

A museum based on the arts and crafts of bookmaking

After more than 18 months of works and rehabilitation, the former Paulet Hotel, successively the Town Hall and a Public Library, has become the Médard Museum, inaugurated on December 14th 2013.

Built around the exceptional study of the bibliophile Louis Médard, born in Lunel, the museum is a place dedicated to books, to the history of his collections as well as to the arts and crafts related to our written heritage.

Welcoming visitors in a large open book ...

In the entrance hall, a Latin translation of Virgil's Aeneid welcomes visitors.

Louis Médard presents this work as decisive in his approach to collecting :

« This book is my oldest friend. »
(handwritten preface in *Virgil, The Complete Works*, 1722)

A spotlight on Lunel's past

The preservation and enhancement of the municipal archives are an integral part of the museum's missions, with an aim to making them accessible to everybody. The presence of the municipal archivist within the team allows the most remarkable and singular pieces belonging to the town to be shown to advantage.

A farsighted museum



An important place has been given to new technologies.

A video room, tactile tablets, and a multimedia pole are available to visitors.

These tools, which are used as a multimedia base for exhibitions and educational visits, are also an opportunity to ask ourselves about the future of books.

A study for the inquisitive



The relationship which each of us has with books is often a matter of private sensitivity. It is particularly true for a book lover like Médard.

During his lifetime, his study was reserved for his private use and for a few privileged friends.

In an intimist and secret atmosphere, the study questions the role and the work done by collectors of Médard's time.

« The best companions, for leisure hours, are good books. Reading offers a thousand delights.

***A book is a friend,
a plaything of our whims,
A regular companion,
it distracts our desires ;
We pick it up, we discard it to
change pleasures ;
And in our very hands,
its sweet company
Pours, in long lines, the oblivion of
the charms of life. »***

Handwritten preface by Louis Médard in his Grand catalogue



The Birds



Equipped with display cabinets and a touch screen, the Bird Room is a space dedicated to the exhibition of selected publications.

The museum essentially presents an original edition of Buffon's *natural History of Birds* (published by the royal press from 1771 to 1786) and its remarkable illustrations.

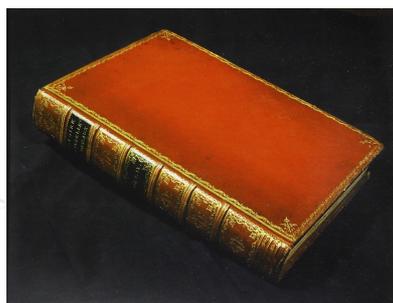
Médard's study



The study of the bibliophile Louis Médard (1768-1841) is located at the centre of the museum and of the tour.

All the furnishings, including paintings and books bequeathed to the city in 1857, are presented here. This is a rare opportunity for the visitor to enter a genuine nineteenth century library, preserved in its entirety.

Containing approximately 5,000 works, the collection is classified according to five major themes : theology, jurisprudence, science and arts, literature, and history. The quality of the book bindings makes the collection a treasure.



The art and crafts of books

An old book is first and foremost an object, created thanks to the expertise of craftsmen and specialised artists.

Between the display of objects belonging to our heritage and practical workshops, it is all the arts and crafts of book making that are shown to advantage here : binding, engraving, letterpress, paper, etc.

The workshop

To make the visit of the Médard Museum a moment of discovery, pleasure and relaxation for all, the second floor has been designed as an entertainment space.

Our cultural programme proposes regular workshops, readings, shows and meetings presented by professionals and craftsmen from the world of books.

Young and old, readers and non-readers, the curious and the connoisseur : everyone is welcome in the Médard Museum, which is entirely accessible to the disabled. The mediation team has the mission to keep the collection alive.

- It took 2 years to renovate the building

- The museum offers you 600m² to discover 10 centuries of the history of books

- You can find out about 5,000 precious ancient books