the 612 hectares of the Camp Joffre, otherwise known as the 'Camp de Rivesaltes' seemed to have been buried under layers of collective memory, like a part of history that was not to be told. For a long time, those who had been interned in this camp did not have a place that told their story and honoured their memory. And yet the history of twentieth-century Europe still resonates in the vestiges of the buildings that stand on the site, in echo of major conflicts, including the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War and the Algerian War of Independence. It is these vestiges that today enable us to explore seventy years of our history.

Originally built as a military camp, the 'Camp Militaire Joffre de Rivesaltes' has had various functions over the years. It was an 'Accommodation Centre' for Spanish Republicans, foreign Jews and Gypsies; an 'Inter-Regional Round-Up Centre for Israelites' before their deportation to Auschwitz via Drancy, and later a 'Relocation Camp for Harkis and their families' while they awaited processing. The Camp de Rivesaltes was therefore a place of internment and exclusion for tens of thousands of people from different backgrounds, nationalities and cultures, who in addition to having been forcibly displaced, were excluded. France considered them to be 'undesirable' and interned them, not on the grounds of crimes committed on French soil, but for the potential danger they were likely to represent.

Because looking at the past allows us to build the future; because the suffering experienced by the thousands of men, women and children in this place deserves to be made public, because of the importance of honouring memory and place, Christian Bourquin, then President of the Pyrénées-Orientales Departmental Council initiated discussions on the creation of the Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes as far back as 1998. In January 2012, the Languedoc-Roussillon Region, with the support of the departmental council, took over the management of the project. Languedoc-Roussillon became the first Region in France to undertake a memorial project on this scope and scale, a project of general interest, highlighting Republican values of humanism, and reflecting the ambition of the Region. Indeed, the aim of the memorial is to raise public awareness of the dangers that weakened democratic values in the past and which have, and continue today to jeopardize the freedom of men and women everywhere.

This memorial is unique in France. Other internment camps throughout the country have left very few traces. Rivesaltes on the other hand, with its ramshackle barracks, is a powerful symbol of a tragic story. The issue or question of memory, transmission and education are the cornerstones of the Rivesaltes Memorial. In the words of Elie Wiesel '[i]f we forget, we are guilty, we are accomplices'. This is why I am convinced that the history of this camp concerns us all and I hope that this commemorative project will serve as an important lesson to our young people, to us all, and to humanity as a whole.

President of the Languedoc-Roussillon Region

President of the EPCC* Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes

*EPCC (établissement public de coopération culturelle) is a French public institution concerned with the development of a region's cultural facilities.

Women on the camp in 1941-1942
© Photo Paul Seen - Leiter Paul Collection
Seen-Archiv Kunstmuseum Bern



PRESS RELEASE

A witness to some of the twentieth century's darkest moments—the Spanish Civil War, World War II, the Algerian War of Independence—the Camp de Rivesaltes occupies a unique and important place in French history. A former military camp, a camp for Spanish refugees, the largest internment camp in Southern France in 1941 and 1942, an internment camp for German prisoners of war and collaborators, and the primary relocation centre for Harkis and their families ... its history is unique.

In order to tell this story, a memorial designed by architect Rudy Ricciotti and the agency Passelac & Roques, opened its doors on 16 October 2015. Built on the former block F of the camp, in the middle of the existing buildings, the memorial, measuring 4,000 m², provides an authoritative account of the history of the forced displacement and subjugation of populations. It is also a place where visitors may cultivate the memory of all those who once passed through its doors.



**View of the camp
October 2015**

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Fish'Eye for the Region

Barracks in 2015
© Olivier Amsellema



THE HISTORY OF THE CAMP

THE BIRTH OF AN INTERNMENT CAMP

On 12 November 1938, a law implementing the administrative detention of 'undesirable aliens' was passed. One of the specificities of this law was the authorization of the arrest and detention of persons, not for crimes or offenses they had committed, but for the potential danger they supposedly represented for the State. The first victims of this law were the Spanish and the volunteers of the International Brigades, who had been expelled from Spain following Franco's victory.

In early February 1939, over 450,000 Spaniards crossed the Pyrenean border, with the vast majority of them turning up on the beaches of Rousillon: Argelès, Saint-Cyprien and Barcarès. Many of them would end up in Rivesaltes.

In the autumn of 1939, a military site, the 'Camp Joffre', a vast space of over 600 ha was built. It initially had solely a military vocation, and indeed, colonial troops were the first to occupy the site. In June-July 1940, the Fall of France and the establishment of the authoritarian Vichy regime led to the implementation of a policy of exclusion and collaboration. Within a few months, over 50,000 people were detained in various camps in Southern France, in the unoccupied zone, also known as the 'Free Zone'.

However, these makeshift camps were extremely precarious. In reality, the government did not have the means to implement or support its policies. In December 1940, a solution was found: thousands of detainees were to be transferred to the barracks at Rivesaltes. Very quickly however, the inadequate food supplies, harsh climate, and large number of babies and children now living on the site meant that this solution was far from effective.

On 14 January 1941, the first convoys began to arrive from other camps, bringing with them Spaniards, Jews and Gypsies. The latter had been evacuated several months prior to this from Alsace-Moselle, a de facto territory now attached to the Reich.

1942, THE HEIGHT OF THE TROUBLES

Since January 1941, the history and function of Rivesaltes had been closely connected to the exclusion policies implemented by Vichy. The situation changed however, in the summer of 1942. The French government agreed to co-manage the deportation of Jews from France, as desired by the Nazi occupiers, even though there were no German soldiers in the southern zone until November 1942. Between August and November 1942 therefore, almost 10,000 Jews would be given up by Vichy in the name of collaboration. Some 2,313 men, women and children would leave from Rivesaltes in 9 convoys.

The first convoy left from Rivesaltes on 11 August 1942 for Drancy, a transit centre for the deportation of French Jews—an antechamber of death—with most of the 76,000 Jews deported from France leaving for Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Initially, in a symbolic gesture the French state handed over Jews from those already interned at Rivesaltes. Soon, Rivesaltes became a regional camp for Jews. Finally, by early September, it had become the inter-regional centre for the deportation of all Jews from the unoccupied zone, the 'Drancy of the Free Zone', in the words of Serge Klarsfeld.

However, it is worth noting that of the some 5,000 Jews interned in Rivesaltes between August and November 1942, more than half would escape the convoys thanks to the assistance of organizations such as the Swiss Red Cross, OSE, Cimade, YMCA, Unitarian Service, etc., as well as the intervention of individuals such as prefect Paul Corazzi, who did everything in his power to exclude from deportation as many people as possible, children in particular.

In nearly two years of existence, 17,500 people had been interned in Rivesaltes, 53% of them Spaniards, 40% Jews (foreign) and 7% Gypsies (French).

On 22 November 1942, ten days after the occu-

THE HISTORY OF THE CAMP

pation of the southern zone, the Germans emptied the camp, restoring it to its primary or initial vocation: a barracks for coastal defence troops.

A DIFFICULT POST-WAR TRANSITION

With the liberation of the département of the Pyrénées-Orientales, Rivesaltes was once again used as an internment camp, primarily housing those suspected of collaboration and dealings on the black market during the war. This 'surveillance centre' was born in September 1944.

However, it lasted only a matter of months: in April 1945, it became a prisoner-of-war camp, mostly for Germans, but also Austrians and for a time, Italians. The number of prisoners increased rapidly (up to over 10,000) and their living conditions deteriorated dramatically, resulting in high mortality rates in 1945, as was also the case in other camps.

The posting of many of these men as workers outside the camp, coupled with changes in internal administrative policies, greatly improved the situation as of the summer of 1946. The release of the last prisoners in early 1948 saw the closure of the prisoner-of-war camp at Rivesaltes. The camp once again returned to its 'normal' military vocation.

FROM THE ALGERIAN WAR TO THE ARRIVAL EN MASSE OF THE HARKIS

The Algerian War of Independence then left its mark on the history of the Rivesaltes Camp. Many French army recruits would spend time here before crossing the Mediterranean. At the end of the war, between January and May 1962, four blocks were transformed into a detention centre, where prisoners from the Front de Libération Nationale (National Liberation Front) were interned.

However, it was in September 1962, when the

war was over that the former auxiliaries of the French army in Algeria, called the Harkis, arrived. Those who had been able to leave Algeria arrived with their families. They were initially housed at other reception centres such as Bourg-Lastic, Bias and Larzac before being transferred to Rivesaltes.

At first, they were housed in military tents. Added to the material difficulties and promiscuity, were moral distress and the pain of exile. The wind and the cold of the winter of 1962 tragically highlighted the precariousness of these makeshift housing facilities.

The families were eventually relocated to the barracks, and a form of social structure or organization was established.

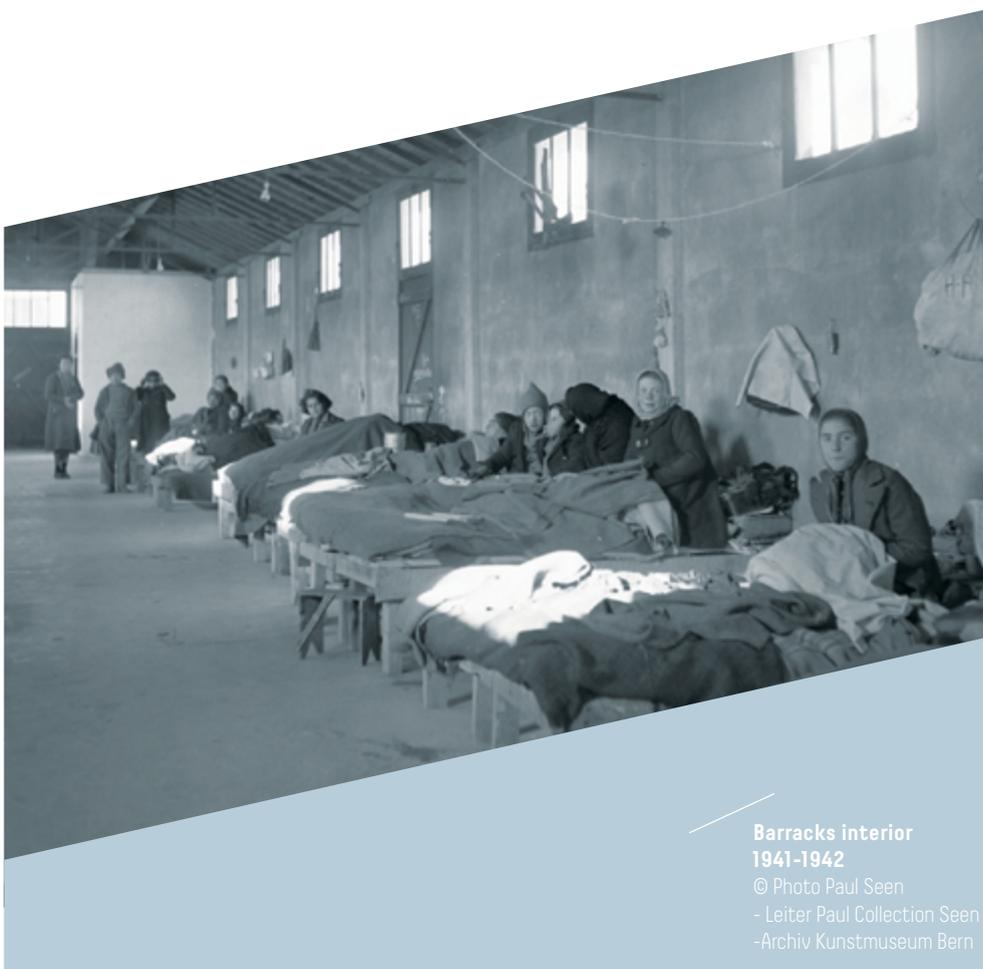
However, the integration of the former auxiliaries and their families was a difficult and lengthy process. Rejected by independent Algeria and therefore by a certain part of the French public, their welfare was long neglected by the French Government.

Many of them were eventually oriented towards employment in the mines, and in the iron and steel industries in the north of France. Others were gradually relocated to specially designated housing estates in urban areas, or were moved to seventy-five remote forestry hamlets scattered across Southern and South East France, including one located at Rivesaltes. The Rivesaltes transit camp, through which almost 21,000 Harkis and their families had passed, officially closed in December 1964. However, a civilian settlement would remain on the site until March 1965. The last families would leave the Rivesaltes forestry hamlet in 1977 and were relocated to the housing estate of Réart (Rivesaltes) in 1977.

After the departure of the Harkis, and up until March 1966, Guinean soldiers and their families (approximately 800) were transferred to the Camp de Rivesaltes by the French government. Following the Independence of Guinea in 1958, these soldiers had been housed in French bar-

racks in Africa: Senegal, Ivory Coast, Niger, etc. During this same period, the camp was also home to a small group of soldiers from French Indochina.

Following this period, the camp would return to its military vocation. However, between 1986 and 2007, the site would assume yet another function: an administrative detention centre for deportable aliens. This centre was eventually transferred to Perpignan, as such a function was deemed incompatible with the creation of a commemorative and historical site.



**Barracks interior
1941-1942**

© Photo Paul Seen
- Leiter Paul Collection Seen
- Archiv Kunstmuseum Bern

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THE MEMORIAL

AN IMPORTANT PLACE OF REMEMBRANCE

«A nation is strong when it has the courage to confront the worst facets of its history. Bad things don't just happen on the other side of the planet, they happened here. That this commemorative project may serve as a lesson to all of our youth, all of mankind.»

Christian BOURQUIN,

President of the Pyrénées-Orientales Departmental Council (1998-2010)

President of the Languedoc-Roussillon Region (2010-2014)

Senator for the Pyrénées-Orientales (2011-2014)

In 1998, the Pyrénées-Orientales Departmental Council began a project to build a memorial on the site of the Camp de Rivesaltes and for this, acquired one of the blocks of the camp, block F (a 42-hectare site). Given the dimension of the project, the Languedoc-Roussillon Region then emerged as the most suitable actor to ensure the successful realization of the project. The latter has overseen the management of the memorial project since January 2012. Languedoc-Roussillon is the first region in France to undertake a memorial project of this scale and scope, with the aim of promoting a greater awareness of our past and providing the tools to understand a shared history.

The history of the Camp de Rivesaltes is at the pivot of events (the Spanish Civil War, World War II, the Holocaust, the Algerian War of Independence, etc.), countries (Spain, Germany, Italy, Belgium, France, Poland, USA, Israel, Algeria, etc.), and cultures. It is also the only site where visible traces of an entire part of the history of the second half of the twentieth century can be seen. This makes the site unique in France.

The memorial will become a reference place for the history of the forced displacement of populations and their subjugation, but also a joint place of remembrance.

Memories, repressed or sublimated, the cornerstone of communal identities, are the subject of teaching and research, key elements of a historical narrative that aims to explain, set out the facts and allow, through a multidimensional approach, a common narrative to be passed down to present and future generations. The memorial therefore has a deeply humanistic vocation: its intention is to allow communities, unaware of their respective histories, to discover them all under the one roof.

The questions of memory, transmission and education are the foundations of the Rivesaltes Memorial. This site, with regional, national and international dimensions has a variety of missions:

- historical research, the restitution and transmission of this knowledge to the general public, through the form of exhibitions, publications, seminars, conferences, etc.
- an educational dimension with the aim of promoting awareness and knowledge and encouraging a questioning on specific themes, namely the relationship between history and memory, through guided tours, workshops, educational resources, etc.
- an artistic and cultural programme that allows the public to question history and memory in a sensitive and alternative fashion, through the form of exhibitions, artist residencies, concerts, film screenings, etc.

The permanent exhibit takes visitors on a discovery of the memorial and of its history. Visitors can also follow an open-air path through the camp, amidst the remains of the barracks. Some of the former buildings have been left untouched, while others have been restored or reconstructed.

THE MEMORIAL

Combining history and memory, eye-witness accounts and historical records, the aim of the permanent exhibition is to reconstruct the history of the site and the populations once interned there, to explain the causes and mechanisms of their internment, and to shed light on their living conditions and their fate.



From left to right, Anne Lauvergeon, President of the Memorial Endowment Fund, Christian Bourquin, President of the Languedoc-Roussillon Region (2010-2014), Hermeline Malherbe, President of the Pyrénées-Orientales Departmental Council and Rudy Ricciotti, architect, on their first visit to the construction site on 26 June 2013
© Agence Rudy Ricciotti



© M. Hedelin

THE MEMORIAL

THE HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

The project of the Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes has a long history, punctuated rather unsurprisingly by the vagaries of politics, given that history, politics and memory are so closely intertwined.

Firstly, it is worth noting that this project was born from civilian society. Three individuals played a decisive role in the origin of the project: Claude Delmas and Claude Vauchez, who were instrumental in getting the local authorities on board with the project, and Serge Klarsfeld who worked on a national level. It all began in the mid 1990s, with the publication of the *Journal de Rivesaltes 1941-1942* (Diary of Rivesaltes), published in 1993. This diary was written by Friedel Bohny-Reiter, a nurse working with a Swiss relief organization for children. In her journal, she writes about life in the camp and the drama of deportation. In 1994, a monument was erected in memory of Jews deported from the Camp de Rivesaltes to Auschwitz, with another monument being erected in December 1995 in honour of the Harkis. This was followed by another commemorative monument in 1999, in homage to the Spanish Republicans.

However, it was the scandal caused by the discovery of a file from the camp in a dump by journalist Joël Mettray that marked a milestone in the history of the project. In the wake of this discovery, a large-scale national petition was launched by Claude Delmas and Claude Vauchez, and was signed by well-known figures like Claude Simon, Simone Veil and Edgar Morin.

It was at this time that the project took on a political dimension through the involvement of Christian Bourquin, a Socialist candidate running for presidency of the département of the Pyrénées-Orientales, a position he would win in 1998. Throughout his career, as President of the Departmental Council, and later as President of the Regional Council—succeeding Georges Frèche—he made the memorial project one of his priorities.

In 2000, Block F was identified by heritage organization, Monuments Historiques, as worthy of conservation. Soon, everything began to fall into place. Chris-

tian Bourquin asked Denis Peschanski, a historian specializing in France's internment camps, to create and chair a scientific and research council which would provide a historical framework to the project. A memorial commission was also established, bringing together various associations, as well as an education commission made up of teachers who had been working on themes relating to the memorial and its history with students for a number of years.

Finally, in January 2006, architect Rudy Ricciotti, in collaboration with the architecture agency Passelac & Roques, was awarded the overall design of the project. The project to develop a memorial received unanimous support in a vote by the Pyrénées-Orientales Departmental Council. Robert Badinter would then bring his moral support by agreeing to sponsor the project. There followed a long period of planning and development. While political issues slowed down the advancement of the project, this time was used to learn more about the history of the camp. A photographic inventory was performed on the three major blocks of the camp, J, F and K. Things finally began to move quickly in 2010 when the building permit was issued, with construction work finally beginning in 2012. In 2013, an endowment fund was created, presided by Anne Lauvergeon, and charged with sourcing and mobilizing private financial aid. In January 2014, the memorial's administrative framework was put in place (EPCC*) and its direction entrusted to Agnès Sajaloli, the following month.

Sadly, Christian Bourquin passed away on the 26 August 2014 before witnessing the completion of this project and the inauguration of the Rivesaltes Memorial. History will remember that it was at his funeral, in a speech delivered by Prime Minister Manuel Valls that the French government declared its moral and financial commitment to the project, alongside support from the Languedoc-Roussillon Region and the Département of the Pyrénées-Orientales.

On 16 October 2015, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls, officially inaugurated the Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes.

*EPCC (établissement public de coopération culturelle) is a French public institution concerned with the development of a region's cultural facilities.



Denis PESCHANSKI
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THE MEMORIAL

THE SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH COUNCIL

DENIS PESCHANSKI

«The Rivesaltes Memorial has as its vocation to bear witness to contemporary history.

In the second half of the twentieth century, France experienced two major traumas: the Second World War and the Algerian War of Independence. The Second World War is presented through an exploration of the fate of its detainees in camps in Southern France between 1939 and Liberation. The phenomenon of internment was on a massive scale: it is estimated that over 600,000 people were detained in these camps. All pariahs, they included the Spanish and the volunteers of the International Brigades, chased out of Spain following the victory of Franco; 'undesirable foreigners' from 1938 onwards, as well as German and Austrian nationals once war had been declared. The camps also housed communists, both before and after the Fall of France, then following the Occupation, it was an internment camp for Jews and foreigners, as well as Gypsies forced to leave the region of Alsace, women considered to be dangerous, and even regular inmates who the authorities didn't want to release from captivity. The following was the rule in operation: administrative internment targeted individuals not for the crimes they had committed or were suspected of committing, but for the potential danger they represented for the State and society. It is a little known fact that these camps were a kind of anteroom of death for the Jews handed over to the Germans by the Vichy leaders in the name of collaboration.

Sometime later, France faced yet another drama: colonial warfare. This period of history is examined through the study of a particular strand of the population: the Harkis, French army auxiliaries who were the first victims once peace had been restored following the

Évian Accords. Many of those who remained in Algeria were massacred. Those who could escape to France were housed in places such as Rivesaltes or Bias, practically forgotten by the wider population.

This memorial aims to tell the tragic history of those 'undesirables' but also to serve as a message of hope: an illustration of the combined values of solidarity and mutual assistance, aid and resistance. A vast space is also devoted to the history of charitable organizations from the late nineteenth century onward, and the birth of the Red Cross, and examines the struggle of organizations today around the dilemma of humanitarian intervention. This is a saga that we also wanted to tell: the story of men and women who have devoted their lives to helping those in need in an age of terrible suffering. This saga is a part of history, and deserves therefore, to be explored and to be questioned. This part of the exhibition also raises ethical questions, questions which have often been asked by actors in the field: To what extent can one intervene on the terrain without imposing one's might? Can one remain neutral, or by doing so, does one risk supporting the oppressor? Should we stay only within the confines of the law when rescue may depend on illegal action?

These are just some of the important questions that the Rivesaltes Memorial raises. Questions concerning history, memory and ethics. Questions that allow us to analyse the past and to understand the present, and we sincerely hope, to pave the way for a better future..»

Denis PESCHANSKI

Historian, director of research at the CNRS and president of the scientific and research council to the Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes

BIOGRAPHY

Denis Peschanski developed a passion for history at a very early age, in junior high school. After his studies at third level, he became a junior high school and high school teacher. Following his doctorate, he joined the CNRS at the age of 28 and following his PhD, he became a research supervisor. A specialist in Occupied France, the Vichy Regime and the Resistance, several years ago he launched a transdisciplinary platform exploring issues relating to memory.

Since 2002, he has been a member of the Centre d'histoire sociale du XXe siècle, having also been a member of the Institut d'histoire du temps présent. He also occupies various scientific and research advisory roles, such as the presidency of the scientific and research committee of the Mémorial de Caen. He has published numerous books and articles on the 1930s and 1940s, and is the co-author of three films: *La Traque de l’Affiche rouge* (2007), *La propagande de Vichy* (2008) and *La France des camps* (2010), all three co-produced and aired on France 2.

He is a recipient of the Order of Arts and Letters (a ‘chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres’), a distinction awarded by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication.

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Des Étrangers dans la Résistance, Paris, Éditions de l'Atelier & Champigny-sur-Marne, Musée de la Résistance nationale, 2002

Les tziganes en France : 1939-1946, Paris, CNRS éditions, with the collaboration of Marie-Christine Hubert and Emmanuel Philippon, 2010 (re-release of the 1994 publication)

La Collaboration 1940-1945, Vichy-Paris-Berlin, Paris, Tallandier, 2014

THE SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH COUNCIL

Denis Peschanski was appointed president of the Scientific and Research Council for the Rivesaltes Memorial on 1 October 2015. The members of the council will be introduced to the board of directors at the next meeting.

PARTNERS

Ties already exist with the following institutions:

- Israel: Yad Vashem; the Jerusalem Town Hall
- Spain and Catalonia: Memorial Democràtic, Barcelona; Museu Memorial de l'Exili, La Jonquera

- United States: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum of Washington; Jewish Museum of New York
- Memorials and other institutions in France: Mémorial de la Shoah; Mémorial du Camp des Milles; Maison d'Izieu-Mémorial des enfants juifs exterminés;

Ville de Roubaix; Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration – Paris; Université de Perpignan Via Domitia; Mémorial du Camp de Bechen-wald; Fondation Fossoli

- the transdisciplinary, technological platform MATRICE

View of the permanent
exhibition
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Fish'Eye for the Region



View of the temporary
exhibition
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View of the temporary
exhibition
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THE AIM OF THE MEMORIAL

THE PERMANENT EXHIBITION

The permanent exhibition hall (1000 m²) has been designed so that the visitor can understand the historical events leading to the extensive forced displacement of populations and resulting in the creation of over 200 internment camps in France between 1938 and 1946 alone, including the Camp de Rivesaltes.

In the centre of the exhibition space, a large table, over this 30 m long, presents, in addition to the camp's chronology, multiple testimonies, documents and objects that trace the internment of colonial troops, Spanish Republicans, 'undesirables', Jews, Gypsies, collaborators, German, Austrian, Italian and Polish prisoners of war, and later Harkis, Guinean infantrymen, Madagascans, and Indo-chinese, providing visitors with an overview of the history and fate of both the civilian and military populations who were interned or housed here at varying periods.

Five large illuminated panels allow visitors to situate these events within the context of French and international history: the rise of Fascism in Europe and the policy of internment, the Spanish Civil War, World War II, the Algerian War of Independence, etc. A sixth panel illustrates the status of populations who are forcibly displaced and interned today, and includes an interview with the French representative for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Visitors can then visit an interactive space where they can consult maps relating to French internment camps and the forced displacement of populations in France, Europe and throughout the world, over the course of the 20th century.

Also on display, an ensemble of 48 testimonies by former internees and individuals involved in charitable work. These can be consulted on tablets. A large number of films and archives are projected onto the walls of the memorial and the exhibition space.

At the end of the permanent exhibit, visitors can see a mural depicting a map of block F.

PROGRAMMING 2015 / 2016

TEMPORARY EXHIBITION

LETTERS FROM RIVESALTES

For the inauguration and the first six months of its opening, the memorial welcomes the work of visual and video artist, Anne-Laure Boyer. She will exhibit two projects resulting from a residency programme of over two months, over the course of which she met with numerous eye witnesses, teachers, memorial associations, regional development groups, elected officials, etc. These meetings played an integral part in her creative process.

The first project, entitled *LES LETTRES DE RIVESALTES* (Letters from Rivesaltes) is presented in the form of a large pit placed on the ground, containing hundreds of letters in sealed envelopes.

These letters were part of an open call for submissions, and were written by all those who wanted to share their personal history and/or experience of internment camps. Visitors to the memorial can

THE AIM OF THE MEMORIAL

then take one of these sealed envelopes, write their address on it and place it in a special letterbox. A few days later, the visitor will receive the testimony of a stranger, to whom, he may reply, if he so wishes. At the end of the exhibition, the totality of the letters will be made public and some of them will be included in readings, performed by amateurs. For the opening of the memorial, the artist is also presenting a film, entitled *LA MARCHÉ DE RIVESALTES* (The Walk of Rivesaltes), which retraces a public march organized by the memorial, in which a hundred or so people marched in honour of all those who had been detained there—the victims, as well as all those men and women who embody struggle and resistance.



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THE AIM OF THE MEMORIAL

PROGRAMMING 2015 / 2016

CONFERENCE

In March 2016, the memorial will organize a conference entitled *Les conditions de la mise en récit mémoriel* around the theme of memory or memorial narrative. This conference is organized in close collaboration with Denis Peschanski, president of the memorial's scientific and research council. Questions relating to the transmission and construction of collective memory will be explored amongst others, and will be discussed by specialists from different disciplines, as well as authors and artists.

This conference, presented during French anti-racism and anti-Semitism week will form the basis of numerous multidisciplinary educational activities (history, French, philosophy, fine arts ...) carried out in collaboration with teachers, prior to the event. The resulting project work will be displayed in the memorial's learning lab spaces for the occasion.

ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

Throughout the season, the memorial will host a program of shows and events, reuniting different artistic disciplines. Choreographer **Julie Nioche** will present *LES SISYPHE*, a performance that brings together young amateurs of all origins and nationalities for one week around the notion of resistance. This work will be conducted in partnership with the Ligue de l'Enseignement (League of Education).

Musician accordionist **Bastien Charlery** will present a concert, musically representative of the camp's former populations. This project entitled *L'ORCHESTRE ÉPHÉMÈRE*, established in March 2016, will bring together enthusiasts from all horizons (associations, music schools, etc.) to develop and play a repertoire that incorporates a joint artistic and cultural dialogue. These concerts will also be performed over the course of the European Heritage Days event throughout the département.

A show for children, entitled *FIGURES*, will be proposed by the artist **Damien Bouvet** on the theme of childhood in the camp.

Finally, the memorial will organize numerous off-site events throughout the year in an effort to meet the public throughout the region and to present them with various art forms: readings created from the testimonies and accounts relating to life in the camp, including the diary of Friedel Bohny Reiter, and her correspondence with Elisabeth Eidebenz, both nurses with the Swiss Red Cross who saved hundreds of Jewish children from deportation, and a show, directed by **Agnès Sajaloli**, *J'AI ÉTÉ UN ENFANT*, based on a text by Albert Cohen, which addresses the issue of anti-Semitism. The event will feature a debate at the end of the performance.

THE AIM OF THE MEMORIAL

The memorial has published a number of books, representative of its editorial policy. These include:

- **LES CAHIERS DE RIVESALTES**, a specialist collection. Three books have been published to date: Alexandre Doulut, **LES TSIKANES AU CAMP DE RIVESALTES (1941-1942)**, **LES JUIFS AU CAMP DE RIVESALTES: INTERNEMENT ET DÉPORTATION (1941-1942)**, and Beate Husser **HISTOIRE DU CAMP MILITAIRE JOFFRE DE RIVESALTES**.
- **STORIES AND TESTIMONIALS**, a more accessible collection for the general public, featuring ac-

counts of life on the camp over several different periods.

- a young readers collection, which features illustrated books and stories for young children, comic books and autobiographical accounts or fiction for children and adolescents, as well as textbooks prepared in partnership with the National Board of Education
- a collection of photographic works of the site and the architectural project.

CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

Well-known figures whose personal stories bear a connection to the history of internment will regularly meet the public as part of a programme

of events, entitled **LES NUITS DU MÉMORIAL**. These figures include Lydie Salvayre and Rony Brauman.

LEARNING LABS

In addition to the exhibitions and programme of events, the documentation centre and five learning labs within the building contribute to making the memorial a living space, open and accessible to all, attracting a large public through the wide variety of activities on offer.

The documentation centre welcomes teachers and researchers. A digital resource project is currently being designed.

The learning labs provide teachers with a space where they may prepare lessons and/or extend a visit to the site with their classes. Workshops are also conducted here with specialists and artists on projects developed in conjunction with the memorial team. The memorial's educational team—made up of 6 teachers with primary and secondary degrees—also use these spaces to

create educational resources, which may then be used by teachers in the classroom, or over the course of a visit. The learning labs are also used to host training sessions for schools, set up by the memorial in partnership with various local and regional educational establishments: the Inspection Académique des Pyrénées-Orientales and the Rectorat de l'Académie de Montpellier.

These spaces are also dedicated to regular exhibitions of work done by young people, in connection with the memorial's programme and projects.



**Agnès Sajaloli, Director
of the Mémorial du Camp
de Rivesaltes**

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BIOGRAPHY

Following her studies in the humanities and theatre, Agnès Sajaloli enjoyed a career as a teacher, actress and director, creating some thirty shows and readings. She gradually began to focus her creative work on the cross-fertilization of artistic disciplines and on the development of cultural projects targeting a wide and varied audience. In her various roles—appointed associated artist in charge of cultural programming at the Scène Nationale de Châteauroux in 2000, then director of the Etablissement National de Production et de Diffusion Artistique Le Grand Bleu in Lille in 2009—she has privileged educational and outreach programmes for a diverse audience (teachers, associations), across a range of domains (artistic, medical and prison environments). She has overseen projects with a national and European dimension in collaboration with museums,

AGNES SAJALOLI

«The project of the Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes is built around a conviction: the multiple memories which it carries must be shared in order to question the world we live in today. The questions that it raises are essential ones. Essential in the promotion of the principles of democracy and the respect for human dignity. Essential in that they create reference points for citizenship, tolerance and fraternity for young

people. Essential in that they create a social and cultural link between generations and populations. Essential in the sense that they allow us to confront our history and to construct a future that is truly based on humanistic values.»

Agnès SAJALOLI

Director of the Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes

regional contemporary art funds and cultural institutions. She has also worked in close partnership with local authorities (Regional and Departmental councils) and institutional partners (Ministry of Culture and Communication, Ministry of Education, etc.) on regional cultural development projects. Since February 2014, she has been Director of the EPCC* du Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes, spearheading a scientific, cultural and artistic project, catering to a broad and diverse public.

*EPCC (établissement public de coopération culturelle) is a French public institution concerned with the development of a region's cultural facilities.



**Agnès Sajaloli, Director
of the Mémorial du Camp
de Rivesaltes**

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© M. Hédelin / Région
Languedoc-Roussillon



**Memorial construction
site** © M. Hédelin / Région
Languedoc-Roussillon

THE BUILDING



THE ARCHITECTURE

«We cannot remain detached from the history of the Camp Joffre through a discourse that is indifferent to the human drama that unfolded on this very site.

The memorial is silent and oppressive: it lies in the earth, squarely facing block F, with a calm and silent determination, a monolith of ochre-coloured concrete, untouchable, angled towards the sky.

At once buried in, and emerging from the earth, the memorial appears on the surface of the natural landscape as one enters the camp, and stretches to the eastern extremity of the former meeting place, to a height that is level with the roofs of the existing buildings. This arrangement or co-visibility doesn't hinder a reading of the features of block F. The effects of erosion over time are noticeable in some of the buildings, thereby marking erasure and absence, questioning the visitor regarding memory or oblivion. The site has been reclaimed by a tenacious and spontaneous vegetation. The project has altered none of this. If anything, it has been showcased, forming a natural backdrop to an exterior pathway where visitors can stroll freely. An environment propitious to meditation and serenity... To the west of the memorial, some of the buildings have

THE BUILDING

been rebuilt, recreating the serial and alienating spatiality of the camp. Here, there is an absence of vegetation, resulting in a flat, arid landscape, unmarked by shadows, and buffeted by the wind. From the carpark, situated at the outer south-west corner of the block, the visitor can enjoy panoramic views of the camp. The memorial is reached by a pathway that starts from the carpark, in line with the entrance to the building. This pathway leads to either the entrance of the camp or to an exterior pathway or route, with views of the nearby Corbières and Pyrénées. Visitors can pause, look around them, meditate and reflect, in this space that is free of charge and accessible to all.

From the pathway, the visitor arrives at the entrance and discovers a silent monument, aligned with block F. Access to the memorial is indirect, via a ramp that is partially buried in the ground, thereby sanctifying the megalith, and becoming the stepping stone to a journey through time. This tunnel ends abruptly: the visitor finds himself facing a block that is 240 metres long, opaque and timeless, just a few metres from where he stands.

After two strides in the daylight, the visitor enters a building where he will soon discover that the only views or openings towards the exterior are towards the sky itself. The lobby is enveloped in a soft lighting and a calm and serene atmosphere reigns. Propitious to a visit. Opposite the lobby is a long wall, devoid of any elements or decor, in which a passageway is situated. A kind of enigma. Once within, the visitor finds himself in a unique space. He can see small chinks of light skimming the ground and the surface of the ochre concrete walls. The atmosphere is heavy and solemn. It is a long passageway, relatively narrow. Visitors move forward, curious, until they reach the exhibition space. At times, they cross paths with visitors coming in the opposite direction. The atmosphere promotes silence.

The temporary and permanent exhibition spaces are arranged around a large pillared hall, artificially lit from the ground, with large-sized images projected onto vertical concrete walls.

The scenography is modest, without grandiloquence, placed at a distance from the walls, allowing a complete reading of the volume of the room. The visit continues with a return to the gallery, but in reverse.

The visitor then leaves the memorial to go back outside into the camp and the dazzling light. The outside path forms a loop around the museum, marking the end of the visit.

The memorial offers no view of the exterior, except for the sky. However, microcosms are present here and there inside the building. Three patios structure the organization of the learning labs, social area and offices, all the while providing a certain sense of comfort. These are three distinct worlds, each differing in their vocation.

This project is rooted in acceptance. Acceptance of the block, its lines, its military geometry transformed into something alienating, and of course, its history. Acceptance of the wind that blows. The nearby wind turbines are proof that our era coexists with the wind. Our epoch can coexist with its history. The Rivesaltes Memorial, compacted between earth and sky, between past and memory, is situated exactly in the present and in life itself.

Its formal violence demonstrates the impossibility of forgetting!»

Rudy Ricciotti



Rudy RICCIOTTI
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THE BUILDING

RUDY RICCIOTTI

BIOGRAPHY

22 August 1952 > Born in Algiers
 1974 > Geneva School of Engineering
 1980 > Marseille School of Architecture
 He has received two prized national architecture awards: the Grand Prix National d'Architecture and the Médaille d'or de l'Académie d'Architecture. He has also been made a 'Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur', a 'Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres' and an 'Officier de l'Ordre National du Mérite', three orders established by the French Republic. He is also a member of the Académie des technologies.

CULTURAL PROJECTS

'Les Arts Gstaad' Symphonic Auditorium – Switzerland
 Centre des Arts et de la Culture, Douchy-les-Mines
 Médiathèque & Centre d'Art Contemporain - Colomiers
 Palazzo del Cinema – Venice Film Festival (Mostra)
 Centre Chorégraphique National - Aix en Provence
 Philharmonique Nickolaïsaal - Potsdam
 Salle de rock 'Stadium' - Vitrolles
 Boîte à Musiques - Metz
 Complexe culturel et sportif - Pont-du-Château

MUSEUMS

Centre International d'Art et de Culture de Liège
 Musée Jean Cocteau - Collection
 Severin Wunderman - Menton
 Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes
 Islamic Arts Department - Musée du Louvre
 Musée des Civilisations d'Europe et de Méditerranée - Marseille
 Saint Maur, Abbaye de Montmajour
 Abbaye de Montmajour – Arles

SPORTS ET LEISURE CENTRES

Château-abbaye de Cassan
 Centre Oenologique - Roujan

Stade Jean Bouin - Paris
 Base nautique de Bandol
 Complexe sportif - Lille

TERTIARY SECTOR PROJECTS

Rectorat de Dijon
 Pôle service Eurêka - Montpellier
 Siège d'ITER France (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) - Cadarache
 Centre d'entretien autoroutier A.20 - Uzerche
 Centre Régional d'Information de Coordination Routière - Marseille
 Ilot T8 - Paris
 La Madeleine - Lille

SCHOOLS AND TEACHING ESTABLISHMENTS

École Internationale ITER (International Thermo-nuclear Experimental Reactor) - Manosque Rebuilding of the main hall - Faculté des sciences
 Luminy - Marseille
 Collège 600 - St Ouen
 Collège 900 – Auriol

OTHER

Pont de la République (bridge) - Montpellier
 Footbridge of Peace – Seoul

THE BUILDING

THE ARCHITECTURE

Architect Rudy Ricciotti, in association with Passelac & Roques Architects, won the competition for this project, which he designed as 'a very exact proposal between site, territory and memory'. On a site of 4,000 m², the memorial was erected in the heart of the former block F of the camp, in the middle of the remaining barracks which are included in the inventory of France's Historical Monuments and will therefore be preserved. The memorial, a semi-buried monolith, extends over 220 meters long, 20 meters wide and 4 meters high without exceeding the height of the other buildings on the site.

THE RIVESALTES MEMORIAL

- 1000 m² permanent exhibition space
- 400 m² temporary exhibition space
- 145-seater auditorium
- research centre
- learning labs space
- social area.

From the exterior, the building blends into its surroundings with its ochre-coloured sandblasted concrete, mirroring the rusty hues of the landscape.

On the inside, the wood and terracotta combine with the concrete to welcome the visitor in a warm atmosphere. A soft natural light enters the building (with the exception of the exhibition area) through glass skylights.



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PASSELAC & ROQUES ARCHITECTS

28 July 1978 > R. Passelac born in Carcassonne
 15 June 1977 > F. Roques born in Béziers
 Studied architecture in Toulouse and Barcelona
 2002 > Architecture diplomas at the ENSA Toulouse
 2004 > Passelac & Roques architecture agency established in Narbonne

R. Passelac and F. Roques have recently delivered:
 > the Musée Soulages in Rodez (shortlisted for the Equerre d'argent 2014 Prize and the Mies Van Der Rohe Prize 2015)
 > renovation of the Barques and Cours Mirabeau, Narbonne
 > La Cendrillon Vineyard in Ornaisons
 > La Madura Vineyard in Saint Chinian
 Under construction:
 > Ernest Ferroul High school in Lézignan Corbières
 > extension to the Technilum Factory in Béziers

www.passelac-roques-architectes.fr

The list of individuals and companies who contributed to the realization of the Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes is available online at memorialcamprivesaltes.eu

THE ENDOWMENT FUND

THE WORK OF EMMANUEL RÉGENT

The Languedoc-Roussillon Region has devoted 1% of the budget for the construction of the Rivesaltes Memorial to the creation of public artwork.

Within this context, six works by artist Emmanuel Régent can be seen at the memorial, including:

- **La nuit** (Night): pigment ink pen on paper, copper, 110 x 130 cm, oak base, 46 x 46 x 39 cm, copper plate engraving, 13 x 22 cm
- **Plan d'évasion** (Escape Plan): printed entry tickets, copper plate engraving, 13 x 22 cm
- **Le gardien** (The Watchman): 1969 Breitling Sprint watch belonging to the artist, copper plate engraving, 16 x 27 cm
- **La file** (The Queue): pigment ink pen on paper, diptych (220 x 130 cm per drawing, 440 x 130 cm in total), copper plate engraving, 16 x 27 cm
- **Sans titre** (Untitled): metal can, rust, copper plate engraving, 13 x 22 cm
- **Ne nous oubliez pas** (Don't forget us): etching on glass pane, 1 x 17 cm, copper plate engraving, 13 x 22 cm

These works were inspired by quotations from individuals who were detained at the camp. One of the aims of the artist is to encourage the visitor to question his political and/or civic commitments.



Emmanuel Régent, *La file* (diptych), 2015, pen, pigment ink on paper – 130 X 440 cm

© photo : Dorine Potel

THE ENDOWMENT FUND

THE WORK OF EMMANUEL RÉGENT

“Respecting the horizontality of the Rivesaltes site constitutes an important feature of this redevelopment project. It was unthinkable that an architectural elevation could overshadow the acts of horror that had occurred on this site. The building, intentionally designed on a horizontal plane by architect Rudy Ricciotti makes me think of a collapsed beam, a monolith stretched out in an act of resistance, like a scar upon the earth’s surface.

How can we translate a drama like this one in visual or artistic terms? What independent forms can be inscribed in such a difficult context? What is the place of aesthetics in this type of project?

For me, the objective was to come up with a commemorative act reproducing the different periods of the Camp de Rivesaltes, in a form actively oriented towards the future, both an act of remembrance, but also as a kind of warning not to repeat the same mistakes of history. To my mind, the artwork as an ensemble should invite the visitor to ask questions, rather than overwhelming him with good demagogic intentions. The aim here is not to seduce him through compassion and guilt, or to provoke overly facetious judgments which risk distancing us from the context and realities of the past.

I would like to generate a reflection on our current positions, our contemporary political and/or civic commitments. Since the closure of the camp, the context of Rivesaltes has changed significantly. I would like to find a way of positioning the visitor with regard to the prior context of the camp, but also to encourage him to question both the present and the future, as well as his own individual commitments or perspectives on a day-to-day basis.

To resist means to act here and now with one’s own means, however modest these may be. History only serves a purpose if it does not repeat itself.

My work as an artist raises questions linked to memory, time and disappearance, questions that find a resonance in the concerns of the memorial. However, it is difficult to conceive of an artistic project on a site that has such a powerful and weighty symbolism. How can one bear testimony to this past through art, while simultaneously addressing the present and the future? How may art find its place in a building with such a meticulous and introspective design?

After a visit to the site, meetings, research, and films; having familiarized myself with the history of the camp and the architectural project of the memorial, and following weeks of careful reflection and questioning, I came up with a multitude of ways to address and confront the site. However, of all of my ideas, I finally chose the least spectacular.

My intention was not to develop a major or imposing artwork for the building, designed like a panorama encompassing the history of the camp in its generality. Instead I chose to focus on details, almost insignificant ones, in order to explore the history of the site, through the individuals that had lived there, despite themselves.

Rather like some of the booklets published by the memorial, first-hand accounts by detainees form the basis of this artwork. I do not refer to the Harkis, the Jews, the Gypsies,

THE ENDOWMENT FUND

the prisoners of war, the Spaniards or the charitable organizations working at the Rivesaltes Camp. Instead, I took my inspiration from the words of Zohra, Marie Weiss-Loeffler, Harry Geringswald, Antoine de la Fuente y Ferraz and Friedel Bohny-Reiter. They could have been our grandparents, brothers, sisters, friends... Everyone can imagine that what happened to them could easily have happened to us all. Their testimonies allow us to experience what they experienced. Their anecdotes sometimes allow us to see and understand history better than through its major episodes and events.

My artistic position is situated at the frontier of the visible and I limit to a minimum the physical presence of some of the works on display. By discreet gestures, I sought to infiltrate the building, rather like a water leak, penetrating the facade through its minute interstices, running the length of the walls, moving like a slow and regular drop of water that flows along and sometimes ends up at quite a distance from its source, creating an unexpected puddle of water. My intention was not to produce a grandiose work of art but to bear testimony to movement, to displacement."

Emmanuel Régent

BIOGRAPHY

Emmanuel Régent is a graduate of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris. He was the recipient of the Prix des amis from the Palais de Tokyo and a finalist for the Prix Canson.

His works are part of several public collections: Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur, Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain de Nice, Fonds Municipal d'Art Contemporain de la ville de Paris, etc.

He has participated in numerous exhibitions in France (Palais de Tokyo in Paris, Villa Arson in Nice, Petit Palais in Paris, Espace de l'art concret in Mouans-Sartoux, MACVAL in Vitry sur Seine...) and abroad.

In his oeuvre, whether drawings, paintings or sculp-

tures, Emmanuel Régent attempts to construct means of escape, to organize break-outs and to create an exit or a way out via the white of the paper. He imagines the collapse of stainless-steel walls and or digs pathways to colour via his painting. The individuals in the queues drawn by the artist wait in an orderly fashion, as if they were waiting outside a museum or a cinema, but they also conjure up some of the darkest events of our history. It is this potential reversal or shift that interests the artist, this relationship to uncertainty and the tenuousness of that which can be seen. His work is characterized by slowness, an absence, and attempts to construct spaces of conjecture, divagation and wandering.

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Fish'Eye for the Region



THE BUDGET

OVERALL COST

€22,750,000 EXCL. TAX, €18,900,000 BEFORE TAX

BREAKDOWN

- > **€10,300,000 BEFORE TAX:** Languedoc-Roussillon Region
- > **€5,500,000 BEFORE TAX:** Département of the Pyrénées-Orientales
- > **€3,100,000 BEFORE TAX:** State

Operating costs for the Rivesaltes Memorial for 2016 are estimated at €1,635,000.



THE ENDOWMENT FUND

The Languedoc-Roussillon Region approved the establishment of the Rivesaltes Memorial Endowment Fund in 2013.

Anne Lauvergeon, President of ALP Services oversees the presidency of the fund, and Agnès Tixier, General Delegate of Invest Sud de France, acts as Treasurer.

The fund aims to raise contributions to finance the memorial's various investments and projects, and provides a very advantageous tax framework for donors.

The endowment fund has the following objectives:

- support and develop educational projects: visits by foreign school groups for example
- attract and welcome an adult public
- develop the reputation and visibility of the memorial abroad
- implement environmental measures in favour of biodiversity (the site boasts a unique biodiversity)
- promote and develop the permanent exhibit
- develop the publication series 'Les Cahiers de Rivesaltes'
- develop a cultural and arts programme in line with the themes addressed by the memorial (internment, the forced displacement of civil populations, the living conditions of the detainees, the cultures of the interned populations, etc.)
- establish and put in place research programmes and partnerships with universities
- develop the themes of relief work and human rights, through an exploration of the work of charitable organizations in the camp, as well as charitable works on an international scale today
- finance the creation and development of the memorial's Internet site
- restore the barracks

- develop audio-visual material
- develop teaching tools and resources.

The endowment fund is a flexible fund, which can be adapted or tailored to suit the wishes of major donors. The first sponsors and patrons will play an important role in defining, in collaboration with the Region, the main areas to benefit from the fund, including the memorial's strategic projects and investments. The Rivesaltes Memorial endowment fund is open to all donors. There is no minimum amount for participation.

PRESS RELATIONS

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