

Homage to Notre-Dame de Paris 2020—2023

La Cité Architecture & Heritage Center is paying respect to Notre-Dame de Paris, ravaged by a devastating fire on April 15, 2019. Rolled out across four phases, this exhibition delves into the multi-secular history of this major monument in the history of architecture. It invokes the development of the Cathedral from its creation up to modern day, also looking at its significant restoration in the 19th Century.

La Cité and Notre-Dame de Paris

La Cité is home to some 150 casts, (tympanums, moldings, sculptures, high relief carvings) full-scale reproductions and models of Notre-Dame de Paris including the wooden steeple.

This large-scale presence of the Cathedral in our collections allows visitors to truly grasp the history

of this great monument from its construction in the 12th Century up to its restoration in the middle of the 19th Century. This vast interest in the Cathedral is in part due to the fact that Eugène Viollet-le-Duc and Adolphe Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume, respectively the founder and first director of the museum, have very close bonds to the building. Indeed, they worked on the Cathedral's restoration in the 19th Century.

4 focus points of the exhibition The Gothic Cathedral

Notre-Dame de Paris embodies a special moment for Gothic architecture and sculpture. The molds and models of the monument on display allow visitors to truly appreciate the architectural ingenuity of the building as well as the creative quality of its sculptures.

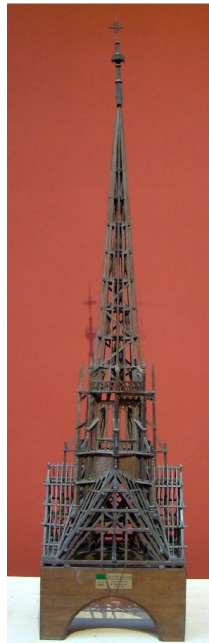




Head of Saint Thomas, the Apostle, as portrayed by Viollet-le-Duc, the Cockerel on the steeple, October 2019 ©Cit  de l'architecture et du patrimoine

The Spire by Viollet-le-Duc

A special focus is devoted to the spire of Notre-Dame, designed and produced by Eug ne Viollet-le-Duc and master sculptor Adolphe Geoffroy-Dechaume, and shows behind-the-scenes details of this exceptional construction which, unfortunately, was destroyed in the fire. Thanks to the support of the Architecture and Heritage Media Archives, a body of designs, photographs, archives and models focus on all aspects of its restoration.



Restoration news

The collapse of the Viollet-le-Duc spire was perhaps the most striking image of the fire of April 15, 2019. It remains at the heart of much debate concerning the significance and place of contemporary intervention on a historical monument of this caliber. La Cit , which is a place of synergy between conservation and creation, will showcase news from the restoration site and the many reflections which have resulted with a host of media (photographic reports of the first building restoration works as well as the many treasures to which it was home, conference excerpts, etc.).

Sculptures of Notre-Dame And their restoration

First deposited on April 11, 2019, the sculptures of the spire went to the Socra Workshop for restoration. Since September 16, 2020, and throughout their restoration, they have been housed in the Casts Gallery at La Cit .

The sixteen statues have now joined the collections at La Cit , and which includes: Saint Barth l my, Saint Jude, Saint Simon, Saint Peter, Saint Philippe, Saint Jacques the Lesser, Saint Paul, Saint Jean, Saint Jacques the Elder, Saint Andr , Saint Matthew and Saint Luke the Evangelist. The statues of the eagle of Saint Jean the Evangelist, of the Angel of Saint Matthieu, of the Lion of Saint Mark and of Saint Thomas as portrayed by Eug ne Viollet-le-Duc have all been restored and exhibited.

In addition to the sixteen sculptures forming the spire, La Cit  is also home to the cockerel which sat abreast the Cathedral. This was found the day after the blaze and will not be restored, instead bearing witness to the tragic fire. This presentation amongst our collections of a public institution is fundamental for dissemination of knowledge as these sculptures are, at present, a cherished link, often brimming in emotion, with the closed Cathedral.

(Left) Auguste Bellu, model of the spire of Notre-Dame, wood, 1859, D.MAP/CRMH24a  Cit  de l'architecture et du patrimoine

