

musée-mémorial du terrorisme

preliminary project team

press kit
january 2026



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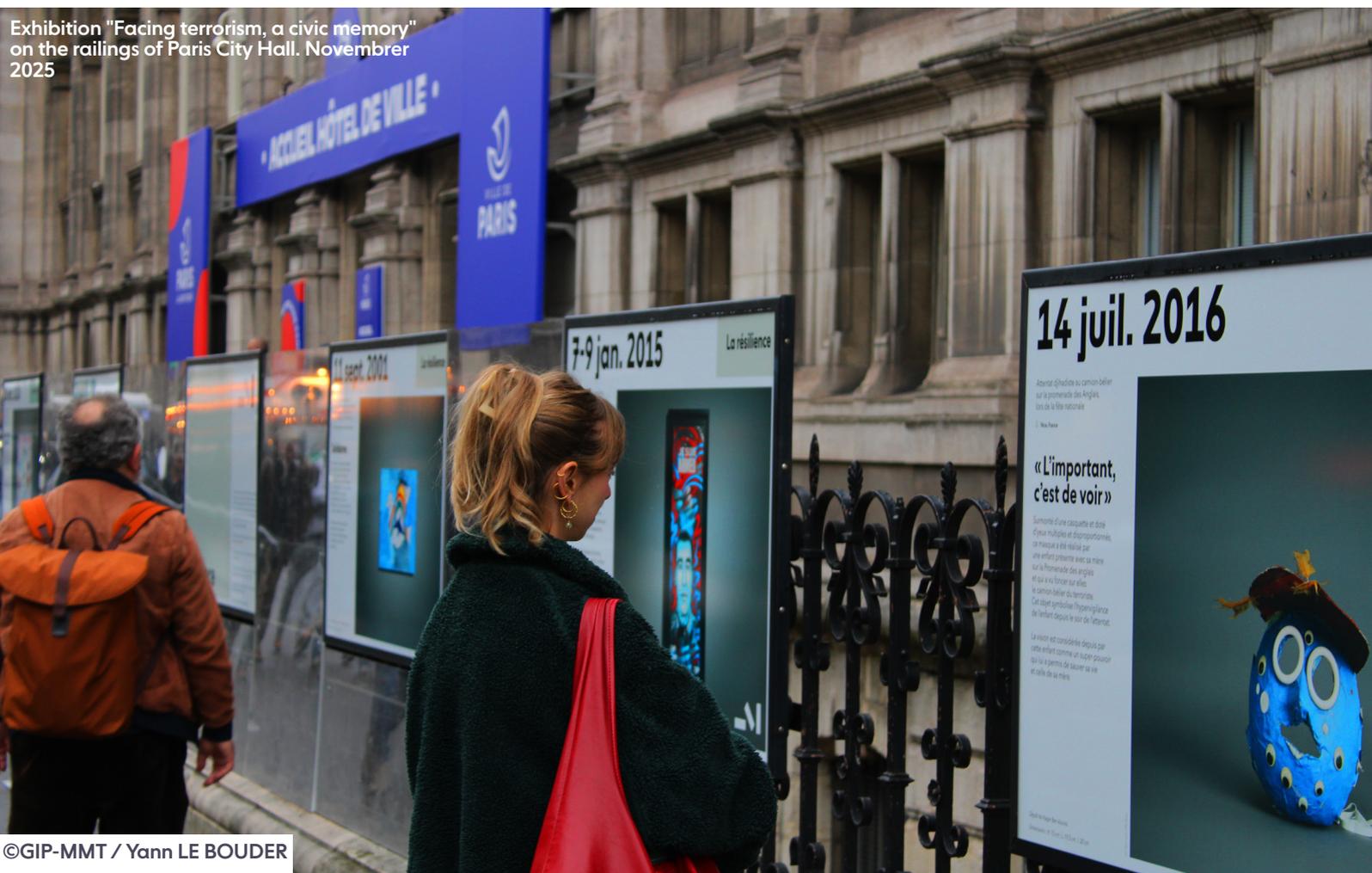
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A place of tribute, knowledge and transmission

The future Museum-Memorial of Terrorism (MMT) will serve as both a national memorial to victims of terrorism and a museum of history and society dedicated to a phenomenon that affects our daily lives. It will be the first museum in the world to address the issue of terrorism, its victims and its effects over the long term and on a national and international scale.

The project was announced by President Emmanuel Macron in September 2018 and a Preliminary Project Team was set up in February 2019. The MMT is due to open its doors in Paris in a few years' time.

Editorial

The Museum-Memorial of Terrorism is fully in line with recent policies of memory dedicated to major events in our history.

It fulfils a dual purpose: to create a national memorial for all victims of terrorist attacks who died in France and French victims who died abroad, and to offer the widest possible audience a place for raising awareness, reflection and transmission on a little-known subject. The memorial and the museum were therefore designed jointly. They form a whole, an alliance between memory and history, between recognition of the endured suffering and knowledge of the causes, methods and effects of this violence of war in peacetime.

The MMT aims not only to keep alive the memory of the victims but also, as far as possible, to give a meaning to the incomprehensible, to humanise assessments and to enable people to distance themselves from tragic events. It therefore aims to be an open and inclusive place, sensitive to a plurality of viewpoints and offering a space for transmission, particularly for younger generations.

Henry Rouso - Chair
Elisabeth Pelsez - Director General

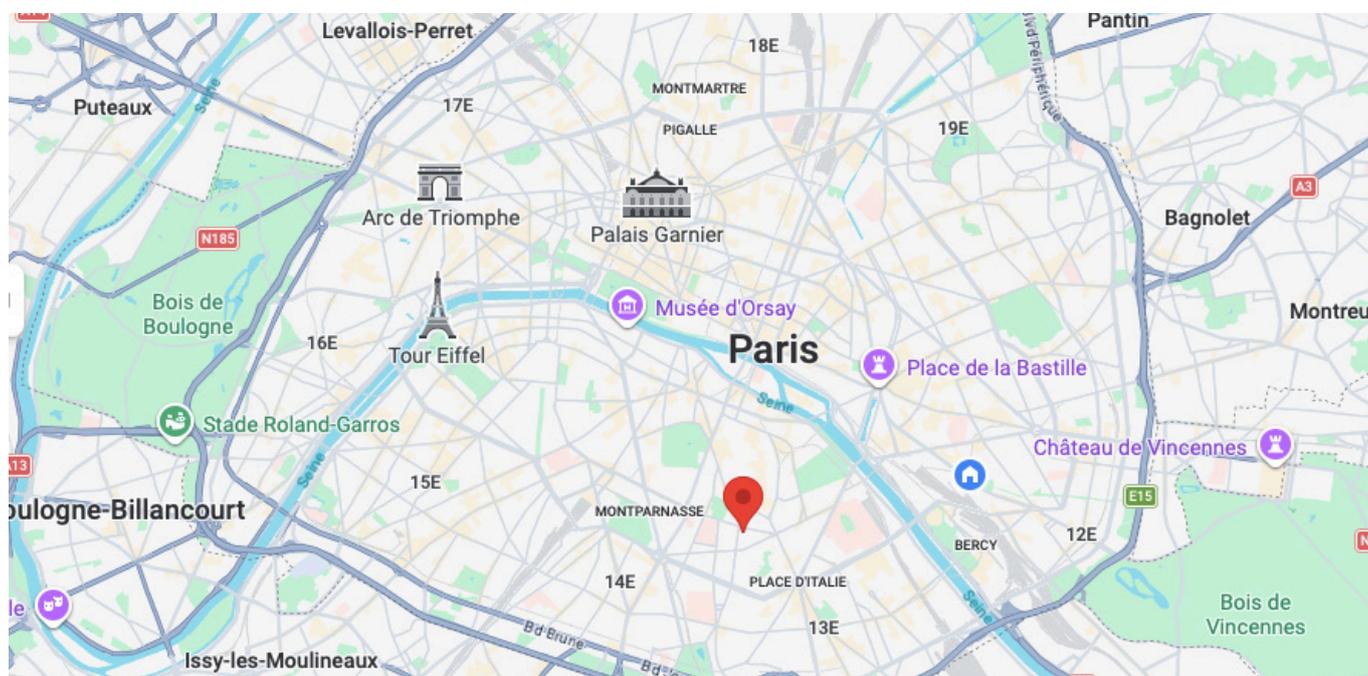


Henry Rouso



Elisabeth Pelsez

©Natacha Nisic



Location of the future Museum Memorial of Terrorism in Paris



The memorial itself has a national dimension. Although there are memorials at some attack sites, most victims have not been honoured, particularly those abroad. The primary purpose of the future MMT is therefore to pay tribute to all victims who have died as a result of terrorism in France, regardless of their nationality, and to French victims who have died abroad since 1974. This date was chosen by the legislator for the awarding of the national medal of recognition to victims of terrorism, in memory of the first attack targeting civilians in France since the Algerian War, on 15 September 1974, at the Drugstore Publicis in Paris.

The design of this memorial was developed in close collaboration with victims' associations and bereaved families. Its aim is to compile an exhaustive list of the victims' names. It also aspires to be more than just a war memorial. It should be a place of contemplation, but also a place of life and hope, which is why its creation will be entrusted to an artist.

In parallel, and to emphasise the complementary nature of the two parts of the project, the museum will display individual portraits of the victims and personal items that belonged to them. The aim is to associate each name with a face and biographical details or personal items, to embody the uniqueness of each life destroyed in collective tragedies.



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Banner for the 2025 international seminar "Traces and testimonies: what historical narratives on terrorism?" at the Collège des Bernardins.

Recognition of victims

The creation of the Museum-Memorial of Terrorism is part of a broader movement of policies of memory, marked by a refocusing on victims and their rights. Since the 1970s, public debate, historiographical controversies and community mobilisation have contributed to making remembrance a democratic issue in its own right. In France, institutional recognition has gradually taken shape: care for victims, compensation, official ceremonies, and, in 2019, the establishment of a National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism on 11 March, which is also the date of the European commemoration, chosen in memory of the 2004 Madrid bombings.

The museum, an original and unprecedented project

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The main exhibition

The museum aims to provide information about terrorism today and in the past. It is one of the first museums in the world to address the issue of terrorism not by focusing on a single attack or national situation, but by taking a close look at the process itself.

It draws on history, sociology, international relations and other scientific disciplines. The aim is to enable visitors to take a step back, to detach themselves from the shock that each attack plunges us into, and perhaps to help defuse some of the causes that enable terrorist acts, starting with ignorance and misinformation.

The exhibition is structured around three main sections.

The history of terrorism

This section covers the history of contemporary terrorism from the 1960s and 1970s to the present day, with an introductory retrospective dating back to the emergence of the word "terrorist" during the French Revolution.

It addresses different moments and different types of terrorism, such as the Years of Lead, regionalist terrorism, state terrorism and, of course, jihadist terrorism, both in France and in the world.

The voice of the victims

This sequence addresses the unique nature of the victims of terrorism and their struggle for greater recognition and better care.

It focuses on individual trajectories, the issue of trauma and the possibility of resilience.

Society's response

This section attempts to show the effects of terrorism on societies, particularly French society.

It addresses all kinds of responses to this violence: those of the media, the police, the justice system, schools and civil society, including citizen mobilisation.

It also shows the transformations in lifestyles and cultural expressions.



Collections

The Museum-Memorial of Terrorism brings collective history and individual stories together through its collections. These consist of donations from victims, their families, and associations. These objects, often witnesses to the most ordinary everyday life shattered by the attack, offer a personal and intimate perspective, recalling the human reality experienced at the closest level.

The collections also include a large number of judicial seals, one of the project's most original features. The seals are objects of all kinds that were used during police investigations and legal proceedings. As a general rule, they are destined to be destroyed. Thanks to the help of the Ministry of Justice and the Paris Judicial Court, the MMT has been able to set up a system over several years to recover some of them once the cases have been definitively closed. Nearly 2,500 items have already been donated to the MMT, and others are expected to be added before the museum opens, in what is now a continuous flow.

The collections also include deposits from institutions (Intelligence Services, Paris Fire Brigade, etc.) and French and foreign museums.

Finally, they include creations by contemporary artists or victims who themselves produced works of art as a response to trauma. These traces, which have been collected, preserved and will soon be exhibited, are unique in their diversity and originality. They allow for not only a scientific approach to the subject, but also a sensitive, emotional approach that is capable of reaching the widest possible audience.



Security guard at the Paris Court of Justice

Several emblematic pieces embody this approach

The watch, which was sealed after the attack at Marseilles' train-station on 31 December 1983, provides an insight into the Carlos affair and the challenges of preserving fragile objects.

The RAID (a special intervention unit of the national police force) equipment used during the assault in Toulouse in March 2012 bears witness to both the violence of the events and the central role of negotiation.

The slate and furniture from the restaurant La Belle Équipe, Romain Naufle's unfinished guitar and C215's portrait «Je suis Ahmed» connect collective history to individual lives.

Finally, elements from the courtroom will help visitors understand, through immersive devices and film clips, the specific nature of major terrorism trials and the new role played by victims in them.

Furniture from the restaurant «La Belle Equipe» marked by Kalashnikov bullet holes during the attacks of 13 November 2015. Donated by Grégory Reibenberg



Educational activities

From 2021 to 2024, the Preliminary Project Team established close collaboration with six regional academies authorities and eleven schools, including secondary schools and high schools, involving nearly five hundred students.

They contributed to the creation of a joint exhibition, "Facing Terrorism", that can be viewed online on the MMT website, for three consecutive years. This exhibition showcased the students' inventiveness: podcasts, models, drawings, textile creations and even live performances were used to address themes such as victim trauma, online hate, disinformation and recent trials.

It also showed how deeply these generations are concerned about terrorism and its effects, and how much they want to understand and take action. This experience reinforced the idea that the MMT was a socially and morally necessary project.

The educational division now focuses on producing resources for teachers and, above all, on developing forms of mediation to accompany visits to future permanent and temporary exhibitions at the MMT.

An international network

The Museum-Memorial of Terrorism has helped to create an international network of all museums dedicated to terrorism: the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum (Oklahoma City), the National September 11 Memorial and Museum (New York City), the 22 July Centre (Oslo), the Lugar de la Memoria y de la Inclusión Social (Lima) and the Centro Memorial de las Víctimas del Terrorismo (Vitoria-Gasteiz).

It regularly organises international seminars and workshops with them to share experiences.



International Seminar 2025, organised by the MMT at the Collège des Bernardins : "Traces and testimonies: what historical narratives on terrorism?"

Round table discussion "How should terrorist violence be portrayed in a museum exhibition?". Speakers from left to right: Arthur Dénouveaux, Hager Ben Aouissi, Clifford Chanin, Kari Watkins, Lena Fahre, Mileva Stupar.

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A hub for scientific research

Even before its opening, the Museum-Memorial of Terrorism is already a resource centre for research. It organises an annual international seminar on scientific, museographic and ethical issues. It contributes to special issues of French and international journals, in particular a special issue of the magazine *L'Histoire*, published in the summer of 2025, entitled «Terrorism» as part of the commemorations of the 2015 attacks. Finally, its members participate in numerous conferences and workshops in France and abroad.

Governance

The Preliminary Project Team of the Museum-Memorial of Terrorism is a Public Interest Group (GIP) supported by seven ministries (Justice, Interior, Armed Forces, Culture, Europe and Foreign Affairs, Education, Higher Education and Research), the National Audiovisual Institute (INA), the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the Foundation for Assistance to Victims of Terrorism.

Its staff counts a dozen members from museums, justice, research, administration and new technologies.

The mission has a Scientific and Cultural Board, which guarantees its independence and brings together experts in the humanities and social sciences, art history and museology. It also has an Advisory Committee made up of numerous prominent figures: magistrates, representatives of different religions, French and foreign museum directors, and all the victims' and victim support associations.

The mission has developed an ethic of listening to all stakeholders in the issues it deals with in all its areas of activity. It pays particular attention to its responsibility towards victims and the general public.

Intervention with students at the French high school in Madrid



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