

# CHÂTEAU DE VULLIERENS

GARDENS AND SCULPTURES

## 2019 PRESS PACK



# CHÂTEAU DE VULLIERENS



## THE ESTATE –LIVING HISTORY

In the Bovet de Mestral family for over 700 years  
A magnificent 18th-century construction  
100 hectares of grounds  
8 hectares of vineyard producing 4 wines: Chasselas,  
Pinot Noir, Gamaret-Garanoir, Gamaret-Garanoir Rosé



## THE GARDENS– UNIQUE IN SWITZERLAND

Over 30 hectares  
400 varieties of iris, the largest collection in Europe,  
plus daylilies, roses, tulips, peonies, rhododendrons...  
7 themed gardens  
Themed walks: roses, centennial trees, architecture



## THE LOCATION– BEYOND COMPARE

20 minutes from Lausanne, 40 minutes from Geneva  
Views onto Lake Geneva, the Alps and Mont Blanc



## ART – AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE

72 contemporary artworks  
19 sculptors  
The largest collection in Switzerland  
Some unprecedented in Switzerland  
Monumental sculptures

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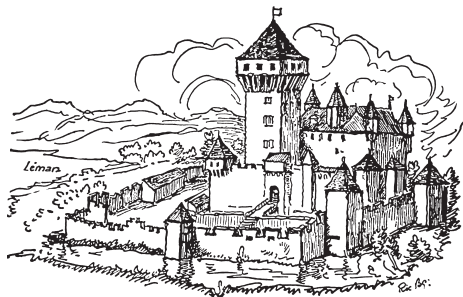
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# HISTORY

A family heritage, part of Swiss history

## ■ THE FIRST CHÂTEAU

The first record of the parish of Willerens, part of the barony of Cossonay, can be traced back to 1228. In 1308 Pierre de Duin was granted permission to build a fortified house with dwellings on the land, becoming its first lord. This imposing fortress, similar in structure to Château de Vufflens, was dominated by a square tower with machicolations. On his marriage to Guillermette de Duin, Guillaume de Colombier took possession of the fortress, and the land remained the property of their descendants until the family line was extinguished in the sixteenth century. In 1421 Vullierens became a banneret seignory, part of the bailiwick of Vaud, and was given to Henri de Colombier, lord of Vufflens.



Through marriage and inheritance, Vullierens remained with the de Colombiers then went to the Allinges, until 1665 when it was given to Henri de Mestral by sovereign decree. Since then, the estate has remained with the de Mestral family and its direct descendants. The father of the current owner inherited the Château in 1950 from his mother, Georgina Bovet de Mestral. The Château as it stands today was built by Gabriel-Henri de Mestral, comrade-in-arms to Abraham Davel, who was born in Pampigny in 1670.

## ■ THE CHÂTEAU TODAY

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, news that a "little Versailles" was being built in the region spread like wildfire. Legend has it that when Charles de Chandieu's beautiful French wife set eyes on the dark and dank castle intended as her future home, she turned on her heels and swore she would return only when a new Château, comparable to those of France, had been built. Anxious to please his bride, Charles ordered that the old fortress be demolished and the present-day Château de L'Isle built to drawings by a student of Mansart. His wife, on return-



ing, must have found the new architecture to her liking as she stayed, and went on to give her husband 11 children.

Naturally, such an event didn't go unnoticed among the other ladies of the region. They too were little enamoured of the uncomfortable fortresses where they spent their days behind heavy walls, in rooms where daylight barely penetrated. And so, circa 1706, Gabriel-Henri de Mestral called on the same architect to draw up plans to transform Vullierens – with the condition that certain features of the feudal castle remain, namely three towers (one was demolished in the 1900s to open up the view onto Mont Blanc), that part of the ramparts supporting the present-day terrace, and the outbuildings. The rest was demolished and the stone reused for the new building, which was finished in 1712.

Equal care was afforded to the inside of the Château. Tapestries were commissioned from the prestigious Aubusson workshops in France. Craftsmen from China were employed to create exquisite wallpapers. The decoration for one of the wood-panelled salons was also executed by Chinese artists. Another salon was lined with beautifully embossed Cordoba leather.

Château de Vullierens presents a fine example of the architecture of its period, not a single alteration having been made to its exterior since it was completed in 1712. Even the layout of the different rooms is unchanged. It is also one of the few remaining illustrations of an authentic eighteenth-century seigneurial residence, still with its period tapestries and furniture. Indeed, Gabriel-Henri de Mestral stipulated in his will that the Château's furnishings were not to be dispersed. Château de Vullierens remains the de Mestral family home and is therefore not open to the public.

700  
years in the same family

100  
hectares in total



# SWITZERLAND'S MOST SPECTACULAR GARDENS

*The Château's quiet splendour and the enchantment of its magnificent gardens together form one of the country's most remarkable heritage sites. The sumptuous gardens, unequalled in Switzerland, are framed by stunning views of the Alps, Mont Blanc and Lake Geneva, and are certain to delight garden enthusiasts together with admirers of art and architecture.*

*As well as one of the most modern iris collections in Europe with almost 400 different varieties, visitors can enjoy the regularly renewed landscapes of the different areas throughout the thirty hectares (75 acres) of grounds. Between May and July, 50,000 flowers create a glorious mosaic of colour, with more than 8,500 late-blooming tulips, a collection of peonies and rhododendrons, and an impressive rose garden.*

**36,000**

bluebells along the bridle path

**24,000**

irises flowering in May and June

**14,000**

late-blooming tulips

**13,500**

daylilies flowering in June and July

**2,000**

roses flowering in June and July

**700**

white and blue alliums

**400**

metres of bridle path

**400**

narcissus

**400**

camassia

**398**

varieties of iris

**300**

years, the age of the tulip tree and the Sequoia

**250**

rhododendrons flowering in May

**200**

peonies flowering in May

**135**

varieties of daylily

**48**

varieties of rose

**30**

hectares of gardens



### ■ THE FIRST IRISES

Since 1955, visitors have been welcomed to the private gardens of Château de Vullierens for the Floralties Iris Festival.

The first five varieties of iris were planted in 1950 by Doreen Bovet, wife of Dr Bernard Bovet de Mestral and mother of the Château's present owner. Strolling through Vullierens' magnificent iris gardens, amidst such a blaze of colour, it's hard to imagine this was once nothing but wheat. Such a spectacular transformation is all down to Doreen Bovet. Armed with boundless energy, patience and determination, she turned an ordinary field into a stunning garden and a true work of art.

A native San Franciscan, in 1953 she came up with the idea of planting the grounds around the Château with her favourite flowers. She started small, choosing twelve varieties including, aptly enough, Iris California. Little by little she added to the displays, introducing new varieties each

year. Come 1955, she decided to open the garden to the public.

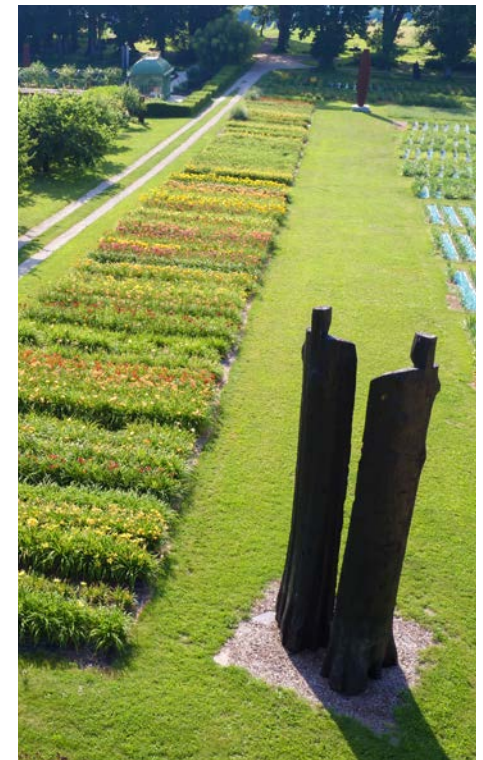
Over the course of the years, with each new season Doreen Bovet continued to assemble what she insisted would be the only collection of its kind, acknowledged by specialists as one of the largest and most modern anywhere in Europe. She placed orders with the leading hybridisers, and not just in Switzerland. She was, for example, a regular customer at Schreiner's, a renowned Swiss grower doing business in Oregon. She imported American varieties that were unknown in Europe, and acclimated them to their new environment.

### ■ THE FIRST FLORALTIES

Doreen had entrepreneurial flair too. She launched the first Floralties to help fund the cost of maintaining the gardens and, realising the importance of keeping pace with modern tastes, ensured the flower collec-

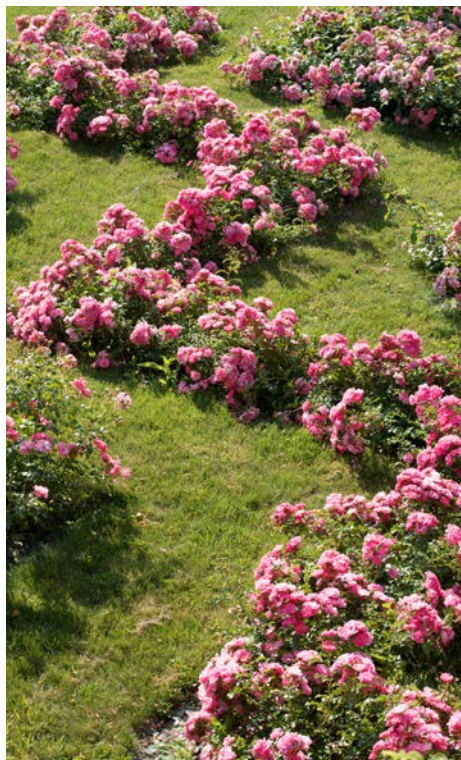
tions were constantly updated – no doubt indulging her own passion at the same time! Indeed, each trip back to the United States became a pretext to purchase elite new varieties selected by the most reputable growers. On Doreen Bovet's death, Gabrielle Martignier took charge of the gardens until her retirement in 2004, after more than seventy years at the Château. Helped by Dr Bovet and his assistant Lucy Mercier, her future successor, she learned how to create hybrids. The Principality of Monaco even featured two of the dozen or so new varieties she introduced to the gardens on its postage stamps.

More than ever, innovation and diversity are the hallmarks of Vullierens. Daylilies are among the plants that now flourish in the gardens. These lovely perennials tolerate both drought and humidity, and are just as happy in partial shade as they are in full sun. They are resistant to disease and flower in abundance. Some 13,500 of these wonderful daylilies have been planted in the gardens.



# THEMED GARDENS

Over the past decade, the present owner has put new energy into developing the gardens by creating distinct areas within the grounds, and diversifying the collections with roses, tulips, peonies, rhododendrons and other blooms.

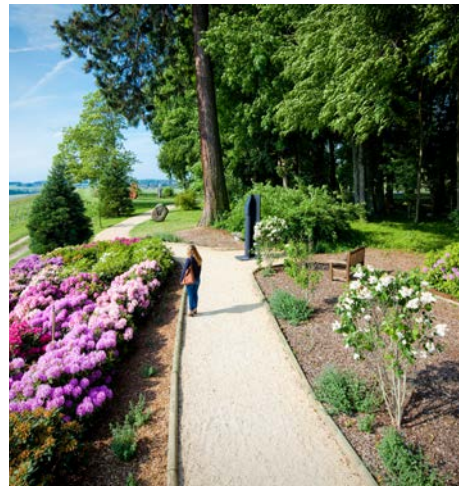


Dorianne's garden

## ■ DORIANNE'S GARDEN

This garden was created in 2006 on a terrace at the foot of the Château, and has no equivalent anywhere in Switzerland. More than 300 rose bushes have been planted here, in a geometric pattern, in memory of Dorianne Bovet.

Bands of yellow and red float on rivers made from pieces of glass that catch the sun's rays. This year, for the first time, visitors can cross through the garden and continue their stroll along the Château's southern terraces, from where they can admire its architecture at close quarters and take in the view across the lake.



Daria's garden



Doreen's garden

## ■ DARIA'S GARDEN

Daria's Garden was created in honour of the present owner's sister, who adored flowers. Eighteenth-century maps of the estate show that this area was once a popular walking spot, planted with shrubs. Today's garden winds its way between the magnificent tulip trees to finish at the foot of the giant California redwood which, at 30 metres high, watches over the grounds.

The garden comes alive each spring with the colours of recently-planted Inkarho rhododendrons, Japanese azaleas and multiple varieties of peony. A gravel path runs between the different displays, and offers visitors a breathtaking vista of Lake Geneva and, beyond the lake, the Alps. Rows of white double lilacs border the path, including the particularly fragrant *Syringa vulgaris* or "Madame Lemoine".

## ■ DOREEN'S GARDEN

What began as a typical eighteenth-century vegetable garden supplying the Château's kitchens was redesigned the following century as an English landscape garden. Almost 400 varieties of iris, 13,500 daylilies, over 400 roses, white tulips and an impressive collection of peonies and mature shrubs greet visitors. Some of these flower beds have also been "planted" with sculptures by Manuel Torres, Étienne Krähenbühl and Herbert Mehler.

A laburnum-covered tunnel runs through the garden to the orangery, which follows a nineteenth-century design. Twelve exotic palms surround an ornamental basin in its centre. Recently planted, palm trees grew in the courtyard of the Château in the nineteenth century. A Rose Walk follows the old garden wall for over a hundred metres. It leads into an open area, the setting for Mireille Fulpius' installation.

## MUÑI'S GARDEN

Colour and symmetry are the hallmarks of Muñi's Garden, which stretches for 1,200 square metres. Three gravel circles, eight metres in diameter, lead the way. At the centre of each stands a monumental sculpture, framed by beds of philadelphus (mock orange) and fuchsias against a backdrop of more than two thousand ivory white "Weisse Berliner" tulips. Along the pathway, guiding visitors' steps, are more fuchsias and philadelphus.

Pale lavender catmint, delicate white "Belle Etoile" philadelphus, English dogwood and pink-flowered tree mallow bloom one after the other, filling the air with their sweet scent from the first days of summer. "Gracilis" and "Gracilis Alba" Magellan fuchsias welcome autumn with their scarlet, mauve and white petals. Along with "Annabelle" smooth hydrangeas and "Vanille Fraise" paniced hydrangeas, they brave the first frost.



Muñi's Garden

## THE ENCHANTED WOODLAND

Continue past the bluebells to the end of the bridle path, and you arrive in The Enchanted Woodland. Contrasting with the formal landscaped gardens around the Château, this area is left to grow as nature intends. Follow the path among the trees, certain of which have been there for years, pause by the stream that flows into the pond and enjoy this haven of tranquility. Listen for the many species of birds that live here or enjoy the woodland plants that come and go with the seasons. And don't be surprised to meet one of the Vullierens elves, sculpted by Sara H.



The Enchanted Woodland by Sara H



The Secret Garden

## SECRET GARDEN

This garden takes the name of Frances Hodgson Burnett's much-loved children's novel, fuelled by her love of gardening and her equally fertile imagination. The sense of mystery and enchantment instilled in both the book and the garden is reflected in Sara.H's five sculptures and in the two Trees of Life, the work of ceramic artist Monique Duplain. Step through the weather-worn wrought-iron gate and breathe in the sweet perfume of honeysuckle. Further into the garden are small copses of flowering apple trees, guelder rose and wonderful ninebark with its dark chocolate-coloured foliage. To the right,

down a rustic path, old garden roses saturate the air with their exquisite fragrance: "Blanc Double de Coulbert", "Jacques Cartier", "Rose de Rescht", "Stanwell Perpetual", "Hansa". Here, at the lowest point of the garden, visitors can cross over the stream that darts between Etienne Krähenbühl's meandering sculpture, L'Imbisse. The drawbridge that once led to the medieval castle is nearby. On the other side of the stream, tiny Japanese primroses form whorls of colour. Further still, a dovecote unexpectedly glistens: its mirrored doors catch the sun and reflect light into the garden.

## ■ BUNNY'S SHADE GARDEN (2018) ■

This garden been designed as a show case for shade loving plants. It is divided into 4 sections, with a total of 730 m<sup>2</sup>. A winding path flows down the middle of this very seasonal spectacle. The 1,320 plants, made up of 35 varieties, will provide a continuous interest of colour, texture and form from April through October. This new garden will hopefully inspire our visitors to plant areas of shade which normally would have been neglected in their own gardens.

The season starts with the Rose de Paques – the colours range from deep purple-black to smokey pink. Followed by 2 types of Dicentra with white and pink flowers resembling a heart shaped bell. Interesting stems

that bloom with fairy shaped pointed flowers, is Aquilegia, which float delicately over their decorative foliage.

No shade garden would be complete without the feathery plumes of the fern family. Ferns are one of the earliest plants recorded in the plant world where many fossils have been found. The reliable Vinca major, has blue flowers that ramble along some path edges blending into plants such as Pulmonaria angustifolia 'Azurea' with its pink buds opening to blue flowers. In early herbal medicine it was used to treat lung disease – hence the name. The hybrid pink Geraniums 'Matu Vu' creates a harmonious and gentle filler linking the different elements of planting.

The assorted magical Digitalis purpurea give height and profusion of colour and is always

a favourite for the bumble bees who make a regular visit for pollen collection. This plant has been used for medicinal purposes since the dark ages to the present day. The dramatic Rheum palmatum also has its roots in the healing. The earliest Chinese records of its medicinal use goes back to 2,700 BC.

Some of the plants in this garden would have been grown throughout the history of the Chateau, for medicinal purposes.

The little known and used, Astrantia major, will dance their pin cushion like white and ruby flowers throughout the garden for most of the season.

An unusual addition to this garden is Cornus canadensis, a ground cover cornus, with its iridescent white flower bracts.







## LES WALKS

### ■ MEDIEVAL WALK

*Architecture and Heritage: a 360° tour of the Château*

Welcome to this 360° discovery of Château de Vullierens. Walk in history's footsteps, from the thirteenth-century medieval vestiges to seventeenth-century French architecture and contemporary art.

Begin by zigzagging among the geometric – and kinetic – rose beds in Dorianne's Garden. Continue with a stroll across the terraces, which are built on the walls of the original fortress. Take time to contemplate the imposing architecture and enjoy the stunning views across the old orchard, the vines and the lake.

Carry on for a few metres, around the tower, and admire what remains of the original construction. Travel seven hundred years back in time by following the ramparts of the fortress that was built in 1308 by Pierre Duin. Continue along the path and you'll come to a second tower, also part of the medieval fortress. End with a stroll along the old moat, now a water garden.

*Please note that this walk is not suited to visitors with limited mobility or in wheelchairs.*



### ■ TREE WALK

The Château's gardens are home to some exceptional ancient trees. Meet these giants, certain of which tower more than forty metres above us, along the Tree Walk. Fifteen different species are represented. The map of the gardens will help you locate these leafy ancestors, and tell you more about them.

Among the most impressive are the tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) that was planted in 1720 and is believed to be one of the oldest in Europe, and the giant redwood (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), the second-tallest tree in the gardens.

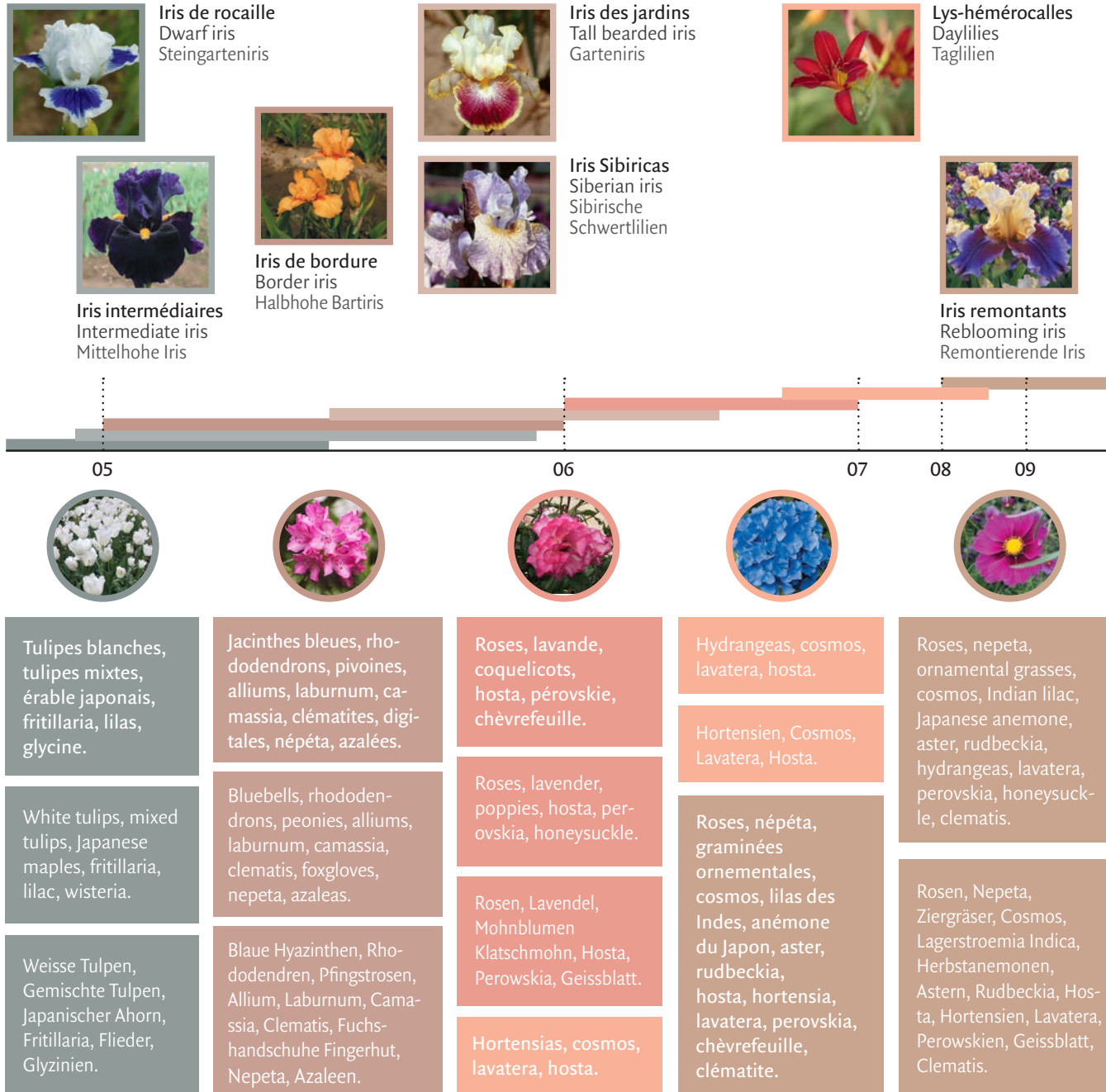
A recent study carried out in the United Kingdom has scientifically proven the positive effects of trees on human health. For example, a walk in the forest can leave us feeling happier for up to seven hours after. So don't feel shy about touching the trees or embracing them to benefit from their natural force.

### ■ ROSE WALK

At Château de Vullierens we have roses by the thousand. The wall of the old vegetable garden alone is planted with more than four hundred. The Rose Walk gives pride of place to this beautiful scented bloom. You'll meet some surprising characters along the way, from Gertrude Jekyll to The Generous Gardner, as you stroll from garden to garden, from Dorianne to Doreen to the Secret Garden. Our collection of more than two thousand rose bushes in bloom makes a spectacular sight – and a wonderful walk!



# FLOWERING TIMES





## THE KING LIZARD'S KINGDOM

2018 novelties for families – King Lizard opens the doors of his kingdom to the visitors. Sheltered from the trees, it shares its treasures and history with young and old.

Born from a generous nature sculpted by time, a kingdom is revealed to children. At the bend of a path under the secular trees, it tells the story of King Lizard. As if emotions and senses had been captured in their bark, dozens of trees facetiously hide the personality of more than 7 characters. A world made of nature, to touch, to see, to listen and to feel. The King Lizard's Kingdom is a tribute to the richness of a preserved nature that generously offers its treasures. Let your imagination and creativity run free and it will become your Kingdom.





Mireille Fulpius – Paradigme

#### Paradigme

Paradigme is a 10 by 50 metre architectural work that seems strangely out of place amidst the classical surroundings of the Château de Vullierens gardens. It first appears as a chaotic and complex monumental labyrinth, the first view of which is an imposing 100 sq m wall. Next comes an exuberant forest, created from a heterogeneous assembly of spruce joists. A narrow tunnel cut through an entanglement of branches leads towards an enormous, bare cylinder stretching up to the sky. This poetic construction was inspired by the skilfully assembled 'bowers' which the male bowerbird builds out of twigs, in the hope of attracting a mate.

1,600

pieces of metal in Etienne Krähenbühl's **Bing Bang** sculpture

80

sculptures

24

sculptors

6

new sculptures introduced in 2019

7

metres high, the tallest installation by Christian Lapie

## GIANTS OF THE ART WORLD

*Art's arrival in the gardens at Château de Vullierens coincides with the present owner's marriage to Dorianne Destenay, herself a painter. Her idea to start a collection of sculptures was confirmed after seeing the work of Manuel Torres. Today, more than sixty sculptures by Swiss and international artists are shown throughout the gardens, with new pieces added each year.*

### Artist biographies

#### ■ MIREILLE FULPIUS (2015)

Visual artist Mireille Fulpius was born in Geneva on February 2, 1951. As a young graduate of the Visual Arts School in Geneva, she spent her first ten years as an artist working with metal, changing her working methods and spatial reference points when she was given the chance to set up a studio in a disused industrial building. This was also when

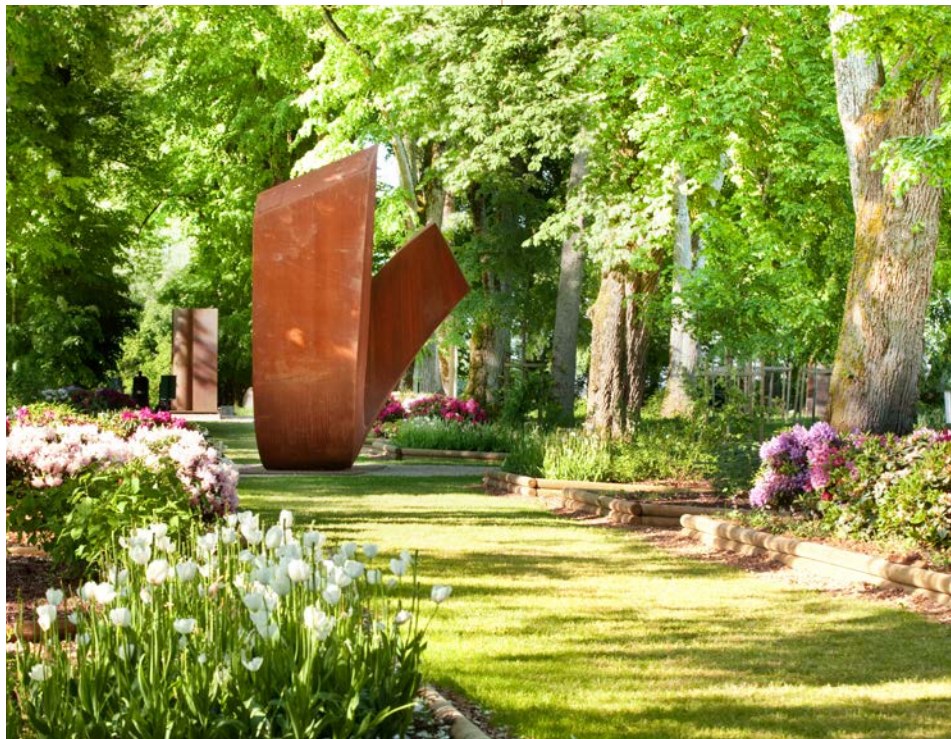
she rediscovered wood, which was to become her material of choice – a turning-point in her artistic practice. For the past two decades, Fulpius has been producing large outside structures, each unique, which she describes as reservoirs of energy, in constant dialogue with the energies contained within the natural rhythms of the environment.

## ■ BEVERLY PEPPER (2015)

Beverly Pepper is still producing art at over 90 years of age – and couldn't imagine her life any other way. Such persistence has led to frequent comparisons with her two peers, Louise Bourgeois and Louise Nevelson, but while she admires their work, she does not see herself as a sculptor. She prefers not to have a specific status, other than “someone who works metal as though it were paper.” This great lady, who has lived in Umbria for more than 50 years, has indeed visited so many foundries the length and breadth of Italy that metal no longer has any secrets for her.

### *My Twist*

*Beverly Pepper honours the gardens with her My Twist sculpture, and in doing so has fulfilled the owner's dream to exhibit one of her works at Vullierens. Not only is this the first time a female artist has exhibited in the gardens, it is also the first time My Twist has been brought to Switzerland! Pepper's works make great use of curves and Corten steel, whose rich hues are altered by time and the weather. Each piece is crafted by hand, entirely unique and of a different size. My Twist, which was created for the 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, takes a monumental view of life, standing a full five metres tall amidst the gardens. Pepper frequently describes her sculptures as waiting sentinels that come to life only when visitors arrive and imbue them with their different interpretations, and in this respect Vullierens offers the perfect setting.*



Beverly Pepper – My Twist



Gillian White – Berg und Tal

## ■ GILLIAN WHITE (2017)

There are many different facets to the artist Gillian White, who was born in 1939. Though a well-known metal sculptor in Switzerland, she has lost none of her British spirit and the two form a perfect mix – much like her dual citizenship! Having initially trained as a ballet dancer – a career she was forced to abandon for health reasons age 15 – she set her heart on becoming an artist instead. She pursued her chosen path with determination, combining studies (first at St Martin's School of Art in London, then in Paris) with part-time jobs.

Her single-mindedness caught the eye of Swiss artist Albert Siegenthaler, so much so in fact that the couple married, moving to Switzerland in 1966 where they built a studio with their own hands. This is where White started to create monumental works, chiefly from Corten steel. While Gillian White's work can be described as rigorous in terms of the symmetry of its lines, its strict rhythms and its static gravity, this paradoxically results in atmospheric pieces that are instilled with harmony and poetry.

## ■ LAURA FORD (2018)

Laura Ford is an English artist born in 1961. Her passion for art took her to Bath Academy of Art and later the Cooper Union School of Art in New York, where teachers include Michael Pennie, Richard Deacon, Nick Pope, Anthony Gormley, Peter Randall-Page, Shelagh Cluett and Anish Kapoor. At 23 she began a postgraduate sculpture course at Chelsea School of Art in London. Ford's work has been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale, and is part of the collections at the Tate, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Meijer Gardens, together with other contemporary art museums and a number of private collections. Her sculptures are full of fantasy, not to

mention the occasional touch of affectionate cynicism. Ford uses her art to tackle social and political issues through the prism of humour and her own observations of the human condition. Her works are considered yet playful, created using a range of techniques including sculpture, drawing, painting, performance art and set design. When it comes to choosing materials, Ford fluctuates between the power of bronze or ceramic and the fluidity of fabric. The sculpture on show at Château de Vullierens represents six giant cats standing on their hind legs. This bronze feline army is part of her "Days of Judgment" series and is installed on the south terrace, offering an opportunity to contemplate our memories, somewhere between reality and imagination.



Laura Ford – Days of judgement, bronze

## ■ MANUEL TORRES (SINCE 2003)

Manuel Torres was born in Malaga in 1938 and came to Geneva in 1960, leaving Spain and its rampant unemployment behind. He was taken on by Atelier des Charmilles as a metal worker and, in his spare time, discovered an interest in sculpting metal. Torres quickly acquired remarkable technical skill and expertise, though never imagined the career that lay ahead. His passion for sculpting metal grew such that in 1971 he decided to leave his job and devote himself entirely to artistic creation. From his studio in the Geneva countryside, Torres works tirelessly in his efforts to reveal metal's inner soul, as he likes to put it.



Manuel Torres – Miroir, stainless steel

Made in iron or stainless steel, his frequently monumental sculptures for public spaces are formed from interlocking geometries which evoke male/female duality, enfolding and embrace. These sensual, poetic and always highly symbolic sculptures can be seen in more than twenty locations – parks, streets and public buildings – in Geneva and throughout Switzerland.

For the past two decades, Manuel Torres has also worked with blackened or oxidised iron, drawing on a fascination with Egypt to create long, solemn silhouettes that reach towards the sky. With forty years of work to his name, his fame has transcended national boundaries and his work features in numerous private collections as well as prestigious foundations.

**20 sculptures in the gardens**



**Le temps immobile**

Motionless time: Christian Lapie questions our individual and collective memory by installing spectral figures in historically resonant sites. His sculptures all occupy space in the same way – they take over their surroundings, drawing the eye until every last corner is filled. Silent and strong, with neither face nor arms, they catch us unaware. These huge, tree-like figures often tower over their spectators and yet, Lapie insists, despite their blackness and size we have no reason to fear them, for there is always something reassuring and peaceful in the company of trees. Like tranquil, unchanging guardians, they bear witness to the past, personifying the individual recollection that is common to all humanity.

Christian Lapie – Le temps immobile, treated oak

■ **CHRISTIAN LAPIE (2014)**

Christian Lapie studied first in Reims (1972-1977) then in Paris (1977-1979). Having started out as a painter, working in chalk, oxides and ash on rough sheets of canvas mounted on rudimentary frames, he later turned to materials such as sheet metal, cement and charred wood. Time spent in the Amazon jungle triggered the need to create more monumental sculptures, and soon figures made of rough, scorched wood were to appear in the Champagne area where he lives, illustrating the bloody history of its First World War battlefields. His subject matter is universal, a profound contemplation of our relationship with the world and our own identity. Lapie's very basic – rudimentary even – working techniques forever capture an unforgettable image, close yet at the same time distant, of a primary “being in the world”. Artists like Lapie, whose work

consists in changing the landscape in some way, are nomadic by definition.

9 sculptures in the gardens

■ **ETIENNE KRÄHENBÜHL (DÈS 2009)**

Sculptor Étienne Krähenbühl was born in Vevey in 1953, attended the Lausanne School of Fine Arts, and went on to train in Paris and Barcelona before setting up his "laboratory of the imagination" in Yverdon, where he defies the laws of physics. Working with metal requires immense physical effort, and yet his tons of steel appear poised to fly off to another world. The artist uses the contrasts, textures and reflections inherent to metal to evoke something mysterious and far away, and builds on the different forms they take: empty/full, polished/corroded, flexible/stiff. In two very different ways, he explores his materials' many possible states. One uses

the effects of time and water on iron, steel or even paper; the other revolves around innovation with materials such as memory alloys and super-elastic nickel-titanium alloys.

11 sculptures in the gardens

**Bing Bang**  
Winner of the 2009 FEMS Prize (Edouard & Maurice Sandoz Foundation), Étienne Krähenbühl's Bing Bang is a kinetic sound sculpture measuring 3.5 metres in diameter, whose beats and breaths are a poetic echo of our universe.



Etienne Krähenbühl – Bing bang, corroded steel, oxidised iron tubes, stainless steel, nickel-titanium

## ■ HERBERT MEHLER (2012)

Herbert Mehler was born in Germany in 1949, and started working alongside his father, a wood sculptor, before studying at the Nuremberg Academy of Fine Arts, where in 1976 he received a prize in recognition of new talent. From 2003 to 2009, he created his first 'Kavex' series, whose title is a combination of the German words for 'concave' and 'convex'. Using sheets of Corten steel which he cuts and folds into shapes observed in nature, he applies mathematics and technology to produce biomorphic sculptures – allegories of the organised beauty of the natural world. Despite their obvious connection with new technologies, Mehler's sculptures are nevertheless in perfect harmony with the ancient lines to be found, for example, in Gothic cloisters, thus forging a dialogue between two eras that transcends the limits

of space and time. In 2010, Mehler began a new series of sculptures, whose symmetrical curves freely create open shapes. This series is called 'Apsida', after the Greek word for apse or arch.

## 9 sculptures in the gardens

## ■ WERNER POKORNY (2017)

Werner Pokorny, a German sculptor born in 1949, studied sculpture at the Karlsruhe Academy of Fine Arts. It was to be a milestone in his life – first a student then a teacher, he has doubtless been an inspiration to an entire generation of young artists. Now based in Ettlingen (Germany), he has made Corten steel his material of choice, although wood also features in his sculptures. Pokorny's work is significantly inspired by

the idea of houses in their most elementary form. He represents them simplistically, yet recognisably, in a variety of positions: piled up, sloping, balancing... His sculptures situate the home in direct relation with the outside world, a metaphor for the role of art in public space. By presenting his work this way, the artist defines the spaces in which we live, and gives them an energy that goes beyond any purely pragmatic function. Pokorny develops a distinctive style through which we discover, and imagine, a powerful tension between complexity and simplicity. His works are as varied in form as the sites for which they are intended, from quietly modest to frankly monumental.

## ■ PIETER OBELS (2019)

Pieter Obels is a Dutch sculptor born in 1968. He studied at the Academy of Art in

Tilburg. Obels first experimented different materials for his work and after some years settled for steel, which allowed him to express his ideas best.

Pieter Obels explains "I don't start off with a real plan when I embark upon a new sculpture. My works come about spontaneously, as the result of improvisation. I transform the rigid corten steel into graceful and bold sculptures. I submit the raw material to what I want to express visually. I make it dance and move without a set rhythm. In the same way, you have to experience my work through your own movement and discover the sculpture from various angles and aspects. That is how you can best feel the movement of the steel."

Obels' sculptures can be found in many private and public collections around the world. Three of his sculptures are installed in our garden since 2019.



Herbert Mehler – Corten steel



Werner Pokorny – Endlos, Corten steel



Pieter Obels – Fijngevoelige verrukking, corten steel





Urs Twellmann – Wood

### ■ URS TWELLMANN (2016)

Urs Twellmann discovered his true vocation in 1997 when, after a period at the Visual Arts School in his native Berne, he took off for America and the Art Students League of New York, before completing his education at the Manhattan Graphic Center. Today, photography and sculpture are his preferred means of expression. Inspiration for his sculptures comes from the objects and installations which he experiments with in his studio-laboratory. This is where the wood reveals its nature and the future works begin to take shape.

He shapes and sculpts with a chainsaw, stopping only when he is convinced, beyond any doubt, that the piece has reached its finished

form. Twellmann's works come in all sizes, have been exhibited on every continent and won numerous awards.

### ■ LAURENT DOMINIQUE FONTANA (2017)

Swiss-born artist Laurent Dominique Fontana studied architecture and fine arts in Geneva. His work often tackles the tragic tension with which the human condition is fraught: suffering, love, solitude, determination. These are characteristics found in his work as a sculptor; a hand-to-hand combat with vital materials: stone, wood and time. There is always a paradoxical element to his portrayal of humanity: male and female figures, dreaming or warring, cross empty spaces with intensely powerful gestures – infinite, voluptuous, tense, elusive, like life itself.



Laurent Dominique Fontana – Sandstone

In the shade of tall limes, by the old moat, stone figures convey love, strength and sensuality. Away from the exuberant flower displays, a couple 2.5 metres high and two 1.7 metre solitary figures contemplate the blondness of the shell sandstone from which they are made.

### ■ CARLES VALVERDE (2018)

Carles Valverde is an artist from Catalonia, born in 1965. He has lived in Switzerland for nearly 30 years, barring an eight-year interlude in Majorca. He studied at the Llotja School of Applied Arts in Barcelona and was inspired to create art himself by the works of Eduardo Chillida and Richard Serra, and by Max Bill's concrete art. Carles Valverde is a sculptor first and foremost, but his practice resembles

that of a painter who combines a diversity of parts into a united whole. From monumental metal works to paintings, drawings and installations, everything is in harmony. Valverde's work is characterised primarily by minimalist, rectilinear shapes. He is a 'builder of space', always true to his own style – which has been described as austere – yet equally happy to experiment with different materials and techniques. Static sculptures contrast with light-hearted, animated installations that exist as extensions of space and time.

In Switzerland, his work can be seen at the Institute of Technology in Lausanne, at Bex & Arts, at the Louis Moret Foundation, as well as in several galleries and private collections. Carles Valverde has also exhibited in Spain, Poland and Germany. In spring 2018, one of his works joins the collection at Château de Vullierens.



Carles Valverde – Steel



Eric Sansonnens – Wood

### ERIC SANSONNENS (2016)

Eric Sansonnens' work asks us to look beyond the apparent complexity of the material and go deeper, to dig down to the very essence of the material. Artists are go-betweens who portray the world not as it is, but as they see it.

In this respect, Eric Sansonnens' first occupation, as a carpenter, has left its mark: total respect for the raw material. He never asks for a tree to be uprooted especially for him, but picks a trunk that has already been felled. Having made his choice, the sculptor scrutinises the wood, explores its structures, tests its resistance and notes any

weaknesses. He is now ready to give new life to a tree that would otherwise have been burned. Entering into violent, noisy combat, Sansonnens shapes his material with a chainsaw until an abstract form emerges from the fray. Art imitates nature, but through the artist's prism. Eric Sansonnens builds a rudimentary bridge between wood's complex structures and the artist's unconscious which has observed his deepest sentiments and brought forth elemental forms. He opens a door into his world, without the need for further explanation.

### GEORGES COULON (2018)

Georges Coulon was born in Chartre, France, in 1914. He studied at the Ecole des Arts Appliqués and the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

Thanks to his technical mastery and creative talent, he was quickly noticed among his peers and won the Casa de Velázquez prize.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, awards and successes reinforced his talents as a figurative sculptor.

Desperate to find that abstract art was no longer appealing to the public, he abruptly ended his career as a sculptor in the late sixties to devote himself to painting. He even decides to destroy some of his sculptures, which were then saved and hidden by his wife and friend, the sculptor Volti. The secret of his work preservation was revealed to him shortly before his death in 1990. His artwork is therefore rare but powerful and elegant. One of his bronze sculpture can be admired on the south terrace of Château Vullierens since the summer 2018.



Georges Coulon – Bronze

### ALLEN JONES (2018)

Allen Jones was born in 1937 in Southampton, England. He studied painting and lithography at Hornsey College of Art, London before enrolling at the Royal College of Art. In 1963 Jones received the Prix des Jeunes Artistes at the Paris Biennale, and in 1986 he was elected to the Royal Academy of Arts. From 1990 - 99 he was a trustee of the British Museum, London.

Allen Jones established himself as a controversial Pop artist during the 1960s. He is best known for his steel sculptures, paintings and prints incorporating female figures. His sexually charged early works, with their provocative eroticism, have, over the years, given way to more stylised, lyrical

compositions often involving elements of performance such as fashion shows, dancing and cabaret.

Jones has exhibited internationally in solo and group exhibitions, including a number of major touring retrospectives of his work. His work is held by numerous museum collections including the British Museum, London; Tate, London; National Portrait Gallery, London; Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Chicago Museum of Art; Fogg Art Museum, Massachusetts; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; Vancouver Art Gallery and Nagaoka Museum, Japan. Allen Jones lives and works in London.

His piece "Femme Assise" in red steel is shown in the garden since 2018.



Allen Jones – "Seated Woman" Red Steel

### ■ DOROTHY CROSS (2018)

Dorothy Cross is possibly Ireland's best-known artist. Born in 1956 in Cork, where she attended the Crawford Municipal School of Art, she went on to Leicester Polytechnic in England. She also studied for three years at the San Francisco Art Institute, California, where she completed a degree in printmaking.

She is at home with a variety of media, ranging from sculpture and installation art to photography and video, though always exploring recurrent themes of sexual and cultural identity, personal history, memory and the gaps between the conscious and the subconscious.

Exhibiting regularly since the mid-1980s, Dorothy Cross came to wider public atten-

tion with her major solo installation, "Ebb", at the Douglas Hyde Gallery in Dublin. This was followed by another installation, "PowerHouse", at the ICA in Philadelphia, Camden Arts Centre in London, and Kerlin Gallery in Dublin. Both these works incorporated found objects as well as items that had been in her family's possession for many years. In this respect, Cross's work has been described as "poetic amalgamation".

Dorothy Cross is best-known for "Ghost Ship", a public installation in which a disused light ship in Scotman's Bay, off Dún Laoghaire Harbour in Dublin, was brought to life through the use of luminous paint.

Cross, who holds an honorary doctorate from University College, Cork, and is a past winner of the prestigious Pollock-Krasner Award, comes to Château de Vullierens

with "Bed". Carved from Carrara marble, this crumpled bed symbolises birth, death, sex and dreams. Favoured by Renaissance sculptors and once reserved for depicting saints, Dorothy Cross shifts registers and takes marble from sacred to secular in a thought-provoking work.

### ■ MANUEL CARBONELL (2018)

Manuel Carbonell is one of the most highly regarded contemporary Cuban sculptors. Born in Cuba in 1918, he died in Florida in 2011 at the age of 93. Carbonell belonged to a generation of artists who studied at the San Alejandro School of Fine Arts in Havana, during which time he met Mario Carreno, Amelia Pelaez, Víctor Manuel and Fidelio Ponce. His greatest influence, however, would be his teacher and mentor, José Sicre. Carbonell travelled to France, Italy and Spain where he continued to study. He developed a classical style and many of his early sculptures had a religious theme. This would change when Carbonell fled Cuba for New York, where he began to experiment with more modern forms. His work began to attract the attention of prominent collectors. By 1963 he was exhibiting at the influential Schoneman Gallery on Madison Avenue (and would have a further seven solo shows there). In 1976, at a ceremony at the White House, Carbonell gifted his "Bicentennial Eagle" to the United States. The following year he sculpted the "Madonna of Fatima", his first bronze monument. Standing eight metres high, it is one of the largest bronzes ever cast in the United States in the twentieth century.

Manuel Carbonell's sculptures demonstrate immense sensitivity and technique. His sensual, powerful works are held at museums, in private collections and exhibited in public spaces.

His "Mother and Child" sculpture in the gardens of Château de Vullierens is the first of his works ever shown in Switzerland.



Dorothy Cross – Marble



Manuel Carbonell – Bronze

### ■ NICOLE DUFOUR (2018)

Nicole Dufour is a Swiss artist from Geneva. She was born in 1957. After studying graphic design, she learned Chinese at the University of Geneva before embarking on a nearly 30-years journey that took her successively to China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Kyoto. She set up her studio in Burgundy, France in 2006 and completed several residencies outside Europe.

Her works deal with relationships and its ambivalence, the restoration and the transformation. Her art involves braiding, ink drawing and using recycled papers or materials. The installation "Dieu est une couturière" is a dramatic statement of her work. The needle as a tool becomes a monumental object erected as a totem. It has been installed in the gardens since the end of 2018. The needle is 6 meters high and 3.1 meters in diameter.



Nicole Dufour – "God is a seamstress" polyester resin and metallic lacquer

### ■ POL QUADENS (2018)

Belgian artist Pol Quadens was born in 1960. From modest beginnings as a coach-builder, he has become an internationally recognised designer. He trained in the arts in Brussels with Pierre Sterckx – a life-changing encounter – but needs must, and Quadens found work twisting metal into bodywork for cars. This experience was nonetheless of benefit, as it taught him the

techniques and materials of metalworking, and honed his vision to focus on the fine, undulating lines of the automobile – the basis of his artistic research. In fact it was in his own classic car restoration garage that he began designing his first furniture and other objects, aged just 25.

He first achieved success with the CD200 compact disc storage shelf, over 100,000 of which were made. He went on to exhibit at furniture fairs, including the highly regarded Milan Fair, and quickly became a name to be reckoned with on the international design scene, extending and enriching his creations to include the world's lightest chair, made from carbon fibre, shoes also in carbon fibre, worn by Madonna, watches for Swatch Group, etc.

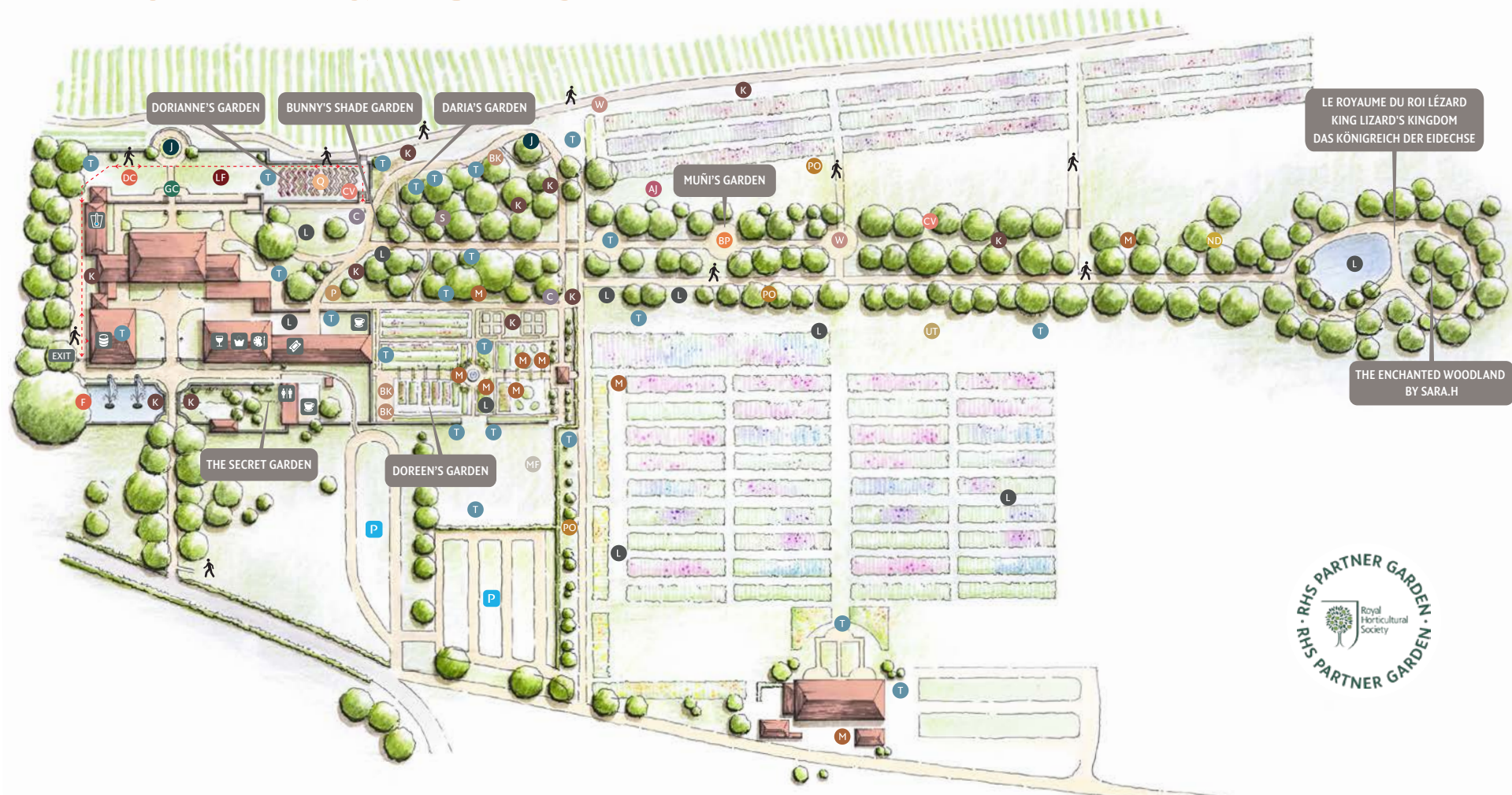
The transition from unorthodox designer and virtuoso draftsman into sculpture came naturally. Line is the common denominator of all his work as it feeds the all-important ideas of asymmetry and balance. What may appear to be free, spontaneous shapes are in fact the fruit of having successfully tackled numerous constraints and taken experiments to their utmost limits.

With quasi sensory expertise, Pol Quadens takes pleasure in defying materials and techniques to extract their essence, testing their breaking point at every step. For Château de Vullierens, he realised sixteen stainless steel "stones" that reaches 4.5 metres in height.



Pol Quadens – stainless steel

# MAP OF THE GARDENS



- |                                  |                                     |                      |                     |                                    |                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>NEW '19</b><br>AJ Allen Jones | CV Carles Valverde                  | J Francis Jennings   | LF Laura Ford       | <b>NEW '19</b><br>ND Nicole Dufour | Q Pol Quadens       |
| BK Beat Kohlbrenner              | DC Dorothy Cross                    | K Etienne Krähenbühl | M Herbert Mehler    | P Werner Pokorny                   | S Eric Sansonnens   |
| BP Beverly Pepper                | F Laurent-D. Fontana                | L Christian Lapie    | MF Mireille Fulpius | <b>NEW '19</b><br>PO Pieter Obels  | UT Urs-P. Twellmann |
| C Manuel Carbonell               | <b>NEW '19</b><br>GC Georges Coulon |                      |                     | T Manuel Torres                    | W Gillian White     |

40,000

bottles produced annually

8

hectares of vines



## THE VINEYARD AND ITS WINES

Château de Vullierens, the home of the Bovet de Mestral family for the past 700 years, is also renowned for its vineyard, which is replanted with Chasselas, Pinot Noir, Gamay, Gamaret, Garanoir and Galotta. The historic vines extend south of the Château for over 8 hectares. For a number of years, the estate has established sustainable, eco-friendly practices for its winegrowing. Individual plots are monitored to know when the grapes are ready for picking. Yield is limited. The grapes are harvested by hand and sorted in the crates to preserve their integrity. The label on the bottles shows an *Iris germanica*, winner of the Dykes Memorial Medal, the highest award of the American Iris Society. Château de Vullierens wines can be tasted and purchased at Café des Jardins during the gardens open season, and at other times by appointment.



### Tasting and sales

All our wines can be enjoyed at Café des Jardins and are sold in the Gift Shop during the gardens open season. Wine tastings are also proposed.

## Our wines

### ■ GAMARET-GARANOIR ROSÉ

The rosé is produced from the best plots of Gamaret-Garanoir. It yields an aroma of blackberry, raspberry and citrus with hints of spice, and reveals a rich, persistent flavour with a delicate, fruity texture. A gastronomic rosé with a bright personality.

*The Rosé Gamaret-Garanoir 2017 has obtained the gold medal awarded by the Wine Office Vaudois.*

### ■ CHASSELAS

Chasselas is the characteristic white grape variety of French-speaking Switzerland. Excellent as an aperitif, it can also be enjoyed with cheese dishes or to accompany a locally-caught fish. The Château de Vullierens Chasselas is a Grand Cru, Appellation Morges. A delicious, floral, structured white, it has twice won, in 2008 and 2009, the Médaille d'Or du Grand Prix du Vin Suisse.

*The Chasselas 2017 received the Excellence Award by Vinum magazine.*

### ■ PINOT NOIR

Pinot Noir is one of the most widely-grown red grape varieties in Switzerland. Originally from Burgundy, it takes its name from its pinecone-shaped clusters of fruit. Its lightness and fruity flavour pair well with both red and white meat. It can also be served with a starter or with pasta. Since 2005, Château de Vullierens has produced a Swiss Pinot Noir with an attractive ruby colour, a subtle, fruity bouquet and supple, silky tannins.

### ■ GAMARET-GARANOIR

Gamaret and Garanoir are two Swiss varieties, a cross between Gamay (black) and Reichensteiner (white). A blend of the two pairs well with game and grilled meat. Château de Vullierens has produced a Gamaret-Garanoir blend since 2008. Its attractive, deep red colour is matched by a full bouquet with berry notes and a round, slightly spicy palate.



## THE CASTLE CELLARS

For the first time in 2018, the castle cellars of the Château de Vullierens open their doors. The estate's principal wine cellar is located on the east side of the Château, underneath one of the outbuildings. Deliciously cool, with a magnificent vaulted ceiling and cobble floor, it contains six large oval oak barrels with a total capacity of 73,000 litres, together with a pair of nineteenth-century yoke presses. This historic cellar was refurbished in 1979 by Gilbert Hammel, a wine

producer in Rolle who has managed the estate's vines and production since 1975. Until 2012, the harvested grapes were pressed and conserved in the cellar by the Château's winemaker. In Spring 2018, this beautiful setting was opened for visitors to the gardens and customers at Portes des Iris to enjoy tastings.



# LE CAFÉ DES JARDINS

The ideal place to take a break and enjoy refreshments in the magnificent garden surroundings. Throughout the Floralties season, a new brigade of chefs is at work in the kitchens, preparing delicious dishes from the freshest ingredients. Artisanal ice-creams are also served. Sit outside in the shade of trees or, when the sun dips behind a cloud, come into our lawned veranda.

Brunch is served on Sundays and public holidays, with an array of quality product. All dishes are homemade.

*The Café is open daily from 10am to 6pm*







Set inside the grounds of Château de Vullierens, Portes des Iris is an enchanting venue, built in the sixteenth century and transformed into a magnificent setting that brings modern comfort inside its historic walls. The main building has six rooms and seats up to 700 guests. Portes des Iris is open year-round for weddings, civil ceremonies, corporate events and symposiums for groups of 10 people and more.

[www.portesdesiris.ch](http://www.portesdesiris.ch)  
+41 21 869 88 80  
[info@portesdesiris.ch](mailto:info@portesdesiris.ch)



# THE GIFT SHOP



Choose among a careful selection of gift items and regional specialities, our own Château de Vullierens range and wines from the estate's vines. The shop also proposes local arts and crafts, original home decor and of course a wide assortment of books about countryside and gardens.

*The gift shop is open from the end of April to the end of July.*

# VISITOR INFORMATION

## ■ OPENING TIMES

### Spring Floralties

April 21 to June 16 2019,  
daily from 10am to 6pm

### Summer Floralties

June 17 to July 28 2019  
Tuesday to Sunday from 3.30pm to 6pm

### Autumn Floralties

Every weekend in September and October  
from 10am to 4pm

## ■ ADMISSION PRICES

Adult .....	15 CHF
Child (under 12) .....	Free
Child (12-16) .....	5 CHF
Seniors .....	10 CHF

Adult season ticket (unlimited entry in 2019) .....	30 CHF
Seniors season ticket (unlimited entry in 2019) .....	20 CHF
Seniors group (one price for groups of 10 and more) ..	8 CHF
Group (10 to 39 people) .....	10 CHF
Group (40 people and more) .....	8 CHF

One price in summer and autumn ....10 CHF

# 15,000

visitors on average  
for each Floralties

# 108

days open in 2019

# 5

gardeners

### PRESS ENQUIRIES :

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