

AMIENS & NANTES

Jules
Verne

2005

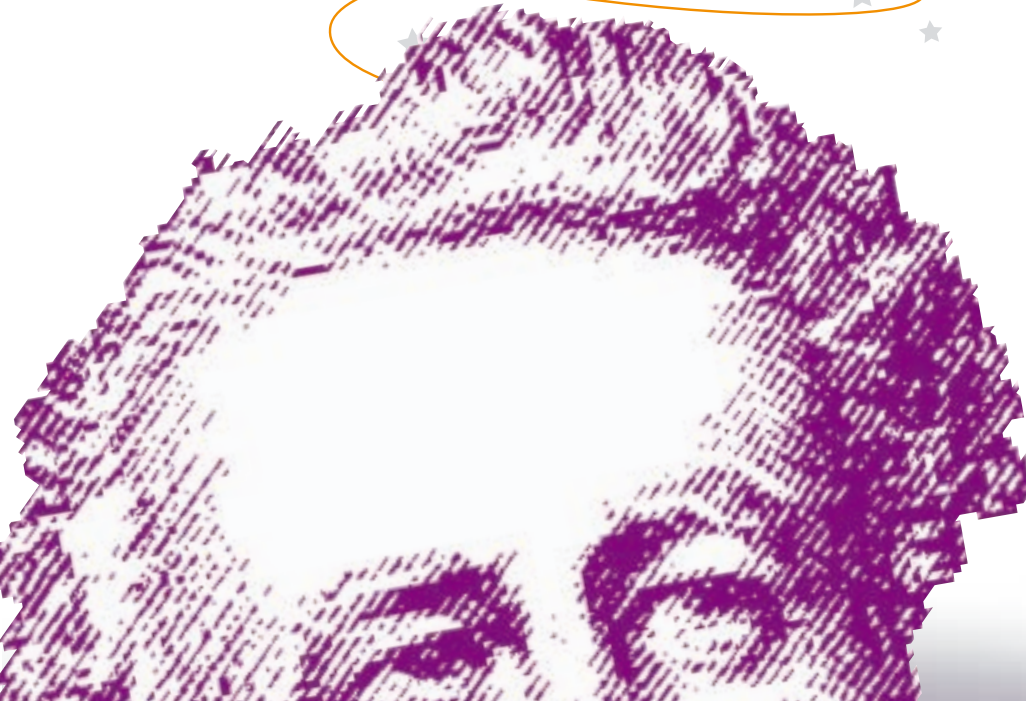
PRESS KIT

The Amiens programme

[Amiens]>



<[Nantes]





The centenary of Jules Verne's death will be celebrated in France in 2005

Against that backdrop, Amiens, the city where Jules Verne wrote most of his novels, has decided in partnership with the City of Nantes to create a nationwide programme with a view to celebrating this centenary, through an important programme of events (live arts, music, exhibitions, cinema, etc.).

Several major events will thus be organised in Amiens to celebrate this centenary. After the story of the big giant, the little giant and the giraffes, Royal de Luxe, the famous French street art company, will once again in 2005 take the public on a journey to a magical, enchanting world. Their new creation will invite the public to follow the peregrinations of a huge elephant. A hundred or so actors, technicians and a large number of musicians will be mobilised for this extraordinary parade which will be organised over 4 days in June.

Several major exhibitions, including The Children of Captain Verne and Puvis de Chavannes, an unusual path in the century of Impressionism, will also be an important part of the commemoration programme in Amiens.

Finally, the House where Jules Verne lived in Amiens from 1872 to 1900, which is listed in the Supplementary Inventory of Historical Monuments, will be entirely renovated. The company Jeux de Plans will be responsible for the architectural work, while the company Bleu Lumière and François Schuiten will be charged with the scenic design and museography elements. Once the renovation work has been completed by the end of 2005, visitors will be able to explore once again the fantastic, visionary world of Jules Verne and his sources of inspirations and discover a large part of the collections acquired by Amiens Métropolis concerning Jules Verne.

Amiens Métropolis Tourist Office

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www.julesverne.fr



Summary

The main events in Amiens

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Sunday 20 March 2005 – 15h
Cirque Jules Verne

■ “MUSICAA VERNE” A grand birthday concert

On Sunday 23 June 1889, at 20h00, a grand inaugural concert at the new Amiens Amphitheatre was given by the Harmony of Amiens. Several years later, on 19 March 1905, the Musical Festival of the Somme was held for the first time, an event which was subsequently to enrich the life of music companies, bands and wind sections.

On 20 March 2005, Musicaa and the Musical Federation of the Somme will celebrate together those anniversaries by reconstituting the inaugural concert. Thus, the pieces of 1889, performed 100 years earlier by the Orphéon d'Amiens, the Société des Matinées Musicales and the Société Symphonique, as well as compositions created for the occasion, will be performed by prestigious ensembles: the Philharmonie de Nantes (directed by Frédéric Oster), the Harmonie Saint-Pierre d'Amiens (directed by Hervé Winckels) and the Choeur Régional de Picardie (directed by Jean-Philippe Courtis).

A famous actor will bring to life the inaugural speech made by Jules Verne at the opening of the Amiens Amphitheatre. Jules Verne himself could not have dreamed of anything better than this original musical creation around "*Journey to the Centre of the Earth*" produced by Rodolphe Pierrepont and Fabrice Planquette, followed by an electro-acoustic performance by Vadim Vernay. As a prelude, drama students of the Amiens Conservatory, placed among the audience in the Amphitheatre or backstage will whisper texts of Jules Verne.

This concert is intended to be an authentic journey in time. To ensure that the audience does not get lost during this journey back in time, a colourful Mr Loyal will guide them throughout the evening.



Musicaa Verne
Harmonie Saint Pierre
Harmonie Saint Pierre © D.R.



Musicaa Verne
La Philharmonie de Nantes
La Philharmonie de Nantes © D.R.



Musicaa Verne
Vadim Vernay
Vadim Vernay © Ludovic Leleu



From Thursday 24 March 2005 to Sunday 29 October 2006
Imaginaire Jules Verne

■ "THE CHILDREN OF CAPTAIN VERNE" Exhibition in collaboration with GEO and the CNES

Through his work as a whole, Jules Verne constructed a "fantastic" scientific novel, that reflects the consciousness of his time, fascinated by multiple technological achievements. The principles which had facilitated these impressive developments, such as thermodynamics and dynamos, were still for the public at large, mysterious, even magical notions.

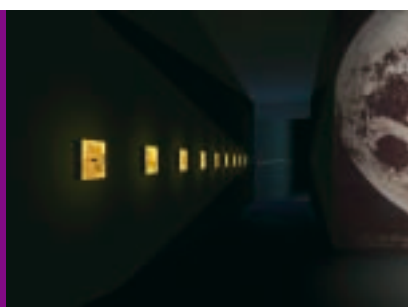
In his vast work that made these scientific developments accessible to the layman, Jules Verne shaped this feeling of wonderment. The aim of this exhibition is to show that it is still possible today for the public to be enchanted and enthralled in a measured and lucid way by science.

The question that will underlie the whole of the exhibition is where and how science concerns our lives today. The exhibition will therefore propose dialogues, narratives crossed between characters from the world of Jules Verne and actors from the world of science today: *"The Children of Captain Verne"*.

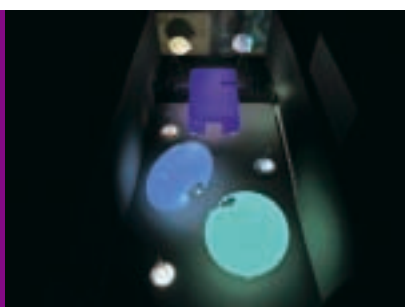
As soon as they enter the exhibition, visitors will be plunged into a space filled with flashing lights and suspended machines. Using cinematographic and imaginary processes from the 19th century, the whole room seems to be taken over by an almost mechanical, but also heavenly movement.

Dynamic lighting, digital images, machines. Jules Verne's heroes, explorers of progress, take us to the depths of the earth and the oceans and distant planets. Immersed in translucent bubbles with flashing coloured lights, visitors board vessels that will take them on a voyage of discovery to extreme territories.

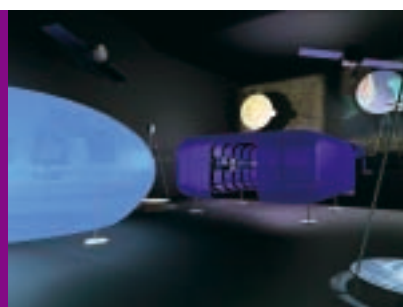
The whole environment contributes to the beauty of the images, emotions, dreams born of the wonderment of men, machines and future discoveries.



© Massenet et Dumas Primbault



© Massenet et Dumas Primbault



© Massenet et Dumas Primbault



■ “THE NAUTISPHERE” 3D interactive installation

The Nautisphere is a virtual exploration in 3D of the extraordinary world of Jules Verne. Its extremely innovative viewing techniques bring to life the visions of the author who described in his novels the most advanced technologies of his time.

Presented in the framework of the exhibition *The Children of Captain Verne* (see page 5), this interactive installation invites visitors to take the controls and travel in all the known and unknown worlds of the Hetzel engravings.

First stage on board the Nautilus for a journey *20000 leagues under the sea*.

Produced by Amiens Metropolis and directed by Amak and the director François Garnier (3D films for *Vulcania*, *Invisible ocean* – 1st prize at numerous international festivals – *Amiens-la cathédrale au bout des doigts...*), this interactive animation is available in CD-ROM in the March issue of *Images Doc* published by Bayard Jeunesse.

The next journeys planned are onboard the gigantic cannon in *From the Earth to the Moon*, the *Albatross* in *Robur the Conqueror*, the *Terror* in *Master of the World*, the *Steam House* and the *Balloon in Five Weeks in a Balloon*.

Production Amiens Metropolis



La Nautisphère
© Amak



The main events in Amiens

Show

"4", Tuesday 7 and Wednesday 8 June 2005
 "The oldest trapeze artists in the world",
 Wednesday 8 and Thursday 9 June 2005
 "Zapptime", Friday 10 June 2005
 Cirque Jules Verne

THE CASCABEL MEETINGS

"This complex programme, which is meant to be entertaining and instructive, can be organised easily in this large vessel, which is intelligently designed and is suitable for concerts and games as well as conferences, whose success is always guaranteed (...) ladies and gentlemen, the new Amphitheatre is a work of art that your municipal administration wanted to equip with all the latest equipment that modern industry makes possible ..." (Jules Verne, inaugural speech in Progrès de la Somme of 25 June 1889).

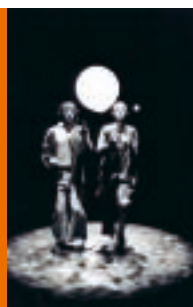
Inaugurated on 23 June 1889 by Théodore Rancy, under the presidency of Jules Verne, the Jules Verne Amphitheatre, today decorated by the Austrian artist Ernst Caramelle as part of a contract awarded by the Amiens Metropolis, takes on a new dimension.

In the framework of the creation of the Regional Arts Centre of the Amiens Amphitheatre, the Cascabel meetings are a new event. For this first meeting, mid-way between the two cities, Amiens and Nantes, a juggling trick between the Jérôme Thomas company, resident guest company at the Jules Verne Amphitheatre, and the Nantes-based Non Nova company. In homage to the circus arts that Jules Verne has always defended and to César Cascabel, the famous quick-change artist from Amiens, who inspired the novel written in 1889, the Jérôme Thomas Company presents "4, and let that be the end of...", the Non Nova Company, "Zapptime! Wide-awake dream of a zapper", and the Cirque du Docteur Paradi, "The oldest trapeze artists in the world".

"In an imaginary public garden... All possible combinations between real and imaginary balls, and four men... form with the distinctive characteristics of their art, the most incredible quartet imaginable." Jérôme Thomas

"Zapptime (contraction of zapping, constantly changing the image and ragtime, a style of syncopated music) decodes our actions and gestures through juggling, a surrealistic jigsaw in a thousand pieces, that have to be put together to discover the landscape." Philippe Ménard (Non Nova Company)

"Circus, music-hall, theatre, musical comedy, they will do everything. The great illusion, horses, menagerie, taming, clowns and trapeze acts, they are bursting with enthusiasm and ready for the challenge, they will dazzle you. Finally, almost..." Régine Hamelin and Jean-Christophe Hervéet (Doctor Paradi's Circus)



4 de la Cie Jérôme Thomas © Bernard Dutheil
 Zapptime de la Cie Non Nova © Jean-Luc Beaujault

Les plus vieux trapézistes
 du monde
 © Cie du Docteur Paradi



Amiens: from Thursday 16 to Sunday 19 June 2005
Then tour in France and abroad: Le Havre (July subject to confirmation)
London: from 8 to 11 September 2005 (subject to confirmation)
Bilbao, Antwerp, Calais... : 2006

“THE TIME TRAVELS OF THE SULTAN OF INDIA ON HIS ELEPHANT” ROYAL DE LUXE

After the story of the big giant, the giraffes and small Chinese tales, the Royal de Luxe Company is taking us once again on a journey into a magical, enchanting world, through its biggest ever production, as we follow this time the peregrinations of a mechanical, huge elephant. Some 100 actors, technicians plus a hundred or so musicians, are mobilised by day and night for this extraordinary creation.

“In the year 1900, Professor SAHIB started work on the phenomenal construction of an elephant to be used as a time machine. His project, now matter how insurmountable it may have appeared, took up all his energy and also attracted the attention of the sultan of his country. This ensured that he had the necessary means and funding for his project. The results of his efforts to transform giraffes and monkeys into machines were disappointing for many years; it was not that his special training hurt the animals but they did not like his treatment and he was faced with the stumbling block of their problems of memory which meant that they could not concentrate enough to go back in time.

Faced with the sultan's dissatisfaction, he obtained a troop of elephants and fed them with a mixture of crushed metal, gunpowder and denatured oil that he imported from Abyssinia. This source of oil attracted his attention because the nearby trees had become large metallic sculptures. However, although the metal provided the idea of eternity, it did not provide the movement necessary for his invention. Of course, the elephants became metallic after a few months, but they were as immobile as the sculptures. The professor has to face the facts: he needed a special elephant and at that time, there was a group of isolated mountains in the heart of India where an elephant that was over there hundred years old lived. The sultan was growing impatient. So all the people in the palace were requisitioned to capture the animal. Time went by and the elephant became nothing more than a steel sculpture, like the hundred or so that decorated the city's gardens. Afraid of the sultan's wrath and vexed by his failure, he had the idea of building steel kneecaps that he placed on the key points of the animal's joints. With the help of ropes, jacks and springs he succeeded in getting the animal to move.

Then, he placed a terrace on the elephant's back and made rooms in its stomach. It was a real vessel with a kitchen and a bathroom. He invited the sultan and his suite to climb onto the back of the machine and got his team to set the elephant in motion. He was surprised, even astonished and afraid when he saw the trees grow slowly, the buildings deteriorate and the city mushroom. The delighted sultan showered him with gold and set off a few weeks later on the back of the elephant on a long journey through time...”

Jean Luc Courcoult





■ “PUVIS DE CHAVANNES, AN UNUSUAL PATH IN THE CENTURY OF IMPRESSIONISM”

The Museum of Picardy has chosen to present an exhibition devoted to Puvis de Chavannes whom Jules Verne, as a local councillor, had encouraged to come to Amiens to continue the major cycle of paintings that he had started in 1861 with *Concordia* and *Bellum*.

The Puvis de Chavannes cycle is composed of fourteen mounted canvasses, including six important “frescos” produced between 1860 and 1882 which are given a central place on the staircase of honour and in the first floor gallery, in the façade wing of the museum.

Although Puvis participated, during his career, in numerous mural paintings related to the construction of public buildings in France and abroad, it was in the capital of Picardy that his career really began.

This adventure in Amiens enabled the path of the artist who can be considered as one of the boldest painters of his time to cross that of a visionary writer: Jules Verne.

The reception at the Museum of Picardy on 5 February 1888, of the *Pro Patria Ludus*, had been the opportunity to immortalise the two artists on the same image and in the museum’s visitors book which will be presented at the opening of the exhibition.

But beyond that meeting, the career of Puvis de Chavannes, like that of Jules Verne, seems to be express an original approach compared with that of his contemporaries. Neither artist’s work can be categorised, being a marriage of tradition and innovation: symbolism and impressionism for Puvis de Chavannes, science fiction and anticipating the future for Jules Verne. This new exhibition of 150 pieces brings them together again, by placing them in the context of the different artistic movements of the time of Jules Verne and in particular the unusual path traced by Puvis de Chavannes and his friends.

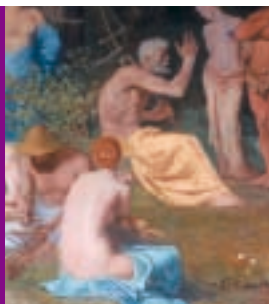
Between impressionists and eclectic artists, Puvis does not belong to any specific pictorial movement. Embracing the legacy of romantics and realists, the artist very soon displayed a very personal artistic conception and pictorial style dominated by his search for the ideal beauty, served by the simplicity of lines, the use of refined forms and finely shaded colours.

A unique artist, a link between the different artistic movements of the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Puvis de Chavannes is complex and subtle. Through a style which is original and difficult to categorise, he finally revealed himself as the precursor of future avant-garde movements.

Starting from mural paintings of the Museum of Picardy and through pieces from elsewhere in France and abroad, the exhibition presents a selection of the artist’s work, that of his peers, his contemporaries and his emulators and provides an insight and clearer appreciation of this his unique place in the world of art in France in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century.

■ (continuation)

This journey, taking in Delacroix, Matisse, Ingres, Corot, Rodin and Picasso, will take visitors from the middle of the 19th century, the period when Puvis learnt his art, up to the eve of the 20th century, which saw the emergence of radically modern talents. The heir of classical tradition, but profoundly independent, Puvis followed during fifty years an original and very productive path, which however is still relatively unfamiliar to the general public. While the impressionists endeavoured to capture the transient nature of things and free colour to transcribe the light, Puvis, who was not a revolutionary but wanted to create in his own style, concentrated on decorative harmony and the expression of a peaceful ideal. Through the work of his self-confessed admirers, who included Van Gogh, Seurat, Gauguin, the Nabis, Picasso and Matisse, he is undeniably one of the sources of modern art.



Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Le Repos (détail), Amiens, Musée de Picardie (cl. H. Maertens).



France, XIX^e siècle, Inauguration de la dernière peinture murale de Puvis de Chavannes au Musée de Picardie, le 5 février 1888, en présence de l'artiste et de Jules Verne (cl. Musée de Picardie).



Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Le Repos Amiens, Musée de Picardie (cl. H. Maertens).



■ THE HOUSE OF JULES VERNE

The House where Jules Verne lived from 1872 to 1900, is located next to the city centre and Amiens station, in the Henriville district. This exceptional location gives it several advantages. This House is imposing and modest at the same time, in the image of the author. A tower, a large veranda with a glass canopy at the front, two floors, with large windows opening on to the world. It is a solid, spacious house ideal for writing. From the top of the adjoining high tower, the view over the rooftops and the Jules Verne Amphitheatre at the end of the street of the same name is splendid.

The House where Jules Verne lived until 1900, was purchased by the City of Amiens in 1980. In 1991, after having carried out renovation work on the ground floor to restore the music room and the dining room of the time, the House was opened for the first time to the public.

The acquisition in 2000 by the urban area of Amiens Metropolis of the collection of the Italian Piero Gondolo della Riva, containing more than 30 000 pieces, objects, posters, furniture, manuscripts, etc. translated the city's intention to acknowledge Jules Verne, one of the most famous French authors in the world, as a writer and citizen of Amiens.

For the Jules Verne celebrations in 2005, it has been decided to renovate entirely the House on rue Charles Dubois, which was listed in the Supplementary Inventory of Historical Monuments on 30 January 1998.

The House of Jules Verne in Amiens (Somme) is considered, from the point of view of history and art, as a building of public interest, on account of its inestimable value as one most famous homes of a writer in France.

The following parts of the House have been listed in the Supplementary Inventory of Historical Monuments: the façades and roof of the main house, including the tower and the wing constructed at a right angle to the courtyard, the veranda and the glass canopy, the dining room and the main living room on the ground floor with their decorations.

François Schuiten, designer of the new House of Jules Verne

The House of Jules Verne will close its doors to the public in March 2005 for important restoration work. It is scheduled to reopen at the end of the year.

The renovation of the House of Jules Verne has been entrusted to the company *Jeux de Plans*, which will be responsible for the architectural work, and to the company *Bleu Lumière* and François Schuiten for the design and museography elements. On three floors, visitors are invited to relive the most important moments of this house where the writer lived for eighteen years and to explore the imaginary world of Jules Verne and his sources of inspiration.

The complete renovation of the House is a reconstitution and evocation of the real and dreamed world of Jules Verne, so as to make it a centre of the literary, cultural and scientific work of Jules Verne.

■ (continuation)

In a way that can be likened to an ascent from the real to the imaginary, Jules Verne, citizen of Amiens, will welcome us into his home, in his courtyard decorated with plants, statues and a large number of lights, in his 'winter garden', then the dining room, his living room and his smoking room. Such intense creativity in such a tidy and organised house. On the first floor, the writer Jules Verne and his publisher Pierre-Jules Hetzel will discuss the geography of distant journeys. Then on the second floor, in his study, by the light of his lamp, Jules Verne will write with a quill pen and invent time machines. From the dreams of progress of Jules Verne, the public will then be invited to pursue their own dreams as they continue their ascent up to the belvedere.

The writer's house will help visitors to understand how the author created his novels and the relationship between the author and this special place which was both his home and workplace.

The House, which has been brought to life, in an accessible, educational way will renew the strong ties between the author and readers-visitors. In each corner of the House, the presence of Jules Verne will live on with portraits, paintings, personal objects decorating the walls and the tables, the fireplace will crackle, visitors will hear dialogues, music and be able to conjure up images of the world of Jules Verne.



Projet : Tour sommitale
© François Schuiten

Projet : Mur peint
© François Schuiten

Projet Salon
© Bleu Lumière

Maison de Jules Verne
© Bernard Maison



■ MR VERNE'S CHRISTMAS Journey through an illuminated city

The year of Jules Verne is ending, but 2006 already has in store new journeys in the House of Jules Verne for centuries.

House of Jules Verne

Closed for renovation work in March 2005, the House of Jules Verne will re-open to the public at the end of the year (see page 11).

Boulevard Jules Verne

Mobilis in mobile (subject to confirmation)

After the renovation of the Amphitheatre, then that of the House, the boulevard Jules Verne will have be decorated with special illuminations to guide us on an imaginary Verne-like journey. The original *Mobilis in mobile* route created for this occasion by Franck Franjou, lighting designer, plunges the public into an atmosphere of a vessel in the middle of the ocean. Like a Nautilus 200 m long, the boulevard Jules Verne, from the House and the Amphitheatre, will be adorned with illuminated portholes. Below, moving trains will produce shimmering, flickering lights.

Amiens city centre

Music, oceans, sky, machinery, exploration and extraordinary journeys are all part of the dreams of Jules Verne. Merry-go-rounds, projections, illuminations, music... time to open the photo album of the year of Jules Verne celebrations.



Hotel de ville
© Bernard Maison - Amiens Métropole



Boulevard Alsace-Lorraine
© Bernard Maison - Amiens Métropole



Place Parmentier
© Bernard Maison - Amiens Métropole



Jules Verne settles in Amiens

by Jean-Paul Dekiss

(extracts adapted from the enchanting Jules Verne, Éditions and Félin, 1999 et 2002)

"In accordance with my wife's wishes, I settled in Amiens, a quiet, well-policed city, which is a pleasant city to live, society is friendly and cultivated. We are close to Paris, indeed close enough to profit from its advantages, without the unbearable noise and sterile excitement. An in any event, my Saint-Michel remains moored in Le Crotoy.¹"

Jules Verne settled in Amiens, after having lived in Le Crotoy during the 1870 war, for several reasons. He explained to his friend Félix Duquesnel that he did not want to return to Paris *"It is no longer possible to work here. This country annoys me. Too much excitement, too much noise. It is impossible to find a minute's peace and tranquillity.²"* He chose a rational organisation between his work, his Parisian relations and the sea. At the time when the repeated success of his works and the considerable success of *Around the World in Eighty Days* pointed clearly the direction to follow, he found in the geographical location, the provincial calm and comfort of Amiens a harmony that suited him. Letters between Paris and Amiens were delivered the same day. There were seventeen trains every day between Amiens and Paris. The journey took only ninety minutes. In Paris, Jules Verne met up with his friends, many of whom were composers or involved in the theatre, his publisher, and the editorial committee of *Magasin d'Éducation and Récréation*.

The Verne family moved in July 1871 to 23 boulevard Guyencourt. One year later, in the space of five months, both Honorine's daughters got married.³ In September 1873, Jules Verne moved into a house at 44, boulevard de Longueville, which is now called boulevard Jules Verne. His work schedule remained invariable. When he was writing, he went to bed early and got up early. He wrote from five to eleven in the morning. Then he had lunch and spent his time reading at home, in the local library and most often at the club of the Industrial Society, which had subscriptions to most scientific and industrial magazines. *"In the evening, after a short walk, he spent the evening with his family. By nine-o'clock he was in bed.⁴"*

The house on boulevard de Longueville is located in the new district of Henriville which was extended in 1830 with the demolition of the old fortifications to the south of the city. Modern and bright, the house opens onto a large garden with closed walls and with adjoining houses in the same Louis-Philippe style. The boulevard is only built up on one side, on the other side, on the site of the former fortifications, runs the new Paris-Boulogne-Calais train line. On the other

1. Letter to Charles Wallut, in op.cit.

2. Quoted by D. Compère, in *La vie amiénoise de Jules Verne*, CNDP, Amiens 1985.

3. On 12 November 1872 Valentine, aged twenty, married the captain of the Rue de Franay, followed five months later by her sister Suzanne who married Georges Lefebvre and set up home near her mother, 16 rue Charles Dubois.

4. Michel Verne, *Le Figaro* 3 April 1905.



side of the train line, a vast bridle path planted with trees runs alongside the boulevard du Mail, which also is lined on one side with bourgeois houses from the time of the republican monarchy and the Second Empire. The boulevard de Longueville and boulevard du Mail lead from the station, five hundred metres on the right of the author's house to place de Longueville on its left, which is used as the parade ground and fairground during the twenty day festival of Saint-Jean.

As a symbolic gesture to mark his move to Amiens, Jules Verne went up in a balloon above the city.⁵ He wrote in the *Journal d'Amiens* an article, which was also published in the *Moniteur de la Somme: Twenty-four minutes in a balloon*⁶: “In a balloon, no movement, either horizontal or vertical is perceptible. The horizon always seems to stay at the same height. It gains simply in radius, while the earth, below the gondola, becomes hollow like a crater. At the same time, the absolute silence, the total calm of the atmosphere are disturbed only by the creaking of the basket carrying us.”⁷ He used this episode straightaway for his final version of the Mysterious Island which started with a balloon blown off course above the Pacific Ocean and crashing.

2, rue Charles Dubois, Amiens

In 1882, Jules Verne and Honorine moved from boulevard de Longueville to a new home, a hundred metres away, at the corner of rue Charles Dubois. The new house was far bigger, with two floors, a large loft, a tower with four floors with at the top a belvedere, stables and outbuildings for the servants. The tower with the staircase with a view over the whole of the city dominated by its famous cathedral was located at the corner of the main building and the outbuildings which looked onto a courtyard and a very long garden.

The author's study where he wrote was on the second floor under the gables. It looked onto rue Charles Dubois and boulevard de Longueville, overlooking the railway line.

Near Jules Verne's desk, a few bookshelves with the books he consulted most frequently, in particular dictionaries. The decoration is limited, a bust of Molière, a bust of Shakespeare, a watercolour of Saint-Michel III...

The adjoining library is a vast room with in the middle a large table piled high with magazines and boxes in which are filed the thousands of notes the author used for his work. The library is composed strictly for his needs. The most frequently consulted books such as Homer, Virgil, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Cooper, Dickens, Walter Scott are worn. Then filed apart, on large bookshelves, are books whose new binding suggests that they have never been used. They are the editions of ... *Extraordinary Voyages* including dozens of foreign editions, with even Japanese and Chinese versions of *Around the World in Eighty Days*. At that time, Jules Verne had three servants including a coachman who drove his cabriolet, a maid-servant and a cook.

5. On 28 September 1873, ascent in the Météore of Eugène Godard of whom he said: “by his experience, his calm, his vision, he is the clear master of the air which supports him and which transports him and, as is well-known, no other aeronaut can compare with him.(...) he anticipates everything. He is never taken by surprise”.

6. Municipal library of Amiens J38.

7. Journal d'Amiens 1973, quoted in *Forgotten Writings* p 191.



The writer in the city

In 1886, an attempt on his life left Jules Verne disabled. He adopted a more sedentary way of life and turned his interests to various associative activities. Already a member of the Academy of Amiens and the Industrial Society, he became a member of the board of directors of the Caisse d'Épargne and the theatre and in 1888, at the instigation of his friend Godefroy, he stood for election to the Amiens municipal council on the republican list led by Frédéric Petit. He was elected and given responsibility, on the council, for shows, fairs, exhibitions, the theatre and urban planning. He was interested in everything to do with the modernisation of the city, from the development of the tramway and telephones to the opening of new schools rather than barracks.

One of his first municipal activities was to follow the opening of a permanent amphitheatre, the existence of which he had predicted thirteen years earlier, in his dream of *An Ideal City*, in the very place where it was built. He made the inaugural speech when the amphitheatre was opened in the same year he was elected.

He was 60 and remained a local councillor in Amiens until the age of seventy-five. By his active presence in the life of an important industrial city, Jules Verne implemented with astonishing modesty part of his literary work: dreaming of a different world is not an act of renunciation in the face of reality, a form of escapism but an action firmly rooted in reality.

In 1900, Jules Verne left the mansion where he had lived for eighteen years in rue Charles Dubois for the more modest house which he had already rented for ten years at 44, boulevard de Longueville.⁸

The house was less spacious but easier to organise, everything was simpler and his wife carefully ensured that everything was kept comfortable. The writer's working arrangements were the same as in rue Charles-Dubois: a study with the library next to it. Maps on the walls and the same desk where he had written for thirty years impeccably installed; the same watercolours of *Saint-Michel III* in front of Vesuvius, the same pipe rack, although he had stopped smoking, and a shell from the 1870 war which he used as a paper-weight, placed on the window ledge in iris which opens on to the garden. In the library, the French and foreign editions of his books fill eight long bookshelves.

The death of the novelist, on 24 March 1905

The bell tolled in the city of Amiens. The pallbearers were Charles Lemire, delegate of the Geographical Society who was to be his first biographer, Louis-Jules Hetzel, Doctor Fournier, director of the Academy of Amiens and President of the Industrial Society. The funeral procession moved towards the cemetery of the Madeleine. Among the numerous wreaths, one of three metres in circumference and composed of Parma violets, roses and lilies from the Theatre of



Châtelet which had put on the first performances of *Around the World in Eighty Days* and *Michel Strogoff*.

*“Along the route to the cemetery, the crowd took off their hats before the mortal remains of the man who had done so much to enhance the prestige of France throughout the world”⁹. Mr. de Flotow, attaché at the German Embassy, came to express the condolences of Guillaume II and visited the writer’s house, reiterating to Honorine the Emperor’s admiration for the *Extraordinary Voyages*.*

Today, in the cemetery of the Madeleine, on the writer’s tomb, under the black yews and the cypresses which soften the almost dazzling brightness of the white marble, a sculpture of Albert Roze represents Jules Verne with an arm stretched out towards the sky, as though to protect himself from the sun. It is the last gesture of a still dynamic man who has torn his shroud and pushed back his tombstone to affirm that his characters will continue to live after him.



The Amiens Metropolis' Jules Verne Collection

Jules Verne is part of the collective conscience of Amiens. Although Amiens has regularly paid homage to him since his death in 1905 (through numerous exhibitions, concerts, changing the name of boulevard Longueville to boulevard Jules Verne and the monument produced by the sculptor Albert Roze in 1909...), the interest in Jules Verne has above all been expressed through the acquisition of the Hetzel pieces, which have enriched the Jules Verne documents already in the local collection and the municipal archives, as well as by the work carried out over thirty years, at the instigation of Mr and Mrs Compère, by the Jules Verne Documentation Centre (which became the Centre International Jules Verne in 2000) and the discovery visits of the writer's House purchased by the City in 1980.

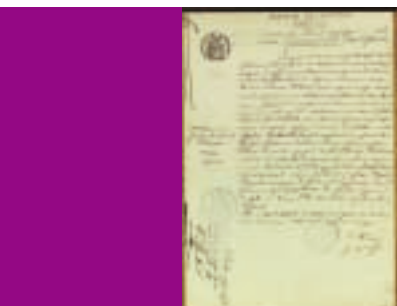
A new dimension was added when **Amiens Metropolis acquired in 2000 the fabulous collection of Piero Gondolo della Riva, considered as one of the greatest Jules Verne collectors in the world.** The enthusiasm aroused by this collection and the participation of other territorial authorities (Regional Council of the Somme and the Regional council of Picardy) as partners and the special effort of the State (Ministry for Culture) thanks to the "Heritage Fund" made it possible to bring to Amiens this exceptionally rich collection, patiently built up over forty years.

Thanks to this collection, which was purchased for 4 million euros, visitors can discover not only the multiple facets of Jules Verne, but also to travel through a literary universe of fantastic worlds, scientific discoveries and plots which are still very contemporary.

The collection, which is exceptionally diverse, is not limited to the writings of Jules Verne, it involves all aspects of his world.

It is composed of almost **30 000 pieces**, including above all the first editions of Jules Verne's novels with illustrated covers published by the Hetzel firm of publishers, the first foreign editions of *Extraordinary Voyages*, the complete edition of the "*Magasin d'éducation et de récréation*" created by Hetzel and on which Jules Verne collaborated for a long time, hand-written autographs (including letters from Jules Verne to his son Michel and his publisher Jules Hetzel), working papers and family archives, documents concerning Pierre-Jules Hetzel, Jules Verne's publisher, numerous theatre and cinema posters relating to the writer's work and his influence and other iconographic documents (advertisements, post cards, drawing, etc.), games, decorative plates, silverware, Second Empire furniture, including armchairs and a divan from Pierre-Jules Hetzel's office, the publishing contracts of Jules Verne, etc.

Collections devoted to writers and kept in public libraries are often limited to published or handwritten manuscripts, autographs and correspondence. The advantage of this collection is that it completely transforms this relatively traditional order.



Acte de naissance de Jules Verne
© Collections Bibliothèques d'Amiens Métropole.



Salvador Dali, portrait de Jules Verne: l'intellect jaillissant. Eau-forte de 1966
© Collections Bibliothèques d'Amiens Métropole.



Diplôme Jules Verne
© Collections Bibliothèques d'Amiens Métropole.



Aouda, vers 1880
© Collections Bibliothèques d'Amiens Métropole.

The assembling of all these documentary collections in Amiens (the collection acquired in 2000, the public library's collection and the documentary collection of the Centre International Jules Verne) translates the city's wish to identify for ever Jules Verne with Amiens, by creating in particular **a unique place of access to research and information sources**. Researchers and any members of the public interested in the life and work of Jules Verne will therefore be able to consult these documents in the library on rue Louis-Aragon, the central library in the Amiens Metropolis, in collaboration with the Centre International Jules Verne.

The aim is above all to give the public access to the collection, in particular by organising exhibitions, publishing and creating a multimedia catalogue.

Three exhibitions have already been presented in Amiens, based on pieces in the collection: **"Jules Verne, the return"** (at the Maison de la Culture, from 30 June to 16 September 2001), **"80 days for a tour of the world"** (from 13 July 2002 to 28 December 2003 at the Imaginaire Jules Verne) and **"Michel Strogoff"** (which ended on 31 December 2004 at the Imaginaire Jules Verne).

The former home of Jules Verne in Amiens, rue Charles Dubois, will moreover be renovated (see page 11). It will also house elements of the collection, either permanently or temporarily. That will also lead to exhibitions, publications and other events. Other projects are moreover under consideration in the scientific or multimedia fields.



Jules Verne's ideal city

GUIDED TOURS THEMATIC PROGRAMMES – TOURIST PASSES

On the occasion of the year of Jules Verne 2005, the Amiens Metropolis Tourist Office is organising specially programmed visits and stays for individuals and groups.

Tours and thematic visits for individuals

"Follow in the footsteps of Jules Verne in Amiens": a stay of 3 days and 2 nights, specially designed to enable visitors to benefit fully from the festive programme of the year of Jules Verne 2005.

- From 89 euros per person in double room
- Offer valid at weekends from 1 April to 31 October
- This price includes two nights in double rooms in a two or three star hotel, breakfast, a guided tour of "Amiens, an ideal city", admission to the exhibition "The Children of Captain Verne", a recent edition of Jules Verne's short story "an ideal city in the year 2000".
- This price does not include transport, insurance, lunch or dinner.

Tourist passport: visitors with an **Amiens Pass'ion** tourist passport can benefit from special discounts on activities, exhibitions and shows during the year Jules Verne 2005.

- On sale at 8 euros from the Tourist Office.

Guided tour "Amiens, an ideal city", a futuristic vision of Amiens society.

- Adult rate: 5.50 euros per person
- Duration 1h30 to 2h00
- From 15 June to 15 September, every Wednesday and Sunday at 14h30
- From 2 January to 14 June and from 16 September to 30 December, every Saturday at 14h30.

Transport

"Main line and local railways are also celebrating Jules Verne"

Obtain a 50% reduction for departures from stations in Picardy to Amiens on round-trip tickets (offer valid for same day returns on 4, 5, 10, 18 and 19 June 2005 and Saturdays and Sundays from 2 to 30 December 2005).

For children aged from 4 to 12 accompanied by an adult, flat rate price of 4 euros for a same day round-trip ticket.

Day trips and visits for groups

"An ideal city according to Jules Verne": a day in Amiens which will enable visitors to discover the dream city of Jules Verne and immerse themselves in his other imaginary worlds.

- 37 euros per person, on the basis of 30 people

"A day in the time of Jules Verne": a tour of the city, around the places and monuments that Jules Verne frequented in the 19th century.

- 38.50 euros per person, on the basis of 30 people

"From land to sea" (two days/one night): after your visit to Amiens, continue your journey in the Bay of the Somme and Le Crotoy where Jules Verne lived for several years.

- From 143 euros per person at half double room rate, on the basis of 30 people.

"In the footsteps of Jules Verne": a treasure hunt where children retrace through the streets, the writer's life in Amiens.

- From 8 euros, on the basis of 30 children



Getting to Amiens

By car

Amiens, **1h15 from Paris** by motorway, is at the junction of:

- the **A16**, which links Amiens to the Ile de France and the North Sea ports, and has opened the capital of Picardy to Great Britain via the Channel Tunnel since 1998
- the **A29**, which now links Normandy (Rouen and Le Havre) and eastern France (Reims)
- the **A1**, which, via the A29 section, is 15 minutes from Amiens, ensures easy access to the eastern region of the Ile de France.

By train

Amiens is **1 hour from Paris** (more than 20 round-trips every day).

In addition, Amiens is located near to a **TGV high-speed train connection**, with the **Upper Picardy TGV Station** (20 minutes).

Which means that Amiens can be reached in 4h20 from Nantes, Rouen 1h30, Brussels 1h56, Lyons 3h35, Marseilles 5h10...

By plane

The Amiens urban area is located near to the **Roissy-Charles de Gaulle international airport (110 km)**. A **daily shuttle service** links Amiens to Roissy Charles-de-Gaulle by coaches and mini-buses.

Moreover, Amiens can be easily reached via the A16 from the **international airport of Beauvais-Tillé in the Oise (50 km)**.



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Photographic library

CD photos free of duty available on request.