



THE SOULAGES MUSEUM OPENS IN MAY 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK, NY, February 3, 2013 —The Midi-Pyrénées Tourism Board is thrilled to announce the opening in May 2014 of the Soulages Museum in Rodez, a village located in the Aveyron Department. Dedicated to Pierre Soulages, the renowned contemporary painter and a native of Rodez, the museum will receive nearly 500 works, estimated to be worth close to 40 million euros, featuring many of the artist's early works.

An internationally renowned artist with his work showing in nearly 90 museums throughout the world, Pierre Soulages' retrospective exhibition in 2009, at the Centre Georges Pompidou - National Museum of Modern Art, attracted nearly 500,000 visitors, second only to the Dali exhibition in the museum's history. He is the highest earning French artist worldwide in the contemporary art market with his last work selling for more than 5 million euros.

Home of the earliest paintings by Soulages, which are the most sought after, the Soulages Museum's permanent collection includes paintings on canvas, including *Outrenoir*, paintings on paper including the famous *Brous de noix*, all his printed work (etchings, lithographs, silkscreens), sculptures, drafts for the stained glass windows at Conques Abbey Church as well as films, photographs and rare books. The permanent exhibition rooms cover nearly 22,000 square feet. The temporary exhibition room covers 5,300 square feet, which is the most extensive in the Midi-Pyrénées, and will house modern and contemporary art events. The first temporary exhibition is dedicated to *Outrenoir* by Pierre Soulages and will study the interplay of light and dark by working with material. This "outrenoir" or "ultrablack" series has enjoyed great success throughout the world.

The Soulages Museum is a contemporary building, designed by the Catalan architectural firm RCR Arquitectes, who became honorary members of the "Royal Institute of British Architects" (RIBA) in November 2012. They were chosen from a pool of 98 candidates to create the Soulages Museum in 2008 by the Grand Rodez Agglomeration Community. The building's rich color aesthetic is due to the uniqueness of the building materials. The exterior is entirely overlaid in Corten steel, a material which produces color nuances ranging from red to brown. The walls and floors inside of the building are covered with darkly colored steel from the region.

The museum is set in a 2.5 acre garden with various tree varieties, where visitors can enjoy a children's play area and a pathway designed by the architect Emmanuel Nebout.

The Soulages Museum offers state of the art lounging and multi-media spaces including: a restaurant area, Café Bras, open all day and headlining Michelin-starred chef Michel Bras; a well-stocked reference library featuring rare publications and magazines as well as documents concerning the artist, catalogues and filmography; children's learning resources; an auditorium with 80 seats, a fresco of the National Audiovisual Institute, a museum gift shop, and multimedia devices to guide visitors.

The museum's impressive restaurant area is designed by Michel Bras, the Michelin-starred chef and culinary artist from Aubrac, an area of the Midi- Pyrénées that deeply inspired Pierre Soulages.



Drawing on their Aveyron culture, members of the Bras family will run the Café Bras which is open all-day, serving: breakfast, apéritifs, lunch, high tea and dinner.

The museum is situated only several yards from the Notre-Dame de Rodez Cathedral, where heritage and modernity overlap seamlessly. A pedestrian path from the Soulages Museum leads visitors to the historic center, mansions, the Fenaille Museum and its collection of statue-menhirs (carved standing stones), which were a major source of inspiration for Pierre Soulages.

The Midi-Pyrénées also has a network of famous museums like the Toulouse Lautrec Museum in the city of Albi <http://goo.gl/UBN40u>, the Ingres Museum in Montauban <http://goo.gl/boJvC8> and the Fondation Bemberg in Toulouse <http://goo.gl/aMorQV>

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