

A large, ornate ceramic jar with floral and dragon motifs is the central focus. The jar is decorated with vibrant colors, including pinks, blues, greens, and yellows, set against a white background. It features a wide, flared rim and a lid with a golden knob. The jar is positioned in a gallery, with other framed artworks visible in the background, though they are out of focus. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the intricate details of the ceramic work.

Cabinet of Works set apART

“Any permanent collection composed of works, whose conservation and presentation are of public interest, is considered as a Museum, as long as these works are displayed for the purposes of public knowledge, education, and enjoyment” – After Article L410-1 of the French Heritage Code

From Ancient Egypt to Italian paintings, from Chinese porcelain to ivory carvings, these objects illustrate the full extent of the richness and diversity of the collections of the Saint-Quentin museum. Originating from a wide variety of historical and geographical contexts, these objects have entered the collections in different ways, and are now used by society for education,

entertainment, reflection and the sharing of knowledge.

The cabinet of works set apART invites you, through a selection of remarkable works of Art, to discover how to build up a collection, walk around and admire those works which are part of the Museum of Fine Arts Antoine Lécuyer.

FOCUS ON ARTWORKS WITH A STRIKING JOURNEY



[Return to the museum]

The Great War deeply affects Saint-Quentin, its museum and collections. The path of *La Vierge à l'Enfant dite Vierge de Saint-Quentin* bears witness : extracted from the ruins of Saint-Quentin in 1918 by sister Hannah Charleman, then a nurse of the German Red Cross, the sculpture is taken to Germany and dropped off in Lower Saxony in the Lunenburg Museum. During July 1957, the object is returned to Saint-Quentin by the curator of the German museum, at the nun's request.

French school, *Vierge à l'Enfant dite Vierge de Saint-Quentin*, wood, late 13th century, inv. L215, undetermined provenance

[Bequest]

The Processional Cross has an extensive past too ! Made of champlévé gilt-copper, carved, chiseled, enameled, with 6 decorative heads on an oak structure, this liturgical piece from the Notre-Dame de Vermand abbey vaults survives the revolutionary turmoils. Following the sale of the monastery as a national property and the scattering of the collections, our cross has no other purpose than to be wielded by an altar boy during the burial of the commune's destitute. Bought in 1865 by the marquis Delherm de Novital to the dean of the Vermand parish, the piece of art is bequeathed in 1881 to the city of Saint-Quentin.



Limousin workshop, *Croix processionnelle dite Croix de Vermand*, champlévé enamel, copper, wood, late 12th early 13th century, inv. L.358, bequest of Alexandre-Adolphe Delherm de Novital, 1881



[Awaiting restitution]

The back of an ancient photograph of this work of art gives us information about the tumultuous journey of this wooden panel. It states : “Exported in Germany by Théo Hermesen for Vienna’s Dorotheum”. Hermesen, an active art dealer as from 1939 would sell works of art of still dubious provenance. A lot of them, spoiled by the nazi regime, passed through the Dorotheum, the world’s oldest auction house. The *Saint Jean-Baptiste*, whose provenance is undetermined, reaches Saint-Quentin in 1957 through the Musée du Louvre and is awaiting restitution to its rightful owners.

Italian school, *Saint Jean-Baptiste*, oil on wood, 15th century, inv. MNR807/E9, work deposited in 1957 by the Musée du Louvre. In case of spoliation, the work will be returned to its rightful owners.

[Archeological digs]

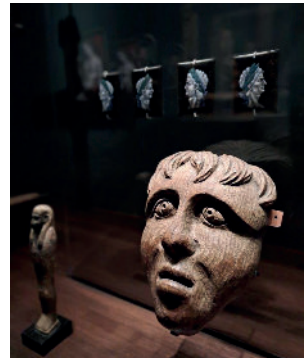
Discovered by archaeologist Ernest Will in 1955 during the restoration of the collegiate church of Saint-Quentin, this large buckle plate remains the major piece of excavation work carried out beneath the crypt's "Merovingian" pavement. In the course of survey work, a limestone sarcophagus is brought to life : the archaeologist discovers the remnants of a skeleton wrapped in fabric. The meticulous work given to the operations makes it possible to extract items found on the belt, including the buckle plate. Its underside held a goatskin bag containing fragments of hair. The buckle plate was sent for analysis and restoration to Nancy's museum laboratory.



Belt buckle plate, 7th century, unknown artist, copper alloy, archeological digs, 1955, basilica of Saint-Quentin, inv. L59

[Return to the museum]

The mask of the pulpit of the Saint-Quentin basilica has a similar story. Between 1917 and 1918, the object is saved from destruction by an officer of the German 463rd infantry regiment based in Saint-Quentin. His son, Claus Husen, hands the sculpture over to the museum in 1977, through the French Consulate General in Hamburg.



Sculpted mask of the pulpit of the Saint-Quentin basilica, 18th century, wood, metal, German restitution, Claus Husen, 1977, inv. 1977.5.1



Egypt, *Ptah-Sokar-Osiris*, Late Period (1085-333 BC), coated and painted sycamore wood, contemporary black stand, inv. 2000.2.6 FA, undetermined provenance

[Undetermined provenances]

In 1917, Saint-Quentin is severely hit by bombardments. The museum's archives and old inventories are destroyed. Thereby, be it these two Chinese Qing dynasty bowls or the Egyptian figurine, one of the museum's most ancient objects, the provenance of the collections remains unclear. Scientific research on the collections, especially on their origin, is among the essential missions of a Museum in France.



China (Qing dynasty), *Imperial bowl*, 18th century, porcelain, undetermined provenance, inv. 2007.30.1 FA



China (Qing dynasty), *Concubine bowl*, 18th century, porcelain, undetermined provenance, inv. 2007.29.1 FA

WHAT ARE THE *MUSÉES NATIONAUX DE RÉCUPÉRATION* (M.N.R.) ?

It is not unusual to encounter this acronym on labels of some works of art displayed in museums. After the Second World War, nearly 60 000 works of art recovered in Germany and in territories controlled by the Third Reich were sent back to France. Many of them had been robbed mostly from Jewish families.

Following the restitution of 45 000 works of art, 2 200 are selected and entrusted under the national museums' care. Just like the three paintings displayed in this cabinet, they make up the M.N.R. goods. In order to give victims their chance to claim them back, part of the 2 200 works have been deposited within 170 museums, holders of the designation "*Musée de France*". The M.N.R. works do not belong to the State, which only holds them temporarily. In case of spoilage, the works will be returned to their rightful owners, without prescription.



Jacob Cornelisz VAN OOSTSANEN, *Portrait d'homme tenant un livre*, oil on wood, undated, inv. MNR456/E7, work deposited in 1957 by the Musée du Louvre. In case of spoilage, the work will be returned to its rightful owners.

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Persons with reduced mobility have partial access to the museum.

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