



#SAINTGOBAIN350

# THE EXHIBITION



FROM 1665 TO 2015

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## SAINT-GOBAIN: 350 YEARS OF HISTORY IN AN ONLINE EXHIBITION WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY WEALTH OF INFORMATION

“ *It is with a certain degree of pride that we are celebrating Saint-Gobain’s 350th anniversary this year. It is a symbolic milestone that provides us with an opportunity to remind everyone of our history, our finest achievements and the passion that has driven us since the Company was established in 1665.*

*Such longevity proves to us that it is necessary, now more than ever, to have a sense of the long term. The peace-of-mind, responsiveness and confidence that our Company has always displayed have enabled us to adapt to the world’s changes, to overcome obstacles and take up challenges. This anniversary encourages us to nurture and pass on this state of mind.*

*Because a picture is worth a thousand words, we are launching this virtual exhibition.*

*Put together from the archives built up by Saint-Gobain over these three and half centuries, it will provide everyone with insight into the Company’s memory.*

*Because we know that experience builds trust, because inspiration is nothing without curiosity, and because Saint-Gobain is a crucial stakeholder in habitat, we encourage our teams, customers and students who are interested in our businesses, and all those who are fascinated by industry as well as the general public, to explore the way we have taken and to imagine with us what tomorrow’s world will be.* ”

**Pierre-André de Chalendar**  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

This exhibition has been arranged to facilitate your visit. Its content is accessible via several entry points so that each person can explore the content according to his or her preferences and interests, the history of the Company, industry and the many periods to which Saint-Gobain has been a witness and active participant.

## THE VARIOUS MODULES

- **A timeline with 22 dates** to learn about the main periods in the Company's history.
- **A 3D reconstruction** of the Manufacture de Saint-Gobain glassworks Mirror Glass Manufactory established in Saint-Gobain as it would have been in operation in 1785.
- **A gallery of innovations** showcasing Saint-Gobain's contributions to architectural revolutions and changes to housing from 1665 to 2065.
- **A gallery of portraits** of the Company's leaders, inventors and employees who have personified the "company spirit".
- **Six themes** to explore the exhibition's 700 documents thematically (**Transformation of Material, From Advertising to Marketing, Saint-Gobain throughout the World, Major Achievements, The World of Work, and Corporate Governance and Culture.**)



**700** DOCUMENTS

**170** AUDIOVISUAL SEQUENCES

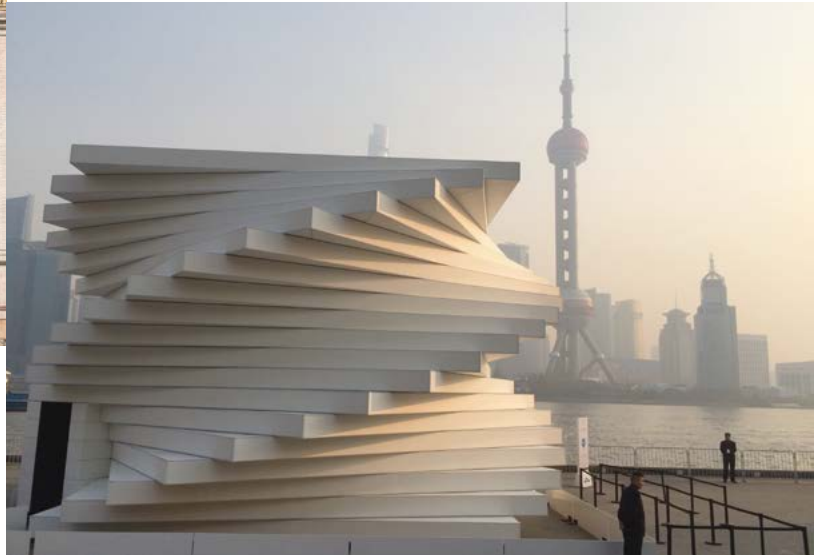
**5** LANGUAGES

**MORE THAN 10 HOURS'**  
WORTH OF DISCOVERY



One of the 350th anniversary pavilions in Shanghai (China) in January 2015.

The Company's first emblematic achievement was the delivery of the mirrors for the eponymous Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles marking Saint-Gobain's entry into the history of France.



## AN EXHIBITION

### PAYING HOMAGE TO THE COMPANY'S CONTINUOUS HISTORY SINCE 1665 AND TO ITS CHANGES

Saint-Gobain's history begins in 1665 when King Louis XIV signed the documents officially creating the *Manufacture royale des glaces de miroirs*. This initiative reflected the economic policy of the King's Minister of Finances, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, who wanted to compete with Venice in Europe's mirror glass market.

Successive periods of diversification and refocussing followed, forging Saint-Gobain as it is today, a company that has retained its historic core business but which has also considerably diversified its product portfolio to become the worldwide leader in habitat.

These changes were accompanied by a powerful commitment to internationalization. Saint-Gobain has continually gained new markets around the world. Today, it has an industrial presence in 64 countries.

It is this pathway as atypical as it is diversified that is revealed in this virtual exhibition. A pathway spanning three and half centuries marked by successes, and sometimes failures, and innovations. It is a pathway that will fascinate everyone who is interested in the history of companies and in history itself.

1974 CREATION OF THE ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

1979 OPENING OF THE ARCHIVES CENTER IN BLOIS (FRANCE)

80 KM OF ARCHIVES

OF WHICH 15 KM OF HISTORIC ARCHIVES

SAINT-GOBAIN:

AN IDENTITY FORGED

BY ITS HISTORY

Saint-Gobain has been a pioneer in France in the field of business history. The Company established its own archives department in 1974 to conserve and make the best use possible of its many heritage documents and to encourage the creation of a shared corporate culture following the merger between Saint-Gobain and Pont-à-Mousson in 1970.

This archives center has informed the work of many historians and is the primary source of documentary material for the virtual exhibition.

The exhibition, available entirely online, comprises more than 700 documents in a variety of formats (archival documents, photographs, films, objects, etc.). The majority have been drawn from Saint Gobain's archives but some come from public

archives, the French National Library BnF and private collections. The selection and contextualization of these 700 documents are the result of meticulous research and presentation work. *"We have made some extraordinary discoveries, especially in the audiovisual collection, which we were keen to present as for the most part they have never been displayed before,"* explains Marie de Laubier, Director of General Relations at Saint-Gobain and Director of the exhibition publication, and Anne Alonzo, Exhibition Curator. *"Take, for example, the film called [Travailler en usine](#) (Factory Work). It is a remarkable sociological document about working in a factory in 1970, a time when major change was afoot due to automation and changes in workplace relations."*

AN EXHIBITION  
ENRICHED  
EACH DAY  
BY NET USERS

In order to transcribe the Company's history as faithfully as possible, Saint-Gobain has opted to open its exhibition to outside contributions. Current and former employees and anyone with information and documents in their possession can place them online on the exhibition site. The aim is to get different points of view of Saint-Gobain's history—from the narrowest to the broadest. This operation is also a way of collecting documents for the Company's archives.

If you have something you would like to contribute, click on the section ["Share your memories and documents."](#)

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*Saint-Gobain has been working since Fall 2013 with Mazedia, a French agency specializing in cultural and heritage multimedia design and creation, to prepare this exhibition.*

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CLEANING CLAY



FURNACE FEEDING

**VISIT**



## THE MIRROR GLASS MANUFACTORY

A 3D immersion into  
the world of the Saint-Gobain  
mirror glass works in 1785

This module with its 12 scenes illustrates the manufacture of mirror glass and the everyday activity in the glassworks located in the small village of Saint-Gobain, Picardy (France) since 1692.



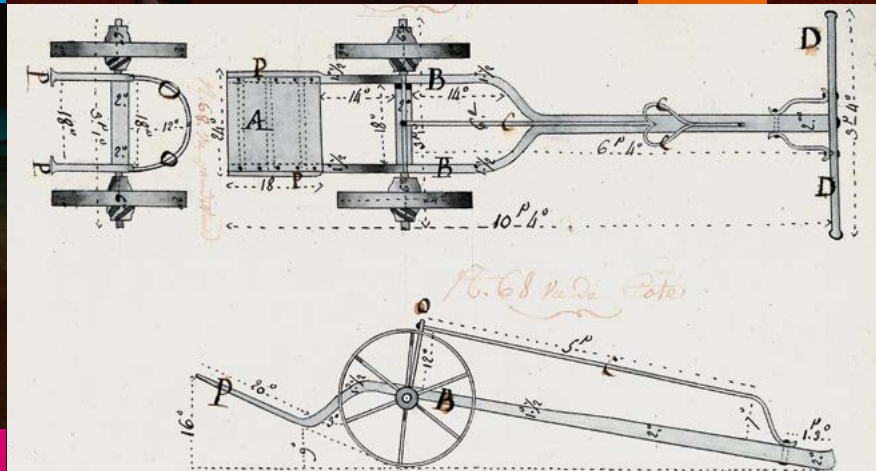
POLISHING



CASTING



REMOVING THE CRUCIBLES FROM THE FURNACE



A technological feat that allows all net users to explore the 18th century glassworks. To make this experience possible, Saint-Gobain's team of archivists cross-referenced plans and drawings of the Manufactory as it was at that time, drawings from the *Encyclopédie* (edited by Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert in the 18th century), memoirs written by the director of the day, and the plant's archives.

The 3D reconstruction also led us to rediscover in detail the production processes used at the time. This unprecedented information provides a realistic immersion into the world of the original Saint-Gobain, covering the tools used all the way to the distribution of tasks and the role of women in the workshop, with each element recreating as faithfully as possible life in the plant at the time.

*The tools used by the workers in this scene have been reconstructed to within one centimeter using an inventory of tools with their plans and dimensions created in 1800 and corroborated by 18th century documents.*



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**CLASSICAL BUILDING**

End 18th century



**PARISIAN BUILDING**

End 19th century



**VILLA**

1920-1930



**MODERN BUILDING**

1950-1960



**RELIVE**



## THE HISTORY OF OUR INNOVATIONS IN HOUSING

This part of the exhibition provides concrete evidence of Saint-Gobain's contribution to the changes in housing. To do this, it retraces three centuries of technical progress and architectural revolutions by inviting net users to visit seven dwellings from various periods from the 18th century to 2065. The aim is to show how the technology developed by the Company and its subsidiaries has advanced hand-in-hand with architectural revolutions.



### **At the end of the 19th century,**

Pont-à-Mousson pipes supplied water and gas to homes. Also at that time, merchants like Brossette, Jewson and Dahl helped with the introduction and dissemination of new building materials, such as metals, cement and the first industrial mortars.



### **Between the two World Wars,**

avant-garde architects started to use glass more widely making it a building material in its own right. Its use became increasingly diversified for mirrors, glazing, bricks and slabs, insulators for electricity, decorative glass and furniture in tempered glass.





SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE  
1970-1980



MULTI-COMFORT HOUSE  
2015



TOMORROW'S HOUSE



In 2065



In the 1970s, after the oil shocks, there was greater focus on reducing the energy consumed in housing: ISOVER glass wool became increasingly widely used for thermal and acoustic insulation.

In accordance with France's RT 2012 thermal regulations, by 2020, new buildings will have to be positive-energy, that is, they will have to generate more energy than they consume. Saint-Gobain has already factored

this requirement in by combining all its products in its "Multi-Comfort" projects that are attractive and environmentally friendly, and ensure the comfort of their occupants.



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**MEET**



# THE FACES OF SAINT-GOBAIN



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This section of the exhibition focuses on the people who have applied their talent for Saint-Gobain. Here, net users can read the stories of the Company's most emblematic leaders, inventors and many others who have contributed in various positions to making Saint-Gobain what it is today.

## 18th century

This Director, who was a stickler for detail, devoted himself to rationalizing production: he made table pouring the general practice rather than glass blowing, and perfected the workshops and tooling needed for this process.



**PIERRE  
DELAUNAY-DESLANDES**



## 19th century



**LOUIS JOSEPH  
GAY-LUSSAC**



The great chemist Louis Joseph Gay-Lussac was recruited as a scientific advisor to Saint-Gobain in 1832 and was its President from 1844 to 1850. He personifies the "tradition of innovation" that defines Saint-Gobain.

## 20th century



**JEAN-LOUIS GOBAILLE**



A filmmaker recruited by Saint-Gobain in 1957 at a time of growing importance for advertising and marketing.



**AUGUSTE MATRINGE**

Auguste Matringe, the Director of the Saint-Fons plant in the Lyon region (France), was recognized as a Righteous among the Nations for having hid the families of Jewish workers during the Occupation.



**SUZANNE DUPUIS**

Suzanne Dupuis was the first female engineering graduate from the *École centrale* school of engineering in Paris (France) recruited by Saint-Gobain in 1927 to its Patents Department (the first women graduated from the *École centrale* in 1921).

21st century



**JESLIN JACOB**

Jeslin Jacob, Industrial Product Manager in a crystals plant in the United States, is one of the 180,000 faces of Saint-Gobain today.

Christiane Willot, a Social Worker who created the Saint-Gobain Welfare Department in the 1940, symbolizes the modernization of human resources management.



**CHRISTIANE WILLOT**

# EXPLORE

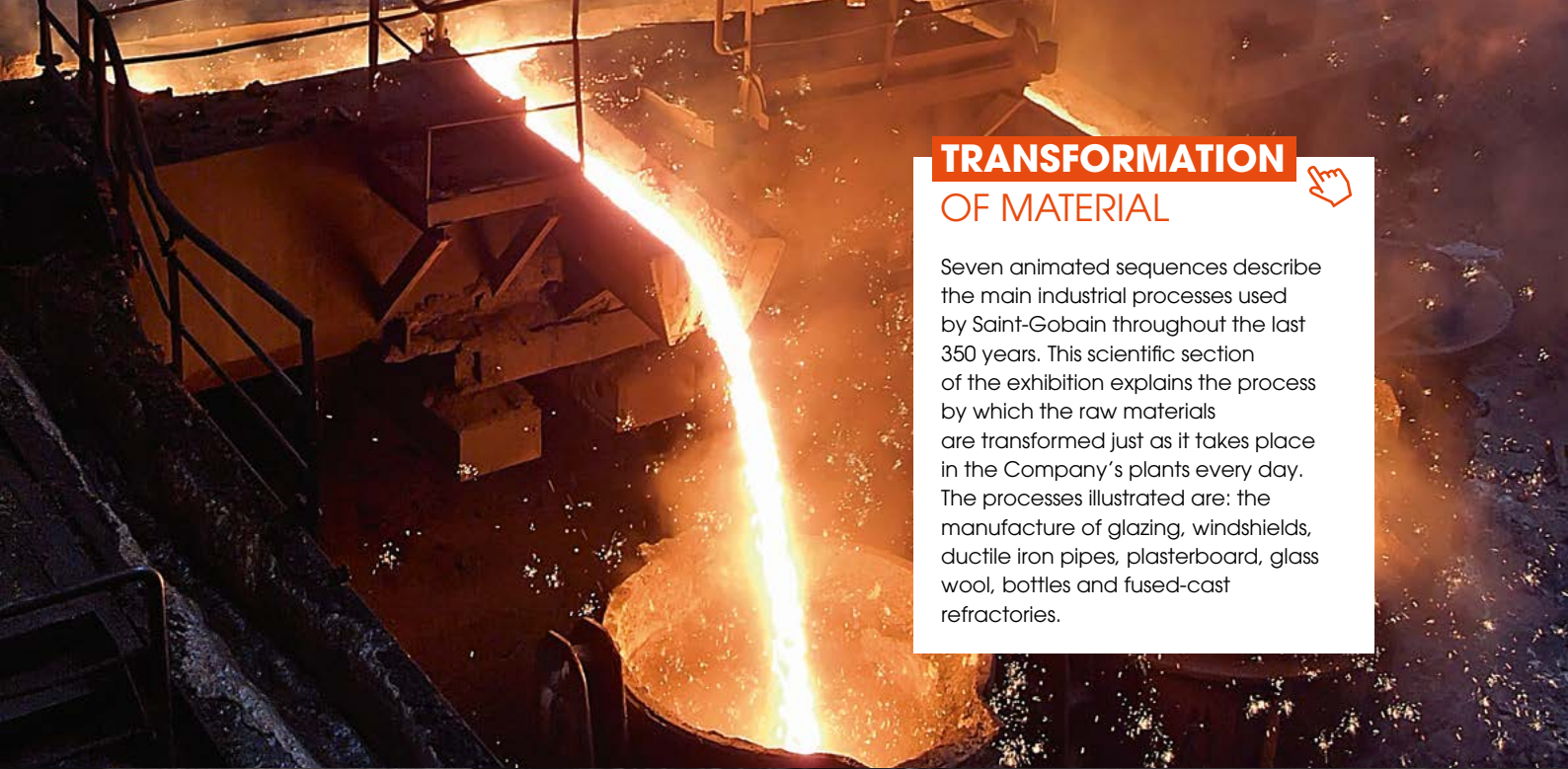
## THE SIX THEMATIC ENVIRONMENTS

### THE WORLD

#### OF WORK



Because having lived through three industrial revolutions also provides a canvas on which to view changing jobs and professions, working conditions, the relationships between the Company and its employees, and, more broadly, the changes to society, Saint-Gobain's virtual exhibition devotes considerable space to social progress. The birth of paid leave and mass leisure, recognition of women's work, improved safety in plants and welfare (housing, schools, cooperatives and cultural activities), Saint-Gobain adopted and was sometimes ahead of the major social advances that are explored in this section.



## TRANSFORMATION OF MATERIAL



Seven animated sequences describe the main industrial processes used by Saint-Gobain throughout the last 350 years. This scientific section of the exhibition explains the process by which the raw materials are transformed just as it takes place in the Company's plants every day. The processes illustrated are: the manufacture of glazing, windshields, ductile iron pipes, plasterboard, glass wool, bottles and fused-cast refractories.



## FROM ADVERTISING TO MARKETING



Saint-Gobain has witnessed and contributed to the creation of advertising and marketing. In this section, net users can learn how the Company has addressed its customers since the 18th century. The material showcases constantly evolving creativity throughout the times and from country to country: from the first price list to mobile apps, advertising posters and TV ads, as well as samples and showrooms.



## SAINT-GOBAIN



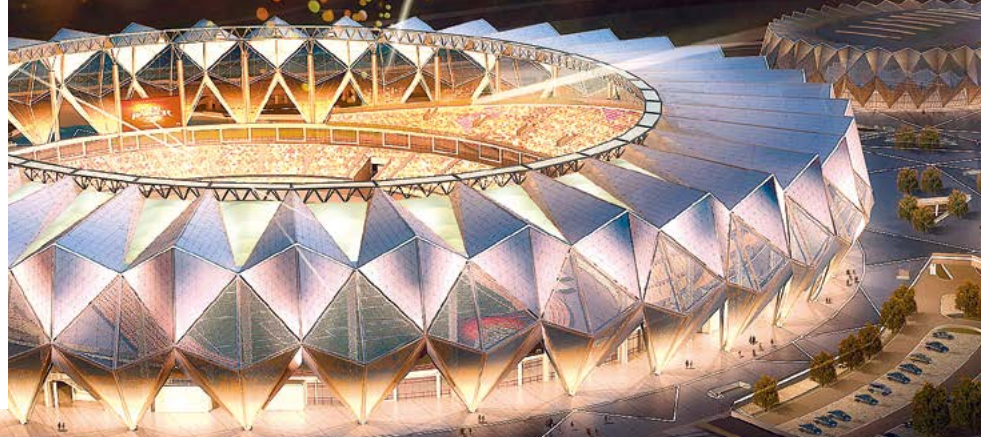
### THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Saint-Gobain's international presence is its wealth and its strength. This section illustrates the many faces of the Company around the world: its subsidiaries, sites, products and several flagship achievements by geographic area. It also shows how Saint-Gobain adapts to different cultures and vice versa.

## THE MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS



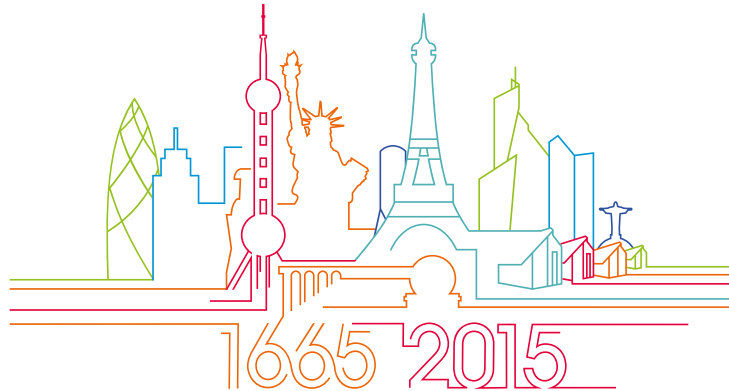
This section is a gallery of more than 150 structures to which Saint-Gobain and its subsidiaries have contributed from the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles Palace in 1684 to the glass floor of the Eiffel Tower in 2014. The segments in which Saint-Gobain materials and expertise can be found range from architecture to transportation (automobiles, aircraft and ocean liners), as well as the arts, sports, sciences, and so on.





## GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE CULTURE

This web documentary looks at the changes to the Company's governance and the birth of the "Saint-Gobain spirit." This spirit is the result of a unique history of a company that has managed to incorporate the very different cultures of the companies that have joined it over time and of which several characteristic aspects are explored here.



## IN 2015, CELEBRATE WITH US SAINT-GOBAIN'S 350TH ANNIVERSARY

- By joining us on the [saint-gobain.com](http://saint-gobain.com) website
  - By following us on social networks
-      
- By sharing the hashtag **#SaintGobain350**

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