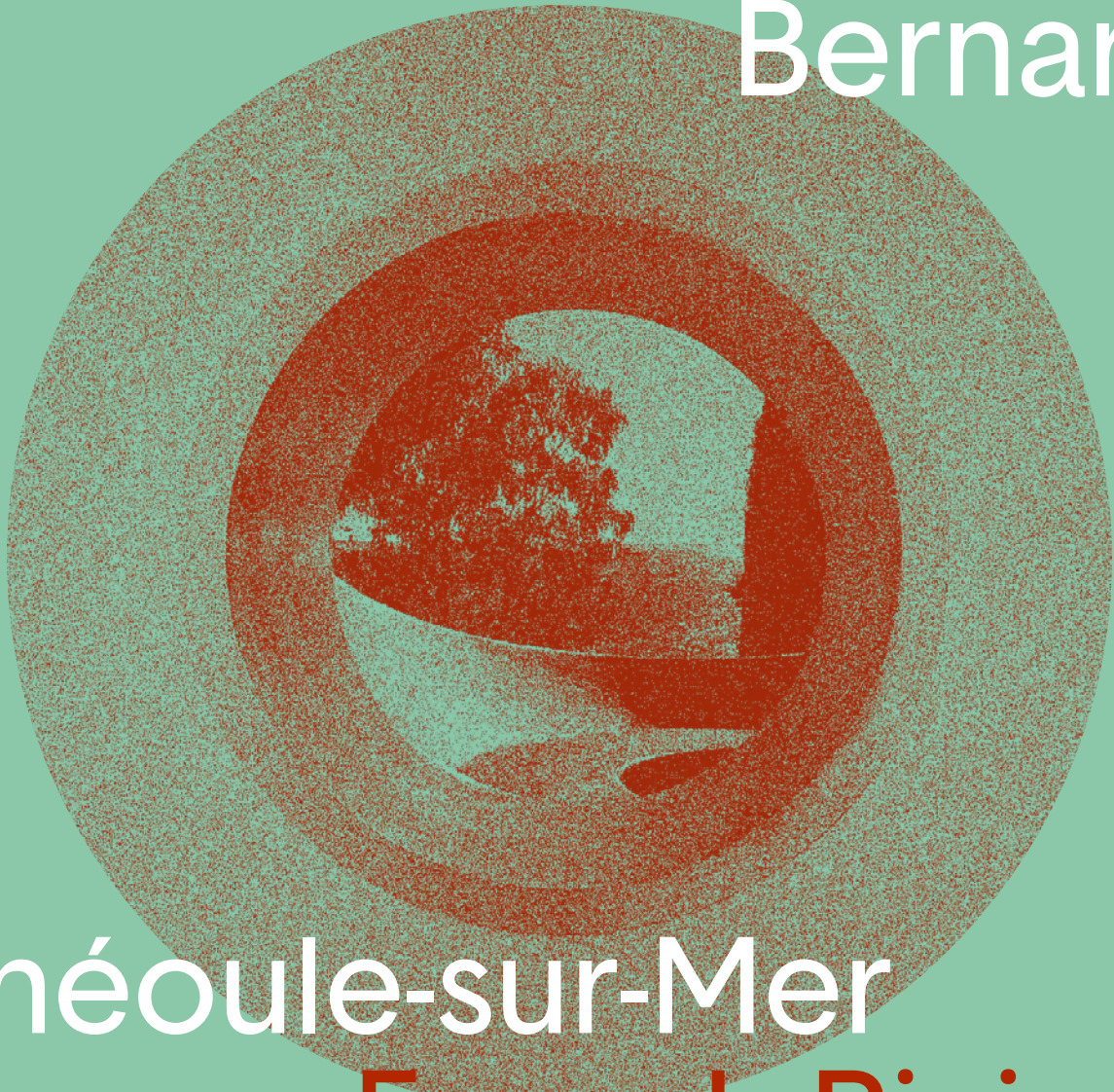


GENIUS
LOCI

Maison
Bernard



Théoule-sur-Mer
French Riviera

June 8–23, 2024

Press release

Founded in Paris in 2021 by the curator Marion Vignal, Genius Loci is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting architectural heritage and contemporary creation. Guided by the values of education and the transmission of knowledge, Genius Loci showcases the history of architecture while fostering new creative production and dialogues between artistic disciplines.

Through its program of experiential exhibitions, the organization seeks to reach the widest possible public with architecture as a cultural focus. It spotlights hidden or little-known architectural treasures, offering exceptional opportunities to visit private venues that are normally closed to the public. Allowing these sites to be discovered and more widely known, the organization's events juxtapose architecture with contemporary art and design, revealing each venue's artistic resonance and revitalizing its intrinsic spirit. Every exhibition also provides an opportunity for contemporary performing artists to express themselves through the creation of works or installations conceived to interact with the architecture.

Since its founding, Genius Loci has offered the public unprecedented access to a number of landmarks of architectural history: L'Ange Volant, the villa built by Gio Ponti in the Paris suburb of Garches in 1927; Auguste Perret's apartment, on the top floor of the building that he completed in 1932 at 51 Rue Raynouard in Paris; Les Espaces d'Abraxas, built by Ricardo Bofill in Noisy-le-Grand (East of Paris) in 1983; and the Ozenfant House, one of the first Purist structures in Paris by Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret.

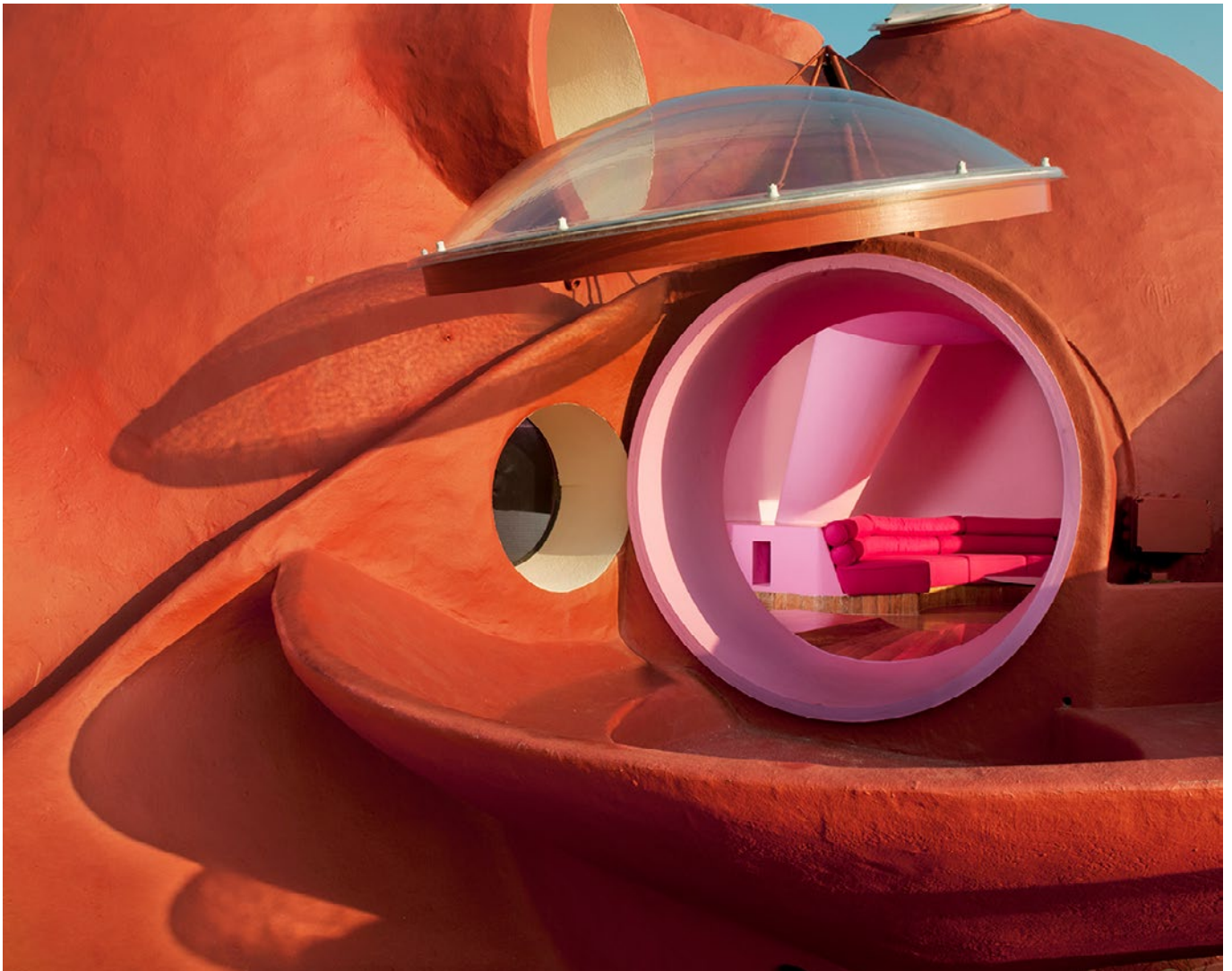
In all of its projects, Genius Loci helps raise public awareness of the importance of preserving the architectural heritage, and actively supports contemporary creation through special commissions and carte blanche invitations.

About

Genius Loci

For its latest edition, Genius Loci will open the doors of Maison Bernard, a masterpiece of organic architecture from the 1970s designed by Antti Lovag in Théoule-sur-Mer, near Cannes on the French Riviera.

View of the Maison Bernard
© Yves Gellie for the Maison Bernard
Endowment Fund



Curated by Marion Vignal and organized in partnership with the Maison Bernard endowment fund, the exhibition will highlight the visionary brilliance, imaginative power and creative freedom of this extraordinary structure conceived in symbiosis with nature and the human body.

The event will feature works by more than 20 artists and designers, both modern and contemporary, as well as a number of special commissions specific to the project. These creations will dialogue with Lovag's architecture, from its multiple spherical spaces to the seaside cactus and succulent garden. In this exceptional setting, an eco-responsible temporary installation will be mounted as part of a workshop conducted in cooperation with Villa Arson in Nice.

Invited to conceive a performance at Maison Bernard, the choreographer Némó Flouret will present *DANCE PARC: a Playground Project*, a creation arising from a unique interaction between architecture and contemporary dance, with the backing of Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels.

The exhibition

Genius Loci *Maison Bernard*

Built in the 1970s, Maison Bernard is the fruition of an encounter between two free-thinking personalities brimming with innovative ideas, Antti Lovag and Pierre Bernard, and a landscape: the Estérel massif, with its vivid red rock formations overlooking the Mediterranean.

Lovag knew the region well, having collaborated with the architect Jacques Couëlle on the construction of the Port-la-Galère private residential compound in the 1960s. An adventurous industrialist, Bernard, was impressed with Lovag's ideas, far from the conventions and standards of the time, and asked the architect to build him a holiday home in Théoule-sur-Mer, near Cannes. Conceived in harmony with nature, the house took shape after nearly ten years of construction using artisanal techniques.

The result is an ovoid structure devoid of right angles, nestled in the landscape as an homage to the curve on every scale. In Lovag's view, no form was better suited to human living spaces than the sphere. He abhorred conventional, inflexible layouts and sought above all to emphasize functionality in the spaces that he conceived, designed and furnished down to the smallest detail. Joined by a deep bond of friendship, Bernard and the architect—or "habitologist," as he defined himself—pursued their structural adventures, building a few kilometers away the future Palais Bulles, acquired by Pierre Cardin shortly after Bernard's untimely death in 1991. Restored by Bernard's children in 2015 with the help of the architect Odile Decq, Maison Bernard remains one of the finest examples of Lovag's organic architecture and his conception of well-being.



Pierre Bernard (on the left)
and Antti Lovag (on the right)
© rights reserved

The venue

Maison Bernard

The biography of Antti Lovag is characterized by frequent travels and shrouded in mystery. Born in Hungary in 1920, he grew up in Finland and Sweden, where he studied naval architecture.

In 1939, at age 19, he enlisted in the Finnish army. In 1946 he moved to Paris, where he studied architecture, urban planning and cinema. He then left for the Alps, where he worked with various architects on the construction of holiday villages and individual chalets. In the early 1960s he moved to the Riviera and began collaborating with Jacques Couëlle. The two worked together on houses in Castellaras-le-Neuf, in the hills above Cannes, and began building the Port-la-Galère residential compound in Théoule-sur-Mer.

On the fringes of the architecture of their time, they were pioneers of an innovative movement that emphasized environmental considerations, seeking to integrate the dwelling into its natural setting. They upheld an evolutive, intuitive approach to architecture, adapted to the needs of the occupants. In 1969 Lovag began his first residential project in Tourrettes-sur-Loup, in southeastern France. Alternatively called Maison du Rouréou or Maison Gaudet, the structure was not fully completed until 30 years later. In parallel, Lovag started the construction of Maison Bernard, and pursued his reflections on the dwelling and well-being by building Palais Bulle, also in cooperation with his friend Pierre Bernard. Between 1974 and 1979 he built the CERGA geodynamic and astronomical research center on the Calern Plateau in Provence, followed in the late 1980s by Villa Roux in Fontaines-sur-Saône, near Lyon. In 2001 the architect moved into a three-quarter scale model that he had built for Maison du Rouréou in the heart of the forest in Tourrettes-sur-Loup. He lived there until his death in 2014.

Antti Lovag at the Maison Bernard construction site © rights reserved



The architect Antti Lovag

Katinka Bock | Pol Bury |
Charlotte Chesnais | Venia
Dimitrakopoulou | Emma
Dusong | Jérôme Échenoz
Némo Flouret | Susanna
Fritscher | Yves Gellie |
Paul-Armand Gette | Studio
GGSV | Toni Grand | Safia
Hijos | Sabrina Le Bachelier
| David Logan | Marion
Mailaender | Isa Melsheimer
| Samuel Nguyen & the students of Villa Arson |
Antoine Poncet | Rachel
Robinson | Marcin Rusak |
Xavier Veilhan

The artists



Isa Melsheimer
Larvae I, 2021, ceramic, enamel
© Galerie Jocelyn Wolff



Susanna Fritscher
Souffle, 2021, crystal © Yves Gellie
for the Maison Bernard Endowment Fund



Paul-Armand Gette
0m, 2015, engraved glass
© Yves Gellie for the Maison Bernard
Endowment Fund



Isa Melsheimer
*Metamorphosis (Antti Lovag, Maison
Bernard)*, 2021, ceramic, enamel
© Esther Schipper

Selection of works from the exhibition

A select group of artists and designers have been invited by Marion Vignal, in collaboration with Isabelle Bernard, co-owner of the house and co-founder of the Maison Bernard endowment fund, to create a work especially for the exhibition.

These artworks and installations are conceived in resonance with the spirit of the venue, envisioned as an arena for creative experimentation. They also constitute an extension of the program of artist residencies initiated by Isabelle Bernard in 2015 for the creation of original works specifically for Maison Bernard. **Paul-Armand Gette, Susanna Fritscher, Emma Dusong and Yves Gellie** have produced works and installations that strike a counterpoint with the architecture, emphasizing its inherent originality.

For Genius Loci Maison Bernard, the composer **Jérôme Échenoz** brings the voice of Antti Lovag back to life in an audio installation. The artist-designers of **Studio GGSV** take over the windows, transfiguring the light and the landscape. The designer **Marion Mailaender** chose one of the bedrooms as the setting for an original textile creation, and the ceramic artist **Sabrina Le Bachelier**, who integrates astrology into her creative practice, is creating a sculpture inspired by Maison Bernard's astrological birth chart.

In the succulent and cactus garden, the ceramist **Safia Hijos** cultivates a subtle dialogue between the plants, the red rock outcroppings of the Estérel massif and her ochre-colored creations evoking both the outer cladding of Maison Bernard and the earthenware produced in the nearby town of Vallauris. Facing the sea, **Charlotte Chesnais** unveils a piece of wooden outdoor furniture conducive to contemplation. The designer **Marcin Rusak** continues his exploration of the plant world with a monumental work that evokes the sensuality of nature, echoing that of the house. The artist **Rachel Robinson**, who collaborated with Antti Lovag, contributes a bronze sculpture that offers a different point of view on the horizon. **Xavier Veilhan**, a visual artist with a passion for contemporary architecture, sets his focus on Lovag's curved forms with a site-specific installation that further develops the approach initiated with his series *Architectones* in iconic sites from the history of architecture.

Special commissions

Yves Gellie

Néon, 2019, visual and video installation

© Yves Gellie for the Maison Bernard

Endowment Fund



Invited by Marion Vignal to devise a unique interaction between dance and Antti Lovag's architecture, the dancer and choreographer Némo Flouret conceives a promenade performance entitled *DANCE PARC: a Playground Project*, with the backing of Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels.

With this creation, the artist pursues his research in choreographic forms that break free from the conventional framework of the performance venue. The choice of including contemporary dance emerged as a way of developing a dialogue between architectural forms inspired by the human body and the dancers' bodies in movement. The performance will take the viewers on a circuit in which the dancers will act by turns as guides, interpreters and players of the space (see practical information).

In Flouret's choreographic trajectory, the idea of "extremity" has always been a key starting point for generating gestures, movements and spatial scenarios. *DANCE PARC: a Playground Project* is a hide-and-seek in dance, an interplay of perspectives that incites viewers to perceive the sensual shapes of Maison Bernard through the lens of bodies that embrace, move across or contrast with the details of the architecture, transforming it into a playground.

Némo Flouret has been developing a site-specific approach to choreography for several years. His creations occupy spaces that were not intended to accommodate dancers in movement, ranging from post-industrial sites with the piece *900 Something Days Spent in the XXth Century* to the Louvre museum with *Forêt*, in collaboration with the dancer and choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker.

The Performance by Némo Flouret

To celebrate nature and in keeping with Antti Lovag's ideal of becoming one with the environment, Genius Loci is joining forces with the Villa Arson (Nice) to host an exceptional workshop in the gardens of Maison Bernard, under the direction of Samuel Nguyen.

The artist, a 2022 graduate of Villa Arson, develops a collective, participatory practice based on a quest for "social ecology." For an exhibition at Ricardo Bofill's Les Espaces d'Abraxas in June 2023, Genius Loci offered Nguyen carte blanche to produce works on site in dialogue with residents of the housing complex. With students from Villa Arson, he will co-create an installation conceived in resonance with the spirit of the place in the gardens of Maison Bernard. This site-specific creation is part of an ecological, sustainable approach, adopting a low-carbon strategy in every phase, from design to execution to post-exhibition reuse.

The workshop
by

Villa Arson

Marion Vignal is a curator, consultant and author. An expert in contemporary art and design, she promotes and supports young international creative talents through exhibitions, commissions and special projects.

She holds degrees in literature and art history and is the author of several books on the history of design, interior design and olfactory art. President of ida M., an artistic consultancy studio that she opened in Paris in 2015, she is also the founder of the Genius Loci association and its program of experiential exhibitions. She curated the exhibitions *Genius Loci L'Ange Volant*, *Gio Ponti* in Garches in 2021, *Auguste Perret's Apartment* in Paris in 2022, and *Benoît Maire at the Ozenfant House* in Paris in October 2023.

Marion Vignal

About

Exhibition organized in partnership with The Maison Bernard Endowment Fund

The Maison Bernard Endowment Fund was created by Isabelle and Jean-Patrice Bernard with the mission of preserving the architectural work of Antti Lovag built with Pierre Bernard in Théoule-sur-Mer in the 1970s. The Maison Bernard Endowment Fund also seeks to promote public access to Lovag's work. Each year it hosts an artist in residence for the creation of an original works in harmony with the house's architecture and environment. The resulting artworks remain on permanent display on the premises.

fonds-maisonbernard.com

Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels

Profoundly attached to the world of dance since its origins, the High Jewelry Maison strengthens its commitment with Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels. Guided by the values of creation, transmission and education, this initiative aims to support artists and institutions in presenting choreographic heritage, while also promoting new productions. Since its launch in 2020, it has promoted numerous dance companies for their creations as well as the presentation of multiple performances around the world. The program is complemented each year by major events, including the Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels Festival, whose first edition took place in London in March 2022. This support further extends to awareness-raising actions focused on dance culture for the broadest possible audience, professionals and amateurs alike.

dancereflections-vancleefarpels.com

MISIA

MISIA is a French editor and creator of prestigious, exclusive, and high-quality fabrics. MISIA draws its inspiration from the joyful, creative, daring, glamorous and refined world of the early 20th century, reinterpreting it in a resolutely modern way. Born out of a journey, an artistic or cultural adventure, each collection delivers a new emotional and sensorial experience to the most influential people in the world of interior design.

misia-paris.com

Galerie Jacques Lacoste

Since 1997, Galerie Jacques Lacoste has been dedicated to rediscovering and promoting the decorative arts of the 20th century, specializing in French creations from the 1930s through the 1950s. A member of the Compagnie Nationale des Experts, Lacoste is an internationally respected expert. Taking great care to ensure authenticity and combat counterfeiting, he makes a point of only presenting pieces whose provenance is impeccable, most often acquired directly from the original clients' descendants. He has been a patron of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris since 2018 and is now recognized as a key player among the world's leading antique dealers. A figure of reference in the perpetuation of Jean Royère's legacy, Jacques Lacoste also spotlights the work of the master glassmaker Max Ingrand as well as the sculptors Alberto and Diego Giacometti. Having acquired from the family of Antoine Poncet (1928–2022) the contents of the sculptor's studio, Galerie Jacques Lacoste is broadening the scope of its approach to 20th-century art.

jacqueslacoste.com

Fondation Almayuda

Founded in 2010, the Fondation Almayuda provides backing for projects in the realms of culture, solidarity and environmental protection, promoting access to education and training for socially disadvantaged groups. It supports contemporary creative activity and encourages interactions between artists, enabling new projects to come to fruition. From its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, the foundation funds projects throughout the world in collaboration with local partners.

almayuda.org

The Partners

Villa Arson

Inaugurated in 1972, Villa Arson was conceived from the outset as a highly innovative institution, with several essential and complementary functions in support of creation: teaching, research, experimentation, production, and exhibition. Villa Arson's uniqueness also lies in the association of its different areas of activity (a school, a library, an art center, a research center, and an art residency), whose actions intersect and enrich experiences. Villa Arson is home to some 230 students. The school offers a single Arts department covering a broad spectrum of disciplines and practices. An exhibition program with a strong international outlook and a focus on emerging creation aims to highlight the cross-roads between art, research, experimentation, and transmission.

villa-arson.fr

Fondation Maeght

Inaugurated in 1964, the Fondation Maeght is the first foundation for modern and contemporary art in France. It perfectly combines art with architecture and nature. In addition to its sculpture gardens and temporary exhibitions, the Foundation houses a collection of works by artists such as Miró, Calder, Chagall, Giacometti, Richier, Bonnard, Braque, Kelly amongst many others.

fondation-maeght.com

With the support of

Appia Art & Assurance

The fine art insurance brokerage firm Appia Art & Assurance was born of a collaboration between Edouard Bernard and Hadrien Brissaud. Since 2015, the founding partners' mission has been to offer insurance solutions tailored to the needs of their professional and private clients: galleries, auction houses, art dealers, restorers, private collectors, museums and institutions, fine art shipping services, etc. Cultivating a passion for art, wine and classic automobiles, Appia Art & Assurance offers its policy holders made-to-measure services and dedicated management. The confidentiality, responsiveness and efficiency of its team members are the key to its close relations with its clientele.

appia-art.fr

La Napoule Art Foundation

Founded in 1951 by the American patron of the arts Marie Clews to honor the memory of her husband, the sculptor Henry Clews, La Napoule Art Foundation promotes contemporary creativity and cultural interaction through a program of artist residencies. Château de La Napoule, the couple's former seaside retreat on the French Riviera, is now an international center for the arts. Among its many former residents are several winners of the Prix Goncourt literary award, including the author Jean Echenoz in 1999, and of the Nobel Prize, like the writer Gao Xinjiang, the 2000 Nobel laureate in literature.

lnaf.org

The Partners

Genius Loci Maison Bernard
Experiential exhibition
curated by Marion Vignal
June 8–23, 2024
10 AM–6 PM

Promenade performance
DANCE PARC: a playground project
by Néo Flouret
June 8, 13, 14 and 15
from 7:30pm

Admission fee
Reservations available
starting in March 2024 at: geniusloci-experience.com

Maison Bernard
Port-la-Galère, Théoule-sur-Mer
(French Riviera)

Press contact
Perrier / Giroire Communication
Solenn Roux
solenn@perriergiroire.com
P. +33 (0) 6 83 78 46 66
T. +33 (0) 1 84 79 18 09

Contact Association Genius Loci
contact@geniusloci-experience.com
geniusloci-experience.com
[@geniusloci_experience](https://www.instagram.com/geniusloci_experience)



MAISON BERNARD

DANCE
REFLECTIONS
BY
VAN CLEEF & ARPELS

MISIA

GALLERIE
JACQUES
L'ECOSTE

FONDATION
ALMAYUDA

villa
arson
nice

Fondation
Maeght

APPIA
art & assurance

La Napoule Art Foundation
CULTURE CHERIE POUR LE SUD