

# PRESS KIT

JULY 2026

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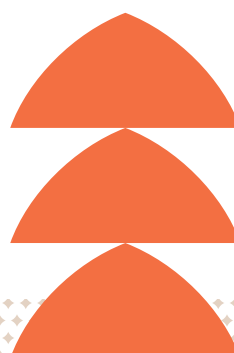
## MILLENNIUM

2027, EUROPEAN YEAR OF  
THE NORMANS 1027-2027



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# PRESS RELEASE

## MILLENNIUM : One millennium, more than 1,000 events planned across Europe in 2027

**2027 marks the 1,000th anniversary of William the Conqueror's birth in Falaise, in Normandy. This historic milestone marks the start of 'MILLENNIUM – 2027, European Year of the Normans', a major European-scale event celebrating culture, tourism and community spirit.**

Organised by the Normandy Region and its many European partners, the MILLENNIUM event year aims not only to **highlight the little-known history of Norman expeditions** across Europe, by bringing together institutions, cultural, academic, business and tourism sectors, but also to **celebrate the vitality of contemporary European artistic creation.**

From Normandy to the United Kingdom – via the Channel Islands, from Ireland to Southern Italy, from the Scandinavian countries to Flanders, from 2026, and throughout 2027, **a programme of events on an unprecedented scale** will bring together **hundreds of stakeholders in Normandy and across Europe.**

Medieval festivals, shows, concerts, exhibitions, conferences, events centred around gastronomy and crafts, sporting events, tourist experiences... **660 projects have already been awarded the 'Millennium 2027' label**, representing **more than 1,000 events** in Normandy and in partner countries.

## Among MILLENNIUM's flagship projects:

- **The launch show "The Doors of Millenium"** in February 2027 at the Abbaye aux Dames in Caen.
- **The creation, by French artist Hélène Delprat, of a monumental contemporary tapestry depicting the missing scene from the Bayeux Tapestry.** This work will be exhibited at Westminster Abbey before moving on to the Château de Falaise in Normandy.
- **A major touring show featuring outdoor arts** performed in several towns across Normandy.
- **Scriptoria, a unique multi-venue exhibition of illuminated manuscripts** produced in Normandy between 1000 and 1150.
- **A gathering of Viking ships** in Normandy.
- **A major exhibition at the British Library** exploring the impact of the Norman Conquest on England.
- **The opening of a new Norman interpretation centre** in Ireland.
- **The Infiorata, one of Sicily's most iconic events, will feature a special edition inspired by Millenium in 2027, with thematic creations.**
- **A major collaboration will bring together the Ballet d'Jèrri and the Opéra Orchestre Normandie Rouen** for a double bill of live music and contemporary dance, to be staged in autumn 2027 in Rouen, Jersey and Guernsey.
- **A multidisciplinary programme** combining contemporary art, research, heritage and educational exchanges, **in collaboration with major institutions such as the Glyptotek in Copenhagen, the Moesgaard Museum in Aarhus and the National Museum in Oslo.**

## THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY IS ABOUT TO CROSS THE CHANNEL!



© Valentin Picaud - The Explorers

The exceptional loan of this iconic work by the French state to the British government, for display at the British Museum, is a major historical event in which MILLENIUM plays a central part. While the Bayeux Tapestry will cross the Channel as early as 2026, 2027 will see the legacy of the **Norman epics shine across the European stage.**

« Through this event year, we wanted to work with our partners to create an event that would resonate across Normandy and throughout Europe.' In 2027, people from the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands, Italy, Flanders, Denmark, Norway, France and beyond will be invited to (re)discover this vast and remarkable Norman heritage, with its many facets and influences visible across these territories! "This historic anniversary will not only mark the start of a year of major celebrations, but will also lay the foundations for innovative and lasting cooperation between our region and the European territories with which Normandy shares a common history." »

**Hervé Morin, President of the Normandy Region**



**Find the full programme  
at [millenium.fr](https://millenium.fr)**  
Regularly updated

## MILLENIUM IN FIGURES:

- **1 Millenium**
- **7 partner territories and 15 European regions**
- **Hundreds of stakeholders involved across in Normandy and across Europe.**
- **A Europe-wide call for projects**, resulting in the selection of **660 initiatives awarded the 'Millenium 2027' label** representing **more than 1,000 events in Normandy** and across partner countries, with funding totalling over **€30 million**, including **€6.5 million** from the Normandy Region.
- **A total of €20 million has been committed by the Normandy Region**, split between the projects it leads and those led by the partners it supports.



# PROGRAMME



# A PROGRAMME ON AN UNPRECEDENTED SCALE TO MARK A HISTORIC ANNIVERSARY

With its scale and European reach, MILLENIUM stands as an unprecedented event year. Whilst 2027 will be the focal point, a number of landmark events will begin as early as 2026 to kick-start the European Year of the Normans.

## From 2026: First highlights ahead of the event year

### Normandy

#### The Bayeux Tapestry at the British Museum

SEPT. 2026 → JULY 2027

The French state's exceptional loan of the Bayeux Tapestry to the British government and its display at the British Museum mark a historic occasion in which MILLENIUM plays a central part.

This major 11<sup>th</sup> century work will be exhibited in the United Kingdom for the first time in nearly a thousand years. To mark this visit, a wide-ranging national programme combining digital initiatives, participatory projects and partner events across the country will enable people throughout the UK to take part in this exceptional cultural event.

### Of linen and wool

PART ONE | 14 MAY 2026 → 19 SEPTEMBER 2027

The City of Bayeux is presenting a 3-part exhibition across several cultural venues. Initially incorporated into the permanent displays at the Museum of Art and History Baron Gérard and the Memorial Museum of the Battle of Normandy, the exhibition continues into two specially curated spaces featuring archival documents and artefacts that trace the history of the Bayeux Tapestry's conservation.

From 17 December, the final part of this exhibition offers an immersive experience at the Hôtel du Doyen, taking visitors to the heart of the ancient fibres of the famous tapestry.

### Nielsen, Grieg

SOUFFLE DU NORD (BREATH OF THE NORTH)

FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2026 → 8PM

SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2026 → 6PM

Théâtre des Arts

**Duration :** 1 hour 50 minutes, including the interval

*Pre-concert talk, 1 hour before the concert (free upon presentation of your ticket)*

→ This Scandinavian programme brings together Edvard Grieg's Piano Concerto, performed by Lise de la Salle, and Symphony No. 4 'Inextinguishable' by Carl Nielsen, preceded by Resurgence by Ørjan Matre. Conducted by Antony Hermus, the evening features a visual creation by Claudia Fuggetti, extending the energy and imaginative power of these deeply evocative works.

Ørjan Matre | Resurgence

Edvard Grieg | Piano Concerto

Carl Nielsen | Symphony No. 4 « Inextinguishable »

**Conductor:** Antony Hermus

**Piano:** Lise de la Salle

**Visual Creation:** Claudia Fuggetti

Opéra Orchestre Normandie Rouen

## Film with live music Les Vikings

**RICHARD FLEISCHER (1958)**

Concert by the Opéra Normandie  
Rouen Ensemble

**FRIDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2026 → 8PM**

**Cinéma Les Vikings** • Le Neubourg

**SATURDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2026 → 7PM**

**Centre culturel Les Vikings** • Yvetot

**FRIDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2026**

**Théâtre Robert Auzelle** • Neufchâtel en Bray

**SATURDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2026 → 8PM**

**Comédie de Caen** • Hérouville Saint Clair

**SUNDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2026 → 5PM**

**Théâtre de Lisieux Normandie** • Lisieux

**FRIDAY 9 APRIL 2027 → 8.30PM**

**Le Podium** • Les Pieux

→ The Opéra Orchestre Normandie Rouen presents a newly composed original score for Richard Fleischer's cult film *The Vikings*, starring Kirk Douglas, Tony Curtis, Ernest Borgnine and Janet Leigh. This epic saga is reimagined as a film concert, set to a score by Norwegian composer Martin Romberg, weaving together passion, rivalry and Viking heritage.

## Les Boréales Festival 2026

**12-22 NOVEMBER 2026**

→ Founded in 1992, Les Boréales has expanded well beyond the polar nights of the Far North. Over more than 30 editions, it has established itself as **the leading festival dedicated to Nordic culture in Europe**, showcasing Nordic and Baltic countries, Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

Originally conceived as a literary event, Les Boréales has since evolved into an open platform for contemporary Nordic creativity, embracing a multidisciplinary identity through a rich and diverse programme: theatre performances, dance, circus, concerts, film screenings, exhibitions, all presented over a period of around ten days in Caen and throughout the region.

Les Boréales helps to strengthen the ties forged between Nordic countries and Normandy throughout the centuries. Thanks to ambitious co-productions, the support of its Nordic and French partners, and exclusive performances presented in France, the festival continues to build on its success year after year.

**The 34th edition of Les Boréales will take place from 12 to 22 November 2026. The Kingdom of Norway is the guest of honour.**

## The Normans in the Middle Ages: A European Adventure (911-1204)

**DECEMBER 2026 → DÉCEMBER 2027**

→ Normandy Region is hosting an exhibition dedicated to the Normans in the Middle Ages (911-1204). Housed in the prestigious setting of the Abbaye aux Dames in Caen, the headquarters of the Regional Council and an iconic site of medieval Normandy, the exhibition invites visitors to embark on a journey into the heart of the Norman adventure. From the founding of the duchy to expeditions across Europe, from the British Isles to the Mediterranean, the exhibition combines artefacts, maps and interactive, immersive displays to trace the history of the territory, from its key figures to its incorporation into the Kingdom of France. It also highlights the cultural heritage of the Normans, whose influence extends far beyond the region's borders.

**Self-guided tours at the Abbaye aux Dames, Caen.**

**A children's trail and educational booklet are available.**

## FÊNO

**16 - 18 OCTOBER 2026**

→ The Normandy Region presents FÊNO, the Normandy Festival at the Caen Exhibition Centre. Three days of demonstrations, tastings, sales and events showcasing Normandy's talent across a wide range of sectors: agriculture, research, innovation, higher education, industry, the food and drink sector, gastronomy, crafts, tourism, culture, the environment, transport, energy, cosmetics and more.

A chance to attend the Millenium event for the final date of the Millenium Tour and create an avatar to see yourself transformed into a medieval Norman!

→ **Friday and Saturday:** 10 am - 11 pm

→ **Sunday:** 10 am - 7 pm

→ **Free entry**

## Southern Italy

### Feast of Saint Rosalia the Norman

14-15 JULY 2026

➤ Celebrations kick off with the 402nd edition of the 'Festino' of Saint Rosalia in Palermo. This iconic event is given a Norman twist. Associated with the Hauteville dynasty and the court of Roger II, Saint Rosalia is celebrated through a series of events inspired by Sicily's historical ties with Normandy. Hervé Morin, President of the Normandy Region, will attend as guest of honour at this pre-launch event for Millenium 2027 in Sicily.

### Between stone and memory: the rediscovery of Norman ingenuity

NOVEMBER 2026

➤ Held at Villa Zito in Palermo, this exhibition marks the bicentenary of the reconstruction of Palermo Cathedral's bell tower, and explores the study and revival of the Arab-Norman style over the centuries.

### Major launch event : Palermo 2026 - The Normans, a shared heritage

NOVEMBER ➔ DECEMBER 2026

➤ Palermo will host a spectacular and unprecedented medieval re-enactment, starting on the forecourt of the Norman Palace before spreading throughout the city. The President of the Normandy Region will be in attendance alongside the presidents of the Italian regions and the partner municipalities involved in the project. As part of the programme, a number of monuments along the Norman route will exceptionally be open to the public in partnership with the Le Vie dei Tesori Festival.

### Odo of Bayeux: Power, Images and Dynasties in Normandy, England and Sicily

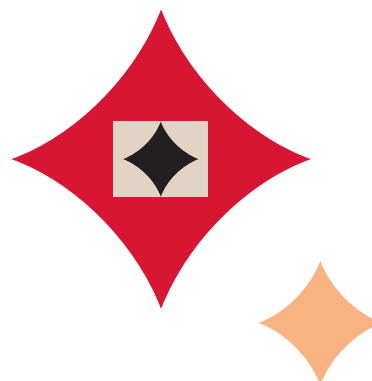
DECEMBER 2026

➤ A highlight of the event is the unveiling of the **Pirou Embroidery**, a monumental work from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century that depicts the Norman conquest of Southern Italy, modelled on the Bayeux Tapestry. This work is leaving Normandy for the very first time to be shown in southern Italy. It will be the focus of a major exhibition in Palermo, presented alongside digital images of the Bayeux Tapestry and major artefacts from the Norman period. This exhibition also shines a light on Odo of Bayeux, half-brother of William the Conqueror, who died in Palermo and whose sarcophagus is preserved in the cathedral crypt.

### William II and Monreale Cathedral: between power and faith

DECEMBER 2026

➤ At the Diocesan Museum of Monreale Cathedral, the exhibition 'William II and Monreale Cathedral' explores the construction project for this major monument. It showcases this exceptional site on the Arab-Norman Route, whilst highlighting the rediscovery of the cathedral's treasure and its historical links with the English court.



## United Kingdom

### Exhibition at the National Library of Wales

NOVEMBER 2026 → MARCH 2027

→ For the first time, a major exhibition will bring together manuscripts produced at **Llanbadarn Fawr**, a leading intellectual centre of the 11th century. These documents provide a unique insight into religious, literary and cultural life in Wales in the run-up to and at the time of the Norman invasion.

Developed in partnership with the **British Library, Corpus Christi College (Cambridge) and Trinity College Dublin**, the exhibition explores the experiences of Welsh communities as they grappled with the political and cultural upheavals of this pivotal period.

It is accompanied by a programme of outreach activities and public events highlighting the lasting historical significance of these changes.

### Re-enactment of the Battle of Hastings - Battle Abbey

10 AND 11 OCTOBER 2026

→ To mark the **960th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings**, the one and only official re-enactment returns to the historic site of Battle Abbey, where King Harold and Duke William confronted one another in 1066. More than **500 re-enactors** bring the dramatic intensity of this defining conflict vividly back to life.

Before the re-enactment, the visitor centre offers a range of interactive displays, allowing visitors to explore the history of the battle. An audio guide then leads them across the battlefield, punctuated by monumental interpretive installations. The abbey ruins, the wall walk and an exhibition housed in the gatehouse complete this immersive experience.

These events form part of a wider programme organised by **Battle, 1066 Country**, bringing together communities and heritage sites across the region shaped by the events of 1066.

## 2027 : A year of celebrations across Europe

A LOOK AT SOME OF THE FLAGSHIP PROJECTS:

## Normandy

### The launch show "The Doors of Millenium"

20-27 FEBRUARY 2027

→ The Abbaye aux Dames (Caen) transforms and invites visitors to step through the doors of Millenium! In the main courtyard, a collaborative digital mural, brought to life by avatars, symbolises a shared heritage. Then, in the cloister gardens, large-scale projections, along with sound and visual creations, bring Norman history to life, narrated by the voice of Matilda of Flanders. Open to all and free of charge, this 20-minute immersive show is staged several times each evening. The journey concludes with a symbolic passage into 2027: "Millenium starts here."

### MUNDUS SENTIT

→ This contemporary art trail explores the legacy of William the Conqueror and Matilda through the lens of contemporary issues. What traces have the men and women of a thousand years ago left behind in the historic sites that these artists will inhabit? Through their works, visitors are invited to decipher the message that has echoed down the centuries.

Drawing on Norman history, from the Viking world to Sicily, the project explores how stories of conquest, cultural fusion and resilience resonate in present-day Europe, at a time marked by renewed conflict and increasing pressure on resources.

The trail unfolds through a series of key themes. In Falaise, William's childhood becomes a symbol of the collision between childhood imagination and political destiny, where innocence comes face to face with the violence of the adult world. Drawing on fantasy, historical memory and cultural hybridity, the artists explore the tensions between myth and history.

In Caen, the themes of war and reconstruction interact with the medieval remains that survived wartime destruction. The works explore the resilience of places, bodies and collective imagination.

Across Normandy, particularly in Rouen, the project also examines medieval relationships with nature, the sacred, and unseen forces. Forests, rituals, mythical creatures and folk beliefs combine to form an evocative world where spirituality, fear and hope intertwine. The guest artists breathe new life into this legacy, which lies at the intersection of architecture, legend and the quest for elevation.

## Contemporary art

➤ Contemporary art brings history, landscapes and narratives into dialogue with the challenges of the present day. In Saint Rémy sur Orne, **Alexis Defortescu** explores the landscapes between Normandy and Copenhagen. In Caen, the AIR project, led by **Station Mir** in collaboration with **Virgile Abela**, connects **wind harps** installed in various locations creating a real-time sonic and visual map of climatic conditions across Europe. In Bayeux, **Le Radar** is mobilising a vast network, stretching from Rouen to Hastings, from Falaise to the Channel Islands, to bring together the Bayeux Tapestry with press illustration and contemporary image making careers. From the **Franciscaines** in Deauville to the **Frac Normandie**, **Françoise Pétrovitch** unfolds a poetic body of work blending a creative residency in Normandy with echoes of the medieval world. The **Centre photographique Rouen Normandie** has invited **Stéphanie Solinas** to develop a new chapter in her work centred on Santa Rosalia, the patron saint of Palermo and heir to a little-known chapter of Norman history. At the **Dominicaines** in Pont l'Évêque, **Jean Baptiste Janisset** creates a dialogue between Normandy and Sicily, in collaboration with the **French Institute in Palermo**.

A nomadic project, **Panem & Formae** by Fleur Helluin combines visual arts, banquets and gastronomy. Alexis Debeuf and Claire Lebreton respectively revisit stained glass, paper and linen, reinterpreting traditional craftsmanship through contemporary participatory works. **Olivier Mériel** and **Mathilde Bennett** explore Ireland through portraiture, memory and genealogy.

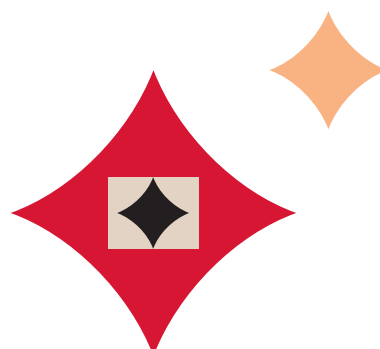
From Évreux to Dublin, and from Le Havre to Oslo, this series of events embody a shared ambition: to make contemporary creation a vibrant space for exchange, transmission and European dialogue, where Norman heritage informs the present and opens new perspectives for the future.

## A monumental contemporary tapestry depicting the missing scene from the Bayeux Tapestry



© Pierre Gallot

➤ Artist **Hélène Delprat** has been invited to bring a contemporary perspective to one of the great founding narratives of Norman history. Based on her original design, a **monumental tapestry** was woven by **Atelier Guillot in Aubusson** depicting the missing scene from the Bayeux Tapestry: **the coronation of William the Conqueror at Westminster Abbey in 1066**. Initiated by the Normandy Region in partnership with the **Manufactures nationales**, the project will be exhibited in 2027 at the **Château de Falaise**, William's birthplace, and in **Westminster Abbey** in the Chapter House.



## Scriptoria, on the trail of Normandy manuscripts

➤ How were books made in the Middle Ages? Where were they produced and by whom? What materials, colours and pigments were used, and which were the most valuable? What animals, creatures or characters populated their pages? How did the artists influence and inspire one another?

To explore these questions, a major multi-venue exhibition invites visitors to discover illuminated manuscripts produced in Normandy between 1000 and 1150, on display in Alençon, Avranches, Évreux, Le Havre, Rouen and Sées from March to December 2027. Created in the time of William the Conqueror and his descendants, these works – rarely exhibited and long kept out of the public eye – are nevertheless the most important surviving witnesses of the art of drawing, illumination and painting from the Romanesque period (11th - 12th).

This exhibition offers a unique opportunity to admire an exceptionally rich collection of illuminated manuscripts, reflecting the flourishing artistic activity in ducal Normandy between 1000 and 1150.

*An initiative coordinated by Normandie Livre & Lecture, in collaboration with the British Library, and in partnership with the BnF, the Diocesan Archives of Sées, the Calvados Departmental Archives, and the Lisieux Media Library.*

## Boat gathering

11 - 27 JUNE 2027

➤ A large gathering of ships is one of the highlights of the European Year of the Normans. It aims to bring to life the maritime and European heritage associated with the Normans, through a fleet of Scandinavian-inspired vessels including langskips, dreki and snekkars among others. These 'ships of conquest' – as described by historian Elisabeth Ridet, and which are sometimes mistakenly referred to as 'drakkars' – are built using traditional techniques or are directly inspired by them. More than a hundred of them, reconstructed by enthusiasts, can still be found in many European ports.

This fleet of 30 to 40 ships sails across Normandy from one estuary to another, evoking both the legend of Viking raids and that of William the Conqueror's fleet. A number of stops and key events are planned, combining sailing, tours,

events, activities and interpretive activities both on land and on the water, as well as initiatives to raise awareness of maritime culture, the history of the Normans and contemporary issues (the sea, climate, mobility, cooperation, etc.).

*Departure on 11 June from Ornavik (Hérouville-Saint-Clair), with stops in Caen, Dives-sur-Mer, Honfleur, Rives-en-Seine and Duclair. The fleet will arrive at the Rouen Armada site on 19 June, where it will remain until 27 June. Some boats will also be visible before and after these dates along the Normandy coast (Cherbourg, Barfleur, Carentan, Fécamp, Saint-Valéry-en-Caux, etc.)\**

\*subject to change

## FABULA

### MAJOR EVENT IN NORMANDY

➤ **FABULA** (working title) is a major artistic and cultural project led by **Atelier 231 – Normandy's National Centre for Street Arts and Public Space**, forming a central part of **MILLENNIUM 2027 – European Year of the Normans**. Conceived as a **popular, festive and contemporary fresco**, the project draws loose inspiration **from the routes of Norman epics across Europe**, from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean.

Designed for the public realm, the project will unfold in spring **2027 across five Norman towns**, one in each department, over the course of **five festive weekends**. Each stage brings together local residents, community groups, restaurateurs and producers in a lively temporary village celebrating local food and conviviality.

The **Gratte Ciel company**, internationally renowned for its large-scale aerial performances, will be at the heart of this artistic and cultural programme. It will present an original work combining circus, procession, music and visual imagery. From the mists of the **Far North** to a **meeting of cultures** in Sicily, via a reimagined **living tapestry** and a **community dance celebration**, the show will celebrate a history interwoven with migration and cultural fusion.

Accessible, welcoming and spectacular, **FABULA** does not seek to recreate the past. Instead, it invents a **contemporary ritual: a collective fable celebrating movement, imagination and the joy of coming together, today, in Normandy and across Europe**.

## Performing arts

➤ MILLENIUM comes alive through performing arts, driven by a broad European creative movement that blends historical elements, contemporary forms and participatory experiences.

The **MARDI** network, which brings together Normandy's puppetry community, is organising a **Normandy Laboratory for European Creation** bringing together twenty puppeteers from **Norway, The United Kingdom, Italy and France**, featuring a theatrical night-time journey through a heritage site and four short performances staged at the **Sablier in Dives-sur-Mer**, at the **Trident in Cherbourg-en-Cotentin**, at the **Passage in Fécamp** and the **Centre Dramatique National Normandie Rouen**, as well as in libraries, schools and public spaces.

The **Comédie de Caen** is also staging the Wars and Peace in Normandy season, featuring Embroidering History – The Bayeux Tapestry, a monumental production by **Mohamed El Khatib** and **Patrick Boucheron**, a large-scale participatory fresco that explores the construction of historical narratives. The Bayeux Tapestry also inspires the **compagnie 14:20**, in collaboration with **Dieppe Scène Nationale**, which has created a shadow and holographic theatre piece that engages with the tapestry and features artists from Normandy and across Europe.

The theatre company **Et vous en vivez** presents *La Glorieuse et dérisoire épopée des Roger* (The Glorious and Ridiculous Epic of the Rogers), a burlesque retelling of the Norman conquest of Sicily, a theme also explored by the **Compagnie des Petits champs** in their bilingual French Italian play *Casa Altavilla*. **In Itinere** creates *Escales*, performances based on the testimonies of local people on both sides of the Channel, to bring heritage to life in the present day.

Dance also features prominently throughout the programme. **Maryfé Singy** and **Myriam Jarmache**, associate artists at the **Centre Chorégraphique National de Caen**, are developing *Na Ninna Nanna*, inspired by Norman Sicilian history, while **François Chaignaud** offers a special tour of his repertoire. *VIDDE*, led by Ingvild Marstein Olsen and **Deborah Lennie**, blends dance, song and video using materials collected between Oslo and Normandy. **Gaëlle Bourges** reimagines the Bayeux Tapestry with *Guillaume & Harold* (William & Harold), a choreographed piece that challenges the narrative of the conquest.

Collective experiences take centre stage with *Balladium* by the company **La BaZooKa**, which revives community dance tradition, and the *Bal des Reines* by **Camille Dewaele**, inspired by **Queen Matilda**. *Traversées chorégraphiques* (Choreographic Crossings), presented by Pavillon s with Emmanuelle Vo Dinh, links Normandy and Ireland, while *Carte de Tendre* by **Colette Sadler** explores the Norman heritage in Scotland, combining dance, film, music and research.

International partnerships strengthen these artistic exchanges: the twinning between **Le Phare** in Le Havre and the British organisation **Crying Out Loud** supports choreographic and circus creation in Normandy and the United Kingdom. The *SPRING* circus festival, organised by the **Circus hubs in Normandy**, presents a Focus Millénium (Millennium Focus) bringing together companies from Ireland, Norway and Flanders, from **Cikada Circus** to **Alexander Vantournhout**.

MILLENIUM is a time for gathering and circulating; from abbeys and theatres to public squares, artists and locals share the same space for play and emotion, making Normandy a vibrant and inventive European stage.



© Agathe Fournier - PhotoScène

## Music

→ In 2027, Normandy will become a major open-air music venue. Concerts, touring performances and participatory projects weave a European soundscape that bridges heritage, contemporary creation and cultural exchange.

The **Musicales de Normandie** are organising 12 concerts – from **Fécamp** to **Gaillon Castle**, from the **Abbeys of Le Bec – Hellouin, Jumièges and Montivilliers** to **Rouen Cathedral and Château Gaillard** – bringing together prestigious ensembles – **De Caelis, Correspondances, Le Poème Harmonique, Les Musiciens de Saint-Julien, Les Mélanges, the Trondheim Orkester Nord, The King's Singers, The Sixteen, Micrologus, Into the Winds** – and young European early music ensembles.

The **Mobilo Lyricus** company presents *Les Fables du Conquérant* (The Conqueror's Fables), musical tales inspired by 11th-century Norman legends, performed in heritage sites or aboard its travelling Stage Truck, equipped with a portable organ, perpetuating the tradition of itinerant troupes and the importance of oral transmission.

Contemporary creation enters in dialogue with history: **Correspondances** and artist **Juliette Minchin** present the *Rite des Quarantes Heures* (Forty Hours Rites) in **Caen** and **Palermo**.

With *N'est ce pas Sublime* (Isn't It Sublime), **Hélios Azoulay** and the **Incidental Music Ensemble** bring together heritage and sound creation centred on the **Maison Sublime in Rouen**.

At the **Théâtre de Caen**, the contemporary opera *Push* by **Howard Moody**, directed by **Jeanne Desoubaux**, brings together young singers, musicians and amateurs in a universal fable about resilience. The production brings together the **Maîtrise and the Scuola de Caen**, and the **Orchestre de l'Opéra Normandie Rouen**.

The rock-metal-folk festival *Kave Fest Konquest*, at the **Château de Gisors**, is putting together a special edition while **STRØM** brings together artists from Normandy and across Europe aboard a barge for creative workshops and concerts held during stopovers along the Seine.

The **Normandy 1000 BPM Tour** features 32 cross-Channel concerts, from Normandy to the UK, on a solar-powered mobile stage.

Choral singing plays a prominent role; **Normands de Chœur** brings together 400 European choristers for a major concert at the **Zénith in Caen**, with the participation of Norwegian composer **Ola Gjeilo** – whose work will also feature alongside a new composition by Howard Goodall for **Millennium Voices**, performed by the **Schola de l'Orne**.

The region's music and dance conservatoires are also heavily involved in exchanges with other European students, original productions, and the active participation of young artists.

## Heritage

→ The historical, architectural, natural and intangible heritage is brought to life through immersive experiences. Abbeys, castles, motte-and-bailey sites, villages and landscapes associated with the 11th and 12th centuries serve as gateways to rediscovering Norman history and its sometimes little-known figures.

Throughout the year, in addition to the sites at **Falaise** and **Bayeux**, the whole of Normandy becomes a **territory of immersion and transmission**: themed trails, guided tours, re-enactments, exhibitions and major events. In **Dives-sur-Mer**, a spectacular sound and light show depicts William's departure for Hastings from the Dives estuary. In the **Suisse Normande region**, from **Clécy to Château Ganne**, shows, talks and educational activities are taking place at major medieval sites.

Local heritage is coming to life everywhere: showcasing the **Fossés du Roy** in the south of the Eure and Orne departments, rediscovering the **Motte de Venables** via an interactive digital tour, a special opening of the **Baronnie de Torteval**, or storytelling walks in **Fécamp** centred on the legend of the Precious Blood. Historical figures are being brought back into the spotlight, such as **Guillaume Pantol** in the Pays d'Auge or **Urse d'Abbetot**, William's sheriff, who is being honoured at **La Cerlangue** through events, talks and cross-Channel exchanges. **The Manoir du Catel** offers a unique insight into **Coutume de Normandie (Norman Law)**, a legal and cultural cornerstone that remains little known today.

→ Millennium is also a major moment for **research and knowledge sharing**, as illustrated by scientific projects such as the studies conducted by **Philippe Charlier** on the remains attributed to **William the Conqueror** and **Matilda of Flanders**. Meanwhile **Bernay** is preparing an analysis of a burial site attributed to **Judith of Brittany**, William's grandmother.

All these initiatives bring together heritage, science and education, shedding light on the past and sharing it with as many people as possible.

## Medieval festivals & events

Between May and September 2027, Normandy is set to come alive with **festivals, banquets and medieval events every weekend**, in an atmosphere of unprecedented excitement.

Villages and historic sites host craft markets, Viking and medieval encampments, historical re-enactments, tournaments and combat demonstrations, banquets, traditional music and dance, fire shows, costumed processions, equestrian displays and fireworks.



From **Falaise, Domfront, Barvenille-Carteret, Cerisy la Forêt, Arques la Bataille, Les Andelys or Auffay to Barfleur, Clères, Rouen, Echauffour, Villedieu les Poêles, Bayeux, Le Vaudreuil, Dieppe, Montfort-sur-Risle, Neufchâtel-en-Bray Port Jérôme sur Seine, Val ès Dunes, Saint-Lô, Bézou Saint Éloi or the Domaine d'Harcourt [...]**, these events transport the public to the heart of the 11th and 12th centuries, a formative period celebrated by Millenium.

These events, largely driven by local residents, community groups and specialist companies from across Europe, will make the summer of 2027 a **grand, festive and vibrant celebration of Norman history**.

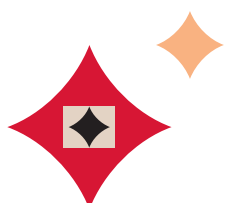
## Sporting events

Sporting events are also reinvented to bring history and contemporary practices together: the **béhourd** (medieval armoured combat) with a round of the Coupe de France in Saint-Lô or an international tournament in Saint-Valéry-en-Caux, **Gaelic football and hurling** bringing together Normandy clubs from Le Havre, Cherbourg and Mondeville with European teams, or even **narrative walks** such as the one in Hauteville-la-Guichard, following in the footsteps of the Normans in the Mediterranean.

**Water sports** play a major role, with the DéfiSeine Millenium 2027 in Rouen, a major international rowing regatta, and in Honfleur, which hosts the Hastings Regatta, featuring sailing challenges and cross-Channel voyages involving secondary school pupils and students from Normandy and the UK.

→ A flagship event of this initiative, the **Vhélío Trophy** fully embodies the spirit of Millenium. This educational, sporting, environmental and community-minded project brings together schools, charities, local authorities and higher education institutions around the **construction of solar-powered low-tech tricycles**. In May 2027, several hundred participants are invited to cycle from Sotteville-lès-Rouen to Hastings, with festive stops in Clères, Dieppe and New Haven, and a crossing of the English Channel. Assembled by the participants themselves, Vhélios symbolise a collective adventure based on cooperation, the sharing of knowledge, innovation and a European spirit of openness, with members of the public also invited to take part by bicycle.

Through this rich programme of sporting events, Millenium uses sport as a **vehicle for vibrant culture**, social cohesion and dialogue between regions, generations and European cultures.



## Educational projects

➤ MILLENIUM places a strong emphasis on education and knowledge-sharing, working closely with schools and the local education authority. Primary and secondary schools are actively involved in educational, artistic and cultural projects that enable young people to discover the history of Normandy and Europe.

Among the flagship initiatives is a **bilingual French English teaching kit**, designed and delivered by the **British Council**, aimed at secondary school pupils on both sides of the Channel. Developed in collaboration with historians and institutional partners in France and the UK, it offers interactive content, fun activities, cultural resources and tools for teachers, and supports school exchanges, language teaching and non-language subjects.

In **Seine-Maritime**, the **Département** is also rolling out an **engaging educational app** on secondary school pupils' tablets. Inspired by choose-your-own-adventure books, comic books and video games, it invites pupils to immerse themselves in the 11th century by taking on the role of a character from the entourage of **William and Matilda**, through a scripted multiple-choice adventure, suitable for use in class or independently.

This educational initiative continues with **EpiK**, a youth programme bringing together the partner regions of the European Year of the Normans. Aimed at **secondary school pupils in Normandy and across Europe**, it combines civic engagement and artistic creation through the **Prix Liberté**, dedicated to human rights, and **Encrage[s]**, dedicated to creative writing. The project will conclude with a **restitution stay in Normandy in early June 2027**, featuring visits, intercultural exchanges and the Prix Liberté award ceremony at the **Zénith de Caen**.

## Symposia & Conferences

➤ In 2027, Millenium will transform Normandy into a vast space for reflection and exchange through a wide range of **conferences, symposia and meetings** open to all. These events explore key themes: **Norman dialects**, **Norman law**, major historical figures and lesser-known personalities, the **Sicilian epic**, the **Vikings** and their legacies, combining scientific research, knowledge transfer and public engagement.

Driven by a broad-based initiative within the research community, notably involving the **University of Caen Normandy**, the programme promotes dialogue between specialists and the general public on the history of Normandy and Europe. A highlight of this initiative is the "**Crisy la Salle symposium**, Le monde où naît Guillaume le Conquérant (The World Where William the Conqueror was born)", which brings together international researchers around an approach to connected history, focusing on mobility, movement and exchanges between territories.

In Évreux, the **62nd Congress of the Federation of Historical and Archaeological Societies of Normandy**, "Guillaume, Mathilde et les autres" (William, Mathilda and the others), sheds light on the key figures of Norman history in France, the United Kingdom and Italy.

Local initiatives, from the **Pays du Neubourg** to the **Region Nature Park of the Cotentin** and **Bessin Marshes**, bring together researchers, community representatives and local residents. Finally, Normandy's hosting of the renowned **Battle Conference** in 2027 confirms the region's position at the heart of European discourse on medieval history.



## Literary and audiovisual events

➤ 2027 promises to be a year of real **literary excitement**, extending the events through books, reading and the sharing of knowledge.

Among other titles, **Éditions OREP** is publishing a book by **Stéphane Gondoin** that revisits the great Norman legends, from the Bayeux Tapestry to the Vikings, from the Chanson de Roland (Song of Roland) to William the Conqueror.

The journal **Annales de Normandie** is publishing, in collaboration with Latinist **Pierre Bouet**, a two-volume publication of the **founding texts of the history of William the Conqueror**, whilst **La Fabrique de Patrimoines** presents a previously unpublished translation of the great Anglo Norman account of his life, led by **Françoise Laurent, Laurence Mathey Maille** and **Stéphane Laîné**.

With **Michèle Sajous D'Oria**, **Éditions des Falaises** explores the cathedrals of Puglia, shedding light on the cultural exchanges between Normandy and Italy. Another example is the children's series **Croqu'Mystères**, which features two illustrated novels about William the Conqueror, written in collaboration with children, to bring Norman history to a younger audience.

This publishing trend is also widely reflected in festivals such as **Terres de Paroles**, **Époque in Caen** and the **Rouen Children's Book Festival**, which all focus on specific themes for 2027, with some wonderful surprises in store.

➤ **Audiovisual productions** also play a significant role in Millenium, with numerous projects involving **fiction, documentary and short film-projects**.

Festivals are fully embracing this trend: the **Off Courts de Trouville** Festival is developing a travelling film creation lab in partnership with **Jersey, Ireland, Norway and Sicily**, while **Short Up** in Rouen is presenting a special selection 'Year of the Normans' and professional meetings between creators from Normandy, the UK and Ireland. These projects highlight the movements, migrations and cultural exchanges that form the basis of Normandy's European history.



## Norway Denmark

→ **Denmark and Norway** have close historical ties with Normandy, a legacy of the Vikings who laid the foundations for the Normans' Nordic heritage. From Rollon, who founded the duchy in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, to Emma of Normandy, Queen of England, Denmark and Norway, this shared history continues to foster a rich and vibrant cultural partnership today. This is achieved through a multidisciplinary programme combining contemporary art, research, heritage and educational exchanges, in partnership with major institutions such as the **Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, the Moesgaard Museum in Aarhus and the National Museum in Oslo**. Joint exhibitions, notably focusing on ceramics with artist **Bente Skjøttgaard**, between the **CLAY Museum of Ceramic Art Denmark in Middelfart** and **Fontaine-Guérard Abbey**, engage in dialogue with artistic projects such as *Emergence*, a Franco-Danish creation bringing together dance and visual arts led by the **Association for Creation and Emergence in the Choreographic Arts**.

This initiative is accompanied by academic conferences focusing on Viking-Norman links, participation in international events such as the Viking Moot, as well as heritage and regional projects, such as collaborations centred on the Jelling Stone or the 'Destination Viking' network. Educational exchanges, particularly with Ballerup High School, and artist residencies – at the Fossekleva Centre in Norway or in art centres in Normandy – further strengthen these flows.

In Norway, the links between different forms of heritage are being explored through conferences on the Baldishol and Bayeux tapestries, exhibitions, and Per Barclay's installation at the Oslo Museum of Cultural History, as well as events such as the International Puppet Festival.

## Flanders

→ **The Normandy Region and Région de Flandres** have initiated a dialogue aimed at building cooperation based on the iconic **Matilda of Flanders**, Duchess of Normandy and Queen of England, a historical symbol of the links between Normandy, Flanders and south-east England, and which forms part of the wider **medieval heritage of a dynamic European space shaped by trade**.

### THREE KEY FACTORS UNDERPIN THIS COOPERATION:

- **In terms of culture and heritage**, Flanders is involved through joint projects: an academic session and a polyphonic concert, culinary initiatives involving Flemish and Norman chefs, the participation of circus companies, and the networking of historic sites tied to Matilda. Discussions are also taking place regarding temporary exhibitions and scientific projects.
- **In economic terms**, the two Régions have identified significant areas of complementarity in the fields of decarbonisation, port logistics and maritime infrastructure.
- **Finally, with regard to attractiveness and tourism**, the aim is to develop joint initiatives based on sustainable transport, themed itineraries, the joint promotion of destinations and the involvement of Flemish tourism stakeholders.

# United Kingdom

→ The European Year of the Normans 2027 is generating exceptional enthusiasm in the United Kingdom, where all four nations of the UK (**England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland**) are fully committed to the initiative!

With the joint involvement of major cultural institutions, local authorities, historic monuments and key players in the contemporary arts, a wide-ranging multidisciplinary programme is being rolled out across the country.

Iconic sites linked to Norman history are at the heart of this celebration, thanks in particular to the commitment of **English Heritage** and the **National Trust**, which are bringing numerous monuments and historic sites across the country to life.

## → LONDON - THE BRITISH CAPITAL IS HOSTING SEVERAL MAJOR EVENTS.

→ After the Bayeux Tapestry at the **British Museum**, the **British Library** will present a major exhibition exploring the impact of the Norman Conquest in England, from October 2027 to February 2028, looking back at the decades preceding and following William the Conqueror. Drawing on manuscripts and major works from the 11th and 12th centuries, the exhibition shows how this episode brought about lasting change to the country, whilst allowing certain continuities to persist.

**The Tower of London** also has an extensive summer programme lined up. From mid July to mid August 2027, the area around the White Tower, built from Caen stone by William the Conqueror, will host daily street theatre performances inspired by the Norman Conquest, commissioned by Historic Royal Palaces for the European Year of the Normans.

Lastly, the UK National Archives will also present a programme dedicated to the Domesday Book, the oldest surviving administrative record in the country.

## → NATIONWIDE LOCAL

## AND REGIONAL MOBILISATION

→ Beyond London, a great many towns and cities are offering programmes dedicated to Millenium, at both local and regional level; Canterbury, Norwich, Reading, Battle, Hastings, York, Carlisle, Aberystwyth, Edinburgh, Carrickfergus, Wallingford and many others.

## → INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL

→ In Kingston, Hastings, Sheffield and Rotherham, the Children's International Film Festival is placing Norman heritage at the heart of its 2027 edition.

Designed as a cultural and educational highlight, the festival invites young filmmakers and schools to explore the history, heritage and cultural influence of the Normans through short films, animations, documentaries and experimental projects. (In partnership with the **National Film and Television School, BAFTA, IntoFilm and Ciné Schools.**)

## → WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR BY RABBLE THEATRE, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NORMANDY-BASED COLLECTIVE IN ITINERE

→ Reading's RABBLE Theatre delves into the life of William the Conqueror, one of history's most controversial and fascinating figures. With boldness, emotion and a healthy dose of rebellious spirit, the company aims to bring history to life on stage and, to this end, has teamed up with three actors from the In Itinere collective, who perform in French as **William**, his wife **Matilda** and **William FitzOsbern**.

The play, commissioned from the author **Beth Flintoff** and directed by **Hal Chambers**, draws parallels between the political upheavals of the 11th century and contemporary challenges: invasion, the redrawing of borders, and the desire for conquest.

## → MUSIC AT MALLING FESTIVAL

**24 SEPTEMBER - 3 OCTOBER 2027**

→ Recently praised by The Guardian, **Music@Malling** brings exceptional musicians to the heart of Kent, performing at iconic heritage venues in West Malling and the surrounding area, to celebrate the Millennium through music. Twenty-five concerts bring together British and French music, from the Middle Ages to contemporary works, at venues such as **Malling Abbey, Rochester Cathedral and Saint Leonard's tower.**

### → CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE

→ In **Northern Ireland**, Carrickfergus Castle, one of the great Norman heritage monuments from the 12<sup>th</sup> century founded by **John de Courcy**, is the subject of a major enhancement project led by the County of **Mid and East Antrim** and the Northern Irish government. The renovation of the castle, new cultural spaces and improved walking routes are designed to make Carrickfergus a major heritage and tourist destination on a European scale, for the benefit of both residents and visitors.

## Ireland

### A strong national commitment

→ Millenium has generated considerable enthusiasm across Ireland. Supported by the Irish government and driven by a broad coalition of partners, it has resulted in the development of a comprehensive and structured programme comprising over a hundred events, covering a wide range of fields including heritage, education, the arts, festivals and research.

### Dublin, at the heart of the national programme

→ In Dublin, one of the major highlights is the joint exhibition by the **National Museum of Ireland** and the **National Library of Ireland** - Ireland and the Norman World - which opens on 20 April 2027. It displays recently excavated artefacts, such as the horse harness from Caherduggan, alongside charters dating from the invasion period and an illustrated copy of Giraud of Wales's Topographia Hibernica, the famous account of the conquest of Ireland in the 12th century.

Dublin City Council is hosting an international conference - Normanitas - aimed at assessing the Norman influence on Dublin's emergence as a major city. **The Royal Irish Academy** is organising a forum on Norman influence in urban planning and is bringing together decades of research carried out within the Academy into a dedicated online resource - The Normans and the Making of Medieval Ireland.

The **medieval museum Dublinia** is curating an

exhibition entitled The Daily Life of the Normans and is collaborating with the great Norman cathedral of Christchurch on a series of lectures and a symposium.

### Norman monuments at the heart of local communities

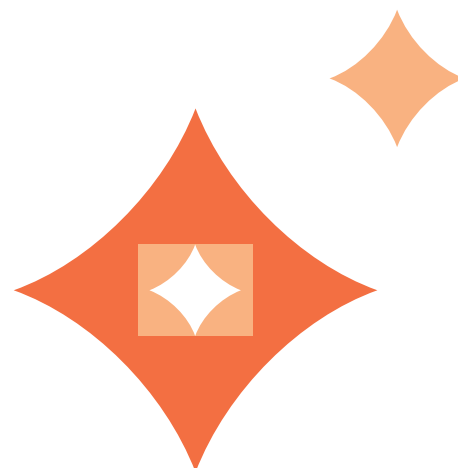
→ Across the country, Ireland's iconic Norman monuments are becoming key venues for events aimed at local communities and families.

Historical re-enactments, festivals, heritage walks, guided tours and talks will bring this heritage to life, including, for example, a collaborative Normandy - Ireland dance performance hosted at **Barryscourt Castle** in County Cork.

### Strong engagement from local authorities

→ **Many local authorities are also spearheading transformative initiatives at a regional level:**

- A contemporary art exhibition dedicated to the Normans at the **Wexford Arts Centre**
- Plans to open a new **interpretation centre dedicated to the Normans in New Ross** by the end of 2027
- The development of links with major **Saint Patrick's** day festivals, particularly in **Cork**, where the programme will focus on the Normans.



## Southern Italy

**2027 will also see a host of events linked to Millenium 2027** - Anno Europeo dei Normanni, both in Sicily and in other regions of southern Italy. This programme showcases the richness of Normandy's medieval heritage through cultural, heritage and culinary events of European scope.

### Infiorata - Noto

**9-19 MAY 2027**

➤ **The town of Noto** hosts the Infiorata, one of Sicily's most iconic events. On this occasion, the main street of the historic centre is covered with sumptuous floral carpets created by the maestri infioratori (master floral carpet designers). Attracting nearly 100,000 visitors each year, this event features a special edition inspired by Millenium, with specially commissioned themed creations.

### QOCO - culinary event

**MAY 2027**

➤ **In Andria (Puglia)**, the QOCO festival takes place - Festival del Gusto e della Cultura, an event combining gastronomy, culture and the promotion of local heritage, with a particular focus on olive oil and local produce. It offers tastings, meetings with chefs, talks and cultural events at various venues across the city. A competition and a medieval banquet bring together chefs from Millenium's partner regions.

### Mont Saint-Michel - Monte Sant'Angelo Exhibition

**JUNE → OCTOBER 2027**

➤ A major, unprecedented exhibition, Mont Saint-Michel - Monte Sant'Angelo: A Spiritual Geography of Europe, is being held at **Mont Saint-Michel**. It displays a number of highly valuable artefacts, notably from the Gargano sanctuary in Apulia. The trail combines a focus on heritage, audiovisual elements and contemporary art, offering a fresh perspective on spiritual and cultural exchanges in medieval Europe. To complement this exhibition, a visitor trail dedicated to the cult of St Michael and the links between the two sanctuaries will also open in June 2027 at the Castle of Monte Sant'Angelo (Puglia).

### Culinary and cultural event

**JULY 2027**

➤ In **Troina**, the capital of Sicilian-Norman food and wine culture, a programme of cultural and gastronomic events celebrates Norman influences in Sicilian culinary traditions. The project combines open-air medieval banquets, gourmet dinners, masterclasses and culinary events. The event also includes an academic programme focusing on the Norman influence on Sicilian cuisine, featuring lectures and presentations by medievalists and food historians.

### Palio di Oria - Torneo dei Rioni

**AUGUST 2027**

➤ **The town of Oria (Apulia)** hosts the Palio di Oria - Torneo dei Rioni in an edition inspired by the Millennium. This major medieval re-enactment features parades in period costume, jousting tournaments, shows and entertainment in the historic centre. The event is enhanced by special openings of heritage sites, guided tours and talks, organised in partnership with the European Centre for Norman Studies.

### Fantastico Medioevo - Basilicate

**THROUGHOUT 2027**

➤ **The Fantastico Medioevo** programme, in **Basilicata**, brings together shows, historical re-enactments, exhibitions, talks, immersive experiences and entertainment at iconic sites such as **Melfi, Venosa, Acerenza, Miglionico, Monteserico and Lagopesole**. This project aims to promote local medieval history while developing a European dimension.



## Arab-Norman Musical Encounters

**AUTUMN 2027**

→ The QuarteCgraal ensemble presents a musical project showcasing a collection of reconstructed Norman instruments, some of which were crafted by the Sicilian instrument maker Giuseppe Severini based on medieval sources. A wonderful dialogue between Norman and Arab-Norman musical traditions, brought to life through a collaboration between French, Sicilian and British musicians. This will lead to a tour of Normandy in the summer of 2027, followed by concerts at the Palatine Chapel in Palermo in the autumn, as well as in several European cities, including London and Copenhagen.

## Saint-Thomas Becket Year 1170

**27-29 DECEMBER 2027**

→ In Mottola (Apulia), the 'Saint Thomas Becket, Year 1170' event, which is both religious and cultural in nature, highlights the veneration of Saint Thomas Becket, whose presence has been documented in the local heritage since the Middle Ages. A procession featuring over 400 participants as part of a historical re-enactment, as well as a theatrical performance on the cathedral forecourt, are planned. These events and re-enactments highlight the medieval ties between England and southern Italy.

## Channel Islands

### A strong island-wide commitment

→ The Channel Islands - Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney and Sark - are fully committed to Millenium. As direct heirs to the Duchy of Normandy, they embody a historical, legal and cultural continuity that is unique to the Norman world. The Government of Jersey and the States of Guernsey, in close collaboration with the Office of the Channel Islands and the Maison de la Normandie et de la Manche, are leading a collective effort involving cultural, heritage, educational and artistic organisations across the islands.

## Landmark projects at the heart of the islands

→ In Guernsey, the entire cultural programme for 2027 is centred around Millenium, featuring in particular the major exhibition Meet the Normans and numerous projects organised by the island's cultural institutions. Contemporary art is also in the spotlight with beyond our seas, between our shores, a project involving the RN13 bis network (Normandy), Guernsey Arts and Art House Jersey.

In Jersey, all the major cultural institutions - Jersey Heritage, the National Trust for Jersey, Ballet d'Jèrri, the Jersey Arts Centre and Art House Jersey - are fully committed. Among the flagship projects, a major collaboration will bring together the Ballet d'Jèrri and the Opéra Orchestre Normandie Rouen for a double bill of live music and contemporary dance, to be presented in autumn 2027 in Rouen, Jersey and Guernsey, featuring two original works by choreographer Asier Edeso Eguia, performed by the dancers of the Ballet d'Jèrri and accompanied by music by composer Ilia Osokin.



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### A cross-Channel and European dynamic

→ Through these projects and numerous other initiatives, the Channel Islands are asserting their central role in Millenium 2027: bridges between the Norman world, where heritage, contemporary creation and European cooperation form part of a dynamic firmly focused on the future.

## The Parisian Archipelago

➤ To fully realise its regional and European ambitions, Millenium is building on its strategic foothold in Paris, which from 2026 will become a key hub for influence, dialogue and international visibility.

At **fifteen iconic venues**, major national institutions, foreign cultural institutes and several embassies are joining forces with Millenium in a unique collaborative initiative, forming a symbolic diagonal line from Place de l'Étoile to Place des Gobelins, in close dialogue with the **cité internationale de la langue française in Villers Cotterêts**, a landmark institution for the circulation of languages and ideas in Europe.

From the **Monnaie de Paris** to the **Bibliothèque nationale de France**, from the **Institut de France to the Mobilier national**, from the **Institut français** to the **Institut du monde arabe**, this Parisian initiative brings together conferences, exhibitions, screenings, debates and artist residencies, echoing the major themes of the Millenium Project and extending to Villers Cotterêts to explore issues of language, translation and transmission.

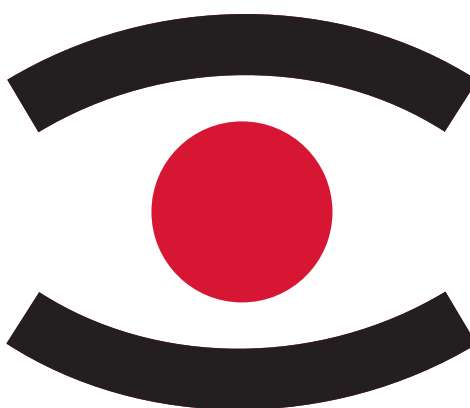
Supported by active and trusted partners - **the British Council, the Irish Cultural Centre, the Italian Cultural Institute**, as well as **several European embassies** - it is not merely a backdrop, but a catalyst for dialogue and cooperation. It showcases Normandy within Europe and Europe within Normandy, broadens its audience, promotes its partners and invites visitors to explore the Millenium regions.



This programme is not exhaustive

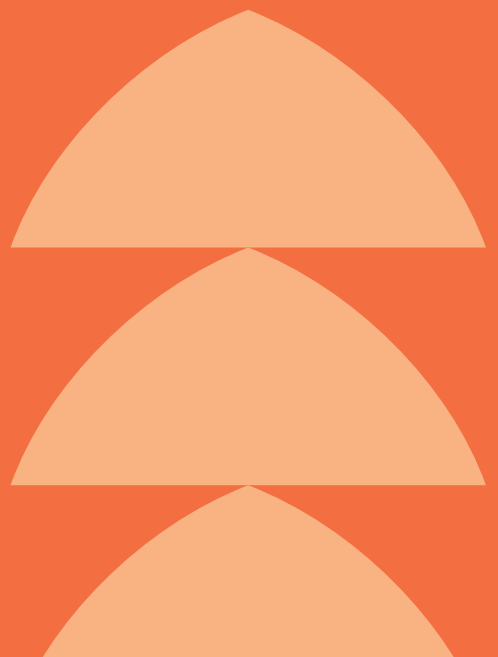
**For the full programme,  
visit [millenium.fr](https://millenium.fr)**

Updated regularly





# MILLENIUM: ORIGINS AND AMBITION





## UNPRECEDENTED EUROPEAN COOPERATION AROUND A SHARED HERITAGE

Conceived from the outset as a **unifying, long-term initiative**, MILLENIUM was created by the Normandy Region with the ambition of transforming a historic anniversary into a year-long celebration on a **European scale**. Its ambition is twofold: **to raise awareness of Normandy's heritage**, which remains largely unfamiliar to the wider public, and **to place this shared history firmly within a contemporary European context**.

### Norman influence in Europe: A shared history, a little-known heritage

➤ In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Vikings, warriors from the north, regularly raided territories along the Seine and the Channel coast. To counter this threat, in exchange for peace, King Charles the Simple granted their leader **Rollo** the territory that was to become Normandy, the 'land of the Northmen'. This marked the beginning of the integration of Scandinavian influences into local traditions.

Skilled navigators, Rollo's descendants reached England, where **William the Conqueror** and **Matilda of Flanders** began their reign from 1066 onwards. The Normans then continued their epic journey to Ireland, where Richard de Clare, known as **Strongbow**, played a key role. Earlier still, **Robert Guiscard** and **Roger I of Sicily** had already embarked on their own expansion to Southern Italy and the Mediterranean.

Wherever they settled, new political, social and legal structures emerged, landscapes were reshaped, and castles and abbeys rose across the territory. By opening up new routes, they carried their language and culture across Europe, sharing skills and traditions while fostering commercial exchange.

From the Norman Palace in Palermo to the Tower of London, from Melfi Castle to Ferns Castle, via the cathedrals of Bari and Dublin, and the Abbaye-aux-Dames in Caen, **the Normans left an enduring mark on Europe, bequeathing an impressive tangible and intangible heritage**, from landscapes and architecture to iconic works such as the Bayeux Tapestry, the Domesday Book and the Tree of Life mosaic at Otranto.

Yet this heritage - and the cultural and linguistic connections forged across Europe during that period - remains **little known** today.



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# A COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE LAUNCHED IN 2023

From the outset in 2023, the Normandy Region sought to involve the various European territories with which it shares a common history and heritage in shaping the Millenium event year.

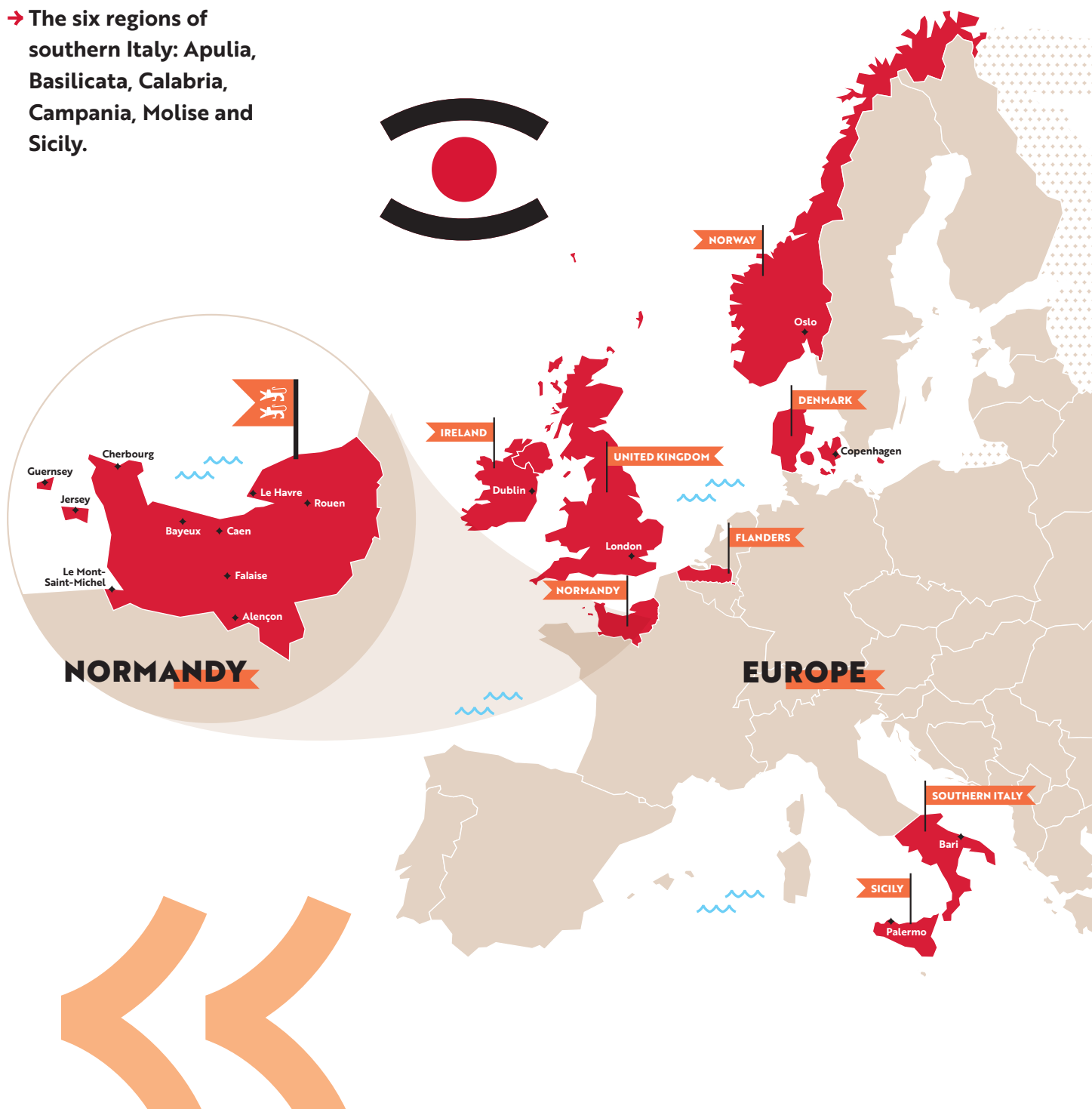
- The United Kingdom
- Ireland
- the Channel Islands
- Flanders
- Norway
- Denmark
- The six regions of southern Italy: Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Molise and Sicily.

The Normandy Region led **delegations** to these European territories in order to present this unprecedented initiative to political, cultural, tourism, heritage and academic institutions and to develop collaborative partnerships.

All those involved in the project who had engaged with the initiative across Europe gathered on two occasions (on 30 and 31 October 2024 and on 10 October 2025) at the Abbaye-aux-Dames in Caen, the headquarters of the Normandy Region, to continue the work already begun and to reflect collectively on the narrative of this major event year.

Cultural, academic, tourism and political institutions worked closely together to make 2027 a year of celebrations and the **starting point for a long-term cooperation.**

All the stakeholders involved met once again at the Abbaye-aux-Dames in Caen on 2 and 3 July 2026 to **unveil the first projects that will form part of this landmark year.**



# GOVERNANCE AND SCIENTIFIC ASSURANCE

The project is supported by a structured governance framework, comprising a Governance Board and a Cultural and Scientific Committee.

## COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNANCE BOARD:

The Governance Board meets once every quarter to discuss the key issues that shape the organisation and delivery of the event year.



### Composition

#### NORMANDY

**Hervé MORIN** | President of the Normandy Region

**Catherine MORIN-DESAILLY** | Senator for Seine-Maritime and Chair of the Normandy Region Committee for Culture, Tourism and Heritage.

#### IRELAND

**Mary MAC SWEENEY** | Executive Director for Planning and Economic Development, Dublin City Council | Dublin

**Xavier d'ARGOEUVES** | Counsellor for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, French Embassy in Ireland | Dublin

**Eamonn HORE** | Deputy Chief Executive, Wexford County Council | Wexford

**Michael MACDONAGH** | Focal Point for the Year of the Normans in Ireland/Chief Archaeologist, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage | Dublin

#### UNITED KINGDOM

**Anissia MOREL** | Counsellor for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, French Embassy in the United Kingdom; Director of the Institut Français | London

**Anne DUNCAN** | Chair and Director for France, British Council | Paris

**Conor SANDFORD** | Cultural Heritage Directorate, Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities, Northern Ireland

**Belfast ANGUS ROBERTSON** | Secretary of State for External Relations and Culture, Scotland | Edinburgh

**Scarlett BUTLER** | Representative for Wales in France, British Embassy | Paris

**James ADDISON** | First Secretary, British Embassy | Paris

#### CHANNEL ISLANDS

**Kirsten MOREL** | Minister for Sustainable Economic Development - Jersey

**Aurélie LEROY** | Director of the Channel Islands Office – Caen

#### SOUTHERN ITALY: APULIA, BASILICATA, CAMPANIA, MOLISE, CALABRIA AND SICILY

**Florence ALIBERT** | COCAC, Institut Français | Rome

**Antonio NICOLETTI** | Mayor, Matera Town Hall | Matera

**Fabio VENEZIA** | Member of the Sicilian Regional Assembly | Troina/Sicily

**Francesco PAOLO SCARPINATO**, Vice President, Sicily Region | Palermo/Sicily

**Nuccio DI PAOLA** | Vice President, Sicilian Regional Assembly | Palermo/Sicily

**Giampiero CANELLA** | Deputy Mayor for Culture, Palermo City Council | Palermo/Sicily

#### FLANDERS

**Yves WANTENS** | Head of Mission, General Delegation of Flanders, Belgian Embassy in France | Belgium/Paris

#### DENMARK

**Catherine LEFEBVRE** | Cultural and Communications Attaché, Danish Embassy | Paris

**Carl ENGELSEN** | COCAC, Institut Français | Copenhagen

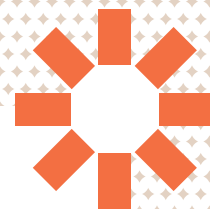
**Hanne LETH ANDERSEN** | Vice-Chancellor, Roskilde University | Roskilde

#### NORWAY

**Gérard CAIRET** | First Counsellor, French Embassy | Oslo

**Barzin VIEL-BONYADI** | Technical Advisor Communications, Norwegian Embassy | Paris

**Isabelle DESVIGNES** | COCAC, French Embassy | Oslo



## THE CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

This advisory committee is responsible for assessing the relevance of applications submitted in response to calls for projects issued by The Normandy Region. It has met on several occasions since June 2025 to review the nearly 900 project proposals received.

### Committee Members

#### NORMANDY

**Jean-Marie LEVESQUE** | Director of the Musée de Normandie

**Philippe NORMAND** | Normandie Livre et Lecture Cultural Advisor, Chair of Normandie Livre & Lecture

**Christophe MANEUVRIER** | Director, Centre for Research in the Humanities, University of Caen

**Sophie POIREY** | Senior Lecturer in Legal History at the University of Caen Normandy

**Denis LUCAS** | Cultural Attaché, Le Rouvray Hospital

**Philippe PLATEL** | Director of Normandie Impressionniste/Artistic Advisor for the Contemporary Art Programme 2027

**Jean-Luc LEGRAND** | DASEN, Regional Education Inspector, Academic Director of National Education Services (DASEN) | Normandy Regional Education Authority

**Aurélien RENOU** | Director of the Saint-Mère-Église Tourist Office and of the Cotentin Bay Tourist Office

**Emmanuel POUS** | Director of Château de Gaillon

**Anne-Florence GILLARD-ESTRADA**, Vice-President for Culture, Science and Society, Documentation and Publishing

**José SAGIT** | President of ODIA

**Sandrine FANGET** | Deputy Director of DEESTRI | Normandy Region

**Deborah COPEL** | Deputy Director of Culture and Heritage | Normandy Region

**Nicolas COMBY** | ARCEC Expertise and Foreign Trade Advisor

#### IRELAND

**Hugh FARELL** | Cultural Attaché, Irish Embassy in France

#### ITALY

**Antonio CALBI** | Director of the Italian Cultural Centre in Paris

#### UNITED KINGDOM

**Petya HRISTOVA** | Programme Director, UK/France Spotlight on Culture | British Council

#### CHANNEL ISLANDS

**Aurélien LEROY** | Director of BIAN Office of the Channel Islands

#### DENMARK

**Catherine LEFEBVRE** | Cultural Counsellor | Royal Danish Embassy in France

#### NORWAY

**Ellen JORGENSEN** | Cultural Counsellor, Norwegian Embassy



# A LONG-TERM AMBITION:

## TOWARDS THE CULTURAL ROUTE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE DESIGNATION

**Cultural route  
of the Council of Europe**  
**Itinéraire culturel  
du Conseil de l'Europe**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

➔ MILLENIUM is committed to a sustainable approach. The European partners involved in the project will jointly submit an application to the Council of Europe for the **Cultural Route of the Council of Europe designation from 2028 onwards**. The first step in this process is **the establishment of a European association** to lead the project, the articles of association for which were filed in March 2026.

Based on criteria of excellence, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe (ICCE) demonstrate, through journeys across time and place, how the heritage and cultures of Europe's countries contribute to a shared cultural heritage.

Present at the first European meeting held in Normandy in October 2024, Bruno Favel, Head of the World Heritage Mission at the Directorate General for Heritage and Architecture of the French Ministry of Culture, commended the initiative driven by all the partners and noted that the project fulfilled all the requirements for accreditation.

This accreditation will help to build a genuine network and ensure greater visibility and longevity for the ambitious MILLENIUM project.

Four countries and two territories are earmarked to become members of this cultural route:

- ➔ **Italy**
- ➔ **The United Kingdom**
- ➔ **Ireland**
- ➔ **France**
- ➔ **The Channel Islands**
- ➔ **Flanders**

A dedicated **Scientific Committee** has been set up to ensure the project's historical accuracy, heritage coherence and European relevance, and to support the application for certification from the Council of Europe.

It brings together experts from all the partner regions of the event year:

## IRELAND

**Sean DUFFY** | Professor of Irish Medieval History, Trinity College | Dublin

**Michael MC DONAGH** | Millennium 2027 Focal Point/Chief Archaeologist, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage | Dublin

## UNITED KINGDOM

**Leonie HICKS** | Lecturer in Medieval Studies, Canterbury Christ Church University | England

**Dauvit BROWN** | Professor of Scottish History, University of Glasgow | Scotland

**Mark HAGGER** | British Medieval Historian, Bangor University | Wales

**Anne DUNCAN** | Chair and Country Director for France, British Council-FR/ENG

**Keith LILLEY** | Professor, University of Belfast | Northern Ireland

**Jeremy ASHBEE** | Chief Curator of Properties, English Heritage | England

**Jonathan CARTER** | Director, Jersey Heritage | Jersey

**Helen GLENCROSS** | Director of Culture and Heritage, Guernsey | Guernsey

## ITALY

**Francesca SOGLIANI** | Professor of Christian and Medieval Archaeology, University of Basilicata | Italy

**Iride VALENT** | Professor of Linguistics, University of Catania | Sicily

**Rosanna ALLAGIO** | Lecturer in Medieval History and Archaeology, University of Molise | Italy

**Francesco VIOLANTE** | Professor of Medieval History, University of Bari | Italy

**Victor RIVERA MAGOS** | President, Association for Norman-Swabian Studies, University of Bari | Italy

**Giovanni TRAVAGLIATO** | Professor of Medieval Art History, University of Palermo | Italy

**Pier Francesco PALAZZOTO** | Professor of History and Society, University of Palermo | Italy

**Angela LAGHEZZA** | Researcher, University of Bari | Italy

## NORMANDY

**Sandrine FANGET** | Deputy Director for the Economy, Higher Education, Tourism, Research and Innovation | Normandy Region

**Déborah COPEL** | Deputy Director for Culture and Heritage | Normandy Region

**Marie-Agnès LUCAS-AVENEL** | Lecturer in Latin Language and Literature/Deputy Director of CRAHAM, University of Caen

**Jean-Marie LEVESQUE** | Director of the Château Museum, City of Caen | Normandy

**Christophe MANEUVRIER** | Senior Lecturer in Medieval History, University of Caen | Normandy

**Sophie POIREY** | Senior Lecturer in Legal History, University of Caen | Normandy

**Anne-Florence GILLARD-ESTRADA** | Vice-President, University of Rouen - Culture, Science and Society/Professor of British Literature and Visual Arts, University of Rouen | Normandy

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