

THE GRAPHIC ARTS COLLECTION

1ST FLOOR / ROOM 34 / (CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC)

With **eight thousand drawings**, the Besançon Graphic Arts Collection (cabinet des arts graphiques de Besançon) is one of the leading museums in the region. Its history is inseparable from that of the museum, whose history has been shaped by the generosity of its major donors.

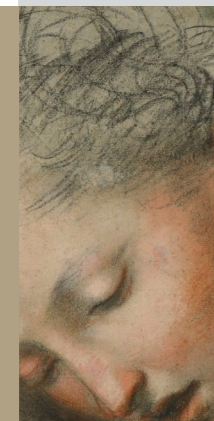
In 1819, **Pierre-Adrien Pâris'** bequest to the public library contained a remarkable collection of drawings by French artists from the second half of the 18th century. Some of them were brought to the museum after its establishment and continue to be the cornerstone of the reputation of the museum's collections, which in the minds of enthusiasts are associated with the red chalk drawings of **Hubert Robert** and **Fragonard**.

The collection owes its growth to **Jean Gigoux**, who bequeathed almost three thousand drawings to the city - in other words, half of the current collection. In keeping with the encyclopaedic vision behind his collection, he collected drawings from all the various schools, including **Carracci, Tiepolo, Vouet, Boucher, Rubens** and **Rembrandt**, among others. Gigoux was a regular visitor to artists' studios and prestigious auctions, and he also acquired works by major French artists of his century, such as **David, Delacroix** and **Géricault**.

But Besançon's collections are not limited to vintage drawings. Thanks to **George and Adèle Besson's** donation, the collection was expanded to include masters of modern art - **Signac, Matisse, Bonnard, Vallotton**, etc. In addition, there are many works by **Charles Lapicque**, donated by **Norbert Ducrot-Granderye** and prints from the **Michel and Christiane Jacquemin** collection.

Because of their fragility, which means that they must often remain out of sight, the drawings are housed right in the heart of the museum, in a room that was furnished in a neoclassical style by **Serge Royaux** at the end of the 1950's. During the renovation, this space was restored and brought up to current conservation standards. It is open to researchers and connoisseurs, by appointment. The public is able to enjoy the collections thanks to the museum's ambitious annual programme of exhibitions, which are held in a space of around 1,000 square feet on the first floor of the museum.

FEDERICO BAROCCI (around 1530-1612)
Woman's head



BENJAMIN DESOUCHE (1989)
Back flip



A MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART?

The contemporary art collection is not a major or central component of the collections at the Besançon Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology. However, the contemporary art scene is of crucial importance for a 21st century museum. Rather than merely presenting a historical perspective, the contemporary art on display offers some insights into fine arts and archaeology, highlighting areas of continuity in artistic approaches through a series of close analyses. The contemporary art visit follows a thematic approach.

Primarily drawn from the **FRAC Franche-Comté** contemporary art collection, from the deposits of the National Centre for Visual Arts (CNAP) and from artists' collections, the works on display explore the idea that the future is always a snapshot of the past, once that past has had time to sink in.

Actively supporting the museum

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUMS AND LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BESANÇON

The association "Friends of the Museums and the Library of Besançon", founded in January 1949, brings together friends of arts and culture who have a special interest in the museums and the library of Besançon. Its aim is to encourage the development of these institutions by enhancing their collections, promoting and expanding their heritage activities, as well as fostering and transmitting a taste for the arts, both past and present.

Friends of the Museums and the Library of Besançon

Non-profit association (as defined under the French law of 1901)
Musée des beaux-arts et d'archéologie
1, place de la Révolution
25000 Besançon

LE CERCLE PÂRIS

PARTNERS AND PATRONS OF THE MUSEUMS WITHIN THE BESANÇON CITY CENTRE

The purpose of the Cercle Pâris is to promote the development of the **Museum of Fine Arts and Archaeology** and the **Museum of Time**. The association brings together partner organisations and patrons who lend their support for the organisation of events and the financing of exhibitions, publications, promotional activities, services for a variety of groups, as well as for museum equipment and special projects.

Marie-Anne SPONY, Secretary
marie-anne.spony@wanadoo.fr

PRIVATIZATIONS / RECEPTIONS

It is possible to reserve the Hall of Honour, the conference room or the entire Museum of Fine Arts and Archeology outside of opening hours. To know the prices and for more information, you can contact the reception of the museum.



ACCESSIBILITY

The City of Besançon is actively committed to improving its ability to cater for visitors with disabilities at the museums located in the city centre.

The museum building is fully accessible.

A complete programme of both special and inclusive activities is available for people with all types of disabilities. The activities were put in place in collaboration with members of the **Inter-municipal Accessibility Commission**. The following assistance is available to enable all disabled people to visit the museum on their own, or with family and friends:

- **Visitor assistance aids** (visit companion, a guide for people with intellectual disabilities, tactile clay and stone maps and visit diagrams)
- **Perceptual and mobility aids** (hearing loop at reception and portable magnetic loops, cane seats, illuminated magnifying glasses, torches and wheelchairs)



THE BESANÇON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

NESTLED IN A BEND OF THE RIVER DOUBS, IN THE HEART OF THE CITY'S HISTORIC CENTRE, THE MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS ET D'ARCHÉOLOGIE HAS A LONG AND FASCINATING HISTORY.

THE OLDEST FRENCH COLLECTION OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

As early as 1694, Abbé Boisot bequeathed his collection (consisting largely of works previously owned by the powerful Granvelle family) to the city, on the condition that it would be on display to the public twice a week. This requirement, a historical first, foreshadowed the idea of the public collection, in other words of the «museum», a hundred years before the creation of the Louvre during the French Revolution.

Starting in 1843, the collections, which had come into public ownership and had been augmented by seizures carried out during the Revolution, were housed in the new corn exchange, a building designed by the architect **Pierre Marnotte**. For a time, the art collections coexisted with the commercial activities of the hall.

In 1849, the Archaeology Museum was established and was moved into the same building.

The collection would be dramatically enhanced thanks to donations from collectors, most of them Besançon residents who were eager to contribute to the cultural heritage of the Franche-Comté region. The greatest part of the collection was provided by generous donations made in 1819 by **Pierre-Adrien Pâris**, architect to King Louis XVI (183 drawings, 38 paintings, a series of art objects brought back from Italy, Etruscan and Roman archaeological remains) and in 1894 by the painter **Jean Gigoux** (3,000 drawings and 460 paintings).

Lastly, in 1963, the deposit by **George and Adèle Besson**, both ardent devotees of modern art, of 112 paintings and 221 graphic works was the opportunity for **Louis Miquel**, who had worked with Le Corbusier for several years, to extend the museum by building a raw concrete structure in the

building's former central courtyard. This structure is made up of a series of superposed sloping planes punctuated by floors of varying sizes in the centre of the building under the glass roof that covers the atrium of the building. As they move upwards, the visitor is offered views through the interior openings that attract the eye upwards, and Miquel's architectural design thus creates the deceptive impression of a labyrinth where the visitor may labour under the (illusory) impression that they are lost.

This extremely ambitious project broke with the original building whenever possible. Marnotte liked symmetry; Miquel plumped for asymmetry. Marnotte liked semicircular arches; Miquel made no secret of his preference for sharp edges and cubical shapes. Marnotte wanted to impress on the townspeople the idea of an order and a sort of sacred distance; Miquel, on the contrary, went for freedom, with a history of art and archaeology that offered many possible points of entry. Marnotte offered an immutable vision; Miquel's was one of growth.

The design project carried out by **Adelfo Scaranello Architects** (2018) aims to preserve and showcase the two architectural styles of the museum: Pierre Marnotte's former corn exchange (1843) and the Louis Miquel (1970) raw concrete structure that it contains. To restore the distinctive character of each of these elements, the architect decided to remove the many additions and accretions that had occurred over the past 30 years in order to expand the exhibition space. An additional 16,000 sq. feet has thus been opened to the public for the display of works in updated conditions, both in terms of conservation and the visitor experience.

By opening up windows, lowering sills and using the numerous skylights, sources of natural light have been exploited to offer a genuinely new perspective on the building and its collections. These various architectural projects create the illusion of an interior located outdoors, and open the building up to the city outside, creating a bridge between the onlooker in the street and the visitor inside. From the street, everyone is free to enjoy the works of art on display in the galleries of the Marnotte building. The eye of the passer-by is drawn to the views afforded by the large bays which beckons them to enter the museum and explore it even further.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Musée des beaux-arts et d'archéologie

1 place de la Révolution, 25000 Besançon
☎ + 33 3 81 87 80 67
✉ mbaa@besancon.fr

OPENING HOURS

IN HIGH SEASON

from April 1st to October 31st, and during Zone A school holidays :
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday | 10 AM - 12:30 PM - 2 PM - 6 PM

IN LOW SEASON

from November 2 to March 31st (excluding school holidays) :
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday | 2 PM - 6 PM

YEAR-ROUND

Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays | 10 AM - 6 PM uninterrupted

CLOSING DAYS

Closed on Tuesdays, and on 1st January, 1st May, 1st November and 25 December

GROUP VISITS

On Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday | from 9 AM



MUSEE DES BEAUX-ARTS & D'ARCHÉOLOGIE BESANÇON

Ville de Besançon

www.mbaa.besancon.fr
www.facebook.com/mbaa.besancon
@mbaa.besancon
@museesducentre.besancon



Check the fares by scanning the QR Code

RESERVATIONS

inquiries for youth activities and groups :
+33 3 81 87 80 49
reservationmusee@besancon.fr

VISITOR ASSISTANCE APP

Download it for free on your smartphone or rent a tablet device: €3

SITE ACCESSIBILITY

Disabled access: accessible to persons with reduced mobility and people with disabilities
Access to public transport:
- **Tram** 1 and 2, Revolution stop
- **Bus** 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12 République or Courbet stop

Parking: paid parking at Marché Beaux-Arts (underground and above-ground car park)

besançon
boosteur de
bonheur



MUSÉE
DES BEAUX-ARTS
& D'ARCHÉOLOGIE
BESANÇON

graphic conception: Thierry Sailland / City Center Museums
photographs: Chipault et Soligny, Pierre Guénot, Thierry Sailland
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REGIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY

GROUND FLOOR - MARNOTTE / ROOMS 1 TO 9

The regional archaeology collections are a reflection of the life of the inhabitants living in and around the Doubs valley, from prehistoric times to the Gallo-Roman period. From the first painted and engraved pebbles, dating back to 14,000 BCE, to the mosaics of the Roman town of Vesontio, as well as the weapons and jewellery of the Metal Ages, visitors can explore all aspects of the area's life, beliefs and art. Everyday objects (whether lost, hidden or buried in graves) are displayed alongside exceptional artefacts, such as the **legionnaire's helmet**, the **three-horned bull of Avriigny** or the **wooden head of Luxeuil**, which are all reminders of the region's artistic and cultural wealth over 2,000 years ago.

ANCIENT EGYPT

1ST FLOOR - MIQUEL / ROOM 35

An entire room is devoted to this extremely popular subject, with collections dating back to the very beginnings of the "Musée Archéologique de Besançon". Located almost at the top of the Miquel structure, the Egyptian collections are centred around the richly decorated sarcophagi of the **Seramon's mummy**. Two exceptional objects, the polychrome statue of Osiris and the "mythological" **papyrus of Seramon**, on deposit from the Louvre Museum, round off this display, which focuses on the theme of treating death in ancient Egypt using a variety of advances in scholarship over the past ten years.

MEDIEVAL SCULPTURES

GROUND FLOOR - MIQUEL / ROOM 15

This room showcases some of the museum's most beautiful medieval and Renaissance sculptures. This collection clearly illustrates the importance and role of sculpture in religious and funerary practices in the region and across Western countries. The collection of **Virgin and Child** sculptures bears witness to the spread of the Marian cult and the various approaches to materials and iconography over the centuries and from one artistic centre to another. The other works on display are the only remaining remnants of buildings from the Franche-Comté region that are no longer in existence, such as the 13th-century doorway of the former Collegiate Church of the Magdalene (collégiale de la Madeleine) and the 16th-century **rood screen from the Cathedral of Saint John of Besançon**. The recumbent statue commissioned from **Pepin de Huy** by Mahaut d'Artois and the prone lion from **Jean de la Huerta's** workshop come from prestigious tombs in Poligny (Jura department) and Labergement-Sainte-Marie (Doubs department).

15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES

GROUND FLOOR - MIQUEL / ROOMS 10 TO 16

The fine arts visit begins with an introductory room in which, by means of painted and sculpted portraits, **the museum's main donors** (from the end of the 17th century down to the 1960s) are depicted. The richness and uniqueness of the collections is due in large part to these donors. The ground floor, which is devoted to the **Medieval and Renaissance** collections, focuses on various themes and gathers together works from the southern and northern schools that have a number of iconographic features in common (Marian devotion, the portrait). One section is devoted to a specific artistic centre, Venice in the 16th century, and features the city's most famous artists (**Bellini, Titian, Bassano, Tintoretto**). Another section focuses on a movement, the courtly Mannerism that emerged during the "waning of the Renaissance". A series of objects illustrate the burgeoning of curiosity at the same period. Finally, visitors can also enjoy a special section on **Lucas Cranach (father and son)**.

CERAMICS IN THE 17TH CENTURY

GROUND FLOOR - MIQUEL / ROOM 17

Invented in the Middle East, glazed ceramic ware emerged as a result of contact with its rival, Chinese porcelain, which was first exported to the West during the Song dynasty (10th-13th centuries). This lively competition decisively shaped the evolution of ceramics. As early as the 8th century, Mesopotamian ceramists, anxious to imitate Chinese pottery, successfully refined the technique of ceramics by adding tin oxide to the impermeable glaze they used to cover their vessels. When the glaze had turned opaque and smooth, it hid the imperfections of the terracotta and provided craftsmen with a bright (white) surface that could be decorated. After reaching North Africa, ceramics were imported to Spain by Arab settlers who invaded the Peninsula. The first European workshops were first developed in Spain and Italy in the 13th century, then spread to the rest of the continent.

16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES

MIQUEL RAMPS AND LEVELS / ROOMS 18 TO 28

The ramp, on which the first stopping point is a concrete chapel housing **Bronzino's** sublime *Deposition of Christ*, is mainly devoted to the 17th century painting collections, presented in sections organised according to school (*Naples, Spain, the Question of the French School*), leading artist (*Rubens as «Leading Light»*) or pictorial themes (*Saints of the Counter-Reformation, the City in Flames, Still Life and Landscape*). One of the principles which guided the hanging of the collections was the idea of contextualising them by the juxtaposition of works created at the same time in various artistic centres. The visitor now can better appreciate the variations in terms of composition and execution.

18TH CENTURY

1ST FLOOR - MARNOTTE / ROOMS 29 TO 31

As regards the 18th century, the creation of the Besançon Academy of Painting and Sculpture in 1773 was an opportunity to highlight the principles of artistic education at the time: the Italian Tour thanks to the wonderful Pierre-Adrien Pâris collection, including works by **Hubert Robert, François-André Vincent** and the exceptional *Mascarade* by **Jean Barbault**; the ten *Chinoiseries* by **François Boucher**, halfway between tapestry cartoons and cabinet paintings; the main developments in history painting, which gradually succumbed to the taste for antiquity, and the commissions for religious works which attest to responsiveness of artworks, artists and models over the century. Tastes were evolving, with the success of genre scenes and portraits emerging to challenge the "grand genre" in painting. One of the museum's strengths lies in the area of urban planning, as illustrated by delicate terracotta models.

19TH CENTURY

1ST FLOOR - MARNOTTE / ROOMS 32 TO 33

The museum's 19th century collections (paintings as well as sculptures) are organised around four themes in a large gallery with overhead lighting. First of all, there is the work of **Gigoux**, unquestionably defined by the success of his *Derniers moments de Léonard de Vinci* at the 1835 Salon, as well as his vision of art as reflected in the artists he collected (Goya, **Ingres, Géricault, Delaroche, Granet**, etc.). The hang of medium-sized and large tapestries exhibited at the Salon testifies to the incredible vitality of the annual Parisian exhibition, but also to the methods used in the 19th century to bring contemporary art into museums (purchases by the State, deposits). The monumental *Hallali du cerf (Killing a Deer)* by **Courbet**, which has been the pride of Besançon since 1882, accompanied by a set of paintings from the MNR collection (Musées Nationaux Récupération, deposit from 1953), provides an opportunity to devote a good deal of space on this level to an exploration of landscape painting, before the visitor reaches the final spaces, which are devoted to the collection donated by Besson.

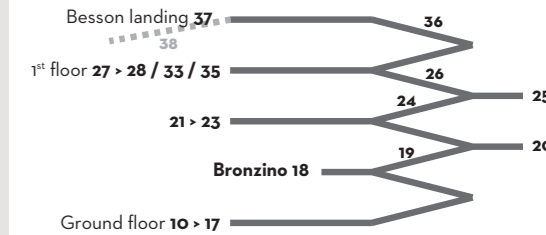
20TH CENTURY

MIQUEL, UPPER LEVEL / ROOMS 36 TO 38

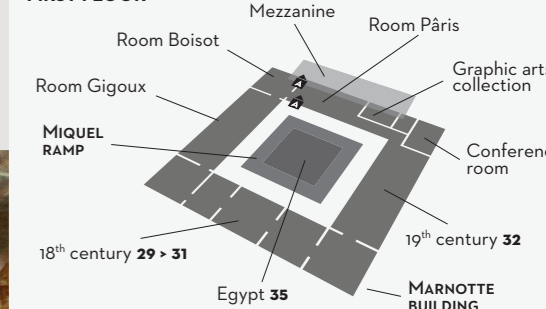
The visit ends in full daylight at the top of the spiral ramps with two exceptional paintings by **Bonnard**, the *Café du Petit-Poucet* and *La Place Clichy*. They are next to works by **Marquet, Matisse, Picasso, Renoir, Signac, Suzanne Valadon, Félix Vallotton** etc. These paintings from the **George and Adèle Besson** collection are outstanding examples of the art of the first half of the 20th century. Finally, the tour through the modern art collections ends with a section whose hangings vary throughout the year.

MIQUEL RAMP

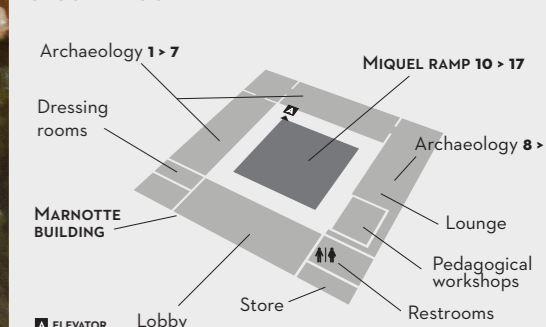
PLAN



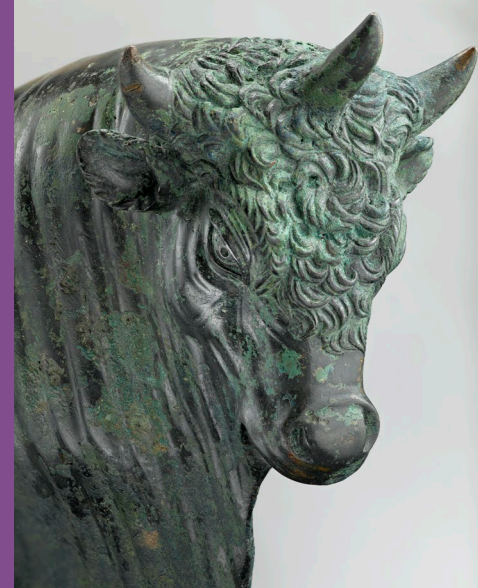
FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



Bull of Avriigny (close-up)
1st century AD - Avriigny (Haute-Saône)



Sarcophagus of Seramon (close-up)
EGYPT, 19th dynasty (1069-945 AD)



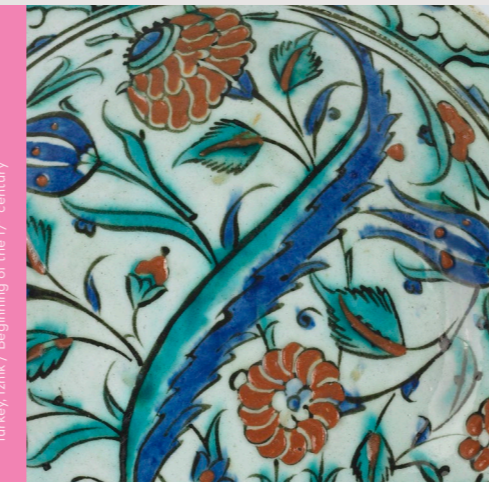
JEAN DE LA HUERTA'S WORKSHOP (15TH CENTURY)
Lying lion



LUCAS CRANACH (1472-1553)
Adam et Ève



Ink dish with six leaf carnations and tulips (close-up)
Turkey, 16th / Beginning of the 17th century



AGNOLO DI COSIMO KNOWN AS BRONZINO (1503 - 1572)
Deposition of Christ (close-up)



FRANÇOIS BOUCHER (1703 - 1770)
The Chinese garden (close-up)



GUSTAVE COURBET (1819 - 1877)
Killing a deer



PIERRE BONNARD (1867 - 1947)
The Place Clichy

