



Musée du Pays Châtillonnais - Trésor de Vix

Welcome to the **Châtillonnais Museum - The Vix Treasure**. The museum displays one of the greatest celtic era collection in France, including the Vase of Vix. Our museum will also lead you on a journey through the history of the Châtillonnais region from the prehistoric times to Gallo-Roman times, on through the Middle Age and all the way up to the reign of Napoleon.



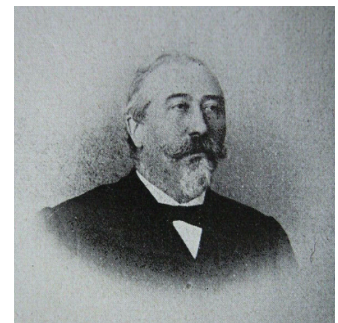
Louis Desliens (1879-1975)

This first room pays tribute to some important figures of the Châtillonnais region. A collection of veterinary instruments demonstrates how essential animals were for agriculture during the 19th century. The horses were particularly indispensable for working the fields and transporting the harvest.

Louis Desliens was a veterinarian who practiced in Châtillon. His early research on the circulatory system of horses proved helpful for human medical purposes. For a long time, little attention was paid to the pain and suffering of animals, as suggested by some of the objects exhibited here. Thanks to Louis Desliens' study, veterinary sciences began to consider these issues.

Fernand Daguin (1848 -1922)

Fernand Daguin was a prominent late 19th-century scholar, passionate about ornithology, who created a collection of naturalized birds between 1860 and 1920. Though he was a lawyer in Paris, he was attached to the natural heritage of the Châtillonnais region where he was born.



Categories of extinction of the bird's species

- Extinct in Mainland France
- Critically endangered
- Endangered
- Vulnerable
- Near Threatened

Daguin's action brought together every variety of birds existing in the Châtillonnais region during his time. Some are rare, while others have practically disappeared, such as the case with the large great Outarde : this bird has disappeared with the development of urban and agricultural areas in the region. Some of the birds presented in this room aren't typical of the region but are migratory birds, that only fly over Châtillon at certain times of the year.

The coloured stickers next to the bird name indicate its category of extinction (lack of stickers means that the species isn't currently endangered).

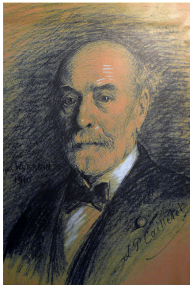
The terrestrial globe



Although the author of this globe is still unknown, its cartography suggests it dates from the second half of the 18th century. Composed of a wooden skeleton filled with straw, the crude surface was then covered with book pages to create a smooth surface.

A first cartography took place before being superseded by a second, more up-to-date. Successive additions were applied to keep the cartography abreast of new discoveries, especially those of James Cook. A final coat of lacquer then sealed the whole.

All in all, its peculiar craftsmanship and opportune materials allow us to establish that it was most certainly conceived in a monastery.



Louis Paul Cailletet (1832-1913)

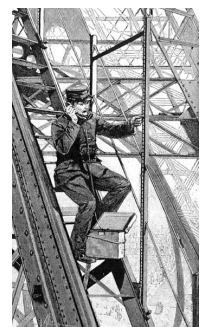
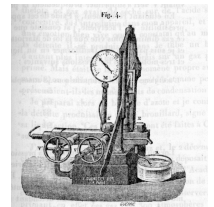
Louis Cailletet was **born in 1832 in Châtillon-sur-Seine**. After his studies in physics in Paris, among the scholars of the time, he joined the family's forge in Châtillon. There, he realized his first experiments on physical and chemical proprieties, and discovered the role of heat in metal changes of state.

In 1877, he successfully **produced a few drops of liquid oxygen**. The machine in front of you was used to compress the oxygen. Then, with a sudden expansion, it will produce a cooling of around 200°C, resulting in the appearance of fine droplets of liquid oxygen. Thanks to this invention, Louis Cailletet was elected a **member of the Académie des Sciences** in 1884. Nowadays, liquefaction of gases is used in the medical field (cryogenisation of the organs, for example), to allow aviators and astronauts of breathing in space, and for molecular cuisine.

In 1891, he installed a **300-meter-high manometer on the Eiffel Tower** and a laboratory to investigate air resistance on falling bodies on its second platform. It was used to calibrate industrial manometers.

Louis Cailletet was one of the first founders of the Aéro-Club (flying club) de France in 1898. He developed automatic cameras, altimeters, and air-sample collectors for sounding balloons to better understand the upper atmosphere.

Cailletet died on January 5th, 1913. He is regarded as the father of low temperatures and one of the pioneers of cryogenics.



The oriental piano

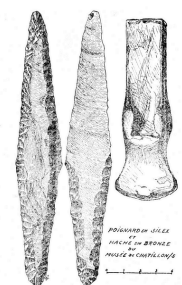


This instrument presents a singular blend of cultures, both in terms of its oriental aesthetic, its high-quality ornamentation, and its evocation of the 19th-century European bourgeoisie lifestyle. Made at the end of the 19th century, it was gifted to Marguerite Trech, a French lady who was living with her family in Alger (Algeria). It's the only piano of its type in French museum collections.

The prehistoric times

Remains of prehistory are sparsely in the Châtillonnais region. One of the major sites is **"La Grande Baume" in Bâlot**. During the 19th century, remains from a human settlement, dating from the **Mousterian** (middle paleolithic, 160,000-140,000 BCE) were found (stone scrapers and points). Other artifacts (blades and burin in silex, Assegai in bones) along with bones of animals (rhinoceros, mammoths, reindeers) show that this site was used during the **upper Paleolithic** (50,000-12,000 BCE) as a rock shelter during the hunt.

Artifacts from the **Neolithic** (10,000-2,000 BCE) are more commonly discover in the Châtillonnais, with local tools but also objects from long-distance trade like a silex dagger imported from the Grand Pressigny (west of France). Funeral coffers buried under tumuli have also been found in the area.



First floor: the Treasure of Vix

Warriors from the Early Iron Age

The Princess of Vix lived during a period called **the Iron Age (800 - 52 B.C.E)**. More precisely she lived in the **culture of Hallstatt** during the first Iron Age (800 -450 B.C.E.).

The first showcase displays objects that surrounded the deceased, including **a sword, a bracelet, and an Etruscan situla** indicating that it was probably the body of **a Celtic warrior**. A situla is a bronze bucket produced in North Italy, that was used to serve the beverage during banquets. This recipient was accompanied by a small bronze cup, known as a **phiale** used for offering beverages to the gods during the ritual that opens the banquet.



This tomb takes back to **around 800 BC** when iron forging had barely begun. Only an iron sword back then was highly symbolic as its production required advanced technical prowess. The presence of **dishes imported from Italy** also underlines the prestigious character of this tomb. This warrior belonged to a **social elite** that just started to emerge in Western Europe.



The Lebes of Sainte-Colombe-sur-Seine

This **Lebes** comes from a tomb discovered under the **La Garenne tumulus located in Sainte-Colombe-sur-Seine** (between Châtillon-sur-Seine and Vix). This Lebes is adorned with four busts of **griffon**, a legendary creature with an eagle head, ears of a horse and the body of a snake. The cauldron is in **sheet bronze**, and the **tripod** supporting it is an assemblage of iron rods and bronze connecting leaves. Each of its three legs is supported by a duck build shape turban whereas the end of each leg forms a lion foot. This was a typically **Etruscan technique** practiced in the northern region of Italy.

The personage buried under this tumulus was probably **lying in a four-wheel chariot** whose fragments were found in the tomb. The elements found there, were similar as those found in the tomb of the Princess of Vix though more modest : this may indicate that the person buried in Sainte-Colombe-sur-Seine was under her authority or a follower.

All of these elements start back to around 500 BCE, a period corresponding to what archaeologists call the **princely phenomenon**, which last around 100 years (550 - 450 B.C.E.). This phenomenon is characterized by rich residences, Mediterranean objects of prestige, and princely tombs, with that of Vix being the most remarkable examples.

The Vix Krater

Now you are facing the masterpiece of our museum: the Vix vase. It is in fact what is known as a **krater** and was used to mix water with wine during Greek banquets.

This krater was produced in a Greek colony located in the **south of current Italy around 530 BCE**. It stands **1.64 meter high** and can hold **1,100 litres of liquid**. It is the biggest existing ancient bronze recipient in the world.

The belly, shoulders, and neck form a single piece and the sheet bronze is only **1.2 millimeter thick**, hence its weight of **208.6 kilograms**. On both handles you can see a woman representing **the Gorgon Medusa**, a monster from Greek mythology who turns anyone who looks upon her face into stone. The frieze found on the neck portrayed the **procession of Greek soldiers (hoplites) and horse-drawn chariots (aurigae and quadrigae)**. Walking around the vase, you'll see that none of these figures are identical.

Climb the steps to observe that the **lid is perforated**: this strainer was used to filter the wine. At the centre of the cover stands a **bronze statuette**, whose identity remains unknown today.

This krater was discovered **in the tomb of the Princess of Vix** as were the other banquets items presented in the display cases of this room.



The settlement of the Mont Lassois



This photograph depicts Mont Lassois, situated just 6 kilometers from Châtillon-sur-Seine. Looking down from his top, there is a beautiful view over the Seine Valley. Today, Vix is a village of around 100 inhabitants, located at the foot of the hill. Around 500 BCE, Mont Lassois was surrounded by a gigantic system of fortifications and was inhabited by 2.500 to 5.000 people, both on his top and at his foot.

The location of this Iron Age's settlement by the river wasn't hazardous: near the Vix village, the Seine became navigable for flatboats. Hence, merchants had to stop at Vix to change their mode of transportation between fluvial and terrestrial roads. The Vix settlement may have flourished at the end of the Hallstatt period (550 - 450 BCE) thanks to the goods that were passing through the Seine. During Iron Age, Celts didn't use coins and it was a bartering system.

The Mont Lassois was also located on a crossroad of the main trade roads of the Iron Age. Indeed, tin came from England, corals from the Mediterranean Sea, amber from the Baltic Sea and oil, wine and bronze objects from the Greek and Etruscan territories. Inside the Celtic world, which extended from the East of France to East Europe, tribes were connected with each other.



The Drinking set

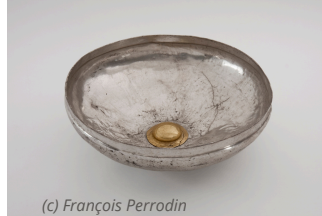
The tomb of the Lady of Vix contains all the necessary utensils for successfully hosting a **Greek banquet**. All these objects were placed on the Vix Krater in the tomb.

Such a ceremony began by **sacrificing an animal**. The bones and fat were kept for the gods whereas the meat was consumed by the men.

Then the participant would **wash their hands** and put on **perfume to purify themselves**. In the display case to the right, you can see two large basins used specifically for this type of cleansing.



(c) François Perrodin



(c) François Perrodin



(c) Mathieu Rabeau



(c) Mathieu Rabeau

The second part of the banquet was called the **symposium**. Wine will first be put into the **phiale**, which is a wide and shallow bowl in gold and silver. The gods were served first: the wine was splashed to the ground or into an altar. After that, wine from the krater was served to the guests with the pitcher, called **oenoché**, into **two Greek cups**.

The symposium was a moment of sociability that was very important in Greek life. It was a moment for apprenticeship for young men citizens to discover the social, political, and economic discussions of their society. Various arts were practiced as well, such as music and poetry.

Though we have discovered in this tomb the ideal kit for carrying out a Greek-style banquet, we can not know what sort of **adaptation the Celtic region** would have brought to this practice.

The torc and other Jewelry



The princess of Vix was buried wearing the torc and the jewelry set presented here.

The **torc** is a necklace of Celtic design and a sign of power. This **gold band**, weighing **480 grams**, formed an arc with the two ends forming a lion paw, resting on hollow spheres. At the junction of the sphere and the arc, **two small wing-horses** can be seen. Admire the finess of the engraving portraying the hair or fur on the horse and the lion. Although this piece of jewelry is a Celtic craftsmanship, the motif of the wing-horse is reminiscent of the Pegasus from Greek mythology.

The torc was found **around the skull of the Princess of Vix** so it was first interpreted as a diadem. It must have slipped out when the ceiling of the burial chamber collapsed, as it was made to be **worn around the neck**.

In the jewelry set, you can see various **fibulae** that were used to fasten clothing like brooches. Crafting in iron and bronze they were embellished with precious materials such as gold leaf, coral (from the Mediterranean sea) and amber (from the Baltic Sea). The amber were also crafted to form the beads of a superb necklace.



The discovery of the Vix vase

It was at the foot of the Mont Lassois near the village of Vix, that an extraordinary discovery was made: in January 1953, archaeologists René Joffroy and Maurice Moisson founded this woman's tomb filled with precious objects which are now known as the Vix Treasure.

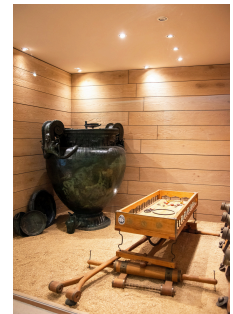
The lady, known as the Princess of Vix, was laid down on a wagon box with precious jewelry. The burial chamber also houses the colossal bronze vase and vessel for the banquet.

When the Vase of Vix was unearthed, it was deeply damaged and was around 60 centimeters high. Indeed, shortly after the princess's burial, the wood ceiling rotted, and the material from the tumulus entered the tomb and crushed everything inside, including the vase and the skeleton of the Lady of Vix. Therefore, restoration of these Iron Age objects was needed. Today, the krater can stand again thanks to wood and metal frames.

The reconstitution of the burial chamber and the wagon

The reconstitution of the burial chamber presents replicas of the objects found in this tomb. It was a 9-meter square chamber closed by a wood ceiling, on top of which was built the tumulus of 6 meters in height and 40 meters in diameter.

The chariot occupied the centre of the burial chamber whereas the wheels were removed and left leaning against the tomb's walls. This replica of the chariot was created by the Mayence laboratory in the 1980s. Cutting single-piece wheels from the trunk of ash trees presented a certain challenge: it was necessary to soften the wood and let it soak in hot water. The softened wood was then fitted with an iron band holding it all around at a circular mass. When it goes cold and kept the shape.



Who was the princess of Vix?



As the Celtic societies did not use written language, we have no written testimony about her. However anatomical studies carried out on fragments of her skeleton shows that she was roughly forty years old. The extraordinary wealth found in her tomb suggests she played an important role in her society but we still don't know what was her statut (political, religious, military...).



The last showcase presents three versions of the Lady of Vix. The picture with a blond lady wearing the torc as a diadem was made shortly after the discovery in 1953. The second one created in the 1980s is based on a **X-ray radiography of the skull that was then molded**. The latest study of 2022, based on a comparison between her DNA and a databank, has allowed archaeologists to generate **a computer-made portrait** (with a blue background). We now know that she had brown or dark blond hair with blue, green, or grey eyes and that her face was typical of Celtic women from the East of France. Analysis of her teeth shows that she may have drunk water from a nearby mountain (Vosges, Massif Central ...) as she has grown. The Lady of Vix was buried between **470 and 460 B.C.E.**, shortly before the end of this princely phenomenon and the decline of the vix settlement (around 450 B.C.E).



Second floor : the Gallo-Roman period

The sacred spring of the Douix

Located near the museum, the **Douix site** is a beautiful place that is well worth the detour.

This statue was found in the Douix spring and dates back to Gallo-Roman times. Its head and the lower parts of its body are missing. It probably represents a woman: in her left arm, she is holding a child. Half of the child's body has been lost, but his hand is open with his palm facing the sky. Some people believe this statue was **an offering to a divinity** others think it is a **representation of a fertility goddess**.

Since the Middle Ages, a **madonna and child** have reigned here replacing these ancient pagan idols that used to stand above the spring.

In 1993, numerous objects were discovered in the spring. Most of them are offerings made to the divinity of the Douix, during the Gallic period and then gallo-roman times, this includes fibulae, coins, and small limestone statues.



(c) Antoine Maillet



The Ex-votos from Essarois

The primary water sanctuary in the Chatillonnais region is that of **La Cave at Essarois**. It was set up near the sources during the Gallic period, around the **2nd century B.C.E.** with a first temple that have been abandoned during the Gallic wars of the 1st B.C.E. A decade or so later, the temple was rebuilt according to Roman techniques and was then dedicated to **Apollo**, a healing god: his name is written in the base of one of the statues. The Gallo-Romans added a qualifier **Vindonus** meaning "light".

Pilgrims went to the sanctuary to **implore a cure** by offering him a statue representing their reflection. Some of the faces of these statues are twisted in pain. On the face of a child marked with a red dot, there seems to be a lump on his cheek. Perhaps this represents an upset tooth? Other faces seem to bear serene, even smiling expressions and are certainly **thanking the divinity for curing them**.

The figures represent all ages; the sick and the cured; men, women, and children; the young and the old : the entire human condition is represented in this sanctuary.

Galic sacrifices

While digs have been carried out on the outskirts of the Gallo-Roman settlement of Vertault, the vestige of a temple attracted the attention of the archaeologists.

Under this gallo-roman temple, there was a gallic ritual area with pits in which the Gauls had placed a huge number of sacrificed animals: 200 dogs, 42 horses, 8 sheep, and 2 oxen. The horses were killed by an axe blow to the head before being laid out on its right flank, its head pointing toward the south. Gallic horses were smaller than the actual horses: they were 1.25m tall which nowadays corresponds to the size of a pony. All of the sacrificed animals were male, had been carefully laid out in the pits following a specific orientation, and were not eaten. The combination of these facts implies the existence of a precise ritual that remains very mysterious to us even today.



The Mausoleums of Nod-sur-Seine

The substructures of **three mausoleums** in Nod-sur-Seine have been discovered on the same road as the Tremblois Shrine. They have been part of an estate belonging to wealthy Gallo-Romans in the **second century AD**, who wished to be buried on their own propriety in highly visible building near the road



The three deceased are shown life sized : **a young male, an older man and a woman**. This latter displays an hairstyle similar to that of Empress Faustina. An elegantly draped female statue, holding a branch of laurel leaves, was also excavated in the site.

These mausoleums were composed of **a podium topped by a gallery with a pediment**, with sculpted decorations, as **the kidnapping of Europa by Zeus** in the guise of a bull, and **sea horses** and **Cupids**, who accompanied the deceasedes to the hereafter.

Cemeteries and Dieties

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The Roman city of Vertillum

Vertillum is the main gallo-roman settlement of the Châtillonais. It was located at the intersection of the ancient roads leading to the large Gallo-Roman cities of Sens, Langres, and Autun. Since the 19th century, numerous vestiges have been discovered there.

On the floor, you can see a map of the city, that stretches about 34 hectares. Its urban planning has a Roman origin as can be seen by the regular lines made by the street creating rectangular blocks of habitations.



At the centre of the city, there was a large square surrounded by public buildings such as the imperial temple and the open-air market. One of the sides of this square was occupied by rich merchants. Numerous craftsmen such as metal workers were settled in houses with a shop opening to the street. The display cases in this room exhibit many iron tools resembling those that are still in use today.

The site was abandoned at the end of the 3rd century CE.

The Infant Bacchus



This statue was found in the garden of one of Vertault's villas. It was made of Bronze between the 1st century BCE and the first century CE. Discovered in 1894, it was stolen from the Museum in 1973 and returned to the museum in 2022. During antiquity, it was covered with gold sheets as well as a silver sheet for the white of the eye.

Bone working

The bones of consumed animals, such as pigs and cows, were used to create objects of everyday life. This craft was known as **boneworking** and also includes objects made in deer antlers.

Display number 1 shows pins decorated with circular, oval, or engraved heads. These were used to tie up strands of hair elegantly. The needles shown in *display number 3* and the spindles in *number 2* evoke the art of clothing fabrication. The perforated tube in *display number 4* is not a whistle but pieces of hinges that allow the door to rotate in a door frame. *Display number 8* shows a small ivory plate engraved with a figurative motive and adorned with beds, chests, and musical instrument cases. You can see a sort of cherub in profile, walking towards the right. He is nude except for his mantle fastened around his shoulders and holding a basket of fruits in his right hand.

The small spoons with rounded ends that you can see in *display number 10* were used for eating types of food such as seafood and eggs. The bone was also used to decorate knife handles. These knives were sometimes foldable such as the case of the *display number 9* featuring a piece in a shell of a bull foot. Finally, the flute in *display number 12*, the dice in *display number 15*, and the tokens in *display number 14* evoke moments of leisure and games.



The kitchen

This display case is dedicated to the kitchen. The hearth was generally portable and could be placed inside and outside the habitation. A rack was used to hang a cauldron over a fire. Slow cooking was possible thanks to **ceramic pots** placed above the fire that was periodically turned. You can see an example of one in the display case to the right at *number 23*.



For faster cooking, Gallo-Romans used the **grill**. The **frying pan**, *display number 9*, was also already known. One could thus boil, roast, and simmer recipes.

The Gaulic diet was based on **meat, vegetables, and milk products**. With the arrival of Romans, **cereals and fruit trees** took great importance in Gaul.

Display number 18 shows a style dish from which everyone would serve themselves using their fingers or **spoons** such as shown in *display number 19*. Indeed, Gallo-Romans were not used to utilizing individual plates and cutlery. The display cases around exhibit the **variety of forms and styles of these ancient dishes** from the most common to the most luxurious.



Writing and Lighting

During Gallo-Roman times, writing becomes a common practice..

The first method of writing was a **stylus on wax tablets** for punctual notes that could be later erased. The styluses on *display number 7* present a dry point on one size for writing and a spatula on the other for smoothing the wax, to correct or erase something.

The second form of writing **was ink on papyrus, wood, or parchment** for documents that would be kept. It is illustrated by an **inkpot** in *display number 9*. The ink was made by mixing very fine ash with resin and was diluted with vinegar to make it permanent. Red ink also existed: this is why the inkpot presented here is double. The ink was used with a pen known as a **calame**, normally made with a reed. This one is in sheet bronze and features a split tip. Writing with a bird feather would not appear until the end of Antiquity.

Gallo-Romans produced light using **oil lamps and candle handles**. The metallic handler that you can see in *display number 3* was designed to be planted into the walls. A wick was inserted that must have produced a rather dim lighting.



Inkpot and calame



*The candle handles (up)
and the oil lamps (down)*

Original Accessories



Among the necklaces exhibited here, the one shown in *display number 2* with its **two pig canines** is striking original. The two teeth linked at the base form a croissant shape and are joined by a connecting sleeve, allowing the croissant to be attached to a small chain and hung independently with beads. Pork plays a big part in the Gallic diet and its animal bones were also frequently used for crafting objects.



Object number 9 displays a **medallion circle** obtained by sawing the base of the atlas, a bone linking the animal's skull with the spine. Holes were pierced into the objects that can be hung or sewn into clothing, as shown on the fragment of the statue in *display number 10*. Like pig canines to the left, the amulets were used as **protective talismans**.



In this display case, you may have noticed the large number of **fibulae** exhibited. Thus, these pins were generally used to fasten clothes or as jewelry and feature fine motives and precious material. Zoomorphic (or animal-shaped) *fibulae* were very popular during Gallo-Roman times. The forms and materials borrowed by these fibulae evolved rapidly over age, following the fashion trend of each generation, and thus allowed archaeologists to date the archaeological layers in which they are found.

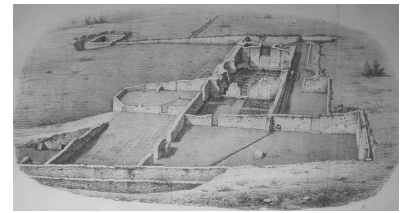
The triad of Mother Goddess



In Gallo-Roman times, religion was practiced in temples and in the privacy of one own house. Altar can be found in Vertault's houses and most often in basements. The wealthier homes even display beautiful statues of divinities. The triad of Mother Goddesses is a perfect example of this. All three have their right breast uncovered as if to announce their material nature. The woman on the left is holding a swaddled baby, the middle one a diaper or swaddling cloth, and the one on the right a sponge. The mother Goddesses protected the family and the children. They encourage maternity and favor abundance.

Personal Hygiene

The Gallo-Romans went to **thermal baths** following a series of steps. First a vapor bath (*sudatorium*), then a hot one (*caldarium*), a warm one (*tepidarium*), and finally a cold one (*frigidarium*). Instead of soap, Gallo-Romans used a mixture of olive oil and powder pomestone, that would leave a sort of film on their skin that they scraped off with a **strigile** (object number 10).



Thermal baths of Vertault in the 19th century



Gallo-Roman toiletries included a tweezer, seen in display number 4, and mirrors, presented in display number 14. Women wore make-up and perfume: fashion dictated a very light complexion? and lips and eyes were strongly enhanced by colors.

To spread this makeup, women used a stone plate like the one in display number 25. Oils and perfumes were kept in small vases, sometimes found in a shape of an animal like the ones at number 20 in the form of a monkey and a lion.



The ancient writer Pline the Older described a skin makeup recipe of Roman beauty: "Small snails dried in the sun of tiles and then ground to a fine powder to be subsequently mixed with beans puree, forms an excellent cosmetic that both whitens and softens the skin."

The High Middle Age and the Merovingians (*in the stairwell leading to the top floor*)

At the end of the Antiquity, the population decreased and much of the territory is abandoned.

The early Middle Age is mostly represented, in our museum, by Merovingian objects. Some very interesting pieces were found in cemeteries and showed the skills of craftsmen of the Middle Age, especially blacksmiths, gold- and silversmiths. Scramasaxes, battle-axes and swords as the damascened plated buckles required original techniques of forging metal.

Damascening is a special technique of plating silver onto an iron base. It was used to make the only Merovingian inscription on metal found in the region.



Merovingian pendant (Ampilly-le-Sec, 6th and 7th AD)



Merovingian belt buckle (Recey-sur-Ource, 7th AD)

Fourth floor: from the Middle Age to the 19th century.

Saint Vorles and Bernard de Clairvaux

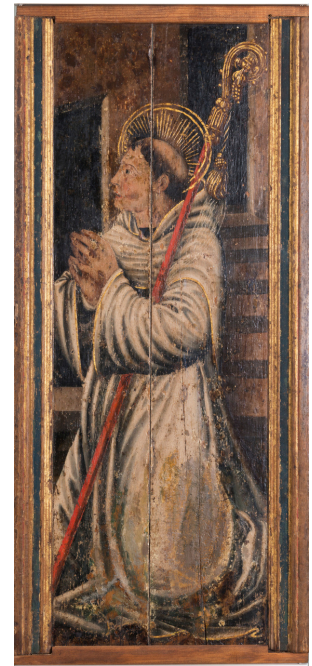


Legend of Saint Vorles

The painting's wood panels date back to the 16th century and evoke the legend of **Saint Vorles**. The left end panel portrays Saint-Vorles himself who was the priest of the village of Marcenay, located near Châtillon, during the 6th century. Born of a high-ranking family, he was known to Gontran, king of the Burgundy. One day, during a mass in the presence of the king, Vorles fell into deep meditation, and when he came back, he explained to Gontran that he had gone off to save a child whose house was on fire in the next village. This is the scene depicts in the painting. After the king have sent horsemen to confirm the story, the church recognized his gift of ubiquity (the capacity of being in two places at the same time). After that, numerous miracles have been attributed to Saint-Vorles.

The painting panel on the right represents **Bernard de Clairvaux**, recognizable thanks to his white clothing with its long sleeves and its Cistercian monkhood. As his father guarded Châtillon-sur-Seine in the service of the duke of Burgundy, he spent a part of his childhood at the school of the canon of Saint-Vorles. One Christmas evening, in the church of Saint-Vorles, he had the vision of the lactation during which his lips were moisturized by some drops of the Madonna's milk. As a young man, he joined the Cistercian order. He was thus among the first to follow the strict rules of Saint Benedicte, founded on sobriety, work, and prayer. He went on to found the Cistercian monastery of Clairvaux.

The back of this wood panel portrays King Gontran on horseback taking the saint relics of Saint-Vorles to the church of Saint-Vorles in Châtillon-sur-Seine.



Bernard of Clairvaux



Saint Vorles' reliquary



Processional stick and wood panel about the return of the Saint-Vorles' relics



The birth of Châtillon

This 18th-century painting is a copy of a 16th-century graphic document figuring Châtillon-sur-Seine during the Middle Ages. The city was divided into two parts, one on either side of the Seine River. On the left, is the **Bourg district** belonging to the bishop of Langres and harboring the intellectual powers. On the right, it's **Chaumont**, owned by the Duke of Burgundy, where the businessmen and craftsmen were living. Each of these two cities was surrounded by **fortifications** built during the 12th century.

In the late 16th century, the two cities, ravaged by religious wars and the plague, finally decided to reunite. The **Castle of the Duke of Burgundy** (*letter B*) was thus taken down, and its walls were used as a quarry for building the aristocracy residences still visible on the hill of Châtillon. Today, the only remaining vestiges of the castle are the **Saint-Anne Tower** and the **Tower of Gissey**. At the top of the hill, the 10th-century **church of Saint-Vorles** (*letter C*) still looks out over Châtillon today.

The letter Z designates the door of Paris which leads to the **Notre Dame of Châtillon Abbey** where you are now. It was founded under the impetence of Saint-Bernard de Clairvaux, around 1140. Its prosperity will last until the 16th century, when wars of religion will cause its dismissal, and its partial demolition. After the French Revolution in 1789, the monastic building was transformed into a hospital, and in 2009, the Châtillonnais Museum was set up here. The only remaining element of medieval art is the **church Saint-Pierre's** nave, standing next to the museum courtyard.

Wood engravings



This museum houses an **exceptional collection of wood engravings** (the second largest in France after the Châlon-sur-Saône's one). The presence of the relics of Saint-Vorles transformed Châtillon into a pilgrimage city. Pilgrims will buy images produced using engraved wooden blocks that function like stamps covered with ink.

The wood engraving *number 58*, marked with a red dot shows how to adapt an engraved block to some specific political change. The character is wearing Louis the XIII's garment but his head has been removed and **replaced by Louis the XIV's**: new king but same old engraving.



Wood engraving mostly portrays the life of saints, especially local saints such as **Saint-Vorles** (*number 46*) or **Sainte-Reine** (*number 44*). Reine (or Regina) was a young Christian shepherdess, who was watching over her sheep at the foot of Mont Auxois (near Alesia). In 262, a Roman governor, Olibrius, fell under her charm and tried to force her to marry him but she refused him in the name of her faith. Thus, she was martyred and decapitated: the four corners of the image depict the scene of her martyr, and the centre, her decapitation.



Image *number 64* portrays the "**Return of the prodigal son**" and depicts a bourgeois interior such as the acanthus leaves decoration found on the fireplace (similar to the one on the fireplace in this room).

Marmont : a Marshal of the Empire

This room is dedicated to Auguste Frederic Louis Viesse de Marmont. Born in Châtillon-sur-Seine in 1774, he was one of Napoleon Bonaparte's companions during his campaigns in Italy, Egypt, and Spain. In 1809, he was made Marshal of the Empire.

In the painting overlooking the room, Marmont is depicted in all his military splendor, proud and sure of himself, depicted with his most glorious medals and distinction. His right hand is brandishing his baton of Marshal of the Empire, a decoration displayed in this room. This painting here resembles "Bonaparte crossing the Alps", of David: indeed, the painter **Jean-Luc Barbier-Walbonne** was his student.



Though he was not lacking in bravery and his talent in warfare, Marmont particularly distinguished himself for his talent as administrator and organizer of position and acquired the title of **governor of Illio provinces** (today Croatia). He also became **Duke of Ragusa**, (today Dubrovnik): he modernized the country so efficiently that his memory is still honored there today.

After multiple political changes in France, he had to flee France and died in Venezia during his exile, on the 2 of March 1852.

Marmont, Captain of Industry

After his epic Napoleonic period, Marmont devoted his time to the **management of his proprieties in the Châtillonnais region**. The Marmont castle, situated just steps away from the Museum, was surrounded by a vast park that has been extended and embellished by the Marshall. Marmont was very fond of experimenting in the farming and industrial domains. He helped to introduce **Merinos sheep** into the Chatillonnais region. In order to improve the region's wine production, he experimented with pasteurization and the addition of sugar during vinification. He created numerous production buildings such as a mill, a brewery, a vinegar factory, a tile factory, a pottery, a two-storey sheep pen a sugar factory, and a sawmill.

The branch where Marmont truly expressed his full talent was in the **metal working domain**. The forge and industrial buildings were concentrated in **Sainte-Colombe-sur-Seine** and give his breath, life and identity to the village. Marmont would transformed it into an **English style factory** featuring improved ovens and steam engines. Thanks to these innovations, production triple during the 1830's. The forge has **a fire that never went out** as no one never turns down the ovens. Dial-shift workers turned for 6 am to 6pm; in the evening, night shift workers took over from 6pm to 6 am. The shift rotated every 15 days. Working the forge was a very hard and exhausting job for the men. Never mind the heat and the danger involved in certain task, sometimes even dedicated to children .

In 1830 Marmont had to give up all of his Chatillonnais position as he went into exile. In 1846, Sainte-Colombe was absorb by the **"Compagnie anonyme des forges de Châtillon et Commantry"**. Then, in 1940 the Marmont forge was replaced by a cable manufacturing plant near the railway. This plant still existed today and belong to **ArcelorMittal**. The Marmont forge however, would be destroyed. Traces of the site can still be seen thanks to the derivation canal from the Seine.

A funny anecdote: Marmont has read that making the sheep wear a sort of overcoat made the wool silkier. So he equipped his entire herd with such covering, which caused some to muse that the sheep all seemed to be wearing military uniforms

Third floor: the model room

A Sanctuary and its Statues



Statue of a warrior



In the early 1990s, archaeologists discovered **a sanctuary close to the Vix tomb**. In the ditches surrounding the sites, **two large limestone statues** were found. The first statue depicts **a warrior** seated with his leg folded beneath his shield. You can see the central part of the shield along with the figured hand gripping the right end side of it.

The other statue portrayed **a Celtic personage** in a long dress and **a torc with rounded ends** around her neck. According to some archaeologists, this could represent the princess of Vix who would have become the goddess of the sanctuary. However, this interpretation is widely questioned as the statue's torc is significantly different from the Vix's one. Therefore, the identity of the personage depicted here remains unknown.

This sanctuary was brutally destroyed around 450 BC. The statues were decapitated and thrown to the ditches. This event may mark the end of the Vix's settlement.



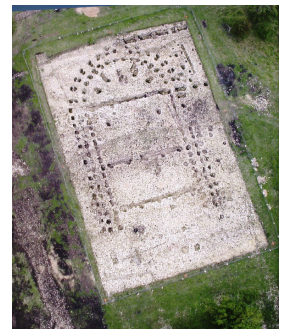
Statue with a torc



The model of the Vix palace.

As the Celtic societies mainly used **wood and perishable materials** for building their settlement, we don't know much about their architecture and their building method until recently. During excavations at the top of the Mont Lassois between 2004 and 2007, archeologists discovered various **postholes** marking the localization of the Iron Age's buildings. Among them, **five gigantic palaces** were identified, all having an apsidal end toward the west and a monumental opening facing the east. The biggest one was a **35-meter-long and 21.5-meter-width building** : its height was estimated by the archeologist of **12 to 15 meters**. First called "The princess Palace", it may have been used for public gatherings such as religious rituals or community management.

The result of these archeological research is the **model** made by **Klaus Rothe** and **Peter Endlicher** in **2013**.



The excavations of 2019 by INRAP

*Almost every year, archeological teams from various countries make new excavations in Vix to get more information about this Hallstatt settlement. In 2018, an Austrian team discovered **a sixth palace**, not on the Mont Lassois hill but on the plain, on the other side of the Seine River!*

*In **2019**, the French archeological institut (INRAP) made new excavations inside the Vix tomb to improve our knowledge about the structure of the tumulus. They **sifted about 70 cubic meters** of the filling of the tomb, made during the excavation of 1953 . They discovered new objects, some of them as small as 3 millimeters!*

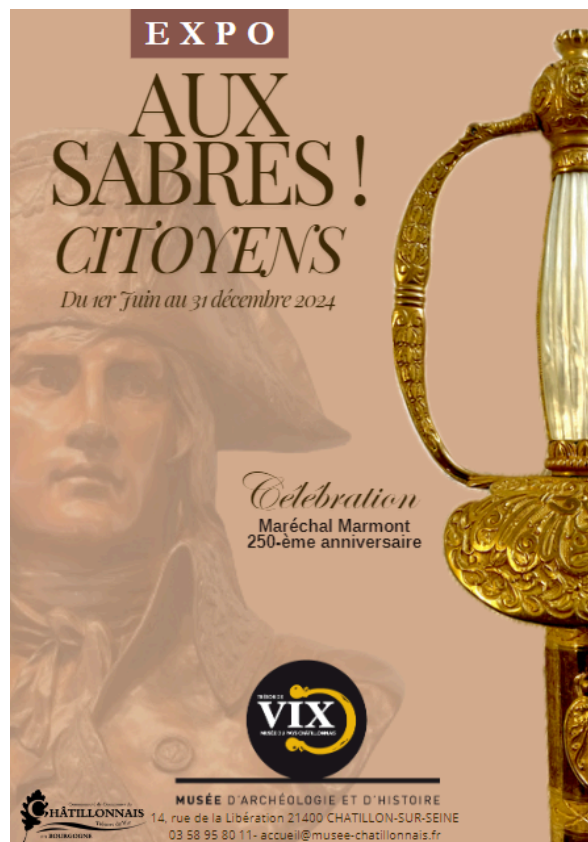
Temporary exhibition

"Aux sabres citoyens" (Grab you swords, citizens), 4th floor

This exhibition was made to mark the 250th anniversary of the Marshal Marmont (1774-1952) who was an important figure of the Châtillonnais. It displays sabers, firearms, swords, and uniforms worn during the first part of the 19th century, mostly during the Napoleonic wars but also during the other political regimes that followed.

The first statue on the exhibition represent Napoleon on his young age.

On the tall showcase on the left, you can see the uniform of the king's bodyguard. The sculpture at the beginning of the exhibition depicts Napoleon during his young age. The other sculpture represents a hussar (Member of a light cavalry corps) on his horse.



Temporary exhibition

Archeocapsule : Féminin/Masculin. Archéologie des sexes. (Female/Male. Archaeology of the sexes)

This exhibition was realized by the French National Institute of Rescue Archaeology (INRAP).

It questions us about the identification of the deceased in the funeral context.

How do archaeologists distinguish male or female based on the bones or the funeral material placed along them in the tomb? How does our understanding of past societies evolve with our own society and how does that affect these identifications?

1. Sexual identification of the skeleton

When the skeleton is in a good state of conservation, which rarely happens, the archeo-anthropologists can identify the sex of the individual based on his hip bone: a round notch for the female, a sharp one for the male.

However, most of the time, they have to compare their discovery with other one made in the same cultural area at the same period. They can also use the objects surrounding the deceased in the tomb (its clothes, its jewelry...). Nowadays, DNA-analysis helps a lot for these identifications, but it is expensive and DNA is not always available.

2. From male to female

After 18 months of digging between France and Italy, Emile Rivière discovered a remarkably whole and well-preserved skeleton on the 26th of March, 1872. The tall individual was wearing a headgear made of shells, a necklace, and an ankle bracelet, and was surrounded with rich offerings. There was no doubt: it was an important character and therefore ... a man!

100 years later, a new study was conducted on the skeleton: the "Man of Menton" as it was called, became the "Lady of Cavillon"!

For a few years, many cases of "change of sex" have occurred. With new archaeological methods, archeologists are trying to be less influenced by prejudices and anachronisms.

3. The weapons to the men

During the Neolithic period, societies became sedentary, and sexual differentiation appeared in tasks and roles. From that moment, when a tomb contains an object related to war and hunting, the deceased is a male. In the first agricultural societies of Europe, weapons seem to be reserved for the male.

In addition to the funeral furniture, the position in the necropolis, the diet, and the geographic origin show that during the Neolithic, men were more valued than women.

4. The power to the women ?

Laid on a chariot, the Lady of Vix was adorned with precious jewelry like the golden torc, and, next to her, stood the biggest bronze vase ever discovered: the Vase of Vix. When the funeral chamber was unearthed in 1953, the Lady of Vix joined the already 700 princely tombs of the Hallstatt period discovered since the 19th century. Many of these burials belong to a female meaning that women had access to prestigious positions in the Iron Age society.

While women may have had power in Celtic societies it does not mean that they were highly valued. There was a significant wealth gap during Iron Age and belonging to the elite was the most important whatever one's sex identity.

The "Lady of Vix" was considered to be a man because of the wealth of her tomb. However, anatomical studies proved that she was a woman. She was then called "Princess of Vix" : in order to be so rich, she had to be the wife or the daughter of a rich king, that had to be buried in another wealthy tomb. However, no male tomb of the same period had been unearthed in Vix. The Lady of Vix was thus one of the most important and wealthy person of her time.

5. Ribrio, an active woman.

Oval face, short nose, and voluminous lock, the Gallo-roman Ribrio was not a housewife. On her stele, discovered in Autun, the woman doesn't hold a cattail or a spindle, symbols of the virtues of a respectable housewife. Before her stand two vases, recalling her job as a potter or a pottery dealer.

In the Roman Empire, women had a role in public life and could have a job or religious duties.

Though being acknowledged as legal persons, they were excluded from political life, without voting rights or access to the magistratures.

The Gallo-Roman steles represent both men and women. However, Roman society wasn't an egalitarian one as shown in written testimonials. Archeologists and historians have to work together to understand the place of women in past societies.

6. True warriors?

Were there really female warriors in the Viking society? In 1878, on the island of Birka, close to Stockholm, the Swedish archeologist Hjalmar Stolpe unearthed an impressive tomb of the 10th century. Alongside the skeleton, there are weapons, strategic games, and two horses: there is no doubt it is a warlord!

But surprise! The latest DNA-analysis showed that the skeleton belongs to a woman! Part of the scientific community interpreted this woman as one of the feminine warriors described in the Scandinavian sagas. For others, the material deposited in the tomb could only be a homage and never belonged to this woman.

Myth or reality?

Every discovery of a woman with warrior attributes nourishes the collective imagination of our modern societies, which claim to be more egalitarian than the past societies. However, this is a fact in archeology : female warrior are very rare in the tombs. Thus, science prevents contemporary aspirations from being imposed on the past.

L'INRAP

This exhibition was realised by the *Institut national de recherches archéologiques préventives* (National Institute for Preventive Archaeological Research), as a research establishment in the public sector under the tutelage of the Ministries of Culture and Communication, National Education, Higher Education and Research. Created in 2002, Inrap conducts diagnostic operations and preventive archaeological excavations before construction projects, in France and its overseas territories. Every year, it carries out more than 1800 surveys and 200 excavations for private or public developers. It ensures the scientific study of preventive archaeology operations and the diffusion of their results. With 2,200 employees and 42 research centers, it is the main preventive archaeology operator in the field, with no equivalent in Europa.

More informations about INRAP : <https://www.inrap.fr/en>