

# WONDERS & MARVELS

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## Where Warhol meets Venus

in [UNCATEGORIZED](#)

by [Caroline Lawrence](#)



In 2010 a millionaire art collector bought a four story house in a pretty hill town on the French Riviera and made it into a boutique museum for his marvellous collection of Classical and modern art. This is the Musée d'Art Classique de Mougins, or [MACM](#) for short.

For any lover of ancient myths and ancient history, gods and heroes, Greece and Rome, Christian Levett's collection is a delight. And all the more so because he has sprinkled in some later works of on Classical themes.

So you get a delicate Matisse charcoal of the Emperor Caracalla glowering at an ancient bust of himself, identical to the one Matisse was sketching.

A wax and insulin sculpture by Marc Quinn and a pair of Gormleys call to mind the plaster casts from Pompeii.

My favorite is a case devoted to Aphrodite, goddess of love. Ancient busts and torsos are set against the backdrop of a Warhol screenprint and flanked by an Yves Klein torso and Salvador Dali's *Venus as a Giraffe*.

There are over 800 pieces in this museum and every one is a gem. Blue underlit marble stairs and a glass elevator give it a contemporary feel and its compact size makes it do-able in under two hours. Big info boards in French and (real) English plus plasma touch-screens in every room make it kid-friendly.

The museum has given a new lease of life to the village where Picasso spent his last few years (plenty of his stuff on show). After your visit, wander the snail spiral streets of the old town, a work of art in itself. And if you are there at lunchtime, the restaurant [L'Amandier](#) serves a wonderful lunch special for under 20 euros. You can dine with a view of the valley with its olive trees and red roofs.

The museum is a great supporter of local schools, like [Mougins School](#), to which they give a prize for art once a year. Kids love visiting the museum. They like spotting the "odd one out" in a case of Greek helmets or votive figurines of Theseus. But children and adults alike will be stimulated by the juxtaposition of old art and new, all on the same wonderful theme of the Classical World and all it entails.

