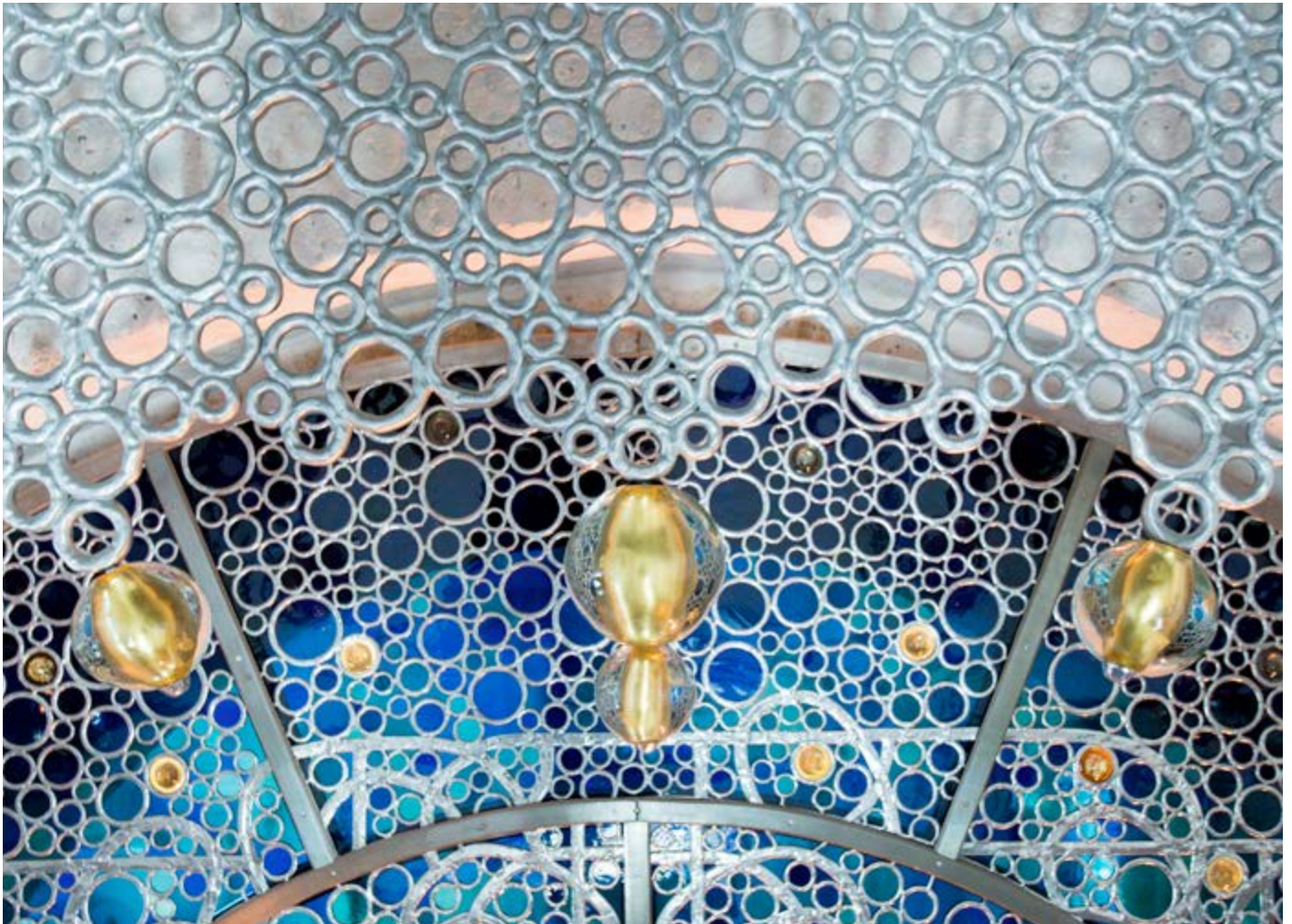


# LE TRÉSOR DE LA CATHÉDRALE D'ANGOULÊME

staged by

**JEAN-MICHEL OTHONIEL**



**Revealed on September 30, 2016**

A public commission from DRAC Aquitaine - Limousin - Poitou-Charentes

2008 - 2016

# SUMMARY

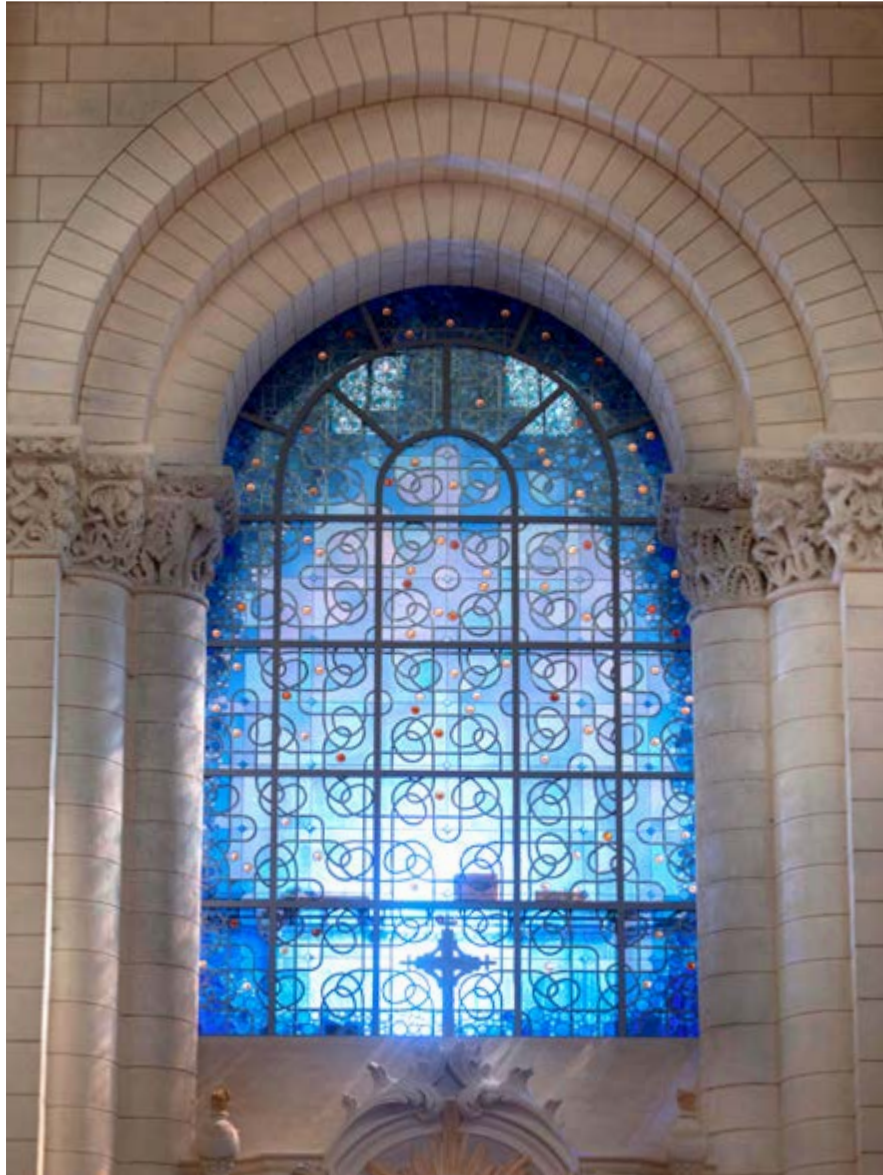
<b>Press release: <i>Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême</i></b>	p.3
<b>Press kit : <i>Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême</i></b>	p.5
I - A unique restoration	p.6
II - The public commission	p.7
III - The invention of a <i>Trésor</i>	p.10
IV - A singular period revisited	p.13
V - Living treasures	p.15
VI - The <i>Trésor's</i> three stations	p.21
The Lapidary room	p.22
The Commitment	p.23
The Supernatural	p.25
VII - Purity on the inside, nobility on the outside	p.31
VIII - Key moments	p.32
IX - Key statistics	p.38
X - Artist's Biography	p.39
XI - Architects of the project	p.40
XII - Practical Information and Press Contacts	p.42
XIII - Press Images	p.43

# LE TRÉSOR DE LA CATHÉDRALE D'ANGOULÊME

staged by

**JEAN-MICHEL OTHONIEL**

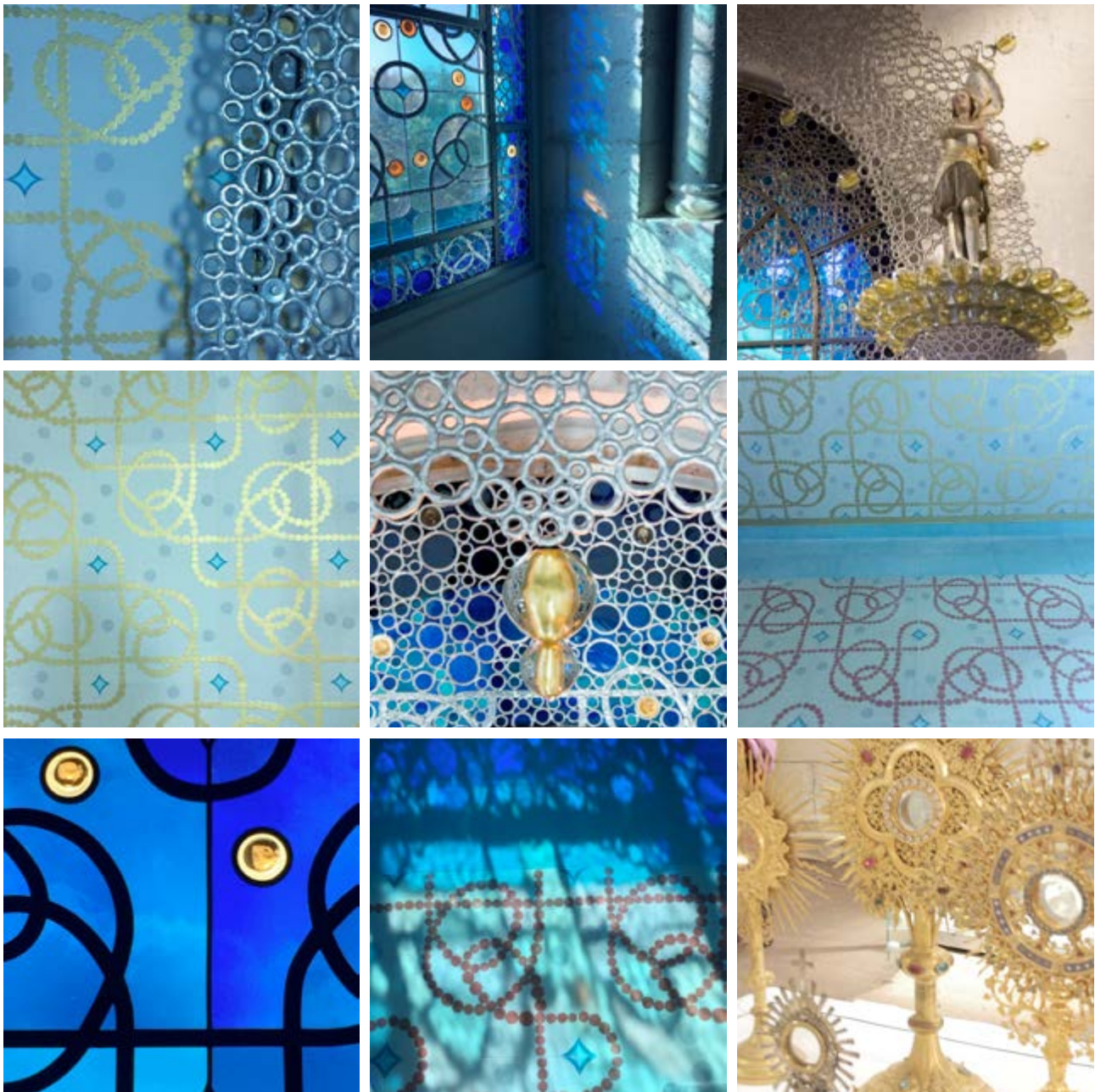
revealed **September 30, 2016**



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême* (the large stained-glass window), 2016. ©Yann Calvez

In 2007, the Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs Aquitaine - Limousin - Poitou-Charentes decided to begin restoration of the Angoulême cathedral. Their ambitious project was to restore it to its neo-Romanesque state from the nineteenth century, when the cathedral was rebuilt by Paul Abadie, an architect from Angoulême who also designed the Sacré-Cœur in Paris. The DRAC and the clergy in charge of the project also agreed to assemble a selection from their collection of liturgical objects from this little-known art-historical period and put it on display to the public in the renovated building.

After studying the collection of liturgical objects and the areas of the cathedral that could be converted, a public art project was commissioned from Jean-Michel Othoniel, with support from the ENGIE foundation. The first artist ever invited to stage a church treasure, Othoniel, whose work has a deeply auratic dimension, worked for more than eight years on this unique commission, linking history and contemporary art.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême (details), 2016. ©Jean-Michel Othoniel ; ©Yann Calvez*

***« I wanted to situate in the 21st century, that sense of wonderment that people felt in treasuries at the time the cathedrals were built. A place that makes you dream, where visitors find themselves in the midst of a monumental treasure hunt. »***

***- Jean-Michel Othoniel***

Over the past several years, three deconsecrated areas never before open to the public have been converted in order to welcome a collection of liturgical art that reflects the popular fervor of the nineteenth century. The artist has completely transformed the spaces to create a highly personal universe. Inspired by the colors and the geometric and interlaced patterns in Romanesque art, Othoniel gathered many skilled artisans with whom he collaborated on this totally immersive artwork. He designed new decorative patterns for floors, wallpaper and floor tiles; he created monumental stained-glass windows in various shades of blue, like the color of the Virgin's mantle; he built extravagant glass-beaded pedestals and vitrines to display the statues and liturgical objects. Conducted with the support of the DRAC ALPC (Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs in Aquitaine – Limousin – Poitou-Charente), this project meets the demanding conservation requirements. Here, Othoniel has created an artwork of spectacular theatricality. Creating a journey through three stations from the intimate to the sublime, he unites man, universality and the sacred to the center of the *Trésor*.

The background features a repeating pattern of gold beaded lines forming a grid of squares and circles. Small blue four-pointed stars are placed at the intersections of the grid. The overall color palette is warm, with gold, blue, and light beige tones.

**PRESS KIT**  
**LE TRÉSOR**  
**DE LA CATHÉDRALE D'ANGOULÊME**

# I - A UNIQUE RESTAURATION

In 2008, the DRAC ALPC, under the direction of Pierre Cazenave, began their campaign to restore the interior of the cathedral Saint-Pierre in Angoulême, which belongs to the French government and was classified as a historic monument in 1840. Their approach was surprising – they decided to return the edifice to the state of its neo-Romanesque restoration, headed by Paul Abadie from 1852 to 1875, rather than to its original 12th-century Romanesque state. Their decision reflects the desire to celebrate an art-historical period that remains little known today.



The cathedral Saint-Pierre in Angoulême, 2008. ©Ville d'Angoulême

## Paul Abadie

*“Paul Abadie was a French architect born in Paris on November 9, 1812. He contributed throughout the nineteenth century to the rediscovery of the Middle Ages, especially through his travels as of 1844 as attaché to the Historic Monuments board. While preparing his first restoration projects in this capacity, he also participated in the restoration of Notre-Dame de Paris, which was headed by Jean-Baptiste Lassus and Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. In 1849, Abadie was appointed architect for the Périgueux, Cahors and Angoulême dioceses. He was responsible for more than forty projects and restorations, primarily on Romanesque churches in the Charente, the Dordogne and the Gironde.*

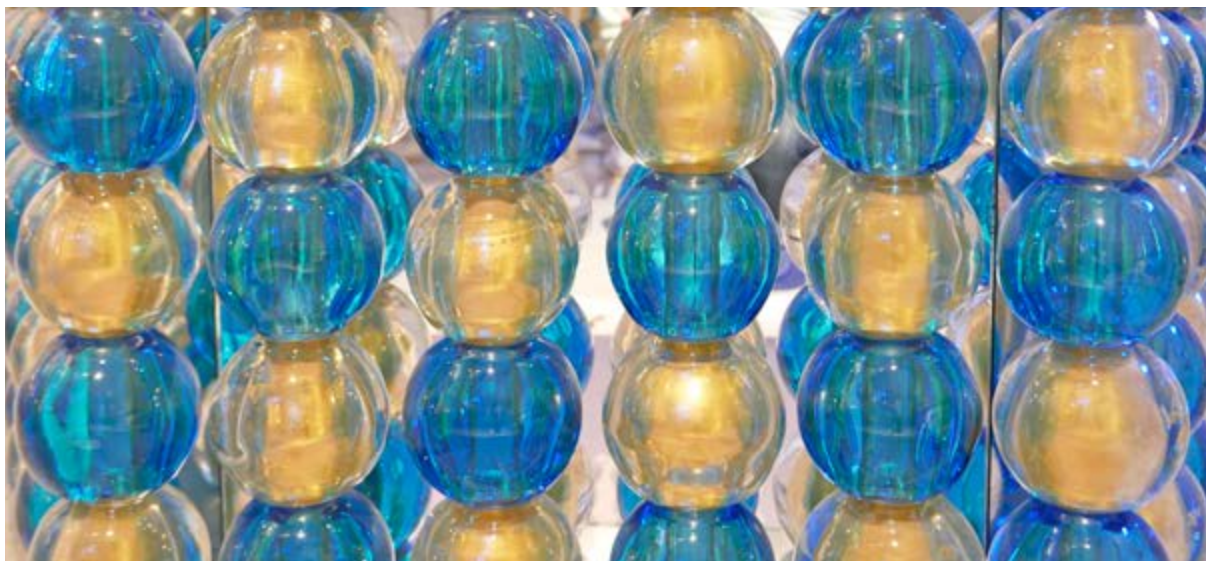
*The restoration of the cathedral Saint-Pierre in Angoulême, as well as the construction of Angoulême’s Town Hall, are eloquent examples of neo-Romanesque architecture, for which he remains the most iconic architect.*

*Near the end of his career, in 1874, at the age of 62, Paul Abadie won the competition to build the Sacré-Cœur Basilica in Montmartre. This project - which is Roman and Orientalist-inspired - is his best known achievement.”*

**Pierre Cazenave**

*State Architect and Urban Planner,  
Regional Conservator of Historic Monuments,  
DRAC Aquitaine - Limousin - Poitou-Charentes*

## II - THE PUBLIC COMMISSION



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, 2016. Detail of the vitrine for the jewels of the Virgin, bell tower room.

“The public art project for creating the *Trésor* of the Angoulême cathedral was born of the difficulty of naming the emotion in the objects selected for display. This difficulty lies in mediating not only the uses (now lost) of most of the liturgical objects we are showing but the nature of the collection itself, which essentially comes from the second half of the nineteenth century. Through the *Trésor*, we want to make people understand how the popular fervor of the time, in combination with industrial genius of the period, produced an art of ‘fabrication’ that has pejoratively been described as the ‘Saint Sulpice style.’<sup>1</sup> Culture is related to social structure, and we wanted to reveal and clarify popular liturgical art. For this reason, the emphasis on heritage conservation and the distance that often accompany religious art represented potential hurdles; so many preconceived ideas exist when dealing with scholarship of a museum of sacred art.

In addition, a semiotic approach, the need to nourish thought with emotion in order to better show and explain the collection, was the starting point for Jean-Michel Othoniel’s commission. In counterpoint with the strained dialectic relationship that can exist between heritage and creation and that often contributes to how installations are developed, we found that Othoniel’s proposals superbly echoed our intentions.

Security requirements necessitated the physical presence of personnel. Mediation with a tour guide or docent was thus integrated into the project from its inception. This was an opportunity for Jean-Michel Othoniel in terms of the sequencing and rhythm of his design of the various spaces of the treasury.

This artwork represents much more than just the thing itself; it is also a symbol, an allegory, a direction. By placing the visitor in a space that is imagined like an immense treasure hunt, Jean-Michel Othoniel questions the mystery of faith, fervor and passion, and appropriately examines the relationship between the objects and the series, which can also be considered legitimate works of art.”

*Pierre Cazenave*

<sup>1</sup> ‘Saint-Sulpice Style’ is a French phrase coined in 1897 by Leon Bloy to describe “religious kitsch” including statuettes of saints or figurative stained-glass paintings made in a somewhat naive style and without much genius. The term comes from the fact that the neighborhood near the Church of Saint Sulpice in Paris, in the northern district of Odéon, traditionally consisted of shops for religious books, images and various other trinkets.

### III - THE INVENTION OF A TREASURY

In view of the restoration campaign of the cathedral, the French Culture Ministry and the Historic Monuments office in association with the bishopric of Angoulême decided to call upon to a contemporary artist to participate in the cathedral's restoration. Jean-Michel Othoniel, whose work has a deeply auratic quality, was chosen to create an environment for the liturgical objects that would make up this new treasury.



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, 2012. Preparatory sketch in watercolor.



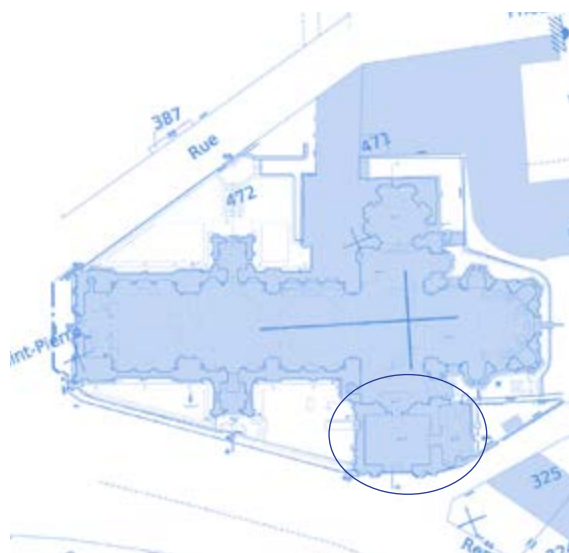




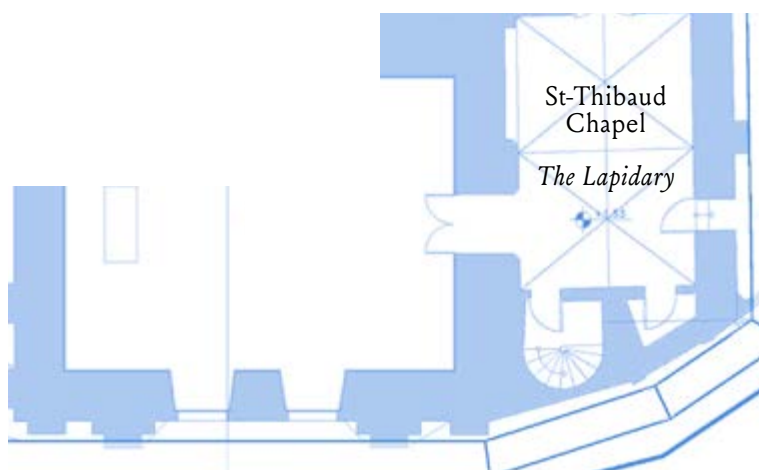
Jean-Michel Othoniel, *Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, 2012. Preparatory sketch in watercolor.

## The rooms of *Le Trésor*

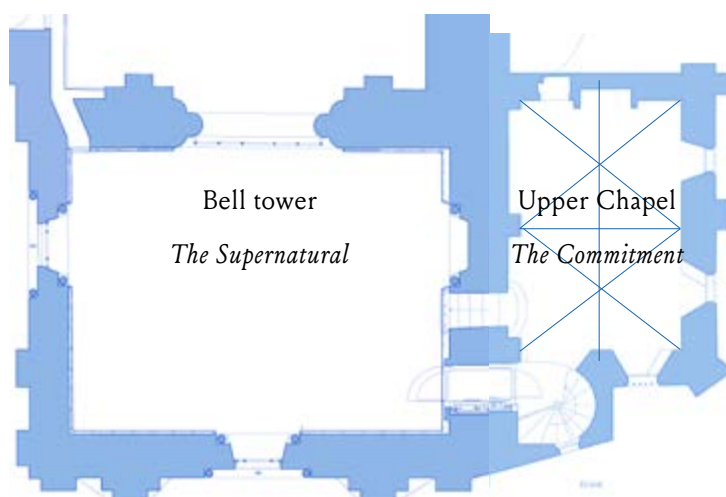
The *Trésor* fills three deconsecrated spaces adjoining the cathedral: the gothic Saint-Thibaud Chapel, on the ground floor, built in the fifteenth century along the eastern wall of the transept; the upper chapel, on the first-floor, overlooking a Gothic arch with ribbed vaults; and the remains of a former bell tower on the first floor; the bell's twelfth century base is still visible today. This room's large bay window opens onto the cathedral transept. Each of the *Trésor's* three spaces corresponds to a theme: The Lapidary, The Commitment, The Supernatural.



Location of the *Trésor*, South area of the cathedral's transept.



Ground floor



First floor

## Objects in the *Trésor*

These monstrances, censers, reliquaries, chalices, patens, crowns, scepters, ewers, tabor that make up the treasure, made of gilded metal and glass, offered Othoniel a great deal of artistic freedom. These objects make up a unique ensemble from the neo-Romanesque period, and come both from the cathedral sacristy and from a collection built for the cloister museum over several decades by Monsieur and Madame Jacques Sauquet, collectors passionate about Angoulême's history. Gold articles, pieces of liturgical clothing and an ensemble of lapidaries bring to light a flamboyant, theatrical period transcribed by the artist in his extravagant artwork. The *Trésor* consists of 147 items, liturgical objects, statues, gold articles and lapidaries. 7 carved stone elements make up the lapidary, including a limestone Madonna and Child by Jean Degoulon from 1679, from the chapel of the Trois-Marie Cathedral in Angoulême. 31 items that belonged to priests or bishops are shown in a room dedicated to the commitment of faith. Lastly, 109 items in gilded metal, playing on ideas of accumulation and profusion, are installed in vitrines in the bell tower on the first floor.

*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, 2016.  
Detail of the vitrine of the chalices.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, 2016.  
Details from the vitrine of the Madonna's jewels.

## An artistic & scenographic proposal

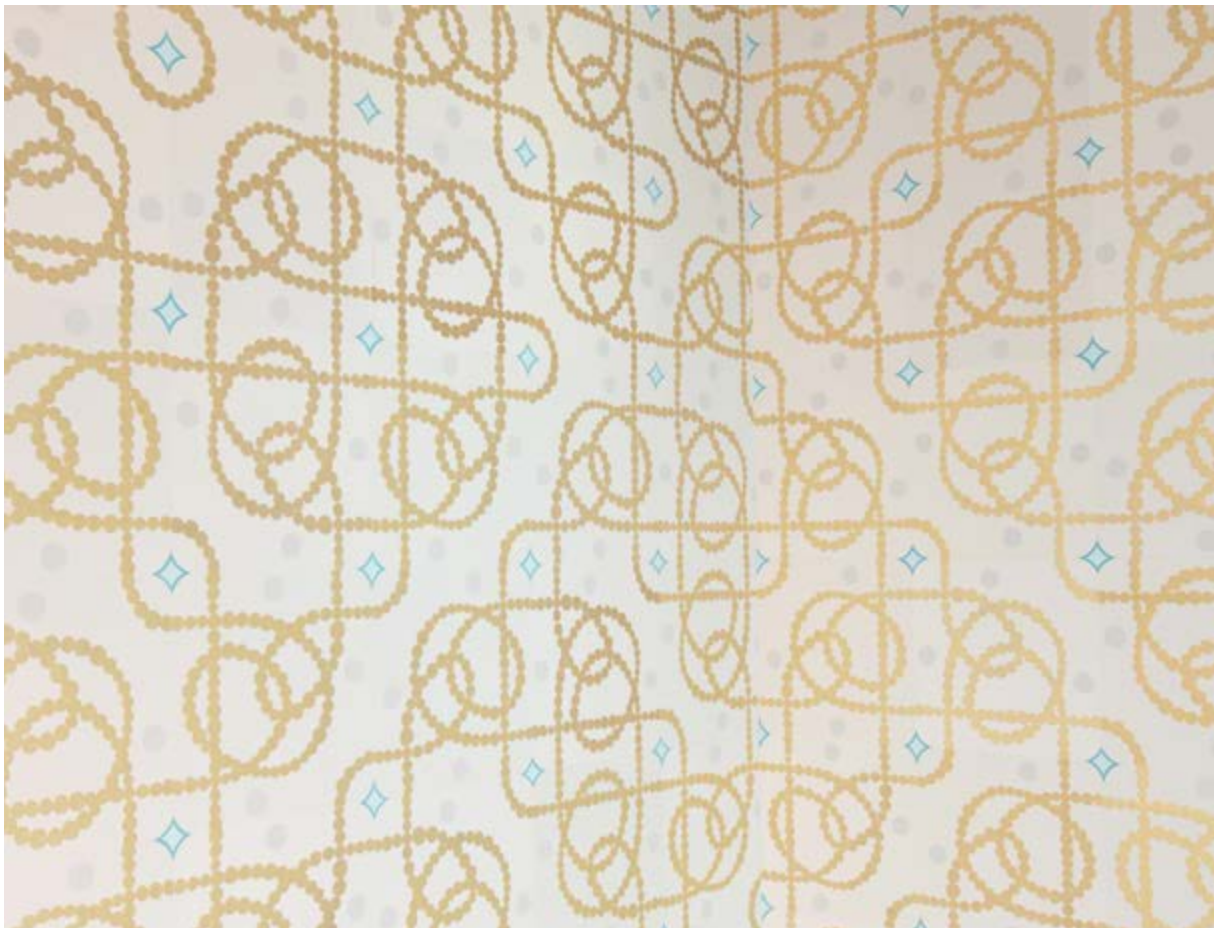
*“The strength of his proposal, in addition to his own “handwriting” and the aspects of nineteenth-century decorative arts integrated into the project, lies in the choice of works, in their accumulation as well as in the systematic nature of certain edecorative lements such as the motifs seen on the wallpaper or floor. This work is also about staging the space itself, reviving the artistic power of this art of the masses; and in addition, it establishes the status of art objects produced in series and the relationship to the universal.*

*Jean-Michel Othoniel reveals this higher value and probes the mystery of these works- products of human history that also endure in the afterlife, through their power in questioning man.”*

**Pierre Cazenave**

## IV - A SINGULAR PERIOD REVISITED

Always ready to explore new frontiers, Jean-Michel Othoniel wanted to revive a moment in nineteenth-century art history when modernism revisited the abstract, colorful shapes of the Middle Ages. Inspired by the magnitude of this commission and the challenge it represented, he imagined a monumental installation that creates a dialogue between the historical and the contemporary.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, 2016. Detail of the wallpaper, 2016. ©Yann Calvez

### Interlacing

*“In my first sketches for the Trésor, I reaffirmed relationships that already existed in my work between the beautiful and the sacred, my obsession with endless knots and the interlacing geometric patterns in Romanesque art illuminations. I also wanted to distill and refine the most minimal forms from sculpture and medieval architecture.”*

**Jean-Michel Othoniel**



Stained glass tympanum in the cathedral, P. Abadie, 1852-1875.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, 2016. Detail of a stained-glass window in the bell tower. ©Yann Calvez

## V - LIVING TREASURES

For this unique commission, Jean-Michel Othoniel gathered around him many artisans who have long accompanied him in his work to collaborate with him. All of them shared in his desire to create a totally immersive and astonishing experience for the visitor, down to the smallest detail. From the stained-glass windows to the wallpaper, from the pedestals whose glass beads evoke contemporary rosaries to the cement tiles, from the aluminum latticework to the gold embroidery on velvet wall hangings, a highly personal universe unfolds. Since he made his first artworks, the artist has regularly made religious references, from the profane body to the sacred. His works, at once fragile and sensual, mysterious and enchanted, reveal a desire to transfigure reality. In this *Trésor*, Othoniel convokes the sacred, transcends emotion and reveals the spiritual in his art.



Work session on the embossed plates for the handmade wallpaper, Atelier d'Offard, 2014.

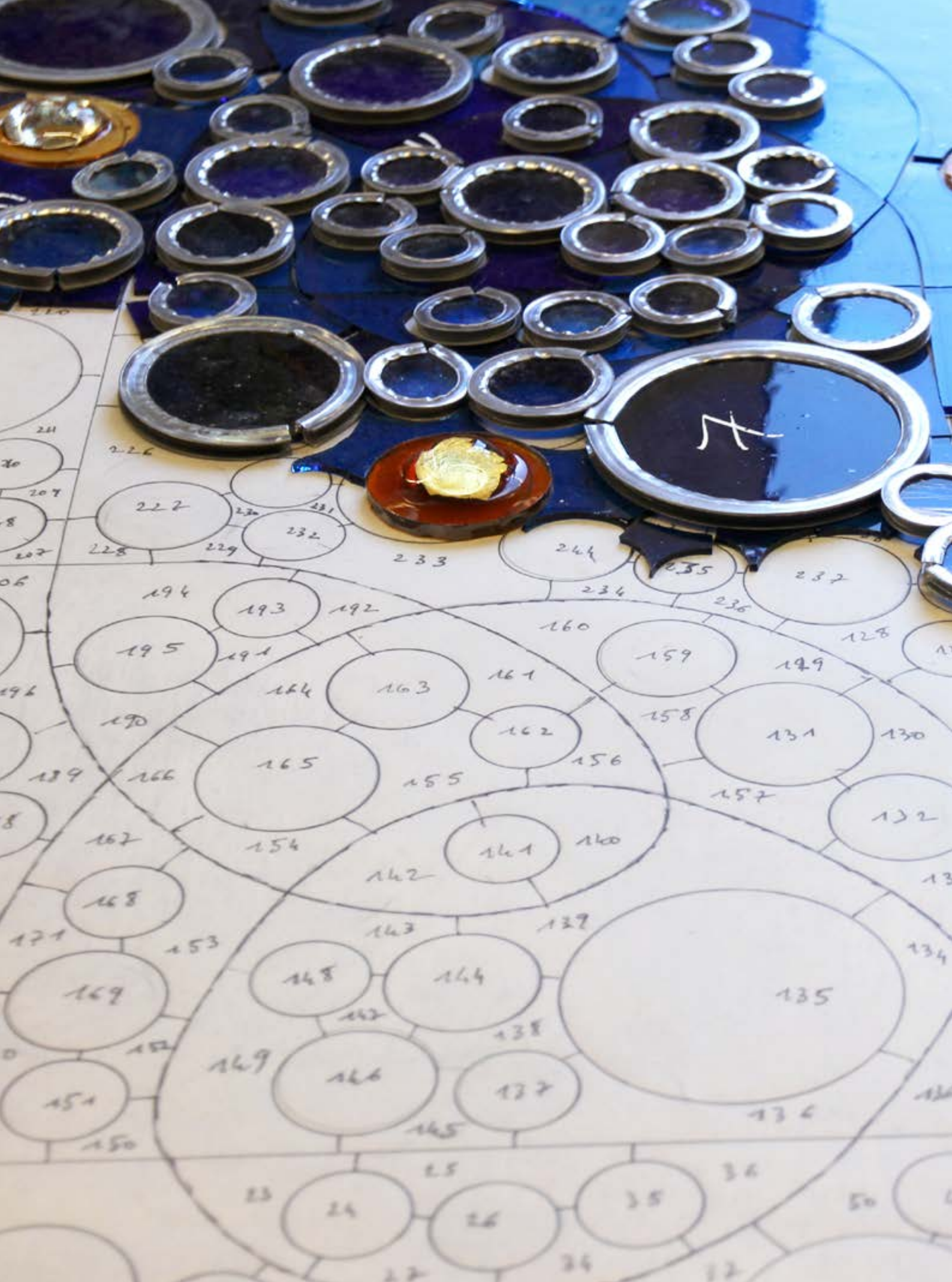
### The artisanal crafts

Wallpaper - L'Atelier d'Offard, Tours ; Cement floor tiles – MiraColour, Aachen, Allemagne ; Stained-glass windows – Les Ateliers Loire, Chartres ; Glass cabochons – Glassworks, Bâle, Suisse ; Aluminum latticework - Technival Industrie, Angoulême ; Embroidery and wall hangings – Le Bégonia d'Or, Rochefort-sur-Mer; Tapestry and tailoring, Paris, Chatillon en Michaille, Magnac sur Touvre ; Furniture – Version Bronze, Montreuil et Lisbonne, Portugal ; Glass beads – Salviati, Murano, Italie ; The reliquary – Cat-Berro, Orléans.



A domino of handmade wallpaper drying after the application of gold, Atelier d'Offard, 2014.



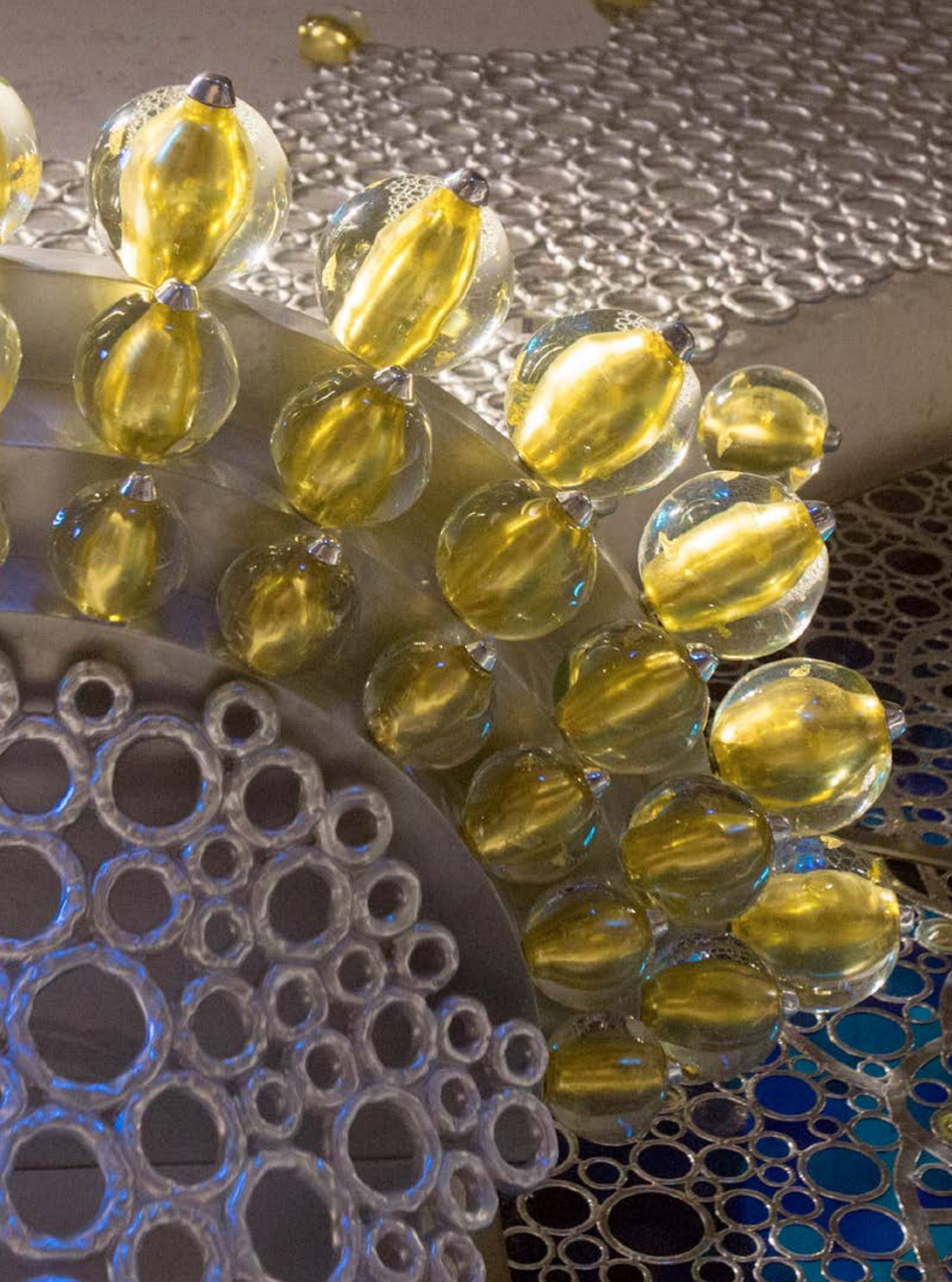


Cutting elements of the stained-windows, Ateliers Loire, 2013.  
A total of 22,000 pieces of handcut glass were necessary for the *project*.





*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême, 2016. Detail of the statue of Joan of Arc in front of the large aluminum valance, created in collaboration with Arsculpt and Technival Industrie. ©Yann Calvez*



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, 2016. Detail of a capital ornamented with beads gilded with gold leaf made in collaboration with the Murano glassmaker Salviati. ©Yann Calvez

## VI - THE *TRÉSOR*'S THREE STATIONS

Three rooms house the ensemble of the *Trésor*, a journey on two different floors from the old bell tower staircase that progressively reveals the various spaces and objects, and also acts as a metaphor for religious passion, devotion and faith.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême* (detail), 2016. ©Yann Calvez

## SAINT-THIBAUD CHAPEL GROUND FLOOR - SILVER BEADS

### THE LAPIDARY

The first room and its two intersecting ribbed vaults dating from 1592, is, in Othoniel's project, dedicated to a lapidary recovered by Abadie during the cathedral's first restoration in the nineteenth century. The presentation of these elements was made possible thanks to the support of the Charente Archeological and Historical Society, founded in 1844 to conserve, develop and enhance the region's historic and cultural heritage.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême, The Lapidary. The Madonna and Child by Jean Degoulon, 2016.*

Adjoining the treasure chapel and open to all visitors, this room showcases the large Madonna and Child statue by Jean Degoulon, dated 1679, in the center of the space on a pedestal made of in silver glass beads. Numerous Roman fragments from the cathedral tympanums are hung on the wall around this magnificent stone sculpture. As of this first room, the Lapidary takes on the value of a relic, as evidenced by the two capitals reused by Girard II in the cathedral choir. It is also a testimony, and this connection with the cathedral and its sanctuary, that are evoked by this first room. Stained-glass windows designed by the artist adorn the embrasure, providing a soft, bluish light. A large, blue-velvet tapestry embroidered with a rain of gold sequins serves as backdrop to this valuable sculpture of the Virgin.

## UPPER CHAPEL FIRST FLOOR - BLACK BEADS THE COMMITMENT



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême, view of the room dedicated to the Commitment, upper chapel, first floor, 2016.*

The second room, protected by latticework consisting of three thousand anodized aluminum rings, is accessible only to *Trésor* visitors. Behind this room, a staircase lined with gold embroidered curtains leads to an upstairs room dedicated to the figure of the priest and to his commitment to the ritual that accompanies faith. The spiral staircase is topped with an inverted dome made of blue tile, gold and amber glass beads created by the artist. Inspired by rosaries, furniture for the *Trésor* consists of rows of opaque, black-glass beads. Display cases shaped like tabernacles house clothing used during liturgical ceremonies and objects used in celebrating the Eucharist.

A few objects from not from the XIXe century are highlighted for they make reference to a difficult and troubled period. The ciborium vitrine, dedicated to a refractory priest and a suitcase used by an imprisoned priest during World War II.



The imprisoned priest's suitcase in the room dedicated to the Commitment, upper chapel, first floor, 2016.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, detail of the vitrine dedicated to textiles, Commitment room, Upper chapel, first floor, 2016.



BELL TOWER  
FIRST FLOOR - BLUE AND GOLD BEADS

THE SUPERNATURAL



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, view of the bell tower room, first floor, 2016. ©Yann Calvez

The third room of the *Trésor* came from transforming the base of the bell tower following the bombing of the cathedral in 1568 by Admiral Coligny. Othoniel's project allows visitors to rediscover the remains of the base of the bell tower, which dates back to the twelfth-century. This impressive cubic volume is the heart of Othoniel's *Trésor*. The accumulation and staging of the objects, the flamboyance of red and gold mixed with the pinkish gray of limestone, the display cases filled with gleaming, newly restored objects - these qualities embody the intensity of the *Trésor*'s mysticism and faith.

## Bringing in the light

Four monumental stained-glass windows open onto the landscape and the heart of the cathedral. The sun's rays invade the room, diffracted by the thousands of cabochons of blue and amber-colored glass. The public is bathed in light; for the artist, the visitor is at the center of his *Trésor*.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême (detail), 2016.*

## An art of “fabrication”

*“In addition to reconciling the difficulty of the lost uses of most of the liturgical objects we wanted to present, one can add the very nature of the collection itself, which comes mainly from the second half of the nineteenth century. We needed to communicate, within the Trésor’s restricted space, the revival of popular fervor that, combined with the brilliance of industry at the time, produced this art of ‘fabrication,’ derogatorily known as the ‘Saint-Sulpice style.’ Culture has to do with social structure, and we wanted to reveal and communicate this popular art; therefore, patrimonialization, and the distancing that usually accompanies it, presented as much of a risk as a priori scholarship does for the public regarding a museum for sacred art.”*

*Pierre Cazenave*



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême (detail), 2016.*

### **The Appearance of the Cross**

Beneath its obvious theatricality, which pays tribute to the madness of the neo-Romanesque period, a single minimalist motif, inspired by Roman knots, was used throughout the environment. The shape is repeated in various orientations, as seen in the patterns of pearls and dots in the space. Running from the floor tiles to the strips of wallpaper and the lead of the stained-glass windows, a single, endless line envelops the entire space. This line converges toward the center, forming a cross in the heart of the large stained-glass window, and recalling the notion that in the Catholic religion, all roads lead to Christ.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême* (the large stained-glass window), 2016. ©Yann Calvez

## A Twentieth-century Saint

The contemporary artwork in the *Trésor* also is a reliquary commissioned to house the relic of Saint Pierre Aumaître. The young missionary, who died at the age of 28, was martyred in Korea in 1866, beatified in 1968 and canonized in 1984 by Pope John Paul II. A fragment of his femur, offered to the French state by the Korean church, has been enshrined by Othoniel.

The reliquary, made in gold and pink silk, will be presented to the public for the first time at the opening of the *Trésor*, and will become part of the annual pilgrimage dedicated to this young saint, celebrating the feeling of popular fervor characteristic of the nineteenth century.



Saint Pierre Aumaître, 1837 - 1866



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, the reliquary of Saint Pierre Aumaître, 2016. Aluminum, gold leaf, wood, Murano glass, embroidered cushion.

## The Virgin's mantle, the gold of Christ, Angoulême Blue

Blue, the color of the Virgin, covers the *Trésor's* stained-glass windows in nine nuances of blue. More than 10,000 delicately cut pieces of glass, gold and mica, put in place using the technique for stained-glass leading, were created for the large bay window. It overlooks the transept, separating the *Trésor* from the holy part of the cathedral. The color gradation of blue, like a watercolor, is dotted with stars, evoking the Virgin's protective cloak.



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême, Madonna and Child, 2016. ©Yann Calvez*

Gold, the color of Christ, a symbol of illumination, already present on the wallpaper, also fills the Murano glass beads presented in this last room. Serving as bases for six newly repainted, plaster sculptures of saints, these gold beads, accompanied by azure-colored beads, adorn the furniture designed by Othoniel. Held up by the same beads, a Madonna and Child, in immaculate white plaster and crowned with gold, commands the center of the room. At the foot of this sculpture, shown to the public for the first time, are pieces of jewelry decorated with rare gemstones, making up the finery of the processions of the Our Lady of Obezine. Once a year, they will leave the *Trésor* to adorn the miraculous Virgin as she is adoringly carried throughout the city.

## VII - TOTAL PURITY INSIDE, TOTAL NOBILITY OUTSIDE



*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême (detail), 2016. ©Yann Calvez*

*“Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême is a total, immersive artwork that links contemporary art and history. I sought to recapture the sense of wonder and astonishment that one felt in ancient treasuries. I was fortunate to be able to create an environment for these little known sacred objects, in being able to return man, and the question of faith, to the center of the Trésor. The experience of this enchanted environment will be personal to each visitor, linking artistic and mystical pleasure. Inspired by a phrase by Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis, who was one of the first reformers of Romanesque art, I might say that the multicolored splendor of the gems will certainly distract us from our external worries, so that this dignified meditation on beauty may convince us to believe in the holy virtue of objects. By transferring the material into immaterial sensations, the Trésor makes us feel as if we are in a distant region of the terrestrial sphere that it lies neither entirely in the earth, nor in the purity of the sky.”*

**Jean-Michel Othoniel**

# VIII - KEY MOMENTS

## RESTORATION OF THE ANGOULÊME CATHEDRAL & CREATION OF THE *TRÉSOR* 2008 - 2016

### **2000, evaluating the cathedral building**

Damage to the Angoulême Cathedral, left from the battle with Admiral Coligny during the religious wars in 1568, is assessed by specialists Marylise Ortiz, Dominique Peyre and Jacques Sauquet.

In collaboration with architect Philippe Villeneuve, a proposal is made to reopen the large wall that has remained closed since the battle, allowing light from the south to reenter the cathedral through the eastern arm of the transept. The proposal is later revived by Pierre Cazenave, architect and urban planner for the “Bâtiments de France” and regional curator of Historic Monuments, and Denis Dodeman, appointed to replace Philippe Villeneuve as ACMH (architecte en chef des monuments historiques, or chief architect for Historic Monuments).

The project to create a cathedral treasury - *Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême* - begins to take shape. It will be installed in three rooms unaffected by Paul Abadie's restoration of the cathedral in the nineteenth century.

### **2004, meeting with the artist**

A first rendez-vous between artist Jean-Michel Othoniel and Thomas Kocek, adviser for visual arts, is organized in Rochefort by Yves Sabourin, inspector for the French culture ministry's Délégation aux arts plastiques. After this first encounter, during a meeting at the DRAC (Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs) Yves Sabourin proposes that Pierre Cazenave commission Othoniel to design and stage the *Trésor*.

### **2008, Jean-Michel Othoniel chosen to stage the *Trésor***

The diocese, in collaboration with the DRAC, analyzes the creation of a *Trésor* for the Angoulême cathedral. They determine that it must bring together various objects and works of art, creating not a museum but an evocation of the diocesan pastoral and liturgy.

Pierre Cazenave contacts Othoniel to discuss his collaboration on the *Trésor* project, including the idea that the artist design a reliquary to house an important relic of Saint Pierre Aumaitre, a saint originally from Charente and a martyred in Korea in 1866.

Dr. Jacques Sauquet, President of the association for the preservation and study of Charente's religious heritage, evokes the possibility of underwriting the project. Monseigneur Dagens gives his approval. The reliquary is commissioned, to be placed in the *Trésor* and used in annual ceremonies honoring Saint Pierre Aumaître. It is confirmed that a number of other reliquaries will be integrated by Othoniel into his project for the *Trésor* and put on display.



## October 2008

The restoration of the cathedral begins, lead by M. Denis Dodeman, chief architect for Historic Monuments. The large wall is removed, and light re-enters the cathedral. A large opening is built overlooking the transept.

## December 2009

Plaster sculptures of saints are the first objects chosen by the artist for the *Trésor*, and are transported to the restorer.

## Summer 2010

Jean-Michel Othoniel makes his first preparatory watercolor sketches for the *Trésor*.

## November 25, 2010, the *Trésor* project is presented at the Ministry of Culture

The project is presented at the Ministry of Culture and Communication during a committee meeting for the DAP (Délégation aux Arts Plastiques, or Delegation to the Visual Arts) in the presence of Monseigneur Dagens, Bishop of the Angoulême Cathedral, Jean-Michel Othoniel, Pierre Cazenave, Anne Embs, curator of historic monuments and Jacques Sauquet. The cathedral restoration and *Trésor* projects are approved.

## Spring 2011

Archaeological surveys of the cathedral are carried out by archaeologists from HADES, center for archaeological research, at the request of the Regional Conservation of Historic Monuments (DRAC Aquitaine - Limousin - Poitou-Charentes). Data show that of all the sculptures on display in the cathedral are authentic with the exception of two statues of horsemen and a Christ figure above the main portal.

## March 12, 2011

Monseigneur Dagens and the CDAS (Diocesan Commissions on Sacred Art) of Angoulême organize a seminar in the Angoulême Diocese on the subject “Our Churches Serving the Encounter with God.” On this occasion, Pierre Cazenave and Jacques Sauquet make a presentation on the “future Treasury of liturgical art from the Angoulême Cathedral.”

## October 2011

A large seventeenth-century stone sculpture by Jean Degoulon of a Madonna and Child is moved from the Diocese garden for restoration, at the initiative of Anne Embs, curator at the DRAC. The sculpture will have a central place in Othoniel’s *Trésor*.

The restoration of the cathedral, including the chapels that will house the *Trésor*, begun in 2008, is completed in November 2012: the stones in the choir vault, then the stained-glass windows and the cathedral’s central nave. Several artisans are then selected in a competitive bid process and solicited for the project.

## May 2012

François-Xavier Richard from the Atelier d’Offard, manufactures wallpaper swatches based on Jean-Michel Othoniel’s drawings. Othoniel and members of his studio, on site at the cathedral, make trials with the prototypes of wallpaper and floor drawings for large-scale cement tiles.

## **June 4, 2012, the project is definitively accepted**

A meeting of the National Commission for Historic Monuments is organized at the Ministry of Culture, with the presentation of the project by Pierre Cazenave, Jacques Sauquet (representing Monseigneur Dagens), Yves Sabourin (from the Ministry of Culture) and Jean-Michel Othoniel. After a positive review by the Inspection des Patrimoines, the project is definitively accepted.

## **November 2012, objects for the *Trésor* are selected**

Full-scale models of the artist's designs are presented in the rooms of the *Trésor*.

Jean-Michel Othoniel chooses the objects to be displayed in the *Trésor* in collaboration with Jacques Sauquet and the clergy.

## **December 2012, a point person is assigned to the project**

David Caubère joins the Othoniel Studio and begins work exclusively on the *Trésor*, first overseeing simulations based on Jean-Michel Othoniel's watercolors. Caubère, taking over from Olivier Lounissi, the technical manager of the Othoniel Studio, will manage the project until its completion.

## **February 2013, the artist selects lapidary objects from the archaeological society for the *Trésor***

The artist visits the Angoulême archaeological society with Florent Gaillard, its and city archivist, choosing various objects from the lapidary to present in the first room of the *Trésor*.

## **May 2013, the pavement**

The first cement tiles for the pavement are produced in collaboration with the company MiraColour in Germany.

## **June 2013, the stained-glass windows**

Jacques and Hervé Loire from the Ateliers Loire workshops complete the plates for the stained-glass windows from the artist's drawings. The artist works with them on site and confirms their color, transparency and pattern size.

## **July 2013, the large window frame**

A life-size paper model of the large metal mesh that will frame the central stained-glass window is presented. Production of the frame then begins at the Technival Industrie workshop and foundry, represented by Mr. Dubois and Mr. Benhamou.

## **September 2013, the embroidery from Rochefort**

Jean-Michel Othoniel works with goldwork embroiderers from the Begonia d'Or workshop in Rochefort, represented by Sylvie Deschamps and Marie-Hélène César, to choose the fabrics, colors and sequins for the curtains.

Manufacturing of the display cases designed by Othoniel for the *Trésor* begins at the Version Bronze workshop in Montreuil, under the direction of Patrick Ribeiro.

## **December 2013, the gold and mica cabochons**

In the artist's presence, artisans from the Ateliers Loire assemble the bottom part of the first stained-glass window. They also position cabochons containing gold and mica, made in blown glass by Matteo Gonet in his Basel workshop under the artist's direction.

## January 2014, Angoulême blue

Jean-Michel Othoniel works with the seamstresses from the Atelier Begonia d'Or workshops to create large-scale curtains in blue velvet with gold embroidery.

With artisans at the Ateliers Loire workshop in Chartres, the artist assembles the large stained-glass window, comprising more than 10,000 pieces of blue glass, put in position one by one.

## February 2014, the tapestries

The first tapestries are completed.

## March 2014, the wallpaper

Jean-Michel Othoniel travels to the Offard workshops in Tours to oversee the printing of the first panels of the wallpaper, which is gilded and embossed.

Embroiderers from Poitou-Charentes complete the last wall hangings.

## April 2014, the large stained-glass window is installed

The large stained-glass window is installed in the *Trésor*.

The walls in the Bell tower room of the *Trésor* are prepared to receive the wallpaper panels.

## June 2014

The cement tiles are delivered to the *Trésor*, and the floor layout put into place.

## October 2014, the mesh is installed

The large-format metal meshwork, which will frame the large stained-glass window in the third room, is finalized in the workshops of Technival Industrie.

## November 2014

The Ateliers Loire complete assembly and installation of the last two stained-glass windows in its Chartres workshop.

Jean-Michel Othoniel and his studio conceive and build a model of the reliquary that will house a fragment of Saint Pierre Aumaître's femur.

## January 2015, the Murano glass beads: gold, black and aquamarine blue

The Murano glass-blowers complete the **660 glass beads, gilded with gold leaf**, to be used for the objects and display cases designed by the artist. They continue production on the remaining **850 black and aquamarine glass beads**.

Ateliers Loire install the two last stained-glass windows in the main room of the *Trésor*.

## March 2015, the gilded aluminum reliquary

In his Paris studio, Othoniel meets with Francis Cat-Berro to look at his drawings and a 3D simulation of the reliquary, made of glass, Murano blown glass and gilded metal.

## **July 2015, laying the cement tiles**

The tiles are laid on the floor of the Bell tower room of the *Trésor* by companions under the supervision of Société Dagand.

Metalwork on the aluminum mesh intended to frame the large stained-glass window is completed.

## **October 2015, posing the wallpaper**

Wallpaper panels are applied to the walls of the main room of the *Trésor*.

The last stained-glass windows are installed in the other rooms.

The reliquary, gilded with gold leaf, arrives at the artist's studio, as does the embroidered cushion that will hold the relic of Saint Pierre Aumaître.

## **December 2015**

The first prototypes of the display cases made by Version Bronze in Montreuil are assembled with Murano glass beads samples. Objects in gilded metal selected by the artist for the *Trésor* are sent for restoration.

## **January 2016, a new bishop is appointed**

Monsieur Gosselin succeeds Monsieur Dagens as the bishop of Angoulême.

## **February 2016**

A second presentation of the display cases in Version Bronze workshop after the artist readjustments.

## **April 2016**

The display cases are put in place, and their final position in each room is confirmed. Lighting on the metal mesh and pedestals is adjusted.

## **May 2016, the black display cases**

The display cases covered in black beads, designed to house the objects of the Commitment room, are installed in the *Trésor*.

## **June 2016, the gold, silver and blue display cases are put in place**

The display cases and pedestals in blue, silver and gold glass beads, created for the objects in the Bell tower room of the *Trésor*, and the Lapidary are installed.

Light settings with the light designer Anne Bureau from Bordeaux and the electrician from Société Brunet.

## **July 2016, the lighting is finalized**

The final lighting tests are made, and the Saint Pierre Aumaître relic and statues of saints are put in place.

## **August 24, 2016**

Mrs. Audrey Azoulay, French minister of Culture & Communication and Mrs. Martine Pinville, Secretary of State for trade, consumption, handicraft and social economy, preview *Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*.

## **August 2016, the objects are restored, good as new**

The restoration is completed on all the elements and objects in the *Trésor*.

## September 2016, The *Trésor* is revealed

The doors to the entrance of the *Trésor* and staircase railing are put in position.

The *Trésor* objects are definitively installed in their display cases, as well as the light design, the alarm and air treatment systems are all set.

The *Trésor* objects are definitively installed in their display cases.

The Lapidary objects for the first room are mounted onto the walls, and the large stone sculpture of the Madonna is installed.

The wall hangings, completed by the gold embroiderers in Rochefort, are hung on the walls.

Every aspect of the Angoulême Cathedral *Trésor* is now in place. The gates protecting the entrance are closed, and the keys are entrusted to Monseigneur Gosselin, bishop of Angoulême, and to M. Christophe Bourel-Le Guilloux, architect representing the DRAC (Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs) for Aquitaine - Limousin - Poitou-Charentes, who replaced Pierre Cazenave.

The *Trésor* opens to the public on September 30, 2016. Tours begin in mid november.

## IX - KEY STATISTICS

**1** periode ( 1852 - 1875 ), **1** style : Neo-Romanesque,  
**1** unique restauration, **1** immersive artwork, **1** artist,  
**8** years of work, **3** dedicated areas and **200** m<sup>2</sup>,  
**17** collaborating workshops, **13** restorers, **147** restored  
objects, **11** stained-glass windows, **40** m<sup>2</sup> of stained-glass,  
**22000** pieces of glass cut and placed, **18** pieces of fur-  
nitures created, **1523** blown-glass beads, **3000** sheets  
of gold leaf, **400** dominos of wallpaper gilded by hand  
covering **80** m<sup>2</sup> of wall, **352** cement tiles on **100** m<sup>2</sup>,  
**3** large blue-velvet curtains embroidered with **2231** gold  
sequins, **196** lumignons of colored glass, **1** reliquary  
and **1** sanctified relic, **14** sculptures, **3742** rings.

# X - BIOGRAPHY

## JEAN-MICHEL OTHONIEL

Inspired by his interest in metamorphoses, sublimations and transmutations, and for materials with reversible properties, Jean-Michel Othoniel (born January 27, 1964 in Saint-Etienne, living and working in Paris) began to create, in the early 90s, works in wax or sulfur that he first presented at Documenta in Kassel in 1992. The following year, he introduced glass into his work, marking a veritable turning point in his approach. Working with the renowned glassmakers in Murano, he explores the possibilities of this material that has since become his signature.

From 1996 on, he began inscribing his works in the landscape, hanging giant necklaces in the gardens of the Villa Medici, on the trees of the Venetian garden of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection (1997) and at the Alhambra in Granada (1999). In 2000, he has his first time public commission, and transform the Paris metro station Palais-Royal - Musée du Louvre into his *Kiosk of the Night-Walkers*. His numerous exhibitions allow to experiment with the many facets of glass: in 2003, for his exhibition «Crystal Palace» at the Fondation Cartier in Paris and the MoCA in Miami, he made blown-glass shapes, enigmatic sculptures part jewelry, part architecture and part erotic objects. The following year, for the Mesopotamian galleries in the Louvre, he created his first self-supporting necklaces.

The themes of travel and memory, which often recur in his work, were highlighted in his *Petit Théâtre de Peau d'Âne* (*Little Theatre of Donkey Skin* - 2004, Collection of the National Museum of Modern Art, Paris), inspired by the little marionettes found in the writer Pierre Loti's house, or, taking a more political direction, with his *Bateau de larmes* (*Boat of Tears*), a tribute to exiles made from a boat used by Cuban refugees found in Miami and shown in Basel in 2005.

In 2011, a major exhibition at the Centre Pompidou in Paris traced his artistic journey and brought to light the multiplicity of his artistic practice. This retrospective, entitled «My Way,» was then presented to Leeum Samsung Museum of Art in Seoul, the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo, the Macau Museum of Art in Macao and the Brooklyn Museum in New York. In 2012, an invitation to the Delacroix museum in Paris afforded him the opportunity to interact with this history-laden place through a series of sculptures inspired by the architecture of flowers and plates from his *Herbier Merveilleux*. In spring 2013, the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo commissioned for its 10th anniversary, *Kin no Kokoro*, a monumental *in situ* sculpture perennially installed in the Japanese garden Mohri Garden.

In May 2015, Jean-Michel Othoniel inaugurated *Les Belles Danses* (*The Beautiful Dances*), three fountain sculptures installed in the basins of the Water Theatre Grove in Versailles, redesigned by landscape architect Louis Benech – the first permanent commission in the chateau's gardens since Louis XVI.

In September 2016, Jean-Michel Othoniel unveils his *Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême*, a total, immersive work of art that he had been working on for more than eight years.

His works are in the collections of the world's most important contemporary art museums.

He is represented by Perrotin galleries (New York, Paris and Hong Kong) and Kukje (Seoul) and has frequently been invited to create works *in situ* in dialogue with historical places or contemporary architecture.

Jean-Michel Othoniel continues to pursue a vast project: his dream to poetize and re-enchant the world.

# XI - ARCHITECTS OF THE PROJECT

**Direction Régional des Affaires Culturelles  
région Aquitaine Limousin – Poitou-Charentes**

Mr. Arnaud Littardi  
Mrs. Adeline Rabaté, Mrs. Camille Zvenigorodsky

**Conservateurs régionaux des monuments historiques  
Drac Aquitaine - Limousin - Poitou-Charentes**

Mr. Pierre Cazenave et Mr. Christophe Bourel-Le Guilloux

**Conservateurs des monuments historiques**

Mrs. Anne Embs, Mrs. Pauline Lucas et Mr. Dominique Peyre

**Conseillers aux arts plastiques**

**Drac Aquitaine - Poitou-Charentes**

Mr. Thomas Kocek et Mr. Christian Garcelon

**Techniciennes des services culturels**

Mrs. Agnès Beaufort et Mrs. Sylvie Plet-Duhamel

**Inspecteur à la Direction générale de la création artistique**

Mr. Yves Sabourin

**Architecte en chef des monuments historiques**

Mr. Denis Dodeman

**The clergy**

Mgr. Dagens, évêque émérite d'Angoulême.

Mgr. Gosselin, évêque d'Angoulême.

Father Michel Manguy, vicaire épiscopal, curé de la cathédrale d'Angoulême

**The artist**

Mr. Jean-Michel Othoniel

**La commission diocésaine d'art sacré**

Dr. Jacques Sauquet, ancien président de l'association pour la sauvegarde et l'étude du patrimoine religieux de la Charente, Mrs. Annie Sauquet, Mr. David Richard, Mrs. Marylise Ortiz, Président de l'Association Nationale des Villes et Pays d'Art et d'Histoire

**La Société Archéologique et Historique de la Charente**

Mr. Florent Gaillard, président et archiviste de la Ville d'Angoulême

**OTHONIEL STUDIO**

M. David Caubère

Mr. Olivier Lounissi, Mrs. Lenche Andonova, Mrs. Sayo Senoo,

Mr. Alain Abitbol (Ingénierie)



### **ENGIE Sponsorship**

Mr. Bruno Odin, Directeur Délégué Grand-Ouest / Délégué Régional Poitou-Charentes at ENGIE

### **The craftsmen**

L'Atelier d'Offard (wallpaper), MiraColour (cement floor tiles), Les Ateliers Loire (stained-glass), Glassworks (glass cabochons), Technival Industrie, (Aluminum latticework), Arsculpt (3D models),  
Ste Baney (metal work), Version Bronze (furnitures),  
Salviati (glass beads), M. Francis Cat-Berro (the reliquary),  
Le Bégonia d'or (embroidery and wall hangings),  
Mme. Céline Gacon (tapestry and tailoring), Mme. Isabelle Cerneau (embroidery and sewing),  
Société Dagand (structural works), MCCC (cabinet making),  
Wonderful light, Mme. Anne Bureau (Light designing), Société Brunet, Société  
Santerne (Electricity), PL Art, BOVIS CENTRE, M. Olivier Braconnier (transportation)

### **The restorers of the Trésor**

Atelier dorure Forget-Morin, Mrs. Martine FORGET (gilded wood), M. Pierre Chatenet (cabinet making), Mrs. Juliette Vignier-Dupin (ceramics), Mrs. Célia Thibaud (textile),  
Atelier Ridacker (cabinet making), Mrs. Delphine Bienvenut (sculpture),  
Mr. Sébastien Brunner (sculpture), Mrs. Amélie Chedeville (sculpture),  
Mrs. Laura Caru et Mrs. Sarah Gonnet (orfèvrerie), Mrs. Charlotte Rerolle (goldsmithery),  
Mrs. Anne-Marie Geffroy (goldsmithery), Mrs. Catherine Augel (goldsmithery)

### **Cultural mediation**

Mrs. Béatrice Rolin, Conservateur en chef du Musée d'Angoulême, Directrice du  
service patrimoine culturel  
Mrs. Laetitia Copin-Merlet, Directrice de Via Patrimoine  
Mrs. Marie Faure, Viapatrimoine, médiatrice de l'architecture et du patrimoine

### **Press relations**

Mrs. Cécilia Hurstel, OTHONIEL STUDIO  
Mrs. Héloïse Le Carvenec, Galerie Perrotin

### **Editions**

Mr. Benjamin Carteret, OTHONIEL STUDIO  
Graphisme - Mrs. Lena Araguas, Traduction - Mrs. Laurie Hurwitz  
Photographer : Yann Calvez

### **The movie "Jean-Michel Othoniel, le Trésor d'Angoulême"**

A movie by Gilles Coudert & Damien Faure  
Produced by A.P.R.E.S Production

### **Book- DVD**

Directeur de publication Gilles Coudert  
Editorial coordination: Benjamin Carteret, OTHONIEL STUDIO ; Alexandre Neveu, A.P.R.E.S Editions  
Text : Adrien Goetz ; Design : Lena Araguas ; Traduction : Laurie Hurwitz ; Photographer : Yann Calvez  
Edited by A.P.R.E.S Editions / [www.apres-production.com](http://www.apres-production.com)

## XII - PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême

Place Saint Pierre, 16000 Angoulême

### Guided tours of the *Trésor* organized by Via Patrimoine.

Reservations required at  
the Angoulême Museum  
Tel : +33 (0)5 45 95 79 88  
mediation\_musee@mairie-angouleme.fr

and Via patrimoine  
Tel : + 33 (0)6 37 82 29 72  
www.facebook.com/via.patrimoine.16

## PRESS CONTACTS

### OTHONIEL STUDIO

18, rue de la Perle, 75003 - Paris

+33 (0)1 43 67 47 22

Cécilia Hurstel : cecilia@othoniel.fr

**www.othoniel.fr**

Instagram : Othoniel\_Studio

### DRAC AQUITAINE - LIMOUSIN - POITOU-CHARENTES

CRMH site de Poitiers - 102, Grand'Rue

BP 553 - 86020 Poitiers Cedex

+33 (0)5 49 36 30 30

Pierre Cazenave

pierre.cazenave@culture.gouv.fr

### GALERIE PERROTIN

76, rue de Turenne, 75003 - Paris

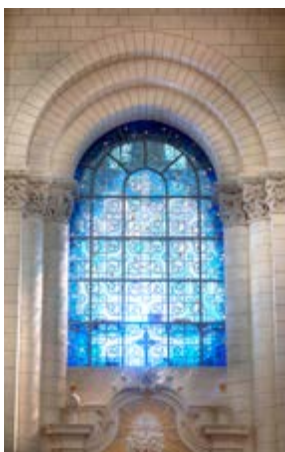
+33 (0)1 42 16 91 80

Héloïse Le Carvenec

heloise@perrotin.com

# XIII - PRESS IMAGES

As the *Trésor* is still being installed, new images will be available soon.



©Yann Calvez



©Yann Calvez



©Yann Calvez



©Yann Calvez



©Yann Calvez



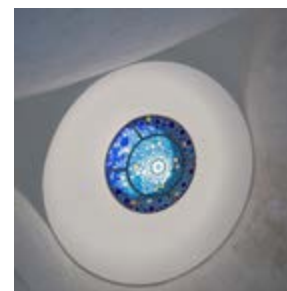
©Yann Calvez



©Jean-Michel Othoniel



©Yann Calvez



©Yann Calvez



©Jean-Michel Othoniel

*Le Trésor de la cathédrale d'Angoulême* (details), 2016.

A public art commission from DRAC Aquitaine - Limousin - Poitou-Charentes.

[www.othoniel.fr](http://www.othoniel.fr)

## CONTACT

OTHONIEL STUDIO

18, rue de la Perle, 75003 - Paris

+33 (0)1 43 67 47 22

Benjamin Carteret: [benjamin@othoniel.fr](mailto:benjamin@othoniel.fr)