

# musée soulages

## RODEZ



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## NEWS

### Official opening of the Soulages Museum

The museum of the « Outrenoir » master (« ultra-black »), Pierre Soulages, will be opening its doors to the public as from the 31st of May. Visitors will be able to discover paintings donated by Pierre and Colette Soulages, as well as an exhibition of international dimension « The Outrenoir(s) of Pierre Soulages: European Museums and Foundations ».



### A new museum in Rodez

The French public institution « Communauté d'Agglomération » of the « Grand Rodez » opened, on the 31st of May 2014, a museum dedicated to the Outrenoir's master in Rodez. The showcase designed by the Catalan Architects , RCR, in partnership with the firm Passelac & Roques Architects and Grontmij and Thermibel design offices, hosts Pierre Soulages' work, the most renowned French artist. Throughout the year, the museum will exhibit events of national and international reputation.

### Opening exhibition

Pierre Soulages' Outrenoir paintings: European Museums and Foundations  
31 May - 5 October 2014



Pierre Soulages, Peinture 3 mars 84,  
03/03/1984, coll. les Abattoirs, Toulouse  
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Pierre Soulages, Peinture 3 mars 1984,  
coll. les Abattoirs, Toulouse  
© Adagp; fotogr. Auriol-Gineste

This retrospective will be the first exhibition ever organised in Europe on Soulages' Outrenoirs.

The exhibition boasts around 30 large-scale Outrenoirs, lent by major museums and foundations in Europe. Pierre Soulages personally participated in the choice of the artworks, to make up a representative range that will complement the museum's permanent collection, highlighting the first three decades of his work.

Curators: Benoît Decron, head of heritage conservation, and Pierre Encrevé, Pierre Soulages' biographer.

This exhibition has been labelled: "Exhibition of National Interest" by the Ministry of Culture and Communication.

## THE MUSEUM

Leading figure of abstract art, Pierre Soulages is the most renowned French contemporary artist in the world. With exhibits in some 90 museums, he has created more than 1,500 works of art and held countless exhibitions around the globe.

It is to Rodez, his birthplace, that he, along with his wife Colette, has made two donations comprising nearly 500 paintings representing all of his work, from post-war oil paintings to his phase of work called Outrenoir. The colour black defines Soulages' world but the Rodez museum will prove that his world is not just confined to black.

The first donation, ever made by a French living painter and officially signed on 13 September 2005, includes:

- Works from Pierre Soulages' youth, representative of the « early years » 1934-1938 period.
- 21 oil paintings, a selection of works from the 1940s to the 1970s, reflecting partial use, and then his complete use of black. The paintings from 1946 to 1950 are the first works showcased by Pierre Soulages himself in French

exhibitions, Europe and the United-States

- 100 paintings on paper produced from 1946. This period truly marks the beginning of his abstract paintings and the new domination of black, including the invaluable 'Brous de noix' ( walnut stain ) , where reigns the memory of the carved standing stones now in the Rodez Museum Fenaille. Rarely represented in public collections, the works of 1946-1948 rank among the artist's major art pieces, in the same way that the Outrenoirs did as from from 1979. The paper paintings make up a unique ensemble, incorporating the clean linear gouaches from the 70s.
- All of the prints which represent 49 etchings, 41 lithographs and 26 serigraphs. The coppers and matrices were added to the donation to help reveal the secrets of the genesis of these works.
- Three bronzes from 1975-1977, steles created from copper plates, a matrix of the engravings.
- Two paintings incrustated in glass from 1979, a cross between a painting and a sculpture.
- All of his stained glass windows preparatory work from Conques Abbey Church dating from 1987 until 1994. The full-size cardboard artworks on melamine panels used as a model, notes and drawings testifying both the artistic and technical research involved in the development of the specific type of glass used.
- An important collection of documents gathered by Pierre Soulages: books, catalogues, films, archives and letters.

In November 2012, the Soulages couple made a second donation to the « Communauté d'Agglomération de Grand Rodez ». This includes 14 canvases: some carried out between 1946 and 1948, major works from 1964 and 1967, and an invaluable Outrenoir from 1986.

These donations from Pierre and Colette Soulages (in 2005 and 2012) make up the most complete display of work from the first 30 years of the artist's creations. They demonstrate the couple's willingness to pass on an artist's experience, to develop the vision of a more universal creation.

Although devoted to a single artist, the museum, which showcases this donation, sees itself as a place in which to discover the techniques and mainsprings of artistic creation: Soulages' creation of the stained glass windows in Conques forms the core.

Musée Soulages is a museum in motion; it has a vast temporary exhibition room and is designed to host events of both national and international dimension : for modern and contemporary art, architectural and theme-based frescoes from previous centuries, with other creative inventors.

Designed by the Catalan company , 'Catalan RCR Architectes' and in partnership with the company Passelac & Roques Architects and Grontmij and Thermibel design offices, the museum covers 6,600 m<sup>2</sup> and is resolutely in tune with the times. Its succession of cubes covered with glass and weather-resistant Corten steel, highlighting shades of rust, fits nicely into the surroundings. Passageways and openings offer various views of the gardens, the town and, in the distance, the Aveyron mountains.

Rafael Aranda, Carme Pigem and Ramon Vilalta, under the name of “RCR Arquitectes”, have been working together since 1988 in Olot, Catalonia. They pay careful attention to the geographical location and surrounding scenery. A quality, for which their work was awarded consultant status for Garrotxa Volcanic Natural Park (Catalonia). Their work has been praised all over the world (Punta de la Aldea Lighthouse in Gran Canaria in 1988, new Barcelona provincial courts in 2010, Hofheide crematorium in 2006, Dubai’s Edge Business Bay in 2007).

Respectively born in 1977 and 1978, François Roques and Romain Passelac both graduated from Toulouse National School of Architecture in 2002, having studied previously in France and Spain. Before joining forces, one of the partners completed a higher educational course in Canada, and the second partner in Catalonia. Thanks to these diverse, mutual and complementary experiences, a strong and stable professional partnership was formed naturally between the two architects. It led to the creation of the Passelac & Roques Architects agency in 2004, Narbonne.

In 2008, RCR Arquitectes teamed up with the firm Passelac & Roques architects to take part in the « Communauté d’Agglomération du Grand Rodez »’s design competition for the Soulages Museum. Chosen among 98 applicants, their project placed the museum on the north side of the entirely renovated Foirail garden. They grasped the significance of the site, considering it as a link between the historic centre and the new quarters. « The museum rises up from the park, it restructures, gives order, reveals and clarifies ...” (RCR Arquitectes ).

Respectful of its surroundings, the building is organised in a succession of parallelepiped volumes (cubes). The intervals remind the passerby of the « fenestras » in Aveyron, which offer a view of the horizon and favour contemplation. Orientated towards the garden, the south wall does not exceed three meters whilst on the north side of the site, the ‘boxes’ are overlooking a pathway.

The cladding is made of Corten steel also known as weathering steel. When exposed to the weather (corrosion), this material a protective layer of rust is created.. « The Corten steel, ages with time, and perfectly suits the park’s natural surroundings. It is not a lifeless and asceptisized material. Furthermore, its colour-range echoes Rodez’s pink grey colours. » (RCR Arquitectes) The shades of this steel also reflect Pierre Soulages’ work.

An integral part of the building, the creative cuisine brasserie owned by award-winning chefs Sébastien and Michel Bras, offers a happy-medium concept of bistronomy and gastronomy, in keeping with the spirit of Soulages’ work.

## THE COLLECTION

### Les Brous de noix, artwork on paper

The donation represents nearly 100 paper paintings including the invaluable Brous de noix. Begun in the middle of the 1940s, they highlight a technique specifically used by craftsman and express Soulages' early and very own conception of abstraction. Rarely exhibited in public collections, the works of the 1946s-1948s rank among the artist's major art pieces, in the same way the Outrenoirs did right from 1979. The paper paintings make up a unique ensemble, which leads up to the clean linear gouaches from the 70s.

### Paintings

"I wanted to choose amongst paintings from the early years », explains Pierre Soulages.

The selection covers a period from 1946 to 1970.

Starting from a partial to a total covering of the canvas in black, the artist works with transparency: he scrapes the material; uncovering, revealing backgrounds with blues, reds and browns...

### Engravings, Bronzes

Soulages has a profound and confirmed interest in creating multiples, and in reproductions. The printed works (etchings, lithographs, serigraphs) represent an entire part of his work.

Progressing by experimentation, the artist accepts chance and also accidents. The engravings' on printed copper matrices blend with the printed sheets, not forgetting sculptures, which also make up the collection.

## YOUR VISIT

### Opening times

1st July – 31st August

Monday: 2pm-6pm

Tuesday to Sunday: 11am-6pm

1st September – 30th June

Tuesday to Friday: 10am–12noon / 2pm-6pm

Saturday and Sunday: 11am-6pm

Closed Monday

### Admission rates

Full rate 7€ / Reduced rate 4€

Entrance valid to Soulages, Fenaille and Denys Puech Museums.

Free access for children under 18, students and all public on every 1st Sunday of the month.

### Services

- Educational workshops
- Auditorium / video projection / lectures
- Documentation centre by appointment
- Multimedia guide
- Book shop/boutique
- "Café Bras" restaurant
- Garden surrounding the museum

### Accessibility

The museum is totally accessible to public with reduced mobility. Wheelchair and pushchair access.

### Contact/Access

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