



For Immediate Release

Franck A. Perret Museum of Saint-Pierre, Martinique gets a new face and name

New York NY (June 6, 2019) –The Frank A. Perret Museum in Saint-Pierre is a memorial to the cataclysmic eruption of Mount Pelée on May 8, 1902, which took the life of close to 30,000 residents—only three survived, and that totally destroyed, what was at the time Martinique’s capital city. Saint-Pierre, which is located at the northwestern tip of the Isle of Flowers, was the island’s cultural and economic center, home to the main port. In the Caribbean this vibrant city was known as the “petit Paris” or the “Little Paris” of the Caribbean. Of course, Saint-Pierre was rebuilt and is



now know as the “Little Pompeii.” Although it lost its place as the island’s capital and economic heart to Fort-de-France, this lovely town by the sea is still a vibrant center of culture and in particular of contemporary art.

Not five months ago, the museum was closed for an extensive renovation of its exterior and major expansion and reorganization of its collections. Recently re-opened early May this year, the museum now carries a second name: Memorial to the Catastrophe of 1902.

The memorial’s re-designed building boasts a sober and contemporary architecture that houses a new digitally enhanced scenography of its collections to be viewed and discovered with audio guides both in French and in English. The collection includes period photos and artifacts chronicling the life of the people of Saint-Pierre before, during and after the eruption. Visitors will see 432 artifacts, objects of every day and religious life that were recovered in the following decades and reconstruction of Saint-Pierre. The collection also has 28 new objects that have been discovered these recent years following construction work in the city or environs.

Complementing its historic collection the museum now has a moving new room that is dedicated to the victims of the explosion. Thanks to surviving records, the room walls are covered with the names of 7045 victims of the 1902 disaster.

“We have always been very proud of this museum and its poignant collections;” said Karine Mousseau, Martinique Tourism Commissioner. She went on to say “and we are very proud and impressed by the renewal and expansion that was achieved in so short a time.”

The 1.5 million euro museum and memorial renewal was financed by the non-profit Culturabam, which is affiliated to the Clément Foundation.

The museum which was founded in 1933, is the idea of the self taught American volcanologist and engineer Frank A. Perret, who helped in the reconstruction of Saint-Pierre. This passionate man was adamant about collecting and preserving objects after the eruption—from volcanic rocks and stones, and melted artifacts that emerged from the hardened lava flows and ash.

Thanks to American Airlines, U.S. visitors will be among the first to visit the stunning Frank A. Perret Museum—Mémorial de la catastrophe. The airline is providing daily and non-stop service from Miami to Fort-de-France, Martinique from Miami from June 7 to September 3, 2019.

For more information www.facebook.com/memorial1902 www.memorial1902.org

Open every day from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Admission: Adults: 8 euros, Children 7 to 17: 6 euros, Children under 7: free

About Martinique (us.martinique.org)

The French Caribbean Island of Martinique is also known as the Isle of Flowers, The Rum Capital of the World, the Birthplace of coffee in the New World, The Isle of the Famed Poet (Aimé Césaire) – Martinique ranks among the most alluring and enchanting destinations in the world. As an overseas region of France, Martinique boasts modern and reliable infrastructure – roads, water and power utilities, hospitals, and telecommunications, services all on par with any other part of the European Union. At the same time, Martinique’s beautifully unspoiled beaches, volcanic peaks, rainforests, 80+ miles of hiking trails, waterfalls, streams, and other natural wonders are unparalleled in the Caribbean, so visitors here truly get the best of both worlds. The currency is the Euro, the flag and the official language are French, but Martinique’s character, cuisine, musical heritage, art, culture, common language, and identity are of a distinctly Afro-Caribbean inclination known as Creole. It is this special combination of modern world conveniences, pristine nature, and rich heritage that has earned for Martinique several notable distinctions in recent years. Hot off the press: In January 2019 OprahMag.com listed Martinique first in “The 19 Best Winter Getaways.” Martinique is also featured in the Caribbean Journal’s Best Caribbean Islands to visit and Best Culture in 2019, in addition to naming the Isle of Flowers “Culinary Capital of the Caribbean”; Martinique has also been featured in Travel + Leisure and the New York Time’s “52 Places to Go.”

PRESS CONTACTS

Géraldine Rome

Martinique Promotion Bureau (MTA USA)

T: 212- 838 6887

E: geraldine.rome@atout-france.fr

Marion Fourestier

Atout France

T :212-745-0963

E : marion.fourestier@atout-france.fr