

PORTS OF EXILE, HOME HARBOURS
The fates of Jewish people during the Second World War
 A virtual exhibition to rebuild the memory of exiled Jews



Marseille/Montreal/Rouen, June 6, 2020 – Four museums from both sides of the Atlantic—La Fabrique des Savoirs in Elbeuf (Réunion des Musées Métropolitains Rouen Normandie), the Musée d'Histoire de Marseille, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA), and the Montreal Holocaust Museum—have come together to highlight the fates of Jews persecuted by the Nazi regime, with the virtual exhibition *Ports of Exile, Home Harbours*, which is accessible online at destinees-juives.expositionsvirtuelles.fr.

Seventy-five years after the liberation of Auschwitz, this exhibition aims to keep this history alive and celebrate the courage of the victims, witnesses and survivors of the *Shoah* so that we never forget. Its launch also coincides with the anniversary of the Normandy landings on June 6, 1944 that led the Allied forces to eventually liberate France from Nazi Germany.

Ports of Exile, Home Harbours: An exhibition on three locations

Rouen, Marseille, and Montreal are three port cities that were built on trade. Their museums hold collections that not only bear witness to a past of conquest and splendour but also preserve memories from history's darkest days. With this virtual exhibition, two French and two Canadian institutions wanted to pay tribute to the Jewish men and women whose fates were marked extraordinarily by both victory and tragedy.

Against the backdrop of the Second World War, the exhibition resurfaces archives, art works, photographs and many never-before-seen objects that bear witness to history on a human scale. The exhibition has three parts:

- 1. Elbeuf: Jewish Fates on Norman Soil**
- 2. Marseille: From Refuge to Trap**
- 3. Montreal: Land of Welcome and New Beginnings**

From Normandy in the occupied zone to Provence in the free zone, the exhibition reconstructs the fates of French and European Jewish men and women who were hunted down by Nazi occupiers and accomplices or by the Vichy regime and whose paths ended in deportation or exile. It also relates stories of resilience and hope in the long journey toward exile, reconstruction, reparations, and the restitution of stolen heritage. Over time, this evolving exhibition will be enhanced with contributions from other museums that are members of the FRAME (French American Museum Exchange) network, a group of 32 French and North American museums.

Sylvain Amic, Director of the Réunion des Musées Métropolitains Rouen Normandie and Head Heritage Conservation Officer; **Nathalie Bondil**, Director General and Chief Curator of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; and **Xavier Rey**, Director of the Musées de Marseille; explained the origin of the project:

“Due to stay-at-home orders around the world, museums have had to turn to online options to keep their activities going. Museums in the three port cities of Rouen, Marseille and Montreal that are members of the FRAME (FRench and American Museum Exchange) network partnered to create this site about the poignant fates of Jewish people on each side of the Atlantic to mark the 75th anniversary of the Second World War, upon the initiative of La Fabrique des Savoirs and its newly public archival holdings about Elbeuf in Normandy.

“Thanks to great effort on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as generous support from FRAME, this exhibition was set up in just a few weeks. Although it has come about during a painful time and also deals with one of the darkest moments in human history, the project is about hope, resilience and reconstruction.”

Curatorial team

Sylvain Amic, Director of the Réunion des Musées Métropolitains Rouen Normandie and Head Heritage Conservation Officer; **Nathalie Bondil**, Director General and Chief Curator of the MMFA; and **Fabrice Denise**, Director of the Musée d'Histoire de Marseille.

With contributions from **Marie Sanchez**, Director of La Fabrique des Savoirs in Elbeuf, Head Heritage Conservation Officer; **Laurence Garson**, Head of the Mémorial des Déportations, and **Ann Blanchet**, Curator, Musée d'Histoire de Marseille; **Iris Amizlev**, Curator of Intercultural Arts, MMFA; as well as **Marie-Blanche Fourcade**, Head of Collections and Exhibitions, and **Andréa Shaulis**, Curator, Montreal Holocaust Museum.

This exhibition was made possible thanks to support from FRAME

During the museums' lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, FRAME (FRench American Museum Exchange) established an Emergency Grant Initiative on April 13. Funds were promptly distributed to six institutions to develop a series of new cultural projects online to help them continue to engage the public and strengthen their accessibility remotely to their local audiences as well as to a global audience. Through these projects, 17 museums, which are more than half of the members of FRAME, benefit from transatlantic partnerships. The online exhibition *Ports of Exile, Home Harbours* is one of the six exemplar projects which were implemented in less than an month within the FRAME Emergency Initiative.

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Download high-resolution images [here](#).

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About FRAME

French American Museum Exchange (FRAME) is a consortium of 32 major museums in France and North America. FRAME promotes transatlantic cultural exchanges and encourages museum collaborations among its members to develop exhibitions, educations and public programs, and professional exchanges among museum staff. FRAME provides an extensive network of intellectual resources on both sides of the Atlantic. framemuseums.org

About the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

Drawing over 1 million visitors annually, the MMFA is one of the most visited museums in Canada and North America. Its highly original temporary exhibitions combine various artistic disciplines – fine arts, music, film, fashion and design – and are exported to the four corners of the world. Its rich encyclopedic collection, displayed in its five pavilions, includes international art, arts of One World, decorative arts and design, and Quebec and Canadian art. The Museum has seen exceptional growth in recent years with the addition of two new pavilions and one new wing: the Claire and Marc Bourgie Pavilion in 2011, the Michal and Renata Hornstein Pavilion for Peace in 2016, and the Stephan Crétier and Stéphanie Maillery Wing for the Arts of One World in 2019. The MMFA complex also includes Bourgie Hall, a 460-seat concert hall, as well as an auditorium and a movie theatre. The MMFA is one of Canada's leading publishers of art books in French and English, which are distributed internationally. The Museum also houses the Michel de la Chenelière International Atelier for Education and Art Therapy, the largest educational complex in a North American art museum, enabling the MMFA to offer innovative educational, wellness and art therapy programmes. mbam.qc.ca

About the Montreal Holocaust Museum

The Montreal Holocaust Museum educates people of all ages and backgrounds about the Holocaust, while sensitising the public to the universal perils of antisemitism, racism, hate and indifference. Through its Museum, its commemorative programs and educational initiatives, the Montreal Holocaust Museum promotes respect for diversity and the sanctity of human life. museeholocauste.ca

About the Musée d'Histoire de Marseille

Located at the site of the ancient Greek port, the Musée d'Histoire de Marseille retraces 2,600 years of France's oldest city that was also a port on the Mediterranean Sea. The museum holds a significant collection of archaeological, medieval and contemporary works that represent the city and its activities. Affiliated with the Musée d'Histoire de Marseille, the Mémorial des Déportations, inaugurated in December 2019, is a tribute to the history and memory of the men, women and children arrested and then deported because they were born Jewish as well as those punished as politicians, resistance fighters, hostages or "suspects" during the Second World War. musees.marseille.fr

About the Réunion des Musées Métropolitains Rouen Normandie

Created on January 1, 2016, the Réunion des Musées Métropolitains (RMM) is the umbrella organization for eight museums in the Rouen-Normandy metropolitan area: the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Musée des Antiquités, Musée de la Céramique, Musée Le Secq des Tournelles, and Muséum d'Histoire naturelle in Rouen; La Fabrique des Savoirs in Elbeuf; the Musée Pierre Corneille in Petit-Couronne; and the Musée de la Corderie Vallois in Notre-Dame-de-Bondeville. Covering all areas of knowledge and curiosity, these rich collections are now accessible to the public free of charge and have become a powerful instrument to stir our imagination and creativity, teach us how societies evolve, and help us return to the source of our modern world's great debates. musees-rouen-normandie.fr