



The birthplace of Claude Debussy

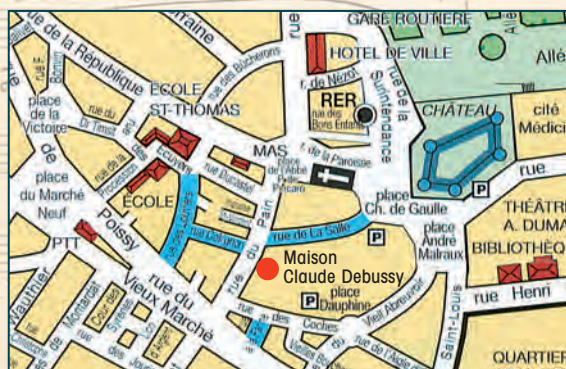
38, rue au Pain - 78100 Saint-Germain-en-Laye
www.saintgermainenlaye.fr

Opening Times

Tuesday to Saturday 14.00 – 18.00
 From October to April 14.00 – 17.30

Closed during bank holidays

Free Entrance



Means of Access :

A14 – A13 – RN 13 – RN 184
 RER line A1 (Saint-Germain-en-Laye) – Bus 258

Programme of the musical season,
 information and reservations for visits :
 Tourist Information Centre (Office de Tourisme)

☎ : +33 (0)1 30 87 20 63

info@ot-saintgermainenlaye.fr

Activities

- Every year the house where Claude Debussy was born proposes a number of musical events of a very high quality. It is not only the classic works of the repertoire of Debussy which are performed at these events, but also the works of other baroque or contemporary composers whose work influenced or was appreciated by him.
- These events are held in the auditorium, which is dedicated to the memory of Yvonne Lefebure, an exceptional pianist and piano teacher who ran interpretation classes in Saint-Germain-en-Laye.
- The Tourist Information Centre organizes guided visits for individuals on fixed dates and for groups by appointment. The conference guides are all approved by the Culture and Communication ministry.



Claude Debussy

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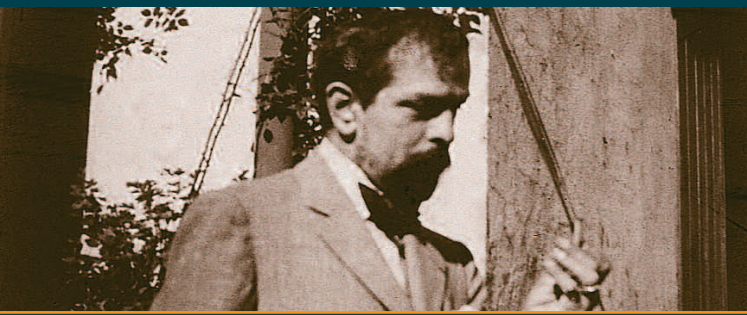


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The house

- The house, dated by dendrochronology to 1680, consists of two main buildings, separated by an inner courtyard which boasts a staircase with a beautiful balustrade.
- The house became a listed building in 1972 and was subsequently restored by the town of Saint-Germain-en-Laye.
- Claude Debussy was born in this house on August 22nd, 1862. His parents kept a crockery shop here.
- Since 1990 the building houses the Claude Debussy Museum on the first floor and the Tourist Information Centre on the ground floor.



Claude Debussy (1862-1918) A French Composer

- Claude Debussy was closely associated with the poets and painters of his period and greatly influenced 20th century music. He revolutionized traditional rules of composition by creating new tones which were to light the way for future musicians.



Debussy revealed his musical talents at a very early age and in 1884 won the Prix de Rome. The three pieces of music that he sent back from Italy, "Zuleima", "Le Printemps", and "La Damoiselle Elue", were not well received by the French Institute. They were considered too modern.

- For a brief period Debussy was influenced by the work of Wagner and twice visited Bayreuth between 1888 and 1889. However his association with the symbolist poets and his attraction to the symbolist and Pre-Raphaelite painters would define the direction of his later work.
- It took Debussy ten years, from 1893 to 1902, to compose his opera "Pelléas et Mélisande". The work was based on a play by Maeterlinck and represents a landmark in the history of music. Claude Debussy also composed for orchestra the symphonic poem "Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'un Faune" (1892 – 1894), and "La Mer" (1905). Other works include the ballets "Jeux" (1912), and "La Boîte à Joujoux" (1913), the musical score for "Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien", some piano pieces ("Children's Corner") and a large number of melodies.

The museum

- In this intimate, cosy atmosphere many personal objects belonging to Claude Debussy are exposed. There are musical scores and iconographic documents which bear witness to his musical career, his life and his tastes.
- The atmosphere of the musician's study is recreated by the presentation of the objects he liked to have around him whilst working, in particular the toad he called "Arkel", the musical score for the "Cinq Poèmes" ("Five Poems") by Baudelaire and various Chinese and Japanese curios. The piece of lacquerware, entitled "Aux poisons d'Or", ("The Goldfish") and the portrait of Debussy painted by Jacques-Emile Blanche (1861 – 1942) complete this evocation.
- In addition to the acquisitions made by the town of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, these collections come from the legacy of Claude Debussy's daughter-in-law, Madame de Tinan, and from the records of the Music museum in Paris.

