

## Casa Nieves, home of the painter Blasco Mentor

Discover the restoration project of this mythical and prestigious house in the Var landscape!

**The project** : restore the house of the painter Blasco Mentor

**Casa Nieves is a house-studio of the painter Blasco Mentor.** The building hangs on the hill of the village of Solliès-Toucas in the Var. Mentor, the one that Hervé Bazin considered "one of the last Catalan princes of painting", had chosen the Var as a land of exile.

Casa Nieves, in perpetual becoming, evolves according to the success of the artist, able to swap a painting to offer a large fireplace to his living room. **This singular residence, a real labyrinth, also including the painter's studio, now requires several restorations works.** They will focus on:

1. putting out of water by protecting the roof and managing rainwater.
2. the control of the foundations of the roof terrace.
3. the rehabilitation of facades and major developments.

1. Early twentieth century

A shed is transformed and becomes Casa Nieves

2. 1967-1970

The house-workshop evolves and expands

3. 2000

Latest additions

4. August 2022

Selection by the Heritage Mission

5. November 2022

Start of work

The place and its history: from modest shed to illustrious house

Dating back to the early twentieth century, Blasco Mentor's house has continued to grow and evolve over the years by the artist and his wife. Initially, this modest shed, which was also an old oratory is now a building considered as an illustrious house. Open to the Provençal sky, **the building is a succession of surprises** as the spaces are unexpected, responding more to the whims of the author than to some architectural logic.

Gradually, many objects of all kinds, of all origins, associated with the paintings and sculptures of the artist, invent an unspeakable world. However, Casa Nieves is not limited to the building. Indeed, the paving, tiles and pigmented cements connect interior and exterior to open onto **the Gardens, creation of Mentor, which contribute to the richness of the whole**: terraces, terraces, stairs, fountains,

punctuate the climb to the house, inhabited by mythological characters, minotaurs, sphinxes, fantastic animals, birds, sculptures of Mentor among olive trees, cypresses, plaqueminiers, Judean trees, boxwood, laurels, up to the large basin dominated by a monumental Nude.

**Casa Nieves is truly a part of the work of Mentor, the illustrious man whom Picasso considered one of his legatees in the history of modern art.**

Mobilization: committing to the creation of a cultural space anchored in one's territory

**Casa Nieves represents a real treasure, both from the point of view of art history and as a tool of attractiveness for the Municipality of Solliès-Toucas and the Department.**

The restoration of this property will make it possible to **transform this remarkable "villa-workshop" into a hybrid facility, combining "Maison d'illustre" and museographic space** relating to the work of Basco Mentor and his contemporaries. It will be able to open up to the hosting of temporary exhibitions, related to the work of the artist, but also to contemporary creation in collaboration with other facilities of the territory already approached and interested (such as the Villa Noailles), thus creating a real network on the Var and strongly participating in its economic and tourist development from the artistic and cultural heritage value.

The remarkable quality of the gardens, works of art in their own right, will allow the development of a linked and qualitative cultural program. As part of the restoration project, 2 terraces will be set up, allowing the reception of shows, readings, chamber music, etc.

The equipment will therefore be complete, will fit perfectly into the tradition of artists' villas found in the South of France, and will undoubtedly find its audience. **Its restoration will save this jewel and give the public the opportunity to immerse themselves in the tremendous creative momentum of the mid-twentieth century, while making it a real tool for a local and territorial dynamic.**