The experience of history



CITÉS IMMERSIVES

Press Kit

Program

2025



BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE IN IMMERSIVE, SPECTACULAR VENUES

Cover image: Cité Immersive Viking, Carré Sénart © Vincent Nageotte
Cité Immersive Viking, Carré Sénart © Vincent Nageotte

“Despite the world being a land of history, rich in heritage and epic tales, many of these stories remain unknown to the general public. We believe that adopting a different approach to the traditional museum can engage a wider audience. We believe that emotion and spectacle should serve education.”

This belief led to the creation of Cités Immersives, founded in 2023 by Jean Vergès and Anthony Samama. The project aims to use immersion and new technologies to tell history with accuracy, passion, and poetry. With 83% of French people expressing a strong interest in history, Cités Immersives is inventing a new model of cultural venue : a space offering a historical and scientific perspective within a unique immersive scenography, designed to immerse visitors in a grand story around heritage.

The project invites visitors to dive into history, to feel, experience, and understand the elements and cultures that have shaped territories. It sheds new light on heroes, legends, and the cultural richness of regions, within a unique melting pot of influences in Europe. Each Cité Immersive is a window into a piece of heritage, a bridge between past and present, and a promise to strengthen bonds between curious minds, scholars, generations, and society as a whole.

An innovative company committed to bringing history and cultural richness to the widest audience, Cités Immersives designs, produces, and operates immersive cultural venues in France and internationally. The aim is to rethink the museum experience and enhance regional heritage, sharing the love of history to all audiences. Each Cité Immersive is intended to become a living space as well as a cultural space, with constantly renewed content, events, and cultural activities, encouraging visitors to engage with their history at an affordable price.

In venues of over 1,000 m^2, Cités Immersives offers a spectacular sensory, visual, and sound experience. Using cutting-edge technology and captivating storytelling, Cités Immersives merges history and technology with historical sets, 360° video projections, and 3D musical devices.

Cités Immersives is expanding across France through close collaboration with local stakeholders, respecting and enhancing the unique heritage of each region. By reconnecting individuals with their history, Cités Immersives aims to weave stronger ties within a shared historical narrative, reinforcing our collective curiosity and sense of belonging. It showcases the intellectual achievements of our predecessors to unite, educate, and pass on the richness of history and heritage.

The first venue, Cité Immersive Viking, opened in Rouen on 15 June 2024. Following this success, a second space opened on 20 December 2024 in Île-de-France, at Westfield Carré Sénart in Lieusaint, in a temporary format.

SHARE A **LOVE OF HISTORY**

83% of French people have a strong interest in history

PROMOTE **REGIONAL HERITAGE**

90% of cultural venue attendance is concentrated in the Paris region

DEMOCRATISE CULTURAL OFFER

70% of French people do not visit museums

MAKING THE EXPERIENCE **ACCESSIBLE TO ALL**

13% of the French population has a severe limitation in a physical, sensory, or cognitive function

Cité Immersive Viking Rouen © Photo David Morganti

Interview with **Jean Vergès**

President and Co-Founder



Jean Vergès © Cités Immersives, Photo Anna Maria Miranda

We use narrative techniques that are accessible to the widest possible audience, while maintaining the rigour and seriousness required when telling historical stories. I've long dreamed of a museum where every visitor—expert or newcomer, young or old—can experience wonder, entertainment, and learning. When the public is immersed in a historical narrative, they are able to absorb and take ownership of it. Cités Immersives was born of this belief: that everyone should be able to embrace the most powerful messages passed down to us by those who came before. History is full of valuable lessons—let's share them!

What is the ambition behind the Cité Immersive Viking in Rouen? How does it complement the region's cultural and tourism offering?

Normandy was founded and shaped by the vikings. These explorers, warriors, and traders left behind a profound cultural legacy, still visible today. This heritage—even present in the very name *Normans*—is not sufficiently highlighted in the region, especially not in Rouen. It's a clear gap in Normandy's cultural offering: Rollo, the founder of Normandy, has little more than a statue in a park, despite being the only Viking to successfully settle on Frankish lands. From him came William the Conqueror, the Norman knights, and the Norman Kingdom of Sicily.

Located on the banks of the Seine—along the very river they so often navigated—the Cité Immersive Viking pays tribute to these first Normans. It's a clear-sighted tribute, embracing the complexity of history while preserving the memory of Normandy's origins.

A venue rooted in both the region and the collective imagination is essential to enrich Rouen's cultural landscape. Our goal is to attract an audience on par with the city's major cultural institutions and to create a cultural hub focused on medieval and Scandinavian memory—a lively, inclusive, and popular space.

How is Cités Immersives developing nationally? What are your commitments to making history accessible to all?

Thanks to an outstanding team based in Paris, composed of leading professionals in the cultural sector, we aim to create a network of Cités Immersives in mid-sized cities across France and abroad. Each Cité Immersive has a dual purpose: decentralising cultural access and promoting local heritage.

Each project is built on several key pillars: an emblematic venue capable of carrying the project's ambition over time; a theme deeply rooted in the region; and a committed local partner.

When we develop a Cité Immersive, we are committed to working hand in hand with local stakeholders. Only by doing so can we gather a network of key partners to welcome a broad audience. This involves building strong ties with target groups such as schoolchildren, people with disabilities, and those who are distanced from cultural access.

Cités Immersives is an impact-driven company: our economic goals are just as important as our CSR commitments.

"Our ambition is to move and captivate; to fully involve each visitor in their discovery. This is achieved through the stimulation of the senses, through new technologies, and through the use of accessible narrative techniques—all while maintaining the rigour and seriousness that historical storytelling demands."

President and Co-Founder of Cités Immersives, Jean Vergès graduated from the Sorbonne and King's College London in law, art history, and cultural management. In 2017, he launched the Universal Museum of Art, a virtual reality exhibition platform, which he led for four years. In 2021, he founded Art Talks, a cultural content agency serving businesses. He created Cités Immersives in 2023, driven by a desire to share a love of heritage through innovative solutions. In parallel, he hosts a podcast and gives lectures on historical and artistic subjects.

Interview with **Anthony Samana**

Managing Director and Co-Founder



Anthony Samama © Cités Immersives, Photo Anna Maria Miranda

France boasts an exceptional cultural heritage, a thousand-year-old history, and a remarkable regional diversity. In a time when our societies are increasingly fractured and searching for meaning, I am convinced that culture is an invaluable treasure—capable of inspiring wonder and bringing us together.

The cultural sector is also a powerful economic driver: it creates jobs, boosts tourism, and contributes to the vitality of our regions. With €45 billion in annual revenue and 650,000 jobs, it stands as a cornerstone of our economy and plays a key role in our country's attractiveness.

Cités Immersives is determined to play its part in energising this industry and showcasing our cultural heritage to everyone—across France and around the world.

Through an innovative approach to the cultural sector, grounded in private and entrepreneurial management and centred around the visitor experience, Cités Immersives positions itself as a new-generation player within this industry. This vision translates into the internalisation of all key competencies in the value chain—from scenography and production to gift shop management and the organisation of local cultural events.

This network-based management model, led by a central team that oversees all Cités Immersives sites, enables us to achieve significant economies of scale and benefit from the expertise of a specialised team working across all our venues.

Our exhibitions are also designed to be mobile and to travel between Cités Immersives, allowing us to regularly refresh the visitor experience while pooling resources and costs. The private hire of our spaces also represents an additional source of revenue, reinvested into the development of new immersive cities.

We also place collaboration with local public and non-profit networks at the heart of our strategy. Working closely with local authorities is essential to share the cultural heritage they protect and promote with the widest possible audience. Together, we identify the most suitable locations to install a Cité Immersive, implement programmes for school groups and those distanced from culture, and organise cultural events.

This successful collaboration—an absolute prerequisite for the success of any Cité Immersive—generates four key external benefits for host cities: the creation of new cultural hubs in city centres, the arrival of new tourists, the development of dozens of direct and indirect jobs, and a symbolic embodiment of the city through a venue that highlights the stories and figures that have shaped it.

Thanks to this unique in-house expertise, the boundless passion of our teams, and our innovative vision, we aspire to become the French leader in the creation and operation of private immersive cultural venues—and to rank among the 10 most visited cultural institutions in France within the next six years.

Cités Immersives pursues a threefold mission:

- To bring meaning – so that everyone can broaden their knowledge and grow intellectually;
- To foster connection – through a shared cultural heritage;
- To inspire influence – so that local heritage can become a catalyst for economic dynamism.

"Our legacy was left with no will," wrote René Char. May we, through Cités Immersives, prove that the past can indeed illuminate our future.

Co-founder and CEO of Cités Immersives, Anthony Samama is a graduate of HEC Paris and Sciences Po Paris. He began his career working on digital and innovation-related issues alongside political leaders, before founding his first startup within a research institute. In 2018, he joined a strategy consultancy and startup incubator. In 2021, he became part of the strategic leadership team of a hyper-growth company listed in the French Next40 index. Passionate about art and history, he is also a local elected official and the author of the novel *Insurrection*, published by Ramsay in 2023.

A **rich and innovative** visitor experience

Cités Immersives offers a bold and innovative initiative aimed at a broad, family-oriented audience. Visitors are invited to take ownership of history and become active participants in their own journey through time. They explore freely across expansive spaces, designed with cutting-edge technology and inspired by both theatre and escape room scenography.

Each Cité Immersive begins with a grand entrance space—sometimes accompanied by an airlock—that leads to a space-time portal, setting the stage for a unique immersive adventure and narrative.

The visit continues into a discovery area: the first educational step on this journey through time. This space immerses visitors in the historical and cultural context of the highlighted era. Meticulously designed, these large-scale areas blend heritage elements with historical sets. Innovative digital tools are presented alongside carefully preserved artefacts and detailed informational panels. This first stage, rich in knowledge and wonder, lays the foundation for the experience ahead.

The journey culminates in the «Hall of Dreams», where the boundaries between reality and fiction blur. The visitor is surrounded by panoramic projections presenting four time capsules:

- the life of Rollo;
- the great Viking expeditions;
- the life of William the Conqueror;
- and the Normans in Sicily.

Thanks to video projections enhanced by immersive 3D spatial sound, XD animations bring these historical stories to life. The storytelling, interspersed with moments of contemplation, powerfully evokes key episodes from history—some of which may have been forgotten.

Innovation lies at the heart of Cités Immersives, offering an **experience that is at once sensory, narrative, educational,** and **entertaining.**

National ambition

Cités Immersives aims to design, produce, and operate a network of immersive cultural spaces focused on exploring history. To highlight regional heritage and decentralise cultural access, the project is expanding with the goal of opening dozens of venues—both permanent and temporary—allowing content to circulate from one Cité to another.

Each Cité Immersive occupies a space of around 1,000 m^2, and stages a local theme to share it with the widest possible audience. These venues are intended to become both living spaces and cultural spaces, offering ever-evolving content, diverse cultural events and activities, and encouraging all audiences to engage with history.

On smaller sites of around 600 m^2, the Nomadic Cités host temporary exhibitions produced by Cités Immersives, designed to rotate regularly and to be exported internationally.

Themes are as broad and rich as the cultural heritage of our world itself—far from static, it has evolved through the centuries and fed the creative soul of humanity through traditions, legends, heroes, artists, inventors, and writers. Future experiences will take visitors into La Fontaine's Fables, the palaces of medieval queens, the world of early cinema, and the lives of the great medieval dukes.

To multiply its impact and reach as wide an audience as possible, Cités Immersives **brings its experiences across France and Europe** in a nomadic and temporary format.



Around 800 - 1100 A.D. A magnificent Viking sword in wrought iron with inlaid pommel. Collection Cité Immersive Viking
© Cité Immersive Viking Carré Sénart, Vincent Nageotte



Cité Immersive Viking, Carré Sénart © Vincent Nageotte

Promoting **Regional Heritage** and Foster **Collective Curiosity**

In response to the current challenge of cultural offerings being concentrated mainly in large metropolitan areas, Cités Immersives seeks to decentralise cultural access.

Every region is a treasure chest of its own heritage and unique history. The project is therefore rooted in a desire to highlight and celebrate regional heritage, taking inspiration from cities like Rouen—whose rich history deserves to be told.

In this spirit, the project offers an experience that is accessible to all. By blending entertainment and heritage, the initiative aims to reach a broad and diverse audience. To ensure the experience is open to as many people as possible, affordable pricing policies are in place, along with special offers designed for schools and educational institutions.

Each Cité Immersive is designed to welcome a diverse range of visitors—from local and regional audiences to national and international guests—shining a spotlight on the richness of a collective heritage.

To firmly root the project in the life of each city, a vibrant calendar of events is offered year-round: cultural happenings, concerts, and special events. These gatherings transform Cités Immersives into more than just places of memory and learning—they become living, breathing spaces at the heart of the city.

The desire to **share a love of history**—the quiet thread that **unites destinies, sheds light on choices, and strengthens our shared narratives**—is at the very heart of Cités Immersives.

Social Engagement Initiatives

Cités Immersives is proudly partnered with the Lumières d'Histoire association, which works to include underserved audiences and promote cultural democratisation by supporting accessibility in heritage venues.

In just a few months, Lumières d'Histoire has enabled nearly 200 people distanced from culture to benefit from educational and fun activities in Normandy. These include solidarity days with Vikings at the Rouen University Hospital (CHU), immersive experiences with 100 Alzheimer's patients at the Boucicaut long-term care unit, and activities for children with multiple disabilities in the region.

The goal is to work with professionals trained to welcome visitors from disadvantaged or marginalised backgrounds, including individuals in prison, hospital patients, and students from priority neighbourhoods (QPV and REP+ school networks).

Lumières d'Histoire seeks to create an inclusive environment where everyone—regardless of circumstance—can fully access and enjoy the richness of cultural heritage. In its first year in Rouen, the association implemented concrete impact measures to organise adapted cultural outings. These include ticket purchases for cultural experiences, the presence of mediators and specialised educators, and logistical support provided by the association.

These outings span the region's major cultural venues, historic monuments, and more playful formats such as historical escape games at the Cité Immersive Viking.



Cité Immersive Viking Rouen © Photo David Morganti



Cité Immersive Viking Rouen © Photo David Morganti

VIKING
ROUEN



Cité Immersive Viking Rouen

An immersive experience in the heart of **Rouen, the city of the Vikings**

1000 m²	1.5 to 2 hours	8
OF INNOVATIVE SCENOGRAPHY	OF A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE	SPECTACULAR AND IMMERSIVE ROOMS

As the very first site in the Cités Immersives network, Cité Immersive Viking is located on the banks of the Seine in Rouen, just 1.5 km from the city's iconic cathedral. Inaugurated on 15 June 2024, this venue offers an educational and immersive experience that explores the fascinating world of the Vikings in Normandy, to bring their story to life.

Through a richly designed journey that is at once sensory, narrative, and entertaining, Cité Immersive Viking highlights Scandinavian culture, its craftsmanship, mythology, history, and its essential contributions to today's world.

How did Normandy become, within a century, the most powerful region in Europe?After repeated Viking invasions, Rollo (also known as Rolf the Walker), the warrior leader of the Vikings in the region, allied with Emperor Charles III and was baptised in Rouen in 911. He was named Count of Rouen, paving the way for the creation of the Duchy of Normandy. This marked the beginning of a process of integration that remains a symbolic milestone in French history—its legacy is still felt across Normandy today.

The exhibition traces a century of Viking raids along the Seine, culminating in Rollo's decision to make peace and found a new territory that would shine for over a thousand years. The journey unfolds across several themed spaces, narrating the key chapters in the Viking settlement in Normandy: the attacks, the encampments, the peace treaty, and the legacy.

A succession of video portraits, curated artefacts, historical set pieces, sensory installations, and multimedia experiences unveils the true face of the first Normans. At the end of the visit, a dreamlike and contemplative room invites visitors to travel through time and space.

The exhibition's scientific advisor is Vincent Samson, a historian specialising in medieval history and Scandinavian philology. The scenography was designed by Sophie Liger.

Throughout the year, Cité Immersive Viking hosts a rich programme of events, aimed in particular at encouraging audiences who are less familiar with history to reconnect with this powerful chapter of their local heritage.

CITÉ IMMERSIVE VIKING

A **unique sensory** and **historical journey**

The Scriptorium

The visitor begins their journey by entering a dimly lit library. Mysterious silhouettes emerge—two young adults named Adèle and Guillaume, the children of Rollo. They introduce the story, the mystery surrounding Rollo's life, and his legacy in Normandy and beyond.

From black and white, the light shifts to a blazing red, guiding the visitor onward—towards the Corridor of Dread.

The Room of Smoking Ruins

The visitor enters a desolate landscape depicting the origins of Rollo's story, plunging them into the violence of the 9th-century Viking raids. In the aftermath of an attack, amidst the still-smouldering ruins of an abbey, with shadowy figures looming and distant war chants echoing, three survivors—a monk, a peasant, and a mother superior—recount the chaos and destruction caused by the Viking onslaught.

Behind the ruins stands a wrecked drakkar longship, a relic of the violence on land and sea. Its tattered sail becomes a screen, revealing spectral faces of the fearsome Scandinavian warriors—including the young Rollo.

The Ornamented Passage

Following the depiction of Viking aggression, the visitor enters a corridor of raw wooden panels, carved with rich symbolic motifs, hinting at a different, more human and civilised side of the Vikings.

Hidden within is a tiny tent, where younger visitors can uncover a treasure. With a playbook in hand, children can follow a version of the exhibition tailored to their age.

The Camp Scene

The passage opens onto a vibrant Scandinavian camp set on an island in the Seine. It's nighttime: an owl hoots, flames crackle. Visitors gather around a campfire, where three generations of women—a völva (seer), a mother, and a young girl—share stories of daily life.

As dawn breaks, a shipyard is revealed. A majestic vessel is under construction. Two new characters appear: an artisan, who explains the boat's construction, and a merchant, who recounts his sea-bound adventures.

They all hope Rollo will succeed in negotiating peace with the Franks, so they can settle and embrace the customs of this new land.

The Peace Room

But the journey continues. Now in a baptistery, filled with beauty and tranquillity, the visitor is enveloped in a serene atmosphere. Female Gregorian chants blend with Viking melodies, lending solemnity to a pivotal moment.

We witness the baptism of Rollo—portrayed by Philippe Torreton—and his Viking followers. Surrounded by key figures in the integration of the Scandinavians into Norman society, including the Archbishop of Rouen and Pope John X, each passes under a symbolic waterfall, representing a rite of passage.

This powerful, symbolic moment captures a historic turning point: the Treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte in 911. In exchange for land in the Carolingian kingdom, Rollo pledges allegiance to Charles III and agrees to protect the Seine estuary from further Viking incursions. Thus, he becomes the Count of Rouen.

The Throne Room

The scene shifts to the warm interior of a palace worthy of the Count of Rouen, where a throne stands under soft lighting and courtly music fills the space. Seated at a grand banquet table, Rollo is joined by his children, Adèle and Guillaume, his chosen heir.

He reflects on his life as he prepares to pass on power. Once a stranger, he has become the founder of Normandy—once a destroyer, now a builder.

The room features multimedia installations inviting visitors to engage with interactive quizzes on Scandinavian cuisine and Viking explorations around the world.

Question for a Norman

In the final room—visually echoing the library from the beginning—the visitor steps into a game space. Guided by clues, they take part in a playful and educational quiz on the Viking legacy, now deeply rooted in popular culture.

This collaborative game invites visitors to play together... and win together.

The Hall of Dreams

A grand conclusion to the immersive journey, this 180 m² space is filled with wonder. Through 360° immersive videos, visitors are drawn into a dreamlike vision of the lives of Rollo and his distant descendant, William the Conqueror, echoing Viking journeys across the world.

Under the artistic direction of Ateliers BK, this final room is a showcase of state-of-the-art technology:

- 3D scenes created using motion-capture,
- animated textures inspired by medieval illuminated manuscripts,
- video-mapping across the walls and floors,
- and a mirrored ceiling for total immersion.



One-handed sword, five-lobed pommel, iron, 9th–10th century
Cité Immersive Viking Collection, Rouen © Jean Christophe Ballot

Artefacts that speak across the **centuries**
A collection of **treasures bearing witness**

As they make their way through the experience, visitors can also discover a series of archaeological objects dating from the 8th to the 11th century: swords, knives, axe heads, and everyday items such as keys, pins, jewellery, and religious artefacts.

The use of precious materials and the expertise of skilled craftsmen give these relics a prominent place in the exhibition. These blades, often exchanged as gifts, were priceless possessions, treasured by the rare few who owned them.

Each item bears witness to the refined metalwork and blacksmithing mastery of the Scandinavian people.

These invaluable objects are displayed delicately within backlit chests, resting on sand, shells, tree branches, stones, and other natural elements. This carefully curated scenography enhances their rarity and invites the visitor to lean in, drawn into an evocative atmosphere of the Viking era.

At the heart of this treasure trove, swords stand out—true emblems of the Viking age, symbols of power and social status, as much as they were fearsome weapons of war.
They offer the viewer a striking journey through time.

A **unique, fun,** and **educational experience** in France

15	21	0 to 99
VIDEO PORTRAITS	COLLECTIBLE ITEMS	YEARS
TO RELIVE & UNDERSTAND THE VIKING EPICS		A VISIT FOR ALL AUDIENCES

CITÉ IMMERSIVE VIKING

Rouen – A Premier **Historical** and **Cultural Destination**

In the heart of Europe, Rouen stands as a timeless witness to some of history's most remarkable chapters. Once a Gallo-Roman city, it became the cradle of the Duchy of Normandy in 911, under the leadership of Viking chief Rollo. Over the centuries, Rouen flourished, establishing itself as a major commercial power, particularly under the influence of William the Conqueror and Philip Augustus.

The city is home to a rich living heritage, from the moving remains of Jumièges Abbey—a masterpiece of Romanesque art—to the timeless grandeur of its cathedral, immortalised by Claude Monet. As the birthplace of Impressionism, Rouen has today become a leading tourist destination.

In harmony with the city's unique past, the Cité Immersive Viking offers a dedicated space that highlights Rouen's Scandinavian legacy. Located near the iconic cathedral, it is part of a new leisure district, now an essential stop for locals, French and international tourists alike, and for all those who appreciate culture, heritage, and the art of living.

Cité Immersive Viking works closely with Normandie Tourisme and the Rouen Tourist Office to promote the city as a cultural destination rooted in Viking heritage.

Project **partners**



Ubisoft

Ubisoft is a partner in an educational video feature presented in the Camp Scene, created using content from the video games Assassin's Creed Valhalla and Discovery Tour: Viking Age.



Nota Bene

The popular YouTube channel Nota Bene collaborates with Cités Immersives to create the *Nota Bene Runes*: standing stones offering visitors 12 short video features on key topics from the experience. These insightful capsules allow visitors to deepen their knowledge and enhance their visit.



© Anna Maria Miranda

A passionate team led by
Ludovic Garnier

The conductor of the Cité Immersive Viking, Ludovic Garnier is a modern-day Viking at the helm of a great ship. Since 2019, he has been the President and Founder of the "Enfants de Rollon" association, based in Rouen. This association brings together nearly 200 volunteers devoted to bringing Viking culture to life.

Through this work, he upholds deep values once promoted by the Vikings themselves: gender equality, bravery, audacity, and a relentless thirst for adventure. For several years now, he has preserved and revived this glorious past in Rouen through shows, medieval fairs, and the construction of traditional drakkar longships.



© Cités Immersives

Vincent Samson
Scientific Advisor

Vincent Samson, a historian specialising in medieval and Norse civilisation, serves as the scientific advisor for the Cité Immersive Viking. He authored a thesis on berserkers—ferocious Viking warriors, published in 2011 and since translated into multiple languages. He is currently preparing several studies on pre-Christian Scandinavian religion.

Vincent ensures the historical accuracy of the experience, enriches the narrative with his expertise, and contributed to the writing of the exhibition catalogue alongside other renowned historians and Nordic specialists.



© Anna Maria Miranda

Sophie Liger
Scenographer

A scenographer with more than 25 years of experience, Sophie Liger designed the exhibition's ambitious and immersive path in collaboration with Jean Vergès and Elizabeth Yardeni, Director of Creative Development.

The epic of Rollo, a story that blends legend and history, serves as the narrative thread of this immersive experience. Here, the poetry of myth intertwines with the march of history, guiding visitors throughout their journey in the Cité Immersive Viking.

Practical Information

Cité Immersive Viking Rouen

Hangar 105 bis,
105 Allée François Mitterrand,
76100 Rouen, France

Opening hours and ticket price

For more information, please refer to the website :
viking.cites-immersives.fr/en



Cité Immersive Viking, Rouen © Vincent Nageotte

CITÉ IMMERSIVE VIKING



Cité Immersive Viking Rouen © Photo David Morganti



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A **spectacular exhibition** revisiting the **Fables of La Fontaine**

Starting in fall 2025, Paris will host the major exhibition the *Cité Immersive of Fables*: a sensory and immersive journey into the world of Jean de La Fontaine and his famous creatures. Over more than 1000 m^2, visitors are plunged into a lush scenography, with striking installations and decor, special effects and immersive projection technologies, as well as a large variety of interactive games.

Top actors from the French stage will appear, including Laurent Stocker of the Comédie-Française, Alexandre Astier, Arielle Dombasle, Charles Berling, and Marie S'Infiltre. Musical direction is provided by the group Bon Entendeur, for a visual and auditory journey of wonder. The exhibition is open to all audiences, offering an entertaining yet accessible take on literary heritage through a 100% playful, educational and immersive experience.

A magical journey through the world of the Fables

Starting in September, a new immersive exhibition concept will take shape on the Champs-Élysées, in the heart of Paris. Among the 243 fables written by Jean de La Fontaine, the exhibition highlights the most iconic, presenting them in an imaginative staging that blends narration, technology, and scenography.
In this exceptional new format, visitors become part of the immersive experience, stepping into a dreamlike world where they become both the audience and the protagonist.

With a runtime of approximately 1h30, the tour offers theatrical, stylized spaces that bring the great fables back to life with captivating costumes and theatrical makeup. This poetic exploration delivers a unique reinterpretation: colorful and playful, yet inhabited by subtly modernized dialogue and characters who embody the vitality and irony of La Fontaine's time.

The cast features a dream team of French cinema and theatre: Laurent Stocker as La Fontaine, Alexandre Astier as the Lion, Arielle Dombasle as the Wolf, Charles Berling as the Fox, and Marie S'Infiltre as the Frog. Also appearing: Félix Juguin as the Donkey, Hubert Myon as the Dog, and Axelle Saint-Cirel as the Crow. The Crow character was notably interpreted by the Marseille-born artist at the Opening Ceremony of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

Throughout the journey, visitors are transported into the Grand Siècle – the age of Louis XIV and Versailles, both festive and strict – and rediscover the many layers of this cultural legacy and the timeless relevance of 17th-century tales. Each room features portraits of the actors portraying La Fontaine's creatures, unique scenic atmospheres, lush vegetation, 360° projections, sound and light effects, 3D audio spatialization, and rigorous educational content.

CITÉ IMMERSIVE FABLES

“I use animals to teach men“
Jean de La Fontaine

A remarkable finale and thoughtful mediation

At the end of the tour, a 25-minute 360° video mapping spectacle transports visitors into the fantastical world of the fables. From Japanese ukiyo-e to street art, via Jean-Baptiste Oudry, La Fontaine’s universe is brought to life in many forms. A dramatic reading of his fables accompanies the visuals.

The room’s musical direction is once again led by Bon Entendeur, represented here by Arnaud Bonnet and Pierre Della Monica, known for their iconic mixes blending French literature and electronic music.

The exhibition relies on a rigorous scientific committee, led by Tiphaine Rolland, PhD and lecturer in French literature at the Sorbonne and specialist in La Fontaine’s work. The committee also includes Patrick Dandrey, professor of literature and editor of *La Fabrique des Fables*, and Didier Foucault, 17th-century history specialist.

The famous YouTuber and science communicator Nota Bene, with over 4 million subscribers, will guide visitors throughout the tour via interactive touchscreens specially designed for the exhibition.

An ambitious cultural project for all audiences

Poetic, playful and spectacular, the *Cité Immersive of Fables* speaks to all generations. It celebrates the modernity and universality of La Fontaine’s work, while offering a new way of engaging with French literary heritage.

The exhibition offers a fresh interpretation of the fables, honoring their timelessness, educational value, and relevance across centuries, while peppering the experience with nods to contemporary culture.

This exhibition is produced by Cités Immersives, a French company specializing in the creation of immersive cultural venues for discovering heritage. After the success of the *Cité Immersive Viking* in Rouen (opened June 2024 and already the most visited cultural venue in Rouen), the company now continues its development with the opening of the *Cité Immersive of Fables* in Paris, which will be followed by a European tour in several major cities across France and Europe.



Jean de La Fontaine, Laurent Stocker © Cités Immersives & Fabien Drugeon



The Wolf, Arielle Dombasle © Cités Immersives & Fabien Drugeon

The **Journey**

La Fontaine's Office

Laurent Stocker, member of the Comédie-Française

Visitors enter Jean de La Fontaine's office, a true plunge into the 17th century. The poet sets the scene for the immersive exhibition, along with the legacy of his 243 fables.

The Fabulous Corridor

The Fox Room

Charles Berling (Fox) and Axelle Saint-Cirel (Crow)

In a French-style garden under a tree, visitors discover a scene from "The Crow and the Fox", with allusions to courtiers and flattery. On the side, they discover the Fox's lair and La Fontaine's world.

The Wolf Room

Arielle Dombasle (Wolf) and Hubert Myon (Dog)

At the edge of a forest under a full moon, the Wolf and the Dog meet – between independence and comfort-seeking. A poetic evocation of La Fontaine's vision. A photo booth, objects of reflection and collectibles enrich this immersive space.

The Frog Room

Marie S'Infiltre (Frog)

Under the watchful eye of Jean de La Fontaine, visitors dive into the world of the vain frog who wanted to become as big as an ox. This scene brings the fable "The Frog Who Wanted to Be as Big as the Ox" to life, encouraging visitors to step into the spotlight.

The Lion Room

Alexandre Astier (Lion) , Félix Juguin (Donkey), and other animals

This section features the fable The Animals Sick of the Plague. This tragicomic scene uses video conferencing where the animals seek a scapegoat to expiate their misfortunes. Frescoes, musical fables in a jukebox, and game stations complete the experience.

The Hall of Dreams

The final room of the tour. A 20-minute immersive show with 360° projections surrounds visitors in a dreamlike experience.

An immersive space in collaboration with Ateliers BK and music direction by Bon Entendeur.

CITÉ IMMERSIVE FABLES

Practical Information

Cité Immersive des Fables

5 rue de Berri, Paris 8e
Opening: **September 6, 2025**

Opening hours and ticket price

For more information, please refer to the website :
fables.cites-immersives.fr/paris/en



The Hall of Dreams @ Ateliers BK



The Frog Room @ Cités Immersives

Practical information

Cités Immersives
https://cites-immersives.fr/en

Cité Immersive Viking – Rouen
Hangar 105 bis
105 Allée François Mitterrand
76100 Rouen, France
https://viking.cites-immersives.fr/

Cité Immersive des Fables
5 rue de Berri, Paris 8e
Opening: September 6, 2025
https://cites-immersives.fr/les-cites-immersives/

Press contact

contact@cites-immersives.fr

CITÉS IMMERSIVES