

### FILM 3- A LIVING HERITAGE

**Pierre Cazenave**, Regional Curator of Historical Monuments, and **Didier Delhoume**, Vice-Regional Curator of Archaeology, both at the Regional Department of Cultural Affairs for Poitou-Charentes, discuss the future restoration of the facade, at the cathedral of Saint Pierre in Angoulême.

#### *Didier Delhoume and Pierre Cazenave at Angoulême*

We are at the apse of the Cathedral of Saint-Pierre. This is where we began restoring the cathedral. It had already undergone restoration in the 1870s. We did not have any scientific problems conducting this first phase of restoration. But once we turned our focus to the facade, a lot of issues surfaced. The art historians did not always agree on the developments incurred, on the displacement of certain sculpted parts. We did not know if the facade had been painted at the time of its construction, as is the case for other buildings constructed in the same period. So we were not in a position to lead a technical restoration. We were not able to decide which restoration techniques to use, so we turned to archaeologists, to benefit from their methodology, before launching the actual restoration.

A team of archaeologists led a study and coordinated a research group. The study focused on the archaeology of the facade. By applying methods to record the archaeological data, they analyzed the construction of the facade using methods that are commonly used in excavations.

They worked on the masonry using a telescopic cradle, and also using laser scanners, computer programs, geographic information systems and more. This enabled them to record the data so that it could be reused by the architects who would later work on the facade. And they led other interventions ; they researched the available documents and the studies that had already been carried out on this facade. They took an inventory of the Medieval sculptural blocks that had been placed here in the 19th century. They noted where they were situated in the facade. So they carried out a number of « interventions » in cooperation with a research lab that analyzed the materials. It was truly an archaeological and documentary approach, that brought a number of results.

The results of this research led to the conclusion that there are no Romanesque paintings. We thought we would find some, as we did at Poitiers, at Notre-Dame-la-Grande. It also concluded that this cathedral was built in a very short time, barely 20 years. We expected it to have been built over a longer period. Usually, such a building is constructed over nearly a century. The research also identified two sculptors who worked on the building during this short period. All of this data will enable us to launch restoration works in the coming years.

*Romanesque treasures of Poitou-Charentes*, Poitou-Charentes region, 2014.

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