

THE OPENING OF A NEW DIGITAL ART CENTRE CREATED BY CULTURESPACES IN BORDEAUX'S SUBMARINE BASE

- OPENING ON 17 APRIL 2020 -

On 17 April 2020, Culturespaces will open the largest digital art centre in the world: the Bassins de Lumières.

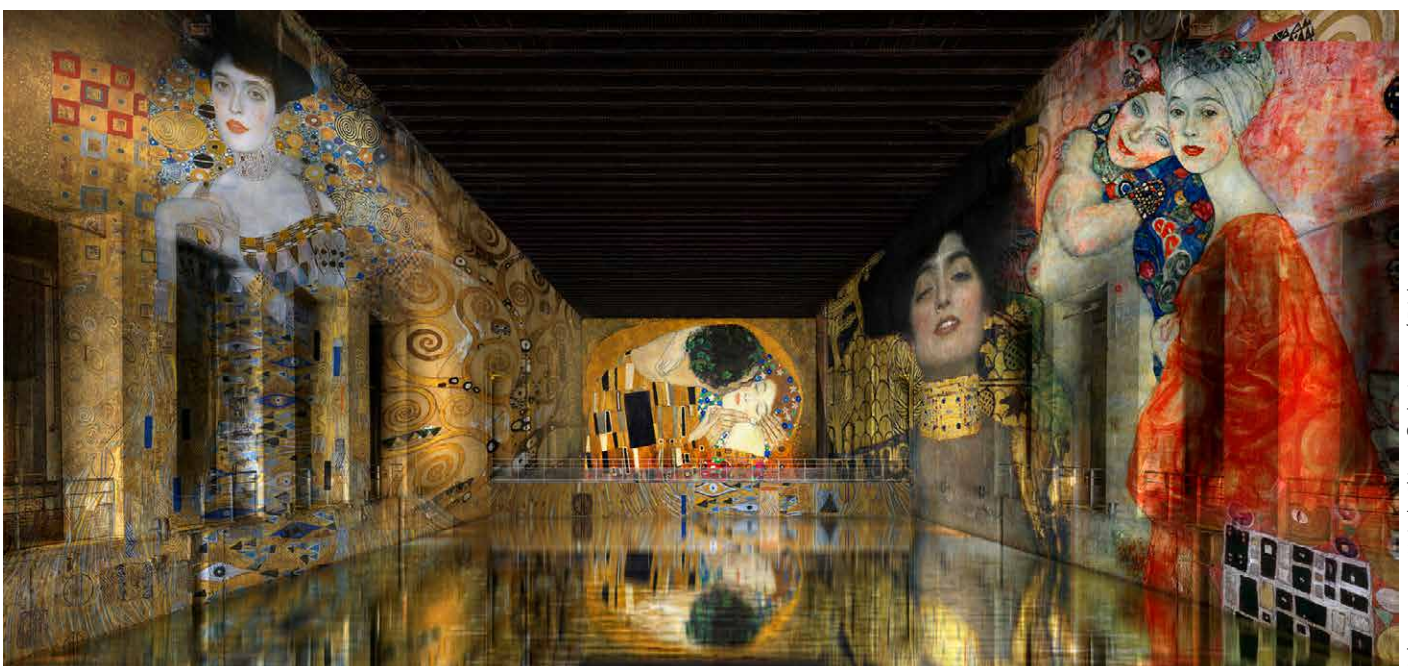
France's leading private operator in the management and promotion of monuments, museums, and art centres, Culturespaces is pursuing the creation of digital art centres and immersive exhibitions.

Located in Bordeaux's former submarine base, the **BASSINS DE LUMIÈRES** will present monumental immersive digital exhibitions devoted to the major artists in the history of art and contemporary art. The submarine base's surface area is three times the size of that of the Carrières de Lumières in Les Baux-de-Provence and five times that of the Atelier des Lumières in Paris.

The digital exhibitions will be perfectly adapted to the monumental architecture of the submarine base and will be reflected in the water of the four enormous basins, thereby adding a new dimension to the immersive experience. Visits will be conducted on gangways above the water and along the quays of the enormous basins.

'Following the creation of the Atelier des Lumières, we are pleased that we have created this enormous digital art centre for the City of Bordeaux. The Bassins de Lumières will offer visitors unforgettable visual and audio experiences in a unique setting, a place for sharing culture that is open to all types of visitors.'

Bruno Monnier, President of Culturespaces



Simulation of the immersive exhibition – the Bassins de Lumières

Culturespaces- Nuit de Chine ; © akq-images / Erich Lessing ; © akq-images ; © Bridgeman Images

The Bassins de Lumières: key figures

- **110-metre-long, 22-metre-wide, and twelve-metre-deep** basins – a total surface area of **13,000 m²**
 - **12,000 m²** of projection surface
 - **3,000 m²** of itinerary floor space
 - **90** video projectors and **80** speakers
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Immersive digital exhibitions

Throughout the year, the Bassins de Lumières will hold exhibitions for lovers of traditional and contemporary art, and several exhibitions will be presented simultaneously:

- **around the four enormous basins** will be presented a continuous cycle of immersive digital exhibitions alternating between a long exhibition, devoted to the major artists in the history of art, and a shorter exhibition devoted to more contemporary works.

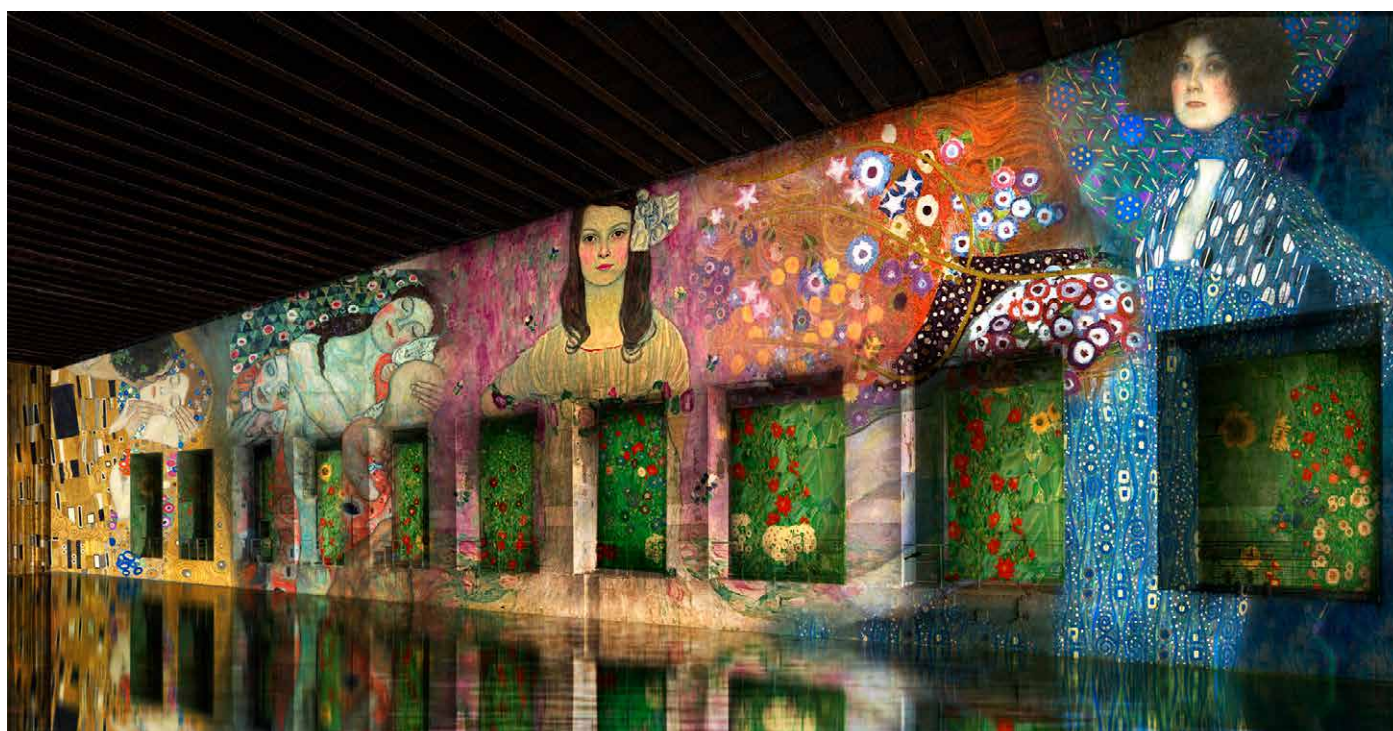
- **in Le Cube, a new 8-metre-high area with a surface area of 220 m²**, devoted to contemporary artists specialising in immersive art, will be presented works by established and up-and-coming digital artists

- **in La Citerne, a new 7-metre-high area with a surface area of 155 m²**, the links between original works and their originating museums will be explored.

The exhibitions will be renewed each year.

The venue will be open 7 days a week.

Banque Courtois is the founding sponsor of the Bassins de Lumières.



Simulation of the immersive exhibition – the Bassins de Lumières

2020 exhibition programme:

AROUND THE BASINS:

'Gustav Klimt: gold and colour' – long programme

To mark its opening, the Bassins de Lumières will focus on a century of Viennese painting and take an original look at Gustav Klimt and his successors through a presentation of portraits, landscapes, nudes, colours, and gilding. Klimt led the Vienna Secession, a movement that sought to break away from academic art: he paved the way to modern painting. The gold and decorative motifs are a symbol of this artistic revolution. Visitors will discover large-format masterpieces, such as the famous work *The Kiss*, and will be immersed in Imperial Vienna at the end of the nineteenth century.

Created by Gianfranco Iannuzzi, Renato Gatto, and Massimiliano Siccardi, with the musical collaboration of Luca Longobardi.

'Paul Klee: painting music' – short programme

This immersive exhibition will be devoted to the colourful abstract works by the German artist Paul Klee. A painter and also a musician and professor, the immersive exhibition will pay tribute to Klee's pictorial world. It will take visitors from an opera overture in an imaginary city to an underwater concerto amidst gold and multicoloured fish, and the rhythm of its geometric structures. Lastly, tens of corresponding portraits and puppets accompanied by Papageno's song will conclude an enchanting interlude that combines painting and music.

Created by the video content creation studio Cutback.

IN LE CUBE, DEVOTED TO CONTEMPORARY DIGITAL ART:

Ocean Data

In Le Cube, a special exhibition space, visitors will be able to discover a new work by the digital creation studio Ouchhh, which specialises in graphic design, motion design, and digital projections. Ouchhh uses Artificial Intelligence to create images and questions the act of artistic creation. Ocean Data is composed of millions of data captured in the sea in order to create a unique digital work in which forms, light, and movement are generated through an algorithm. Visitors will be taken into the heart of the ocean and embark on a journey through different materials, colours, and reliefs. The work combines art, science, and technology to create a contemplative experience.

By the Turkish collective OUCHHH, a digital creation studio based in Istanbul, Los Angeles, and London.

Le Cube will also present works by young contemporary digital art studios based in Bordeaux.

IN LA CITERNE, DEVOTED TO LINKS BETWEEN ORIGINAL WORKS AND THEIR ORIGINATING MUSEUMS:

During the immersive exhibitions, the paintings used as a basis for the work of the video makers will be presented in their entirety, with their name and the museum in which they are exhibited.

The Bassins de Lumières project

Since 2018, Culturespaces has implemented a major project to enhance and develop the four basins in the submarine base, entrusted to it by the City of Bordeaux. In addition to restoration work and the restoration of the site (floors, tanks, foundations, electricity, soundproofing, etc.), and the creation of technical areas (offices, production room, servers, etc.), Culturespaces has decided to develop the site in order to improve the visitors' experience.

In front of the entry to the base, an annex building with a surface area of 340 m² will house a reception area, a ticket office, and a shop. The basin areas will be concealed by enormous 15-metre-high tarpaulins, which will also be used as projection surfaces.

Originally, the basins only had one gangway. It was renovated and two additional gangways were added in order to facilitate access, increase the itinerary floor space for visitors, and increase the number of viewpoints.

Several challenges had to be overcome due to the history of the base -an old bombed building- and the presence of water that is 16 m deep. The projectors will be located inside air-conditioned cases and each speaker will be independently swivelled and controlled in order to control the flow of sound and adapt the quality to the audio content.

Each of these elements, which respects and preserves the original site, contributes to creating the experience offered by the Bassins de Lumières.

Culturespaces has invested a total of 10 million euros in the project.

The creation of 6 new areas

- **Le Cube:** in order to highlight artists who specialise in immersive art.

This soundproofed and insulated area with a surface area of 220 m² and a height of 8 m will offer visitors an unforgettable experience, based on contemporary works;

- **La Citerne:** in order to create a link between the museums and original works.

In an area with a surface area of 155 m² and a height of 7 m, will be presented the original works that were used as a basis for the creation of the digital exhibitions;

- **Les Grands Nénuphars:** for the projection of exhibition images in the water;

- **A museum space:** for the presentation of the history of the submarine base;

- **An educational area:** to complement the exhibition visits and provide visitors with all the necessary information to help them understand the immersive exhibition;

- **A mezzanine floor,** a stage, and a seating area: to offer different viewpoints from a height.



Restoration work – the Bassins de Lumières

With **more than 25 years of experience and 4.5 million visitors a year**, Culturespaces, founded in 1990 by Bruno Monnier, is the leading private operator specialising in the global management of monuments, museums, and art centres. Culturespaces oversees the promotion of the collections, the reception of the general public, the management of all the services, cultural animation, the holding of temporary exhibitions, and the venues' national and international communication.

Always in quest of innovation, aware of the new approaches provided by technology, and capitalising on its expertise in the management of cultural venues, Culturespaces is also **one of the pioneers in the creation of digital art centres and immersive digital exhibitions, in France and abroad.**

With **Culturespaces Digital®**, Culturespaces is the first cultural operator to have artistic teams and extensive expertise, combining the design and creation of digital art centres, technological expertise for the presentation of exhibitions, the production and a catalogue of immersive digital exhibitions, the presentation of traditional, modern, and contemporary artists, and the organisation of festivals.

The digital art centres created by Culturespaces Digital®:

- The Atelier des Lumières, Paris (since 2018)
- The Bunker de Lumières, Jeju (since 2018)
- The Bassins de Lumières, Bordeaux (in 2020)

'Digital technology is part of our daily life, and its use has become an integral part of our society. Thanks to cutting-edge technology, Culturespaces creates and develops digital art centres with high-quality exhibitions avec des expositions. Visitors in our digital art centres are completely immersed in works by the major artists in the history of art. It is a fresh approach that enables visitors to discover, rediscover, and view works by major artists from a different perspective.'

Bruno Monnier, President of Culturespaces



'Art en immersion' ('Immersion in Art')

The Culturespaces Foundation will implement its educational and cultural project in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region.

Over the last ten years, the Culturespaces Foundation's cultural programmes have offered children suffering from an illness, a handicap, or social exclusion the possibility of enjoying unique artistic and cultural experiences, enabling them to awaken, develop, and show their creativity.

Amongst its programmes, 'Art en Immersion' ('Immersion in Art') is a veritable introduction to art, composed of four parts based on immersive digital exhibitions that are already presented in the Ile de France region in the Atelier des Lumières and in the south in the Carrières de Lumières. In 2019, the programme has already benefitted around 4,000 children. In May 2020, 'Art en immersion' will be implemented in the Bassins de Lumières with the aim of benefitting 1,000 children in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region.

In Bordeaux, 'Art en immersion' benefits from the generous support of the Fondation SNCF and the Groupe Monnoyeur.

The History of the Submarine Base

Located in Bordeaux, the submarine base built by the Germans was one of five major structures (the others were located at Brest, Lorient, Saint-Nazaire, and La Rochelle) constructed in France during the Second World War. This massive bunker, arranged in eleven alveoli, is now an essential part of Bordeaux's cultural landscape.

The Second World War: Bordeaux, an occupied city

On 25 July 1940, Germany and Italy decided to construct a shared submarine base to house their fleet.

The construction of the new base commenced in September 1941. The project was placed under the responsibility of the Bordeaux Oberbauleitung headed by Andreas Wagner. Around 6,500 French and foreign (Spanish, Belgian, and Italian) voluntary, contracted, and forced labourers worked on the base, which was extensive enough to accommodate fifteen large submarines. In 2012, a memorial was erected in tribute to all those who helped build the base.

Finished only one and half years later, Bordeaux's U-Boat Bunker was 235 metres long, almost 160 metres wide and on average nineteen metres high, with a total surface area of 41,000 m². It housed electrical and thermal power plants, a technical zone, offices, storage areas, and workshops. Almost 600,000 m³ of concrete was used to build the base.

The first four—and most imposing—submarine pens, which could only be used afloat, could each house two submarines. Pens 5 to 8, with a smaller surface area, were used as dry docks that were necessary to house submarines that required major repair work. Lastly, the remaining three, smaller pens were located further back behind the eight pens. In total, fifteen submarines could be safely housed within the base for maintenance and repair work. Until August 1944, more than forty submarines used to put into port. Various resistance groups were established within the base and they kept the *guérilleros* (groups of Spanish resistance fighters) informed about everything that occurred on the base and all the manoeuvres of the German submarines.

The military base was frequently targeted by allied bombing raids, which only inflicted slight damage on the building. Despite the many attempts of the liberation armies, the structure was never really weakened. On 28 August 1944, the Germans finally left the City of Bordeaux and its port.

The post-war period: an artistic site

During the Liberation, the covered lock and the torpedo storage bunker were destroyed, but the base's principal structure was conserved. In 1945, the base was entrusted by the French Navy to the Autonomous Port of Bordeaux. The onerous maintenance and management costs were an impediment to the site's rehabilitation by the Autonomous Port of Bordeaux. Between 1960 and 1990, the units, including the base's metalworking workshops, were partly occupied by companies.

At the same time, the base attracted and fascinated artists who soon moved into the imposing site. Certain experiments—such as the filming of the final scene of the film *Le Coup de Grâce* by Jean Cayrol in 1965, the performances of the Sigma Festival in 1978, the installations created by the plastic artist Sarkis in 1980, and the filming of an episode in the series *Highlander* in 1996—foreshadowed the site's future cultural vocation.

After the decommissioning of the Bassins à Flot ('dock basins') by the Autonomous Port of Bordeaux in 1982, the U-Boat-Bunker was henceforth part of an immense industrial, port, and military wasteland. The general public only began to visit the base—which was transformed into a Conservatoire International de la Plaisance (a place dedicated to yachts and pleasure boats) until 1997—in the summer of 1993.

In 1998, the base underwent major work with the aim of bringing the site into compliance with new safety standards. The submarine base was turned into a cultural centre run by the City of Bordeaux's Department of Cultural Affairs, and a project was developed that placed an emphasis on creativity, cultural dissemination, and the general public. In the summer of 1999, the new submarine base opened with a multidisciplinary programme that focused on creative work (photographic exhibitions, musical shows, immersive productions, etc.). Today, the base's former 'Tour' Bunker contains a unique 4,000 m² exhibition area that is dedicated to contemporary art and image making. The venue is used for ongoing contemporary works and it holds a cycle of several exhibitions a year, including a major monographic exhibition. An example is the current exhibition devoted to the French artist and filmmaker Clément Cogitore (15 October 2019–5 January 2020).

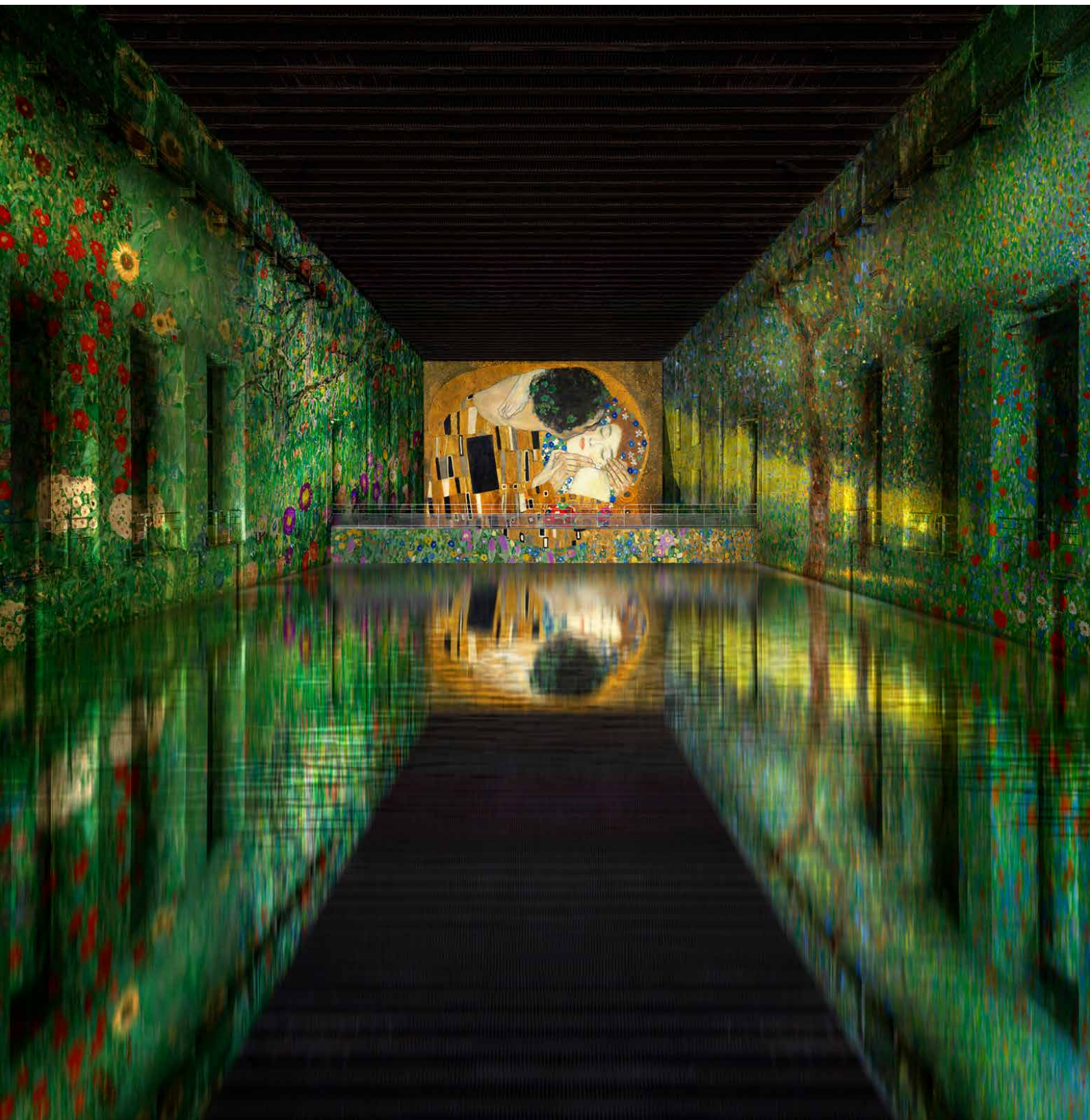
Culturespaces at the submarine base

In 2018, Culturespaces was entrusted with the management of four of the submarine base's alveoli (formerly pens) in order to establish a digital art centre. After creating the Carrières de Lumières at Les Baux-de-Provence and establishing the Atelier des Lumières in Paris, Culturespaces, planned to hold four immersive digital exhibitions devoted to modern and contemporary artists, as well as an immersive art festival. To achieve this goal, Culturespaces decided to further enhance the attractiveness of the submarine base by creating a digital art centre to promote the culture and technology of the City of Bordeaux.

Two years later, after major restoration work conducted by Culturespaces, the Bassins de Lumières will open its doors to the public with three inaugural exhibitions.

'La Base 3 en 1': a project conducted by the City of Bordeaux

Located at the heart of the Bassins à Flots district, the submarine base is adopting a global cultural project on a regional scale: 'la Base 3 en 1' project eventually aims to use the site's entire 41,000 m² with the Bassins de Lumières and the 'Tour' Bunker, and develop new activities in the rest of the base.



Simulation of 'Klimt: gold and colour'– the Bassins de Lumières

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Press images

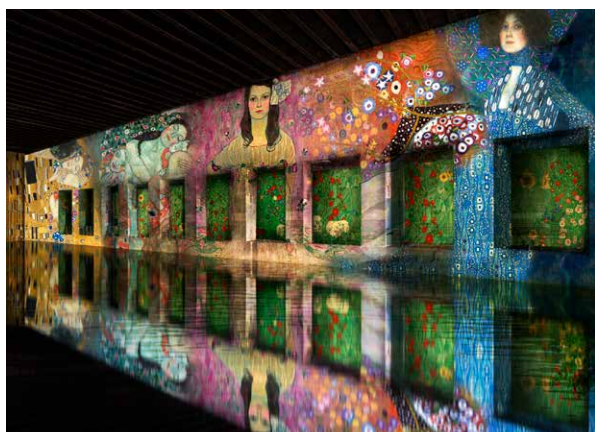
'Klimt: gold and colour'



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1. Simulation: Gustav Klimt: *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I* (detail), 1907, oil, gold, and silver on canvas, 140 x 140 cm, Neue Galerie, New York; preparatory work for the fresco created for Adolphe Stoclet, *The Tree of Life* (detail), 1905–1906, mixed technique on paper, 197.7 x 104.4 cm, Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna; *The Kiss* (detail), 1908, oil, gold, and silver on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna; *Judith I* (or Judith with the Head of Holofernes) (detail), circa 1901, oil and gold leaf on canvas, 84 x 42 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna; *The Friends II* (detail), 1916–1917, oil on canvas, 99 x 99 cm, Galerie Welz, Salzburg, destroyed in the fire at the castle of Immendorf in 1945 © Culturespaces - Nuit de Chine; © akg-images; © akg-images/Erich Lessing; © Heritage Images/Fine Art Images/ akg-images

2. Simulation: Gustav Klimt: *Cottage Garden with Sunflowers* (detail), circa 1907, oil on canvas, 110 x 110 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna; *The Kiss* (detail), 1908, oil, gold, and silver on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna; *Fruit Trees* (detail), 1901, oil on canvas, 90 x 90 cm, private collection; *Poppy Field* (detail), 1907, oil on canvas, 110 x 110 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna © Culturespaces - Nuit de Chine; © akg-images; © akg-images/Erich Lessing; © Heritage Images/Fine Art Images/ akg-images

3. Simulation: Gustav Klimt: *The Kiss* (detail), 1908, oil, gold, and silver on canvas, 180 x 180 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna; *Death and Life* (detail), 1911–1915, oil on canvas, 178 x 198 cm, Leopold Museum, Vienna; *Portrait of Mäda Primavesi* (detail), circa 1912, oil on canvas, 150 x 110 cm, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, donated by André and Clara Mettens; *Water Serpents II* (The Friends) (detail), 1904–1907, oil on canvas, 80 x 145 cm, private collection; *Portrait of Emilie Flöge* (detail), 1901–1903, oil on canvas, 181 x 84 cm, Wien Museum, Vienna; *Cottage Garden with Sunflowers* (details), circa 1907, oil on canvas, 110 x 110 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna © Culturespaces - Nuit de Chine; © akg-images / Erich Lessing; © akg-images

4. Simulation: Gustav Klimt: preparatory work for the fresco created for Adolphe Stoclet, *The Tree of Life* (detail), 1905–1906, mixed technique on paper, 197.7 x 104.4 cm, Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna; *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I* (detail), 1907, oil, gold, and silver on canvas, 140 x 140 cm, Neue Galerie, New York; *Poppy Field* (details), 1907, oil on canvas, 110 x 110 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna; *Portrait of Emilie Flöge* (details), 1902–1903, oil on canvas, 181 x 84 cm, Wien Museum; *Hope II* (details) Vienna, 1907–1908, oil and gold paint on canvas, 110 x 110 cm, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The Bassins de Lumières

Base sous-marine de Bordeaux
Impasse Brown de Colstoun
33300 Bordeaux
www.bassins-lumieres.com

Opening on 17 April 2020.

Opening times:

Open every day of the year, except during the setting up of exhibitions.

1 April–30 September:

10 a.m.–7 p.m.: from Monday to Thursday and Sunday

10 a.m.–9 p.m.: Friday and Saturday

1 October–31 March:

10 a.m.–6 p.m.: from Monday to Thursday and Sunday

10 a.m.–7 p.m.: Friday and Saturday

The exhibitions are projected on a continuous basis.

#bassinsdelumieres

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