

"Gardanne, the only village painted by Cézanne"



1885-1886 : Cézanne in Gardanne

Preface: Cézanne in Gardanne

«To conclude, I will tell you that I am still busy painting and that there would be treasures to take away from this country which hasn't found yet an interpreter up to the richness it shows.»

Thus does Cézanne write from Gardanne to his friend Victor Chocquet on may 11, 1886. The painter has been staying in Gardanne for already nearly a year with his wife and son who is 13 and goes to the local school.

As a matter of fact, Cézanne spends several months in Gardanne (during the year 1885-1886), in the middle of his life as a man and as a painter. On the human level, we know that he is passing through a crisis of passion, of which the stakes elude us (we don't know the identity of the woman whom the painter loves passionately). Gardanne seems to assure him the peace and quiet he needs.

On the artistic level, he becomes the “great Cézanne” we extol. In the preceding years, he learnt in l'Estaque how to go beyond the impressionism whose benefits he once wanted to share. However, in l'Estaque, he discovers large panoramas overlooking the blue sea of the Gulf of Marseille, which gives an unsuspected classical force to his compositions. The colour becomes his material and his place, Cézanne discovers that the painting must be composed both from it and for it: *«when the colour is at its richest, the form is at its fullest.»* He says again.

The time Cézanne spends in Gardanne is quite limited but Cézanne needed this village to take a large step forward, losing nothing from the colour, but composing paintings from objective structuring discovered in nature.

And now, the painter realizes paintings which represent a village of Provence: neither Aix nor Peynier, nor Fuveau, nor Vauvenargues will attract the painter. Only Gardanne makes it possible for the painter to be in keeping with a “védutiste tradition”, that is to say a tradition of Italian painters who are at-

tached to revealing pictorially towns or monuments according to a classical scheduling. There, he captures the village on a front view of the hill. Cézanne paints the village around its bell tower not once or twice, but three times! What a symbol!

The artist wants consistency around a significant feature on a spiritual level as well as on an architectural level. Moreover, he chooses three different times of day as if he wanted to signify the totality of the time. These are not Monet's series of paintings in front of the Cathedral of Rouen, but they are the capturing of a motionless time. As always, the painter stands back facing his motif; in this case, he is on the hill opposite. But that is the way Cézanne likes the surroundings. He chooses another village, “Payannet”, this time to compose a painting lengthways as if it were an answer to the reclining cliff of the Sainte-Victoire.

And now, the artist paints the mountain from an angle of sight that is to be found only at this period. The mountain seems to hold on to the disappearing horizon and it brings the landscape to the foreground.

Having thus experimented with a new link to the motif, Cézanne tries to compose some other paintings in “Jas de Bouffan” in Aix, but now he wants wilder sites which could associate order and disorder at the same time. Château-Noir and Bibémus will give an answer to these new artistic demands.

Undoubtedly Gardanne will have marked that moment when Cézanne becomes the model for a new art-form in the tradition of his Italian masters, since he intended to “paint Poussin from nature”.

Denis Coutagne

Heritage chief curator

Manager of the “Musée Granet”.

Edito

Like the course of the sun, it is from East to West that Cézanne painted the village of Gardanne from three different angles. In Gardanne, Cézanne made his paintings quiver with light. One century after his death, we would like to throw a special light on the works of this great master.

Cézanne chose to be the interpreter of the treasures of our country; that is the reason why he is so dear to us. Thanks to him, the image of our town circulates all over the world. We have decided to publish this brochure in order to explain a part of the works Cézanne painted when he stayed in Gardanne.

I sincerely thank Mr. Denis Coutagne, Heritage Chief Curator and Manager of the “Musée Granet” for having written the preface of this book. I would also like to thank the “Mission Cézanne 2006” who have granted us their seal and all the people who have taken part in the realization of this homage to “Grand Paul Cézanne”.

Roger Meï
Mayor of Gardanne



→ ***Gardanne in the evening.***
View from “la colline des Frères”, 1886.
Oil on canvas, 92 x 73 cm.
Brooklyn Museum, New York.

On the cover:
Gardanne in the morning .
View from “la Planque”, 1886.
Oil on canvas, 65 x 100 cm.
Fondation Barnes, Merion.

Cézanne 1839-1906

His origins

His mother was Provençal, she was born in Aix her father being a “chair maker”.

As for Cézanne’s father, he was born in Saint-Zacharie and was descended from a Piedmontese lineage. His ancestors came from Césana Torinese, a village situated in the Italian Alps, at the foot of Mont Genève. In the middle of the 17th century, they crossed the border to emigrate to Briançon and then moved south. Cézanne’s great-grandfather was a wig maker and was born in Aix in 1710.

Though his origins are modest, Paul, himself, was born to a richer family. His father, Louis Auguste, thinks that the future is in the hat trade (he learns the job in Paris, then settles in Aix-en-Provence, 55 Cours Mirabeau)

He falls in love with one of his employees who later bears him two children (Paul in 1839, Marie in 1841) and they get married three years later.

Louis Auguste grants loans to rabbit farmers in difficulties and, little by little, he becomes... a banker.

At school, Paul makes friends with Philippe Solari, who, in 1898, will sculpt the bust of the Republic for the fountain which carries that name.

With his two best friends from secondary school (Collège Bourbon): Émile Zola and Baptistin Baille, he wanders the surrounding countryside, getting carried away by its greenness and by the sun, and swimming in the river Arc...

His father wants him to become a banker, but Paul is fascinated by painting.

For the sake of peace and quiet, his father gives in and concedes him a meagre alimony. However, the latter will soon dwindle when, without the knowledge of his family, he shares his life with Hortense Fiquet who will bear him a son, Paul, in 1872.

The painter had a reputation for being bad-tempered, but, this could be explained by the ostracism which his family faced.

When Cézanne starts painting in Gardanne, he is “à peu près sans ennui” (letter dated 25th august 1885) which means things are not too bad. There, he has found peacefulness and sufficient friendships to become self-confident.

Paul will later offer several of his paintings to some of the people of Gardanne, which, in his case, is a sign of infallible friendship.

André Cézanne

Born around 1710

† April 22nd 1764 in Aix-en-Provence

Wig maker

Marie Bourgarel

Born around 1733

† 20th 1771 in Aix-en-Provence

Married towards 1755

Thomas François Xavier Cézanne

Born on November 24th 1756 in Aix-en-Provence

† April 23rd 1815 à Saint-Zacharie (Var)

Taylor

Rose Rebuffat

Born in 1761 in Pourrières (Var)

† May 14th 1821
in Aix-en-Provence

Married on February 8th 1785 in Pourrières

Louis Auguste Cézanne

Born on June 28th 1798 in Saint-Zacharie

† October 23rd 1886 in Aix-en-Provence

Hat maker then banker

Anne Elisabeth Honorine Aubert

Born on September 24th 1814

in Aix-en-Provence
† October 25th 1897 in Aix-en-Provence

Married on January 29th 1844 in Aix-en-Provence

Paul Cézanne

Born on January 19th 1839 in Aix-en-Provence

† October 23rd 1906 in Aix-en-Provence

Painter

Marie Hortense Fiquet

Born on April 22nd 1850

in Saligney (Jura)

Married on April 28th 1886 in Aix-en-Provence



➤ *Hortense Fiquet* or *Portrait of Mrs Cézanne*, 1885.
Oil on canvas, 46 x 38 cm. The Museum of Art, Philadelphie.

↑ *His son, Paul Cézanne*, 1885.
Oil on canvas, 65 x 53 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington.

← *Fountain of the Republic.* Bust sculpted by Philippe Solari, 1898.

The years in Gardanne

August 1885 : he is at his parents' in Aix, and every day, he comes to paint in Gardanne. When his small family comes to see him, he puts them up at 27, Cours Forbin in the house of Louis Baret, whose daughter Félicie is related to the family Coustoulier.

His son Paul goes to the state school with the children of Gardanne : let's name some of them who are of the same age : Adolphe Gras who will later become a notary in Gardanne, Louis Blanc who was the son of Auguste, the Main street baker, Michel Chabert from Payannet, Félix Gras from the district La Planque... and many others.

He goes painting in the countryside: in Payannet, Ribas, route de Mimet, in "La colline des frères"... his equipment placed in a cart drawn by a donkey.

In Ribas, when he is not satisfied with a painting, he tears it up and abandons the pieces in a field for an angry farmer to pick up.

It is in Gardanne that, in april 1886, he receives the novel "The Masterpiece" by Zola in which he recognizes himself as the failed painter. Offended, he breaks off his long friendship with the writer. However he will always keep Zola in his thoughts, for when he hears of his death, he will shut himself up in his studio and cry for a whole day.

Marie, Paul's sister, was very pious and wanted her brother to regularize his union with Hortense. In this way their father would officially become a grandfather. The banns are published in Gardanne and in Aix where the wedding takes place on 28th april 1886.

At his wedding, two witnesses out of the four are from Gardanne. They are his friends, Louis Baret (his landlord) and Jules Peyron (two portraits of whom we know).

In a small market town of 2,645 inhabitants, more or less all of them knew and greeted each other.

One day, the mother of Laurent Car (a primary school teacher who was well known by many people from Gar-

TO ÉMILE ZOLA

(Aix.) *Jas de Bouffan, 20 august 1885.*

Dear Émile,

I received the news you gave me of your address last Saturday. I would have... I am in Aix, and I go to Gardanne every day.

Jas de Bouffan, 25 august 1885

I am starting to paint, but because I am not too troubled. Every day I go to Gardanne, and I come back to the countryside in Aix in the evening. I sincerely shake your hand.

PAUL CÉZANNE

TO ÉMILE ZOLA

Gardanne, 4 april 1886.

Dear Émile,

I have just received "The Masterpiece" that you had the kindness to send me. I thank the author of "Rougon-Macquart" for this good evidence of memory and I ask him to let me shake his hand, while thinking of the previous years.

Sincerely yours with enthusiasm for the past.

PAUL CÉZANNE

Extracts of his correspondence with Émile Zola.

In Gardanne, district of Aix

To the Prefect of "La Seine"

The undersigned appeals to your kindness for the certification of the signature of the Mayor of the fourth district, signature which was affixed to the Life Certificate enclosed with the present request.

Yours faithfully

PAUL CÉZANNE

Draft of letter on the edge of a watercolour ; this request probably refers to the formalities of the marriage between the artist and Hortense Fiquet that was to take place in Aix in April 1886

danne and who died in 1985), said while she was walking alongside her son who was turning over the pages of an art book : « *Look ! Here's Mrs Cézanne !* » She had recognized her. Most probably they had already met and talked to each other since one of them lived on the main street, the other one on the "avenue de Toulon".

When his father dies in 1886, Cézanne settles in the family home in Jas de Bouffan.

For him, Gardanne will have represented a calm period when he enjoyed mingling with the inhabitants.

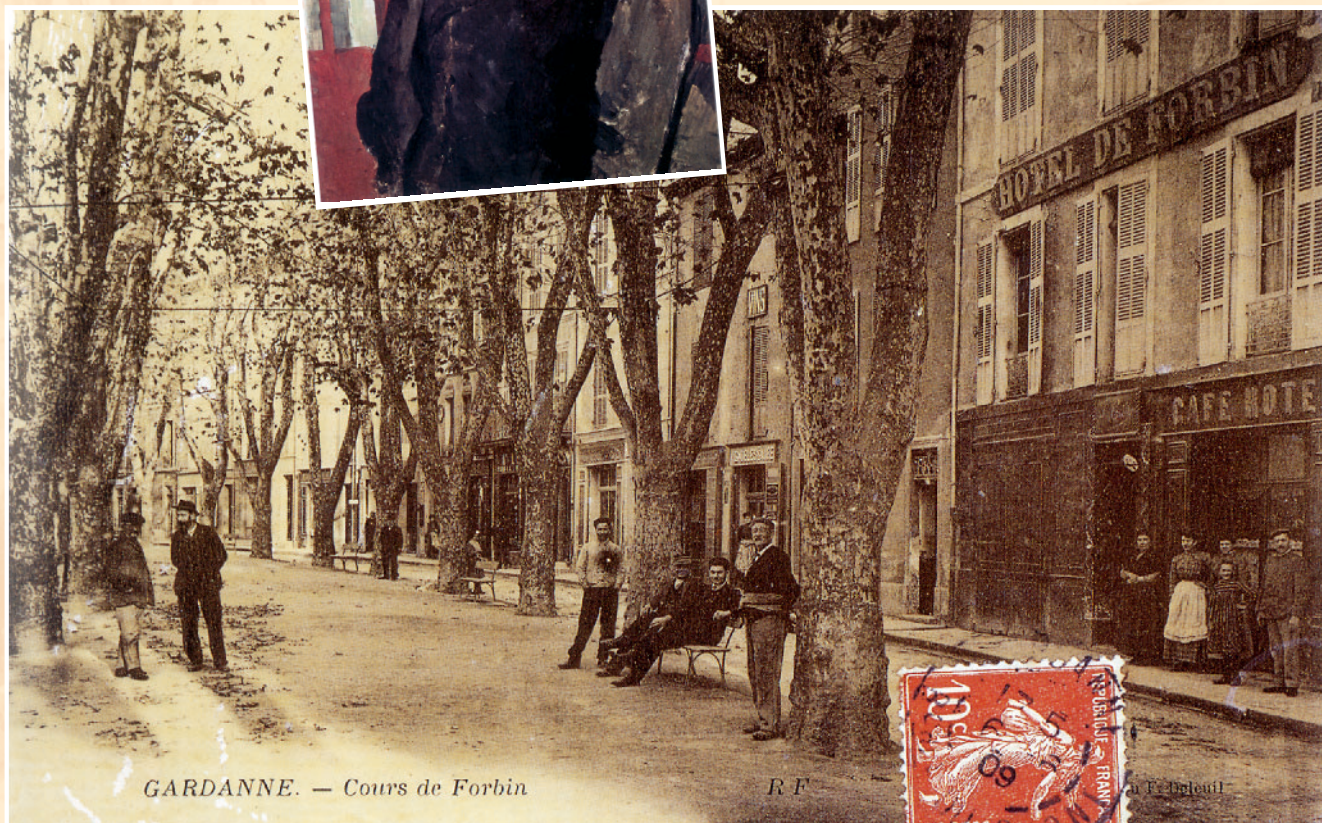


→ *Portrait of Cézanne*, 1885.
Oil on canvas, 61 x 81 cm.
Kunstmuseum Ensemble, Berne.

↓ Cézanne discussing on
the main street ("le Cours")
next to his house.

*«It is impossible to come to Provence through a tunnel
of plane trees and branches into that other Greece without
having the renowned name jump into both your mind and
your heart.»*

Jean Cocteau - Anthology "Tombeau de Cézanne" 1956



GARDANNE. — Cours de Forbin

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Ed. F. Delteil



Gardanne in midday. View from "la colline des Frères", 1886. Oil on canvas, 80 x 64.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Mrs Cézanne, 1886. Oil on canvas, 81 x 65 cm. Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris.

His work in Gardanne

Gardanne corresponds to a unique moment in the painter's life. Cézanne has attached our town to his name and with his works in Gardanne, we travel all around the world.

As for us, Cézanne belongs to Gardanne somehow (even quite a lot), because he has immortalized our village, its old church which has disappeared today, its bell tower, its “chapelle des Pénitents” (still upright). He painted different places in our district, but I think he was especially keen on representing the old village and its houses which climb up the hill to conquer the Cativel, painting from “la colline des Frères”.

We know of ten of his paintings, four watercolours and four drawings. You can see several reproductions of them on lava stones at the spot where he used to settle down to paint. It is still possible to compare them with the existing places.

In the educational file of the “Mission Cézanne Aix 2006”, we can read: « *This village has the rare privilege of being the only one that Cézanne painted. The composite structure of the town was used as a prototype to the structural conception of the painting that Cézanne was developing.* » His paintings could have inspired the first cubist landscapes by Braque, Derain and Picasso...

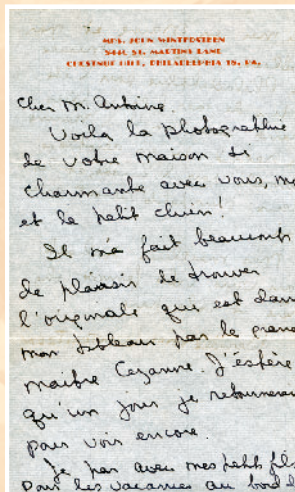
Some art critics think that cubism was born in Gardanne. Why not?

During the autumn exhibition on 4th november 1905, the journalist for "L'illustration" Gustave Geoffroy said:

« I can't help seeing one of the most beautiful incarnations of the art of painting in this so peculiar and simple artist. In front of these so pure works, I have the sensation of being in front of forever fixed aspects. I believe this painting will come down through the ages. »



The hills of Meyreuil. View from Ribas, 1885. Oil on canvas, 60 x 73 cm. Coll. part. New York.



Letter and photograph of the American owner of this painting.

In 1951, she came to Gardanne, looking for the landscape painted by Cézanne.

Document Antoine Dessi.

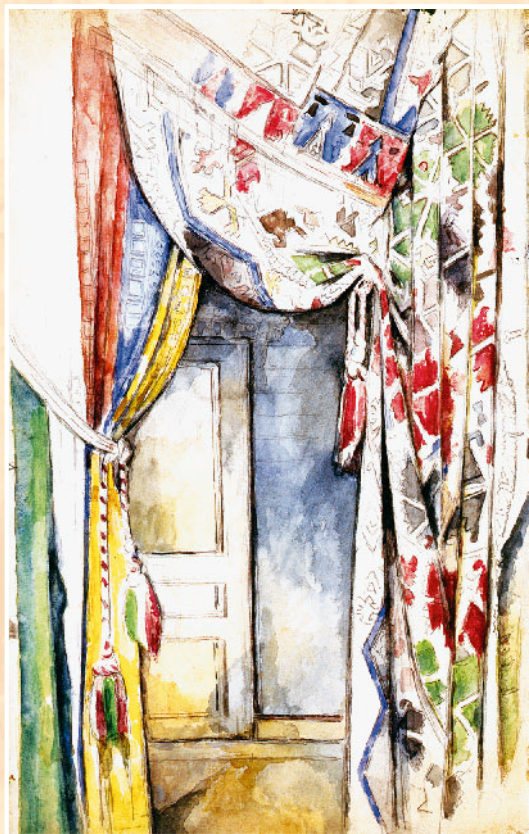


← *Gardanne. View from Saint-André*, 1885. Watercolour, 20.6 x 31.1 cm and the site today.

→ *Portrait of Jules Peyron*, 1885. Oil on canvas, 46 x 38 cm. Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Gardanne Tax collector, witness at Paul Cézanne's wedding.



← *The curtains*, 1885. Paper watercolour, 49.5 x 30.5 cm. Legs Camondo, musée du Louvre, Paris. This is the inside of the flat where Paul Cézanne lived in Gardanne.



↓ *Le Pilon du Roi*, 1887-1888. Oil on canvas, 82 x 98 cm. Sammlung Oskar Reinhart, Winterthur. « *The Pilon du Roi tender friezes through Gardanne reeds...* »
Joachim Gasquet



Gardanne at the time of Cézanne

When the painter was living in Gardanne, our town was administered by Joseph Guirand, Mayor and Academy officer. His deputy was Léopold Bossy, a tile maker, who resigned in april 1886 and was replaced by Léon Poussel, a butcher.

In 1885, there were 270 pupils attending state schools, 160 boys (4 classrooms), 110 girls (3 classrooms), all in the same building in the area “La Planque” (on the left when you go up the street Jules Ferry). In 1885, the building of the boys’ school was decided. Former pupils remember it but in its place today is the “Lycée Professionnel de l’Étoile”.



The bridge of “La Pousterle” was built in 1885. It was intended to make it easier for traffic to go from the old church to the cemetery, spanning the depression and thus creating a direct route for the hearse. Pedestrians coming from Marseilles could have direct access to the “chemin de Trets”.

The municipality will have a square made-up in front of the church and a new door opened in Saint-Joseph chapel in order to have a better access.



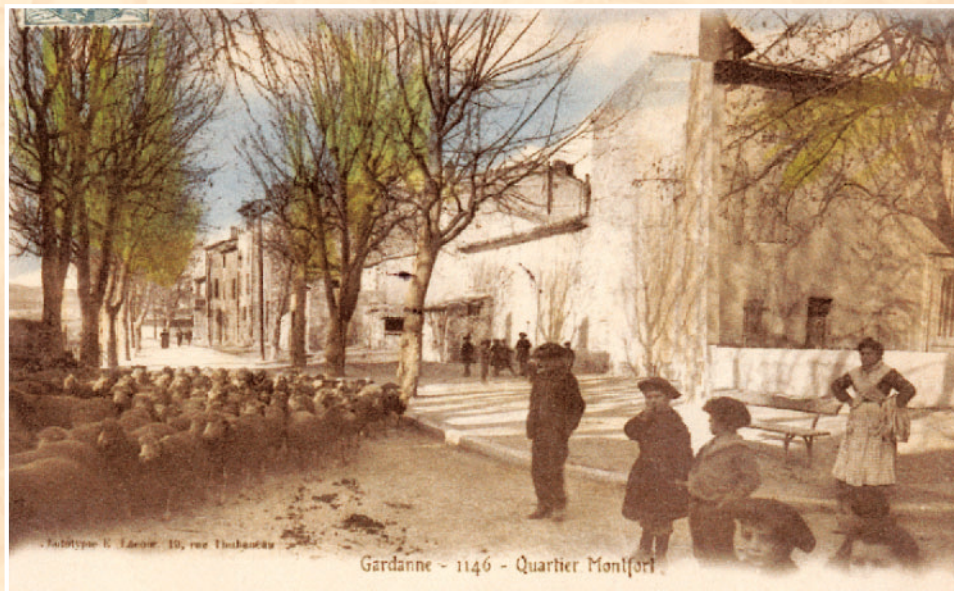
↑ General view.

← Arriving in Gardanne from the railway station.

↓ The old church as Paul Cézanne would have seen it on the present site which bears his name.



- ↓ Gardanne, Saint-Michel area. At this place, the straw stacks will later be replaced by the bauxite stock of the alumina factory.



- ↑ Agriculture school of Gardanne. Gardanne is an agricultural village famous for its vineyard, and the growing of olives, saffron, melons and beetroot.
- ← Montfort area. Sheep heading along Aix avenue towards Gambetta square.

A road will be also built to go from the suburbs up to the new cemetery (now “rue du Repos”).

These constructions and developments can be realized thanks to a bequest of twenty thousand francs made by Jules Lemerrier Maisonnelle de Richemond, (second husband of Françoise Sibillot, marquise de Gueydan), according to his mystical testament of 6th may 1882.

At that time, people speak about building a new church. The idea comes from Dean Fernand Meissonnier who has had the cross of Provence erected on the top of the Sainte-Victoire mountain and its replica on one of our mills of “Cativel”.

Thanks to Mr. Gras, chairman of the “conseil de fabrique” (parish heritage committee) the site of the church seems to have been found. However, Mr. Gras dies on 8th january 1885. His widow would like to continue her husband’s work, but this dignified lady won’t have the courage to do it.

The plane trees on “boulevard Forbin” are pruned in 1885, those on the “Cours” (main street) and along the road in 1886.

On 29th november 1885 a decision is made to furnish the streets of the town with oil lighting. The first year, this responsibility will be given to Benoît Boze, who is a gravedigger too. He will be in charge of the lighting, extinguishing and equipment maintenance.

On 4th september 1886, at the inhabitants’ request, it is decided to put an additional letterbox against the house wall of Auguste Amalbert, tobacconist in “boulevard Bontemps” (now PMU).



↑ Street lamp lighter.
One of the objects of that time presented in the museum “Gardanne Autrefois”.



← Hugues butcher’s shop, today it is Allègre butcher’s “faubourg de Gueydan”.



↑ Master Joiner, Icard on the “Cours Forbin”

← Funeral articles, Joséphine Car on the “Cours”.

Meeting Cézanne today in Gardanne

During his stay in Gardanne, Cézanne wrote: «...*There would be treasures to take away from this country.* » You are invited to take them away too, following the artist from his home, 27 Cours Forbin, up to “La colline des Frères” where a small open-air museum has been fitted out at the exact place where the painter used to put up his easel to paint the old village.

There, you can discover several reproductions of his paintings while facing the subject.

You can continue walking along Mimet road and discover the small country cottage with the village in the background.

Finally, while crossing the countryside of Gardanne, you can go as far as Payannet hamlet and, like Cézanne, admire the Sainte-Victoire mountain.

→ *Gardanne. View from tge Claou,*
1886. Oil on canvas, 58 x 79 cm.
Collection Hahnloser, Berne.

↓ The site today.



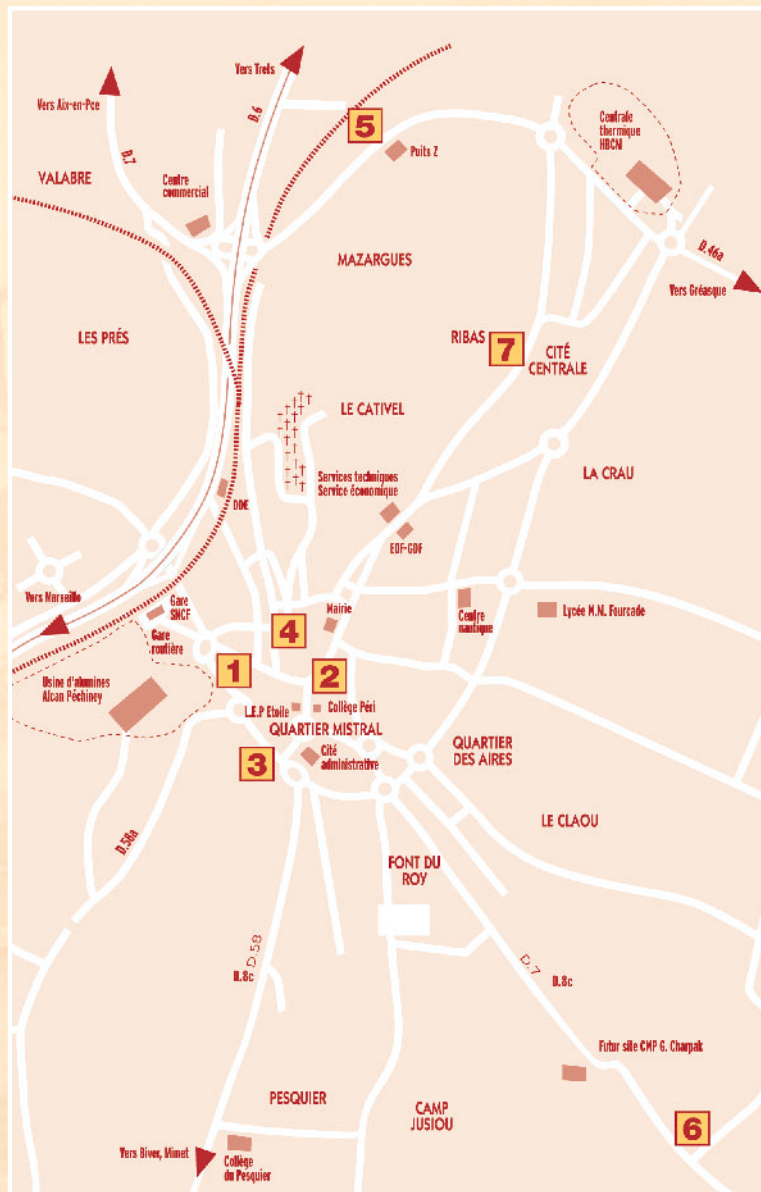
← *Payannet and Sainte-Victoire.*
Surroundings of Gardanne, 1885 - 1886.
Oil on canvas, 63 x 91.5 cm. Courtesy of the
White House Historical Association.
This painting is situated in the Oval Office
of the White House in Washington.

↓ The site today.





- 1 Tourist information centre (31 boulevard Carnot)
- 2 Cézanne's house (27 cours Forbin)
- 3 Open-air museum (Colline des Frères)
- 4 Paul Cézanne square
- 5 Hamlet of Payannet
- 6 "Motif of the small country cottage" (Route de Mimet)
- 7 "Hills of Meyreuil" (District of Ribas)



Gardanne commemorates Cézanne

In 1995, an article was published in the newspaper “La Provence”, entitled “Cézanne and Gardanne, a passion.” What do you think of the recent words of this museum curator: « *Gardanne has honoured Cézanne more than any other town ?* »

Indeed, various tributes have been paid to the painter in this town. Here are some of them :

- Paul Cézanne square which is next to the bell tower of the church painted by Cézanne.

- 1980: Biver school was named after Paul Cézanne.

- December 1989: “homage to Cézanne” with the hanging of a name plate on his house, 27 Cours Forbin, two conferences, and an exhibition of copies of Cézanne’s work made by the pupils of a fine arts school.

- 1995: inauguration of the Urban boulevard, Paul-Cézanne.

- October 1997: during the inauguration of the media library auditorium, presentation of Mr. Deleuil’s book : “15 months in Gardanne”.

- February 2000: inauguration on the “colline des Frères” of an open-air museum displaying reproductions of Cézanne’s paintings on lava stone.



↑ The village of Gardanne and Cézanne boulevard.



← Colline des Frères, inauguration of the Cézanne open-air museum in February 2000.



↑ At 27 cours Forbin where Cézanne lived.



↑ Inauguration of the fresco of Paul Cézanne's school in Biver by Roger Meï, mayor of Gardanne.

↓ *Sainte-Victoire. View from Beaurecueil.* 1886.
Oil on canvas, 67.5 x 91.5 cm. Collection Harriman, Washington.



Booklet with seal of approval of "Mission Cézanne 2006"

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1885-1886 : Cézanne in Gardanne



Selfportrait, 1885-1886.
Oil on canvas, 92.5 x 73 cm.
Collection Buhrle, Zurich.