

ABOLITION ESCLAVAGE

THE MEMORIAL OF THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY *Nantes* PRESS KIT

ABOLITION
ESCLAVAGE

MEMORIAL DE L'ABOLITION DE L'ESCLAVAGE
NANTES

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SUMMARY

THE MEMORIAL OF THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY	p. 3
A POLITICAL, ARTISTIC AND SYMBOLIC PROJECT	p. 4
EXPLORING THE MEMORIAL	p. 7 à 13
THE COMMEMORATIVE WALK	p. 6-7
THE MEDITATIVE TOUR	p. 8 à 11
THE URBAN ITINERARY	p. 12-13
LE MUSÉE D'HISTOIRE DE NANTES	p. 14-15
NANTES FACED WITH ITS HISTORY	p. 16-17
WODICZKO + BONDER	p. 18-19
ANNEXES	p. 20-25
NANTES, THE SLAVE TRADE AND SLAVERY	p. 20-21
THE LONG STRUGGLE FOR ABOLITION	p. 22 à 25
LE VOYAGE À NANTES	p. 26-27

THE MEMORIAL OF THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

RECORDING THE MEMORY IN TIME AND SPACE PROVIDING A WARNING FOR THE FUTURE

Inaugurated in 2012, this monument is one of the most important memorials in the world devoted to the slave trade and its abolition. It is a solemn reminder of Nantes' history as the most active slave-trading port in 18th century France, paying tribute to those who struggled – and still struggle – against slavery in the world.

The artists behind the project – visual artist Krzysztof Wodiczko, and architect Julian Bonder – wanted, *“a metaphorical and emotional reminder of the primarily historical, but also very current, struggle for the abolition of slavery.”* The lights and reflections on the river, the chosen materials, the mix of stones from the old quay, wood, the unfinished concrete... this slow immersion beneath the quays bears a universal message of solidarity and fraternity for future generations, while affirming the value of human rights.

The Memorial carries a triple message with it: it is a tribute to all those who have risen up and fought against slavery, it is an invitation to reflect upon these crimes, and it is a call to continue fighting all forms of human exploitation in the world today. This universal space also hopes to challenge future generations on topics such as solidarity and fraternity.

Its purpose is not to explain history but to act as a reminder to serve as a point of reference in building a collective awareness which refuses any form of enslavement and asserting the richness of human diversity.

A POLITICAL, ARTISTIC AND SYMBOLIC PROJECT

A POLITICAL PROJECT

The Memorial of the abolition of slavery is the culmination of an effort of nearly 25 years by civil society and the City of Nantes to regain its memory and face up to its history. From the creation in 1983 of the *Nantes 85 association, from the black code to the abolition of slavery* and the presentation of the *The Shackles of Memory* exhibition in 1992 at the Château des ducs de Bretagne, this major effort of the City with regard to its history also led, in 2007, to the creation of new exhibition spaces dedicated to the slave trade in the **Nantes history museum** as well as the opening of the **Institute for Advanced Studies** in 2009 which works on opening up humanities and social sciences to different points of view, other than those of the West, and thus create new relationships between the continents. With the Memorial, Nantes continues the mission it has set itself: assume its past, build on its history.

AN ARTISTIC INTERVENTION

The architectural principle of the monument is designed “as a metaphorical and emotional evocation of the struggle, mainly historical, but always present, for the abolition of slavery. For this evocation to take shape, it will require the physical transformation of the designated site and enhancing the symbolic character of it. Spatially and symbolically connected to the Palais de Justice (law courts) by the Victor Schœlcher footbridge, the Memorial affirms the importance of respecting human rights”.

In terms of set design, “the design of the memorial is based on two fundamental actions of disclosure and immersion, which combine to create an in-depth multi-layered experience, through which visitors are able to discover and interpret various aspects of a story they may have thought they already knew”. *Krzysztof Wodiczko and Julian Bonder*

A SYMBOLIC PLACE

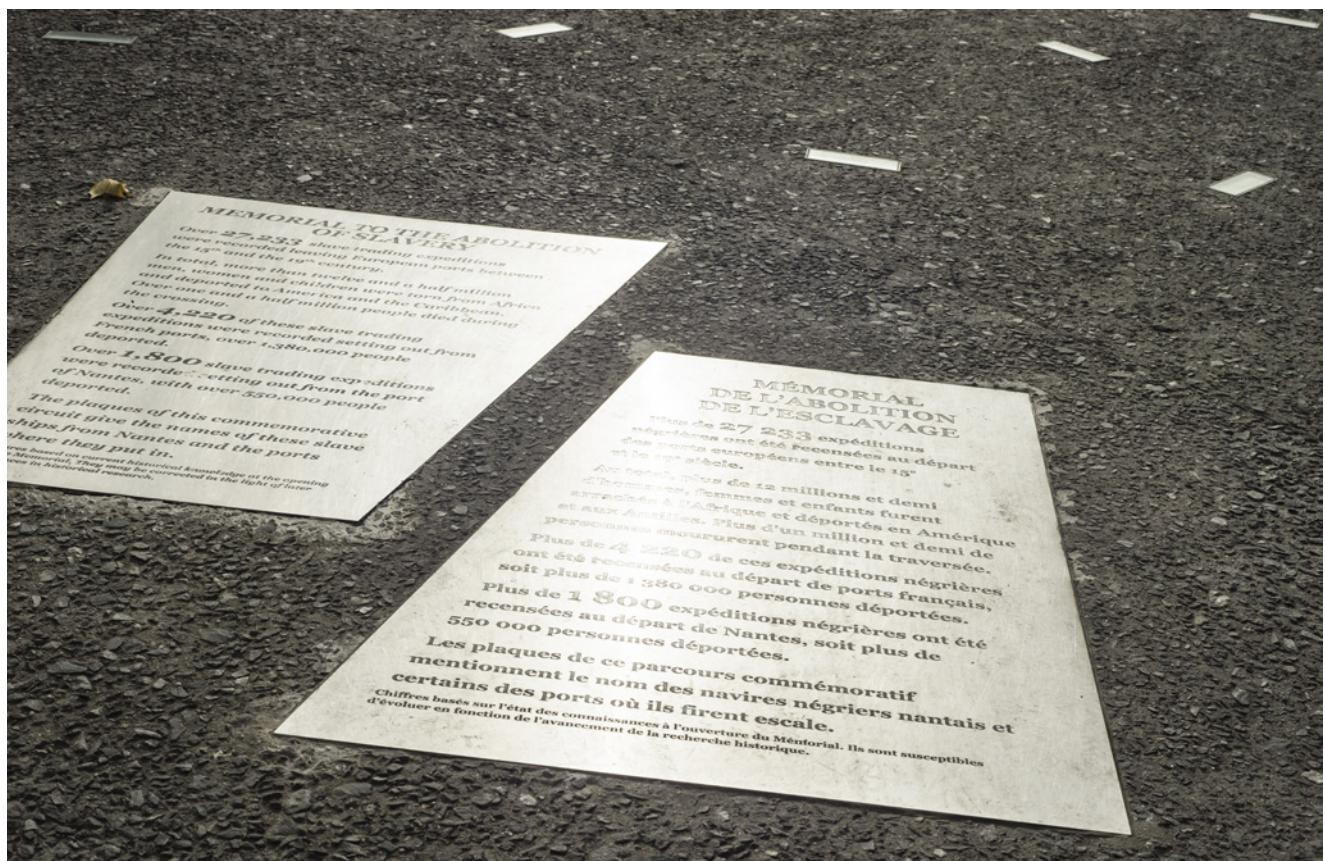
Established in a place that witnessed hundreds of slave trading shipments leave for the coasts of Africa, the Memorial is also an urban project which aims at recovering the banks of the Loire. By enhancing a space that had lost its role in the city and giving it a symbolic meaning, the Memorial will be creating new traffic routes and confirming the commitment of Nantes to build the image of its newly regained memory and conscience in the heart of its urban landscape.

TO LEARN MORE

LIBERTÉ ! Le Mémorial de l'abolition de l'esclavage is a fascinating book sharing everything readers need to know about this meditative space. It explains the thought and artistic principles behind this unique architectural structure, while also compiling all of the Memorial's anti-slavery texts.

104 pages, €19.50. Published by Éditions du Château des ducs de Bretagne
Available at the Château des ducs de Bretagne online shop: boutique.chateaunantes.fr





EXPLORING THE MEMORIAL

THE COMMEMORATIVE WALK

The commemorative walk reminds the historical connection of Nantes with the Loire and the slave trade.

Along the bank of the Loire, between the Anne-de-Bretagne Bridge and the Victor-Schœlcher footbridge, the latter named after the man who contributed a great deal to the abolition of slavery in 1848, is a huge planted esplanade measuring almost 7,000 sq. m. The rehabilitated area on the banks of the Loire is now the perfect place for a stroll.

From their first few steps, visitors notice the 2,000 glass plaques distributed all along the esplanade.

Some of them are a reminder of the 1,710 slave trade shipments that left from Nantes but the other 290 gave the names of slave trading posts, ports of call and ports frequented by the slave traders from Nantes on four continents.

Visitors thus come across the names of faraway places, all of which were affected by the slave trade and slavery. Gradually, with each step, they begin to become aware of the huge scale of this tragedy.

«The design of the Memorial thus offers a dual perspective. On one side it is turned towards a town located on the banks of the Loire estuary, in a significant location, supported as it were, by huge quays which are interrupted in places where the river has been filled. On the other side it is linked to the sea, the vehicle of the transatlantic triangular trade that made the city prosperous. The major feature of the geographic location of Nantes is the almost intimate contact with the Loire and, from there, across the Atlantic. The tides of the estuary provide an additional dynamic.»

Krzysztof Wodiczko and Julian Bonder

THE MEDITATIVE TOUR

A broad, open-air staircase leads visitors from the esplanade to the underground passage, where they are welcomed by The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, behind which the word **Freedom** appears in **47 languages** from countries that suffered from the slave trade.

Visitors then enter the underground passage and are now under the quays. To their left they can distinguish the river Loire between the retaining pillars. To their right is a huge glass plate inclined at 45 degrees which runs along the 90 meter length of the passage. It is the medium for a selection of historical and contemporary texts that carry the very message of the Memorial: *“Voices, everywhere and at all times, have been raised and are still rising against slavery.”*

The chosen texts are from all the continents affected by the slave trade (Europe, Africa, Americas), cover five centuries (from the 17th to the 21st century) and reflect a wide range of sensitivities (legal texts, excerpts from historical evidence or from novels, poetry and songs, etc.). They are presented in their original language with a translation for the French public.

They reflect three fundamental notions. On the one hand abolitionism was the first transcontinental battle in the world. It was also a very slow movement for conveying a moral and pragmatic message and a lengthy and patient task against injustice. Finally, it is a very contemporary message as the issue of slavery still arises today.

At the Western-most point of the passage, a group of historical and geographic keys resituate the Atlantic trade within its context, stressing the magnitude of this history and the past and present struggles against slavery.

“The transformation of a currently “empty” space into a “passage” enable coming into contact with the land side and the sea side, as well as with the very soil of the city of Nantes. The visitors to the Memorial walk “down to the sea” by a passage running along the 19th century quay, and in some places find themselves enclosed in sub-structures of the 20th century recalling the extreme confinement of maritime transport. A huge glass plate inclined at 45°, as if thrown through the Memorial, celebrates the major break represented by the abolition of Slavery. (...) The underground passage is the heart of the Memorial.”

Krzysztof Wodiczko and Julian Bonder



EXAMPLES OF QUOTATIONS ENGRAVED ON THE GLASS PLAQUES OF THE MEDITATIVE TOUR

"I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else's freedom, just as surely as I am not free when my freedom is taken from me. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity."

Nelson Mandela, Un long chemin vers la liberté, 1994 (Afrique du Sud)

"No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms."

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 4, United Nations, 10 December 1948

"For centuries this country repeated that we are brute beasts; that the human heartbeat stops at the gates of the black world; that we are walking manure hideously proffering the promise of tender cane and silky cotton, and they branded us with red-hot irons and we slept in our shit and we were sold in public squares and a yard of English cloth and salted Irish meat were cheaper than us and this country was quiet, calm, saying that the spirit of God was in his acts..."

I hear rising from the hold chained curses, gasps of the dying, the sound of one who is thrown into the sea... the baying of a woman giving birth... the scrape of fingernails advancing on throats... the sneer of the whip... the prying of vermin among weary bodies..."

Aimé Césaire, Return to My Native Land, 1939 (Martinique, Antilles)

"If, as the settlers say, we cannot cultivate the Antilles without slaves, then we must give up the Antilles. Justifying servitude in order to preserve the colonies is the politics of a brigand.

A crime must not be a necessity. Let our colonies die, not our principles."

Victor Schœlcher, Des colonies française, 1842 (France)

"Article 1: The French Republic recognizes that the transatlantic slave trade, as well as the slave trade in the Indian Ocean, on the one hand, and slavery, on the other, that began in the 15th century in the Americas and Caribbean, in the Indian Ocean and in Europe against the African, Amerindian, Malagasy and Indian populations, constitute a crime against humanity."

French Law N° 2001-434 du 21 mai 2001.

Discussion and adoption of the law on 10 May 2001 (France)

The word "Freedom" is translated into:

English, German, Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese, Danish, Norwegian, Russian, Swedish, Afrikaans, Arabic, Bambara, Baule, Haitian Creole, Cuban Creole, Jamaican Creole, Barbadian Creole, Louisiana Creole, Brazilian Creole, Reunion Creole, Mauritian Creole, Martinique Creole, Guadeloupe Creole, French Guiana Creole, Diola, Ewe, Fang, Fongbe, Khoisan, Kikongo, Kimbundu, Malagasy, Malinke, Mande, Senufo, Serer, Somali, Susu, Swahili, Twi, Vili, Wolof, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu, Hausa, Krio, Kpelewo.

Al ne
tennu en
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THE URBAN ITINERARY

The Memorial of the Abolition of Slavery is a commemorative monument which aims at remembering and warning, not at explaining the facts.

This educational mission rests with the Nantes history museum of the Château des ducs de Bretagne. The museum purpose is to analyze, enable a better understanding and make the history of the city visible, including its past as a slave port, something which has been widely discussed since its reopening in 2007.

In connection with this Memorial, the City of Nantes wished to create an urban itinerary around the theme of "Nantes and the Slave Trade."

With its 12 information panels, this 1.5-km-long itinerary symbolically links the Memorial, a place of memory, to the Château des ducs de Bretagne, a place of history. It allows us to evoke the slave trade in its historical and commemorative dimensions.

Placed in emblematic locations throughout the city – like Quai de la Fosse or Île Feydeau – the different signs relate how the slave trade functioned, how it developed in Nantes, and how the city benefitted from this commerce in terms of both its economy and urban development. It shines a light on the major players of the slave trade and its beneficiaries.

The history of abolitions in France and the resistance to these abolitions are also presented.

The signs also explore contemporary slavery and Nantes' soul-searching with respect to its history for the past 25 years, of which this Memorial constitutes a major step.



Portraits d'enfants du monde soumis au travail forcé
© Organisation Internationale du Travail, P. Dulichu, A. Klemka, M. Croze

L'esclavage contemporain, un combat d'actualité

Après un combat de deux siècles pour l'abolition de l'esclavage à travers le monde et la prise de conscience progressive des crimes que constituent le commerce d'êtres humains et le travail forcé, on pourrait penser que de telles pratiques n'ont plus cours au 21^e siècle.

Pourtant, l'Organisation des Nations Unies et l'Organisation Internationale du Travail estiment que l'esclavage contemporain et le travail forcé concernent en 2011, entre 200 et 250 millions de personnes dans le monde, dont une grande part d'enfants.

L'esclavage et la servitude prennent de nouvelles formes, englobant la prostitution, le trafic de migrants, les mariages forcés. Parmi les multiples formes actuelles de l'esclavage dans le monde, on distingue trois grandes catégories : la persistance de l'esclavage traditionnel (servitude pour dettes et vente d'enfants), principalement en Asie et en Afrique, l'exploitation de la main d'œuvre dans des conditions de servitude extrême (mines, usines de sous-traitance, plantations), principalement en Amérique centrale et du Sud, en Afrique, en Asie et au Moyen-Orient, et la servitude domestique clandestine, principalement en Europe.

Selon l'Organisation Internationale du Travail, la traite des êtres humains est un commerce très lucratif qui arrive en troisième position après le trafic de drogues et d'armes. Elle générerait jusqu'à 27 milliards d'euros de chiffre d'affaires annuel. En 2007, l'Organisation pour la Sécurité et la Coopération en Europe a estimé que 137 pays sont concernés à titre de pays de destination et 127 à titre de pays d'origine.

« L'esclavage est l'état ou condition d'un individu sur lequel s'exercent les attributs du droit de propriété d'autres personnes. »
Article 1^{er}, Titre 1, de la Convention relative à l'esclavage, signée à Genève le 25 septembre 1926.



Contemporary slavery, the fight goes on

After a struggle lasting two centuries for the abolition of slavery around the world and the progressive awareness of the crimes involved in the trade in human beings and forced labour, it might be thought that such practices need no longer be combated in our enlightened 21st century.

However, the United Nations and the International Labour Organization estimate that in 2011 contemporary slavery and forced labour concern between 200 and 250 million people around the world, a large part of whom are children.

Slavery and servitude have taken new forms, including prostitution, the traffic in migrants, and forced marriages. The multiple forms of slavery in today's world fall into three main categories: the persistence of traditional slavery (servitude for debts and the sale of children), principally in Asia and in Africa, the exploitation of manpower in conditions of extreme servitude (mines, subcontracting factories, plantations), principally in Central and South America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and clandestine domestic servitude, principally in Europe.

According to the International Labour Organization, the trade in human beings is a very lucrative trade that comes in third position after the traffic in drugs and weapons. It is estimated to generate up to 27 billion each year. In 2007, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe estimated that 137 countries are involved as destination countries and 127 as countries of origin.



L'Europe négrière

Entre le 16^e et le 19^e siècle, la plupart des nations européennes participent à la traite négrière atlantique. Certaines arment des navires, comme l'Angleterre (41,3% des expéditions), le Portugal (29,3%), la France (19,2%), la Hollande (5,7%) et le Danemark (1,2%). D'autres financent les expéditions négrières sans les organiser directement, comme la Suisse qui a des filiales commerciales dans les grands ports d'Europe. Nombreux sont également les pays qui produisent les cargaisons de marchandises échangées contre des captifs africains (textiles, armes, verrerie, outils, métaux...) ou qui fournissent les équipages des navires négriers. Au final, de Cadix à Oslo, de Venise à Liverpool, c'est une grande part du continent européen qui s'est impliquée dans le commerce négrier.

Le « triangle »

La traite atlantique fonctionne selon le schéma du « commerce triangulaire » ou « circuitous ». Le « triangle » s'effectue ainsi : les navires chargés de marchandises destinées à l'achat des captifs, hommes, femmes et enfants, se rendent - depuis l'Europe - sur les côtes d'Afrique où ont lieu les transactions. Puis ils traversent l'Atlantique pour rejoindre les Antilles ou le continent américain où sont vendus les captifs qui deviennent esclaves dans les plantations. Enfin, les navires chargés de productions coloniales rentrent en Europe.



The "triangle"

The Atlantic slave trade functioned according to the principle of "triangular" or "circuitous" trade. The "triangle" was organised in this way: the ships loaded with merchandise intended for purchasing captives - men, women and children - set out from Europe for the coasts of Africa where the transactions took place. Then they crossed the Atlantic to the Caribbean islands or the American continent where they sold these captive who became slaves on the plantations. Finally, the ships loaded with colonial products returned to Europe.

Slave-trading Europe

Between the 16th and the 19th century, most of the European nations took part in the Atlantic trade in African captives. Some fitted out ships, for example England (41.3% of expeditions), Portugal (29.3%), France (19.2%), Holland (5.7%) and Denmark (1.2%). Others financed slave-trading expeditions without organising them directly, such as Switzerland, which had trading subsidiaries in the main ports of Europe. Many countries also produced the cargoes of merchandise bartered for African captives (textiles, weapons, glassware, tools, metals, etc.) or supplied the crews of the slaving ships. Overall, from Cadiz to Oslo and from Venice to Liverpool, a large proportion of the European continent was involved in the African slave trade.

LE MUSÉE D'HISTOIRE DE NANTES

With its numerous digital multimedia stations, Nantes' history museum is at the forefront of contemporary museography, featuring a collection of over 1,100 items throughout its 32 rooms.

A visit here paints a portrait of the city, from its earliest origins to the urban area we know today. Here, history is explored through the world's great historical upheavals: the slave trade, the world wars, industrialization, and more.

The museum maintains close relations with a great many other museums, historians and philosophers throughout the world.

It offers a new way to approach history: that of **"global" history**.

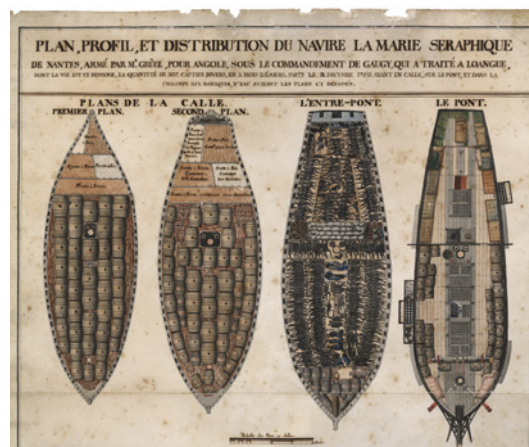
Whether it is as an historical process of global, economic, and/or cultural integration, or as a contextual approach that is sometimes extended to the entire world, here, **globalization offers a prism through which one can study objects**.

The museum's vocation is thus to analyse, help understand, and allow the city's past to be revealed, including its darkest sides.

One of these dark sides is the extent to which Nantes was strongly impacted by colonial commerce and the slave trade. The museum has chosen to devote a large space to this historical chapter – one that resonates on a global scale.

The objects on display – **some of which are exceptionally rare** – are displayed in a spatial layout that sharply contrasts with the rest of the itinerary.

Throughout a twelve-room itinerary, visitors discover the role Nantes played in the European slave trade, in organizing trafficking campaigns, the major players of this trade, and the living conditions of slaves on the plantations.



"Design, profile, and layout of the Nantes ship, La Marie Séraphique [...]"

René Lhermitte, circa 1770

This document is exceptional for many reasons. It represents the arrival of slaves aboard the "Marie-Séraphique": a slave ship from Nantes. 307 men, women and children who were "bought" in Loango, are brought to the ship on pirogues. Rarer still, the detailed contents of the hold, the steerage and the deck indicated above this water-colour inform us about how the transatlantic crossing was organised. Piling captives on top of one another, with their positions painstakingly recorded – so much so that we see several of them wrapped in linen, which means they were most likely ill or suffering in the steerage... All of this is visual evidence confirming how terrifying this crossing of the Atlantic must have been. The clear horror of this trade – one that is rarely represented – is all the more acute because it is treated here "like any other".



Portraits of Dominique and Marguerite Deurbroucq

These portraits of Dominique-René Deurbroucq (1715-1782) and his wife, Marguerite-Urbane née Sengstack (1715-1784) with their black slaves are exceptionally important for our understanding of the history of the slave trade and 18th-century maritime commerce. It was painted in 1753 by Pierre-Bernard Morlot and is now on display at the museum.

These paintings offer a remarkable depiction of a historical reality: the presence of Africans in Nantes. Despite how widespread the phenomenon was, these two paintings are, to this day, unparalleled because no representation of this type – that is, of a citizen of Nantes with a black slave – has ever been identified, be it in a private or public collection.

MONTRE SA RÉUSSITE SOCIALE

Showing one's social success / Mostrar su éxito social



NANTES FACED WITH ITS HISTORY

Nantes was the capital of the slave trade in France in the 18th century: it organised 43% of the French slave trade shipments and its ships deported around 450,000 black captives to the American colonies.

During the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in 1998, Nantes City Council adopted the principle of building a monument on the Quai de la Fosse. The City wanted to assume its past and give shape to the memory via a powerful political gesture.

A LONG PERIOD OF NEGLECT AND REJECTION

After the abolition of slavery in 1848, Nantes turned the page, like the other slave ports. Between the cynicism and a bad conscience, the tragedy of the slave trade was covered in a cloak of silence and oblivion. The concealment was almost total in the second half of the 19th century and at least partially through the 20th century.

«The relationship of Nantes with its slave past thus for a long time remained complex and paradoxical [...]. This collective repression helped to maintain the moral burden attributed to the past and to create suspicion, mistrust and controversy in its practices», wrote historian *Didier Guyvarc'h*.

TWO DECADES TO RECOVER ITS MEMORY AND FACE HISTORY

These are the works of historians Rinchon and Gaston-Martin, now over more than half a century ago, then Jean Mettas, Jean Meyer and Serge Daget, thanks to their systematic inventorying of the French and Nantes slave shipments which has helped to provide the true extent of the phenomenon of trafficking and gradually phase out fantasy and oblivion so as to finally enter into historical reality.

Today, Nantes continues the mission it has set itself: to assume its past and build on its history to engage in combats for the present and the future. A journey of more than 20 years, punctuated by local and international actions: cooperation and twinning with cities in Africa and South America, support for associations, organisation of the World Forum of Human Rights in Nantes... In 2018 alone, 278 school groups visited the Memorial with a cultural officer. This pedagogical itinerary is divided over three steps: first, a visit to the museum rooms devoted to the Slave Trade, then a walk through the circuit in the city between Château des ducs de Bretagne and the Memorial, and finally a visit to the Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery.



FROM THE 1980S, A MOVEMENT BEGAN TO RECONQUER THE MEMORY OF NANTES

- **1983:** Creation of the “*Nantes 85 association, from the Black Code to the abolition of slavery*” made up of local VIPs, teachers and associations with the aim of presenting an exhibition on the slave trade and triangular trade at the Château des ducs de Bretagne. The municipality at the time refused to finance the project.
- **1984:** Creation of a new association: “*The Ebony triangle: black code, slavery and the memory of Nantes.*”
- **1989 > 1992:** With the change of municipality, the launch of a new project that led to the presentation, at the Château des ducs de Bretagne, of the exhibition “*The Shackles of Memory*”, the first of this magnitude on this subject in Europe and probably worldwide. Extended until 1994, it received 400,000 visitors.
- **1991:** Creation of the “*The Shackles of Memory*” association
- **1998:** Commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery. Nantes City Council adopts the principle of building a memorial on the Quai de la Fosse, the future Memorial of the Abolition of Slavery.
- **2004:** Organisation in Nantes of the *World Forum on Human Rights*
- **2005:** Creation of the *Shackles of Memory Alliance* town network.
- **2006:** 10 May, national date of commemoration of the abolition of slavery, is recorded in the municipal events calendar with the creation of a dedicated group. Other initiatives are regularly added on the subject of trafficking and slavery and their abolition.
- **2007:** The renovation of the Nantes history museum in the Château des ducs de Bretagne enables presenting an important sequence devoted to the slave trade of Nantes in a long-lasting way.
- **2009:** Opening of the Institute for Advanced Studies (IEA). The IEA of Nantes brings together Western researchers from the “north” and “south”, opening up widely to the latter. A real diversity of approaches to today’s problems is thus advanced to everyone within the context of globalization.
- **2012:** Inauguration of the Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery, 25 March
- **2013:** The *Rencontres Internationales du Mémorial* conference, which brings together architects and artists who have designed and produced memorials with a dual message for visitors: “Remember” and “Do what you must to prevent this from ever happening again”. For this occasion, the Memorial also turns into an exhibition space with *10 femmes puissantes* (“10 Powerful Women”), featuring portraits of women who have fought against colonial slavery.
- **2014:** The exhibition *Haïti, effroi des oppresseurs, espoirs des opprimés* (“Haiti, the Terror of Oppressors and Hope of the Oppressed”) takes place. In 1804, the Republic of Haiti was born. This incredibly important historical moment was the culmination of the Slave Revolt in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, which began in 1791.
- **2015:** 10 May, commemoration in the presence of **Angela Davis**, Nantes’ guest of honour for the exhibition *Obia*: a series of photos by Nicola Lo Calzo exploring the relationship between religious practice and the acculturation policies carried out in French Guyana.
- **2017:** Launch of “*Saison des droits humains*” (“The Season of Human Rights”) by the City of Nantes, thus allowing for the creation of a space for debate and sharing knowledge.
- **2018:** For the 170th anniversary of the definitive abolition of slavery in the French colonies, a cultural programme bringing together over 35 events from April to June is created. Among them is *Expression(s) décoloniale(s)*, where the Musée d’histoire explores the question: can we “decolonize” our thought, discourse, and imagination?

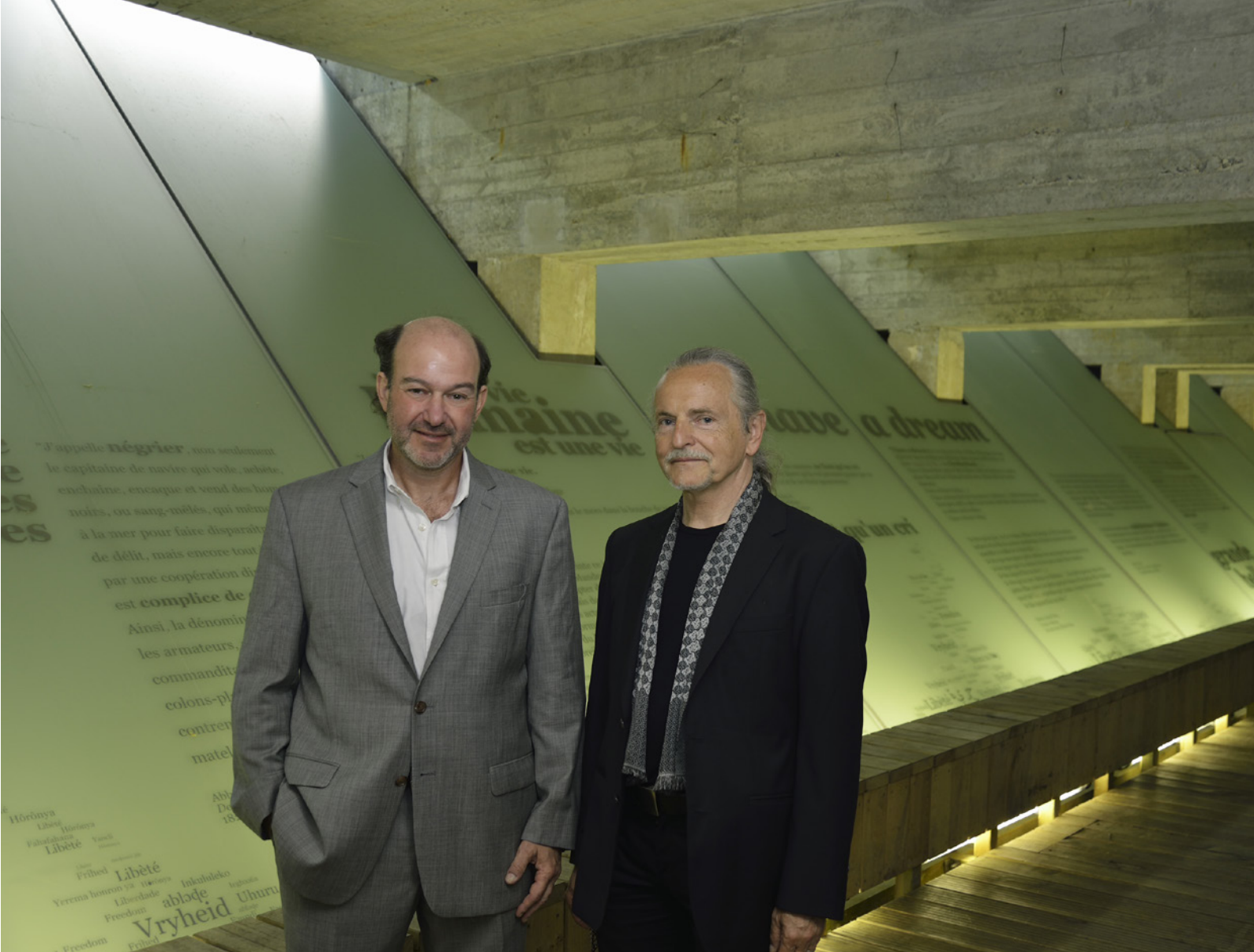
A SYMBOLIC ARCHITECTURE

THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN WODICKZO AND BONDER

Their partnership was born in Cambridge, in 2003. Krzysztof Wodiczko is an artist and professor of Art, Design, and the Public Domain at Harvard University in Cambridge. Julian Bonder is an architect and professor at Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island.

Wodiczko + Bonder focuses on art and design projects that engage public space and raise the issues of social memory, survival, and struggle and emancipation related to urban and domestic violence, war and post war trauma, immigration and global displacement, the Holocaust and genocides, the Desaparecidos (in Argentina), the Civil War, and historical and present day slavery.

Urban Public Space is among the most potent and durable stage and equipment for cultural communication and expression. Wodiczko + Bonder practice is based on their commitment to the advancement of democratic potential, vitality and usefulness of such space through the creation of new transformative and communicative art and design.



LEURS PROJETS ET RÉALISATIONS

- **September 11 Memorial (Hoboken)**

Project among four finalist teams selected out of 100 submissions.

- **Flight 587 Memorial, Queens (New-York)**

Project among six teams finalists out of 68 applicants.

- **WTC Memorial Competition**

Project proposed maintaining the excavated space, and elevating (uplifting) the “footprints” with programs such as archives and museum.

- **Babi Yar Memorial Park and Mizel Museum in Denver (Colorado)**

Awarded winner of an International 3-round Competition, which included 116 entries. The project entails a transformation of Babi Yar Park, dedicated in 1982, and includes a museum, a center for conflict transformation, information areas and other programmatic elements.

- **9-11 Memory Place at Babi Yar Park (Denver)**

This project will includes 15 pieces of steel from WTC. Our proposal includes a commemorative space and a “Memorial in Transit”.

ANNEXES

NANTES, THE SLAVE TRADE AND SLAVERY

From the mid-17th century to the mid-19th century, France organized at least 4,220 slave trade expeditions, a large proportion of them by ship owners in Nantes.

MAIN PORTS	NUMBER OF EXPEDITIONS
Nantes	1714
Le Havre	451
La Rochelle	448
Bordeaux	419
Saint-Malo	218
Lorient	137
Honfleur	134
Marseille	88
Dunkerque	41

Other French ports participated in this trade, although to a lesser degree: Rochefort, Bayonne, Vannes, Brest, Morlaix, Dieppe, Cherbourg, Saint-Brieuc, Sète, Marans...

NANTES' POSITION IN THE SLAVE TRADE IS PARADOXICAL

The first slave trade expedition from Nantes in the 17th century was about 150 years behind Portugal. When Nantes withdrew from the trade in 1830, this was much earlier than other ports such as Le Havre (1847). Slavery continued in Cuba until 1886 and in Brazil until 1888.

For this reason, Nantes does not owe its position to the duration of its slave-trade activities but to their intensity: The port of Nantes was responsible for **43% of the French slave trade** (in other words, for 5 to 6% of the European Atlantic trade).

During the 18th century, 10-33% of the income acquired from long-haul merchant shipping in Nantes was derived from slave ships, while another portion involved the plantation slave economy.

As the historian Eric Saugera has observed : *"More than any other place, Nantes adopted the main argument in favor of the slave trade: the colonies are essential for national wealth, Africans are essential for their growth, and slavery is essential for their preservation."*¹

In just over a century, **ships transported over 550,000 African captives from Nantes to the colonies.**

¹. Nantes in the French slave trade, in the 18th and 19th centuries, exhibition catalog "The Shackles of Memory," Nantes, 1992.



« Vous ne pouvez pas haïr un peuple ou une communauté qui ont cessé de vous haïr, vous ne pouvez pas aimer vraiment un peuple ou une communauté qui vous haïssent encore, en tout cas pas sans le savoir. C'est qu'en matière de relations entre communautés, l'oubli est une manière particulière d'établir des rapports avec les autres, mais que la mémoire, qui est non pas une méditation de l'oubli mais une action, son œuvre dure, ne peut être que commune à tous.

et la mémoire

Chacun de nous a besoin de la mémoire, mais d'une lucidité nouvelle : d'un un p...

abolit cette offense.

vertu de compassion ni de charité,

partager la beauté du monde,

vous souvenez ensemble.

Une nouvelle région du monde, Gallimard, 2008

THE LONG STRUGGLE FOR ABOLITION

Practiced since ancient times throughout the world, slavery was criticized as a violation of human rights quite late and only by a small minority.

At the time of the Atlantic slave trade, between the 16th and the 19th century, the widely prevailing opinion, including religious opinion, was that black slaves were “personal property” little different from beasts of burden. Intellectuals - including Montesquieu himself - acknowledged that this trade was essential to the economy of the colonies. It was commonly accepted that it was rendering a service to slaves to take them away from the barbarism of slavery in Africa in exchange for “human servitude” in the colonies.

Yet from the very beginning of the Atlantic slave trade, voices - very few it is true - have spoken out against this vile trade of human beings and against slavery. Among the forerunners were religious figures breaking with the official position of the Church, the French philosophers of the Enlightenment, leading English abolitionists, and even economists deeming slavery counter-productive.

It was not until the late 18th century when millions of human beings had already been deported across the Atlantic, that a true abolitionist movement started up in North America and England and France in the form of “anti-slavery societies,” which were highly structured and formed a true “international abolitionist alliance”.

Meanwhile, the best fighters against slavery were, for a long time, the slaves themselves. By their passive resistance, sometimes to the point of suicide or abortion, by their sabotage, their revolts and their fleeing (the runaways), they fought constantly against an overwhelming system to make it fragile and ultimately unsustainable.

The French Revolution and slave revolts in the Caribbean led to a first abolition of slavery on 4 February 1794. Slavery was restored by Napoleon in 1802. It was not until Victor Schœlcher and the Second Republic that slavery was finally abolished permanently in France and its colonies on 27 April 1848.



NANTES AND THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

Very involved in the slave trade and colonial trade, at that time Nantes was never at the forefront in the fight for abolition.

During the Revolution, the ship owners and traders protested against the “so-called philanthropy” of the “sect” of the Friends of the Blacks and against those who questioned the existence of the colonies. Nantes MPs were part of the delegation sent to Napoleon in 1802 to demand the return of the slave trade.

Despite the abolition of the slave trade by the English in 1807 and increasing pressure from the French government, the wealthy continued to equip the slave trade, including during the time when it was made illegal before its final abolition in 1848.

CONTEMPORARY SLAVERY : A SCOURGE WITH MANY DIFFERENT FACES

On a global scale, the progressive abolition of the slave trade and slavery spread over more than two centuries, demonstrating the enormous economic, social and cultural resistance it had to overcome. But while the legal battle is virtually over, slavery remains a real scourge.

According to the definition of the League of Nations (League of Nations, forerunner of the UN) slavery is “*the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised (property rights)*”. In 2010, an estimated 27 million people around the world directly correspond to this definition, more than twice the total number of slaves deported by the transatlantic slave trade in over four centuries!

At least 200 million people are victims of enslavement for debt, forced marriages, prostitution and forced labour, including a significant number of children. The Secretary General of the UN, Ban Ki-Moon, recently stated : “*Slavery is a heinous crime. This type of exploitation is changing and re-emerging in modern forms*”.

In August 2010, the UN launched a global action plan to fight against human trafficking and called on world governments to take coordinated and consistent measures to defeat this scourge that affects all countries, on all continents.

In France, the Committee against Modern Slavery estimated that tens of thousands of people are reduced to forced labour as workers in sweatshops or as domestic servants. Thousands of women are subjected to forced marriages and tens of thousands of them are forced into prostitution.

The Memorial of the abolition of slavery in Nantes, one of whose functions is to commemorate the memory of the millions of victims of slavery of the past, also has the mission to recall the dramatic urgency of the situation of slaves today.

The past thus clarifying the present, the Memorial is a call to the conscience of each visitor to the world around them.



FROM 1789 TO 2008

A PAST AND PRESENT STRUGGLE

26 AUGUST 1789: The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.

1802: Napoleon Bonaparte restores the slave trade and slavery under the law in effect before 1789.

1818: French law abolishing the slave trade. It was to be renewed on 25 April 1827 and 22 February 1831.

27 APRIL 1848: 27 April, adoption of the decree abolishing definitely the slavery in France.

1865: The United States enact the 13th Amendment prohibiting slavery.

2000: The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibits slavery, forced labour and trafficking in human beings. September: entry into force of Convention 182 of the International Labour Organisation on *"prohibiting the worst forms of Child Labour."*

2001: French law of 21 May 2001 recognizing that the slave trade and slavery are crimes against humanity. The United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Durban, South Africa) recognizes *"slavery and the transatlantic slave trade as crimes against humanity."*

2 DECEMBER 2005: 2 December, International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.

2008: Declaration of the Secretary General of the UN, Ban Ki-Moon : *"The slave trade was officially abolished 200 years ago, but this gross violation of human rights persists, fuelled by a lack of respect for human dignity, a denial of their humanity and poverty."*



LE VOYAGE A NANTES

The Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery is the property of Nantes Métropole, which has transferred its management to Local Public Company (*Société Publique Limitée*, or SPL) *Le Voyage à Nantes*, as part of a public service delegation for the management of the Château des ducs de Bretagne and the Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery.

Le Voyage à Nantes is an SPL resulting from the political aspirations of Nantes Métropole and the City of Nantes to take a new step forward in imposing its presence in the concert of French and European cities, by positioning and asserting itself as a city envied for its art and culture – both of which provide strong leverage for the development of its tourism sector.

It is responsible for promoting the cultural policy implemented by Nantes and, more generally, the destination of Nantes Métropole.

Its shareholders include Nantes Métropole, the City of Nantes, the Pays de la Loire region, the *département* of Loire-Atlantique, the City of Saint-Nazaire, the urban agglomeration of Clisson, Sèvre, and Maine and the *communautés de communes* of Estuaire et Sillon, and Sud Estuaire.

Through public service delegations in Nantes Métropole, *Le Voyage à Nantes* manages the policies and activities of the tourist office. *Le Voyage à Nantes* also manages the following sites:

- **Le Château des ducs de Bretagne,**
- **The Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery,**
- **Les Machines de l'île and Les Nefs,**
- **HAB Galerie,**
- **Parc des Chantiers,**
- **The permanent collection of art works making up *Estuaire Nantes<>Saint-Nazaire*.**
- **And certain permanent works in the *Voyage à Nantes* itinerary that are in the public spaces throughout Nantes Métropole**

The choice to merge the tourism sector and flagship cultural sites within a single structure was implemented on 1 January 2011.

Many local and large businesses present throughout the region are involved in our project and actively take part in the dynamic launched by *Le Voyage à Nantes*.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The Memorial is a public area which is open all year round except when the Loire River is in flood.

VISITING TIMES

The Memorial is free and open daily – no reservations are required

- from 9 am to 6 pm from September 16 to May 14
- from 9 am to 8 pm from May 16 to September 15.

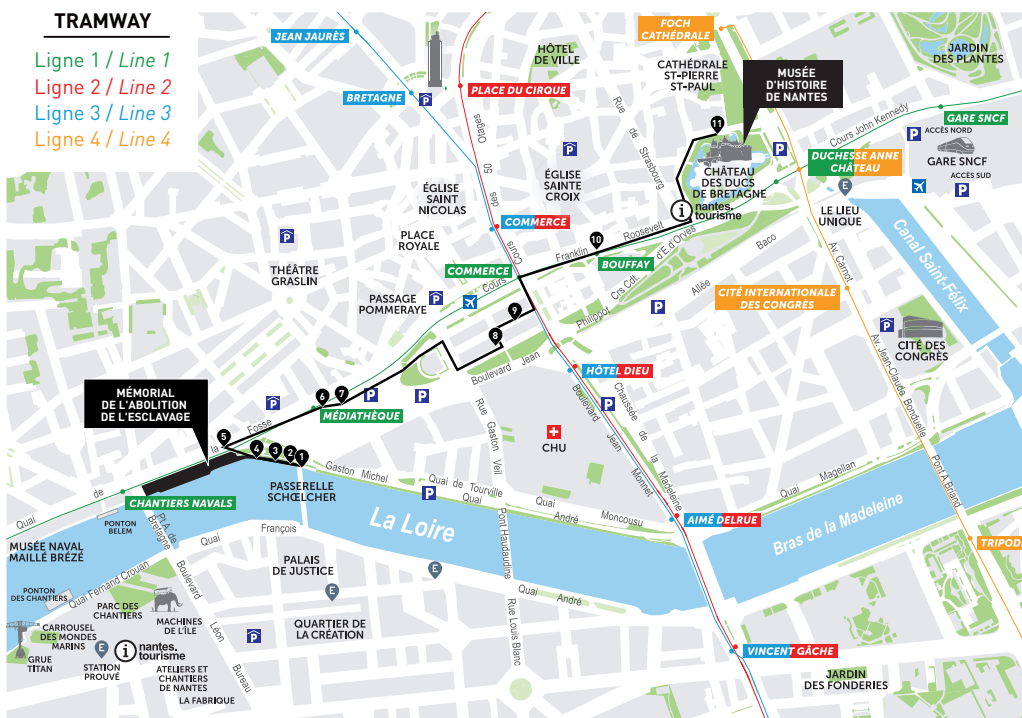
Final entrance to the meditative passage is one half-hour before closing.
Closed for maintenance in the last week of January.

ACCESS

Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery

Quai de la Fosse – Passerelle Victor-Schœlcher (*Opposite the Courthouse*)

Tramway Line 1 – Stops: Médiathèque or Chantiers Navals



HOW TO PLAN YOUR VISIT

Individuals

0 811 464 644 Service 0,05€ / min
+ prix appel

School groups

Monday : 9am-12am / 14pm-18pm

From Tuesday to Wednesday : 9am-12am30 / 13pm30-18pm

T. 02 40 20 60 11 - F. 02 51 17 48 65

Mail: scolaires@nantes-tourisme.com

www.memorial.nantes.fr