

La Nuit des Chimères

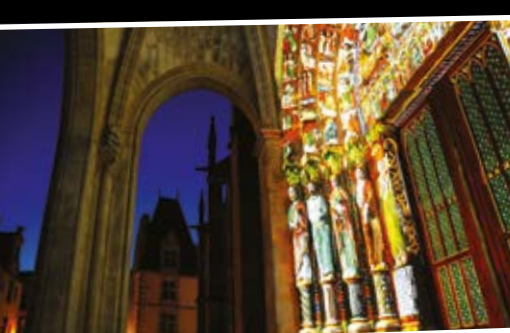
A Skertzò creation for

Le Mans-Cité Plantagenêt

LE MANS ROMAN WALLS, UNESCO World Heritage candidate (UNESCO classification)



From 3 July to 2 September, 2018
Every evening, from nightfall



Press Kit 2018



Press release overview

La Nuit des Chimères (Night of the Chimeras)

Every evening, from the nightfall

All 8 sites, every day.

Free circuit.

The Plantagenet City on stage

Le Mans, City of Art and History, is home to a hidden jewel: the Plantagenet City, twenty hectares of cobblestone streets, populated by timber-framed houses and Renaissance mansions, girdled by a Roman wall and overlooked by a cathedral. Saint Julian's Cathedral, half Roman, half Gothic, is also one of the largest cathedrals in France (134 m long with a surface area of 5,000 m²). *On the strength of the richness and enhancement of its heritage and the high-quality events it stages, Le Mans Roman Walls is candidate for Unesco World Heritage of Humanity listing.*

The Plantagenet city is unveiled via an open stroll staged by Skerzò. Designed as a freely-walked circuit, this route is made up of visual and acoustic creations and image shows that come to life after nightfall.

- ① **The chevet (gothic) of Saint-Julian's cathedral:** Between Angels and Demons (15 min)
- ② **The fountain staircase:** Dawn of the Chimeras (15 min)
- ③ **The cathedral porch (romanesque):** Celestial Concert of Angel Musicians (10 min)
- ④ **The Pans-de-Gorron wall:** Labyrinth of the Chimeras (20 min)
- ⑤ **The Saint-Hilaire wall:** The Mask and the Dragon (20 min)
- ⑥ **The academy garden:** The Banquet (1 hour 10 min)
- ⑦ **The courtyard of Queen Berengaria museum:** The white lady (5 min)
- ⑧ **The royal porch, Royal es Chimères, Saint-Julian's Cathedral** (6 mn)

Between each of the eight sites, the journey is marked by fantasy... Chimeras, gargoyles, grylls and other magic lanterns which are reflected onto the building facades and cobblestone streets. While walking through monuments and facades, the public takes in the heritage of the old town, and crosses the Roman and medieval eras of the city's history.

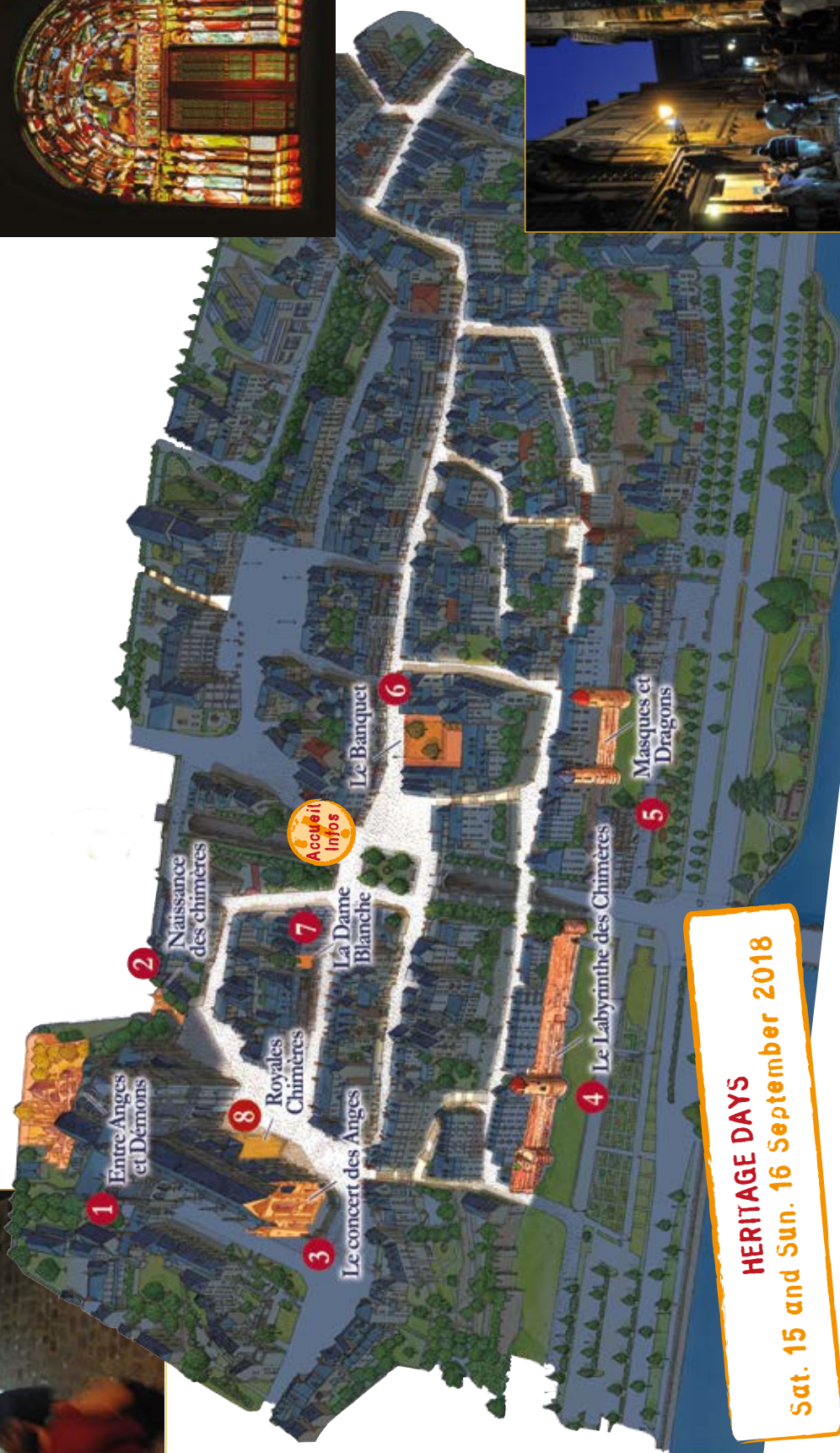
La Nuit des Chimères

Le Mans - Cité Plantagenêt



La Nuit des Chimères - Eight sites and a open walk
3 July to 2 september 2018
Every evening, from nightfall.

Free self-guided walking tour.



HERITAGE DAYS
Sat. 15 and Sun. 16 September 2018



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LE MANS ROMAN WALLS, UNESCO World Heritage candidate (UNESCO classification)

The imprint of the Plantagenet dynasty

Heir to the counties established by Charlemagne, coveted by its powerful neighbours in Normandy and Angers, in the 12th century Maine entered into Angers' circle of influence.

The link between the Plantagenets and Le Mans was established on 17th June 1128 with the marriage in the cathedral of **Geoffrey Plantagenet**, Count of Anjou and Maine, and **Matilda**, widow of the German Emperor. Granddaughter of **William the Conqueror**, "The Empress" was the heiress of the Kingdom of England and the dukedom of Normandy. Their son Henry was born in 1133 in the palace of the counts of Le Mans (current Town Hall) and was baptised in **St Julian's cathedral**. Dying in 1151, Geoffrey was buried in the cathedral: the enamel plate depicting him used to adorn his tomb. In 1152, Henry married **Eleanor of Aquitaine**, who brought to him as a dowry the entire south-west of France. He was **crowned king of England** in 1154. Maine was then involved in the conflicts between the kingdoms of England and France. Their son **Richard the Lionheart**, who left for the Holy Land, was married in 1191 in Cyprus to **Berengaria of Navarre**. After becoming a widow, in 1204 Queen Berengaria obtained the administration of Le Mans and the surrounding territory. She lived for 25 years in the royal palace of the counts. The monarch rests in Le Mans, at the abbey of Épau which she founded.



Between Angels and Demons

The chevet of Saint-Julien cathedral becomes the scene of the struggle "Between angels and demons".



Forest - The nave

Between Angels and Demons, chevet of Saint-Julian's cathedral

Multiple scenes (*angels and demons, forest, zodiac, architecture lessons, rosettes, transparencies, ship, scales...*) follow on from one another. On the flying buttresses, on the towers, on pinnacles, angels appear to fly. The chevet of the cathedral, like a tangled forest of stones becomes the setting of transformations.

To express the full beauty of the chevet's architecture, the main features are strikingly etched out to create an endless stained glass window. Later on, the entire cathedral appears ready to take to the sea like an immense vessel. Flames try to lick up the surrounding wall, alongside little devils in rutilant colours.

Sequence duration: 15 min

La Nuit des Chimères

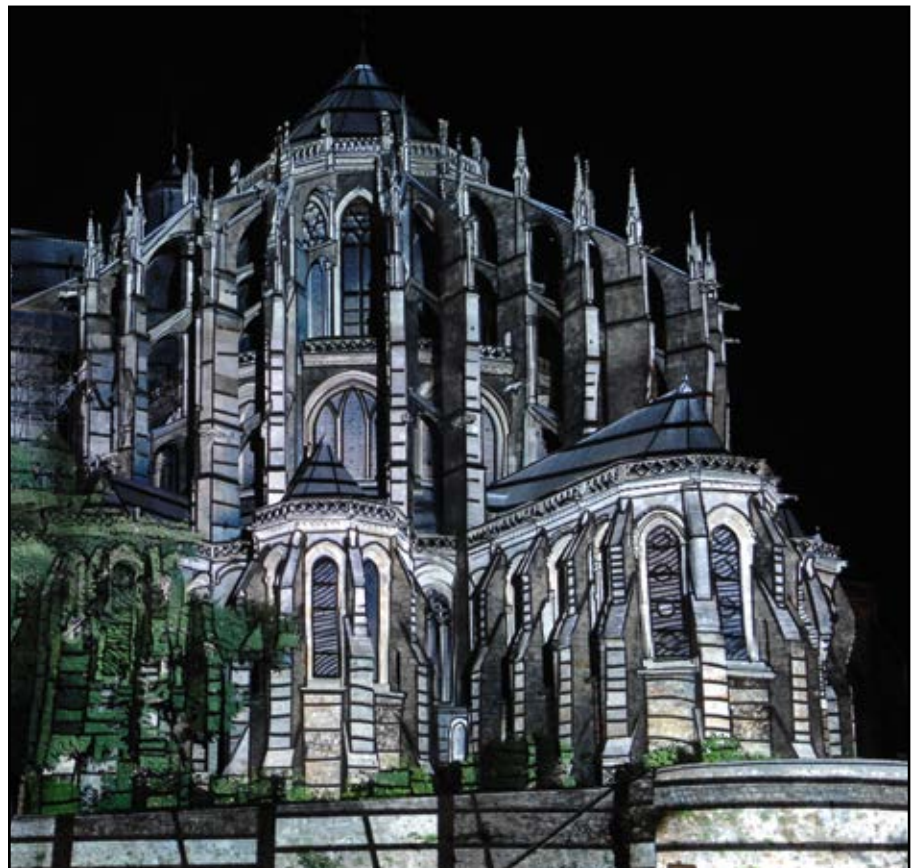
Le Mans - Cité Plantagenêt



Rosettes



Abstract





Dawn of the Chimeras...

The fountain invites us to follow the fantastical Chimeras that appear there.



The chimeras awaken on the fountain and continue their flight onto the Cathedral chevet.



The medieval cycle



The Angels' Concert, porch of Saint-Julian's cathedrale (Roman facade)

In one of the chapels of the cathedral's chevet, a fresco was rediscovered in the 19th century revealing 47 angel singers and musicians dating from the 14th century. An ensemble of stunning beauty, it is also a formidable witness to medieval instruments: eschiquier, string drum, double flute...

This rare set belongs in the course of allocation to Jean of Bruges, the author of the famous tapestry of the Apocalypse, kept in Angers.

Ces anges ont inspiré Skertzò, créateur du concert céleste donné chaque soir. Les anges musiciens dont certains ont dû être restaurés numériquement sont animés, leurs doigts jouent les vraies notes, leurs joues se gonflent d'air pour souffler dans la cornemuse ou les flûtes, leurs ailes leur permettent un vol stationnaire ou des envolées. *The musical score is by Richard Dubugnon, a young contemporary composer.*

Sequence duration : around ten minutes.



The appearance of Queen Berengaria, museum courtyard

In the most medieval of Le Mans streets, when night comes, Berengaria appears in an unlikely mirage. Some have seen her, others still refuse to believe it... A queen, the forgotten wife of Richard the Lionheart.

Sequence duration: 5 minutes.



The Banquet hall, academy garden



The banquet hall

In one of the medieval streets of the Plantagenet city, a small grassy courtyard, an elegant Renaissance facade and, facing the public, a long banquet table, seated on five cathedra like five thrones, five guests... all virtual!

The solemn King, timid and truculent, a Queen, eager and whimsical, an introverted Prince, a lovely princess and a strange foreigner who would come to change the course of history...

It is the hour of the mysterious creature ... that flees before the hunter, constantly shape-shifting.

The Arthurian legend blends with the dark and colourful story of Eleanor, the valiant knight calls on adventure, King and Queen tell us the story of the betrayal of Guinevere, that of Tristan, traitor for Love that leads him to death and the sweet cruelty of women...

Sequence duration: 1 hour 10 min



The king and queen during the feast



The Romain cycle

Skertzò reconstructs the Roman wall with...

The Labyrinth of the Chimeras, Pans-de-Gorron wall



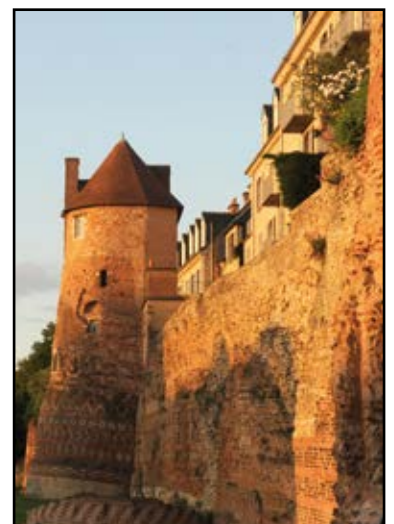
Along the 180-metre length of the Pans-de-Gorron Roman wall, an immense fresco comes to life. At nightfall, within the confines of the ancient city of the enigmatic Cenomani people, strange creatures emerge from virtual underground lairs. They are builders, climbing scaffolding, putting up ladders, delving deep, dark tunnels, constructing strange edifices, erecting great figures. They are architects, designing mosaics; they are citizens yet also nomads. A long procession of musicians playing eccentric instruments moves along the wall. Something is being prepared. In the distance, a whirring sound heralds the sudden arrival of two Chimeras, flying over the mysterious labyrinths. It is to build or to invade? To destroy or to discover?

Duration of the sequence: 20 minutes

About the surrounding Roman wall : Designed with a dual purpose: to defend the city and to assert the revival of imperial power following the political crisis of 260 to 274. The exceptional sumptuousness of the surrounding wall's decoration, where a succession of friezes with geometric embellishments over 8 metres high can still be seen today, is the finest indication of this reasserted strength. In the fourth century, 500 years after its construction, it came under attack by Bretons and Vikings.

In 1637, the historian André Duchesne called Le Mans the "red town", referring to the colour of its surrounding wall. Its construction of brick and roussard stone held together by pink mortar gives it this colour. Twelve towers, one door and three posterns are still visible today, in particular on the banks of the Sarthe. Today, this is the best-preserved surrounding wall of the entire Roman Empire, along with those of the imperial capitals: Rome and Byzantium (Istanbul). A unique monument in France, the surrounding wall has stood, without foundations to speak of, for 1,700 years.

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The Masks and the Dragon, Saint-Hilaire wall



Here, the medieval joins the Roman. With its two high towers, this section of the Roman wall connects the medieval chateau and forms a dramatic site.

Improbable perspectives emerge on the high walls, where at twilight there sleep some Roman monsters, extending into medieval times.

Sequence duration: 20 min



Royales Chimères: the royal porch of Saint-Julien cathedral

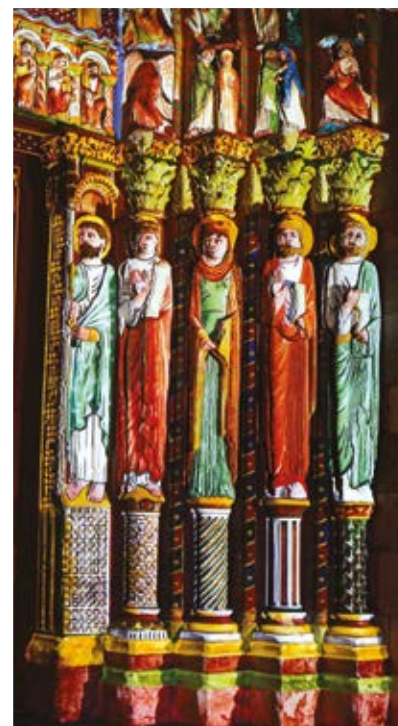
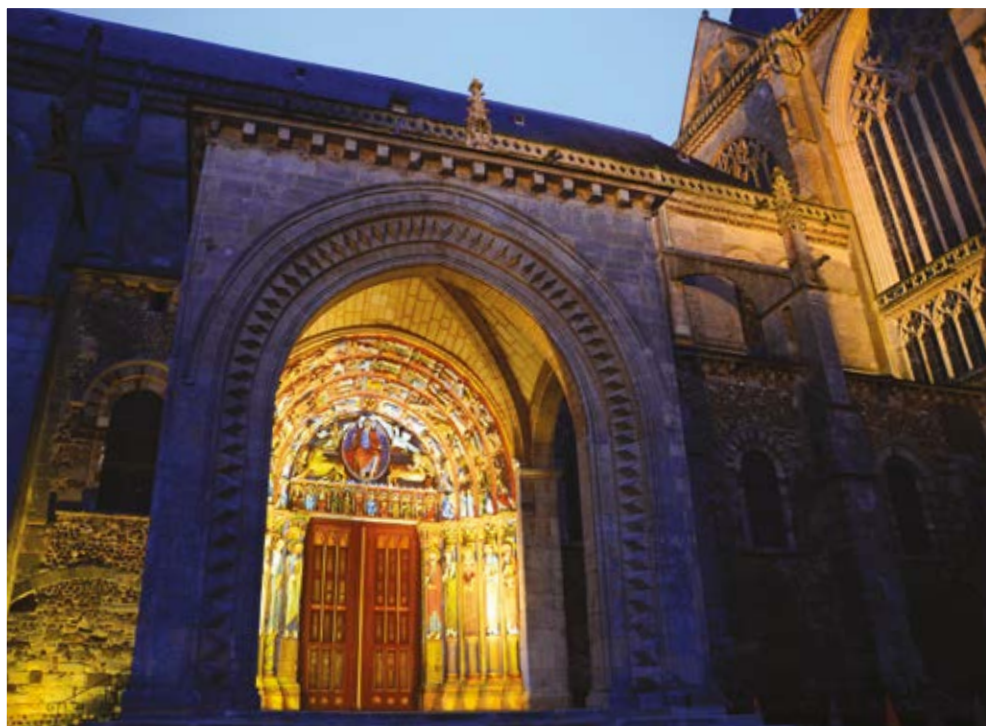
A Skertzò creation for the city of Le Mans.

The scene on the royal porch is naturally staged as part of the Night of the Chimeras.

This polychromatic spectacle will constitute a mysterious segment, since the viewer will have to discover the grand figures that populate it.

The lighting, the projection of images that fits their forms perfectly, brings them back to life. We can see once again the delicate lines of their features, but also dream of turning the clock back so that we become those passers-by, those pilgrims who in medieval times marvelled to hear these grand figures speaking to them.

Sequence durations: 5-6 minutes



The royal porch of the Le Mans cathedral was added to the side of the nave 40 years after the nave was built, in the first half of the 12th century. This is the most decorated part of the cathedral, for reasons of both faith and prestige, but also because it opened directly onto the main street of the town inside the walls, where people passed by on their way to work. The sculptures illustrate the messages to be imparted. Above the door is Christ in glory, surrounded by the symbols of the four evangelists: the lion of Mark, the man of Matthew, the eagle of John, the ox of Luke. The main arch is composed of thurifer angels (dispensing incense), and the others show scenes from the life of Jesus. On either side, Peter and Paul and Old Testament kings.



Skertzò, the dream puppeteers

The combined experience of theatre and images led H el ene Richard and Jean-Michel Quesne to create ephemeral scenes and original shows. Masters of illusion and tricks of the eye, their creations transform and theatricalize the urban space. Continuously seeking new show forms, they work towards the development of total theatre. Atypical, the creations of Skertz o are always a unique blend of imagination, poetry and high technology.

Shows walk-through events, urban installations, exhibitions... aimed at a specific type of spectator... relying on intelligence, sensitivity, curiosity, making characters perceptible, awakening the gaze, giving rise to desire...

Other spectacles include the direction of the **"tube modes soft"** of la Croix-Rousse in Lyon. They visualise the avenue Tianfu, (10km to Chengdu in China, "Mizmor David" the new show of David's citadel, museum of history of Jerusalem, the visualisation of the exhibition "Passion connected" to the Olympic Museum of Lausanne, the visualisation of the Eiffel Tower: 23 live evenings during the Euro 2016, "Beauvais, the infinite cathedral" - "Dream about colors" for the 800th birthday of the cathedral of Reims, "The cathedral in colors" in Amiens, the direction of the ceremonies of opening and fence of the World Equestrian Games on 2014 in Normandy and "Resistances", the show tribute for the Liberation of Paris in August, 2016. Since 2015, the "M etamorph'water" show on the water in Ch alons-en-Champagne - Season 4, Dragon "Kingdom" show on the Vietnamese detached house of the Asia Park de Danang Vietnam and for winter, 2018 in Vietnam also, a night-show to be discovered in the streets of the French Village of B a N a Hills.

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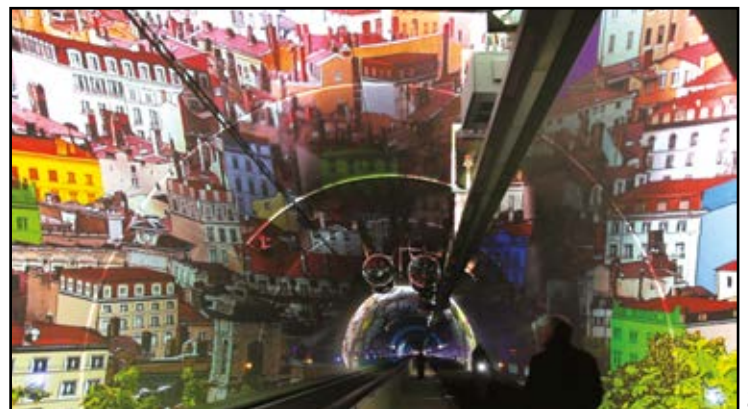
"R esistances" - Paris August 2016



Euro 2016



Caen 2014



Tube modes soft - Croix Rousse, Lyon



Chimeras hunt

From 3 juillet, July, bring family, friends, and delighted children
to take part in the **Chimera Hunt**



The Chimeras are hiding, waiting for you to discover them in the nooks and crannies of the Plantagenet City.

Set off on this "Chimera Hunt" with family, children or friends. But beware, not all Chimeras belong to the same family, you will have to use cleverness and cunning.

Fun and thrills guaranteed...

Useful information

The map of the two Chimera Hunt itineraries is available from the Tourist Office and from the Maison du Pilier-Rouge - the Plantagenet City's tourist and heritage information centre, open until 11.30pm, in July and 11.00pm, in August (Except Monday at 6pm). The Chimera hunt was conceived by the municipal service of the Tourism and Heritage) within the framework of the label "City of art and history"





Guided tours

Be allowed tell Le Mans, City of art and history,

All his facets, its history, its architecture...

The summer, a guided tour every day, sometimes two.



- "La Cité Plantagenêt", Monday and Thursday at 4:30 pm.
- "Visit in Chinese lanterns", on Monday at 10 pm (in July) and at 9:30 pm (in August).
- "Roman Le Mans", Tuesday and Friday at 4:30 pm.
- "Medieval Le Mans", Wednesday at 4:30 pm and Saturday at 5 pm
- "The cathedral upside down", on Sunday at 2:30 pm.

Regularly, also: workshops families "Les Z' enfants à l'œuvre", visits by bicycle, in the Arc of the nature in the steps of shall stick, at the house of the Water, the MMArena, ...

From 6 €.

Information and tickets

**Pilier-Rouge
Tourisme and Heritage Center**

41/43 Grande Rue
Tel. 02 43 47 40 30.



Opened from 10 am till 11:30 pm, in July (11:00 pm, in August) except Monday at 6pm.



Practical information

Night of the Chimeras: eight sites and a open walk

From 3 July to 2 September 2018, chaque soir, every evening from nightfall

Free self-guided walking tour

www.nuitdeschimeres.com

Application
Le Mans Une Marque



@LMUM72



@LeMansUneMarque

Contacts



Pilier-Rouge Tourisme and Heritage Center Tel. +33 2 43 47 40 30.

Opened in the daytime of Night of the Chimeras, from 10 am till 11:30 pm, in July (11:00 pm, in August) except Monday at 6pm.



Tourist Office Tel. +33 2 43 28 17 22 // lemans-tourisme.com

City of Le Mans Tel. +33 2 43 47 49 15 // lemans.fr



Le Mans

By motorways

A28 Le Mans / Rouen / Tours / Chambord
A11 Le Mans / Paris / Angers / Nantes
A81 Le Mans / Rennes

By TGV

54 minutes from Paris Montparnasse (16 connections per day)
3hours of Lyon