



Harmony Project



Lacoste, Provence, France

Situated in a broad valley between the village of Lacoste (photo page three) and the neighboring village of Bonnieux in Provence, France, the Maison Basse is a standing and intact remnant of medieval European life and earlier agrarian activities. Today, verdant vineyards of wine grapes and lush arbors of mature cherry and almond trees surround the ancient maison (sketch above). The valley is a colorful patchwork of farms, hearty fields, and stands of oak and pine.

The Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) studios and facilities dot the village up the hill within 12th, 15th and 16th century buildings. Its art and artisans fill the village and soon, the interiors of the ancient working farm estate. A budding culinary school of farm peasant French cuisine could be launched. A half hour from Marseille and the Mediterranean coast afford pleasant daily excursions into the rhythms of southern French life.

A Sense of History

The primary historic association of the Maison Basse is with the Marquis de Sade and his family. This property and much of the adjacent valley were in the possession of the Sade family until the French Revolution in the late 18th century. An initial archaeological evaluation of the site has indicated that habitation occurred continuously from prehistory through the 1960s. Pottery remnants further reflect possible ceramic production in the immediate area during the early Christian period through the 13th century. Elements of the main house date as early as the 15th century, with subsequent additions occurring over several time periods.

SCAD owns the maison and is very interested in finding its new life; student dorms once considered are now thought no longer appropriate. There is great interest in pursuing a boutique hotel grounded in wellness, art and cuisine.



The Complex - Today

The Maison Basse complex is comprised of four structures, all of which feature limestone wall construction and terra cotta roofing mat reflecting the traditional building methods of the region. The main and dominant structure is the maison de maitre. This building housed the owner or manager of the property and includes centuries of additions and adaptations. It is three stories in height and, although a residence, includes a large beam and grain storage area on

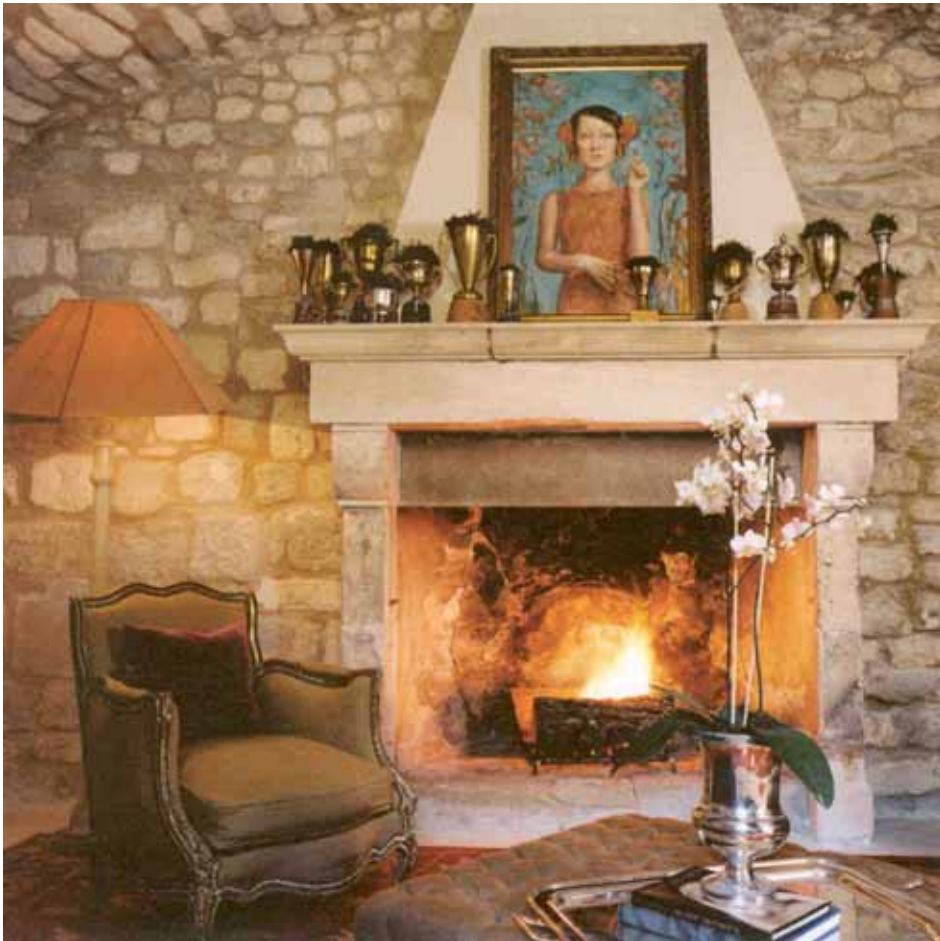
the south elevation, as well as spacious living quarters and a grand kitchen. There are more than 20 rooms within the structure. The kitchen entrance on the east elevation overlooks a large, once formal kitchen garden. Stone stairs and perimeter walls have recently been uncovered, affording a clear reference to a garden area.



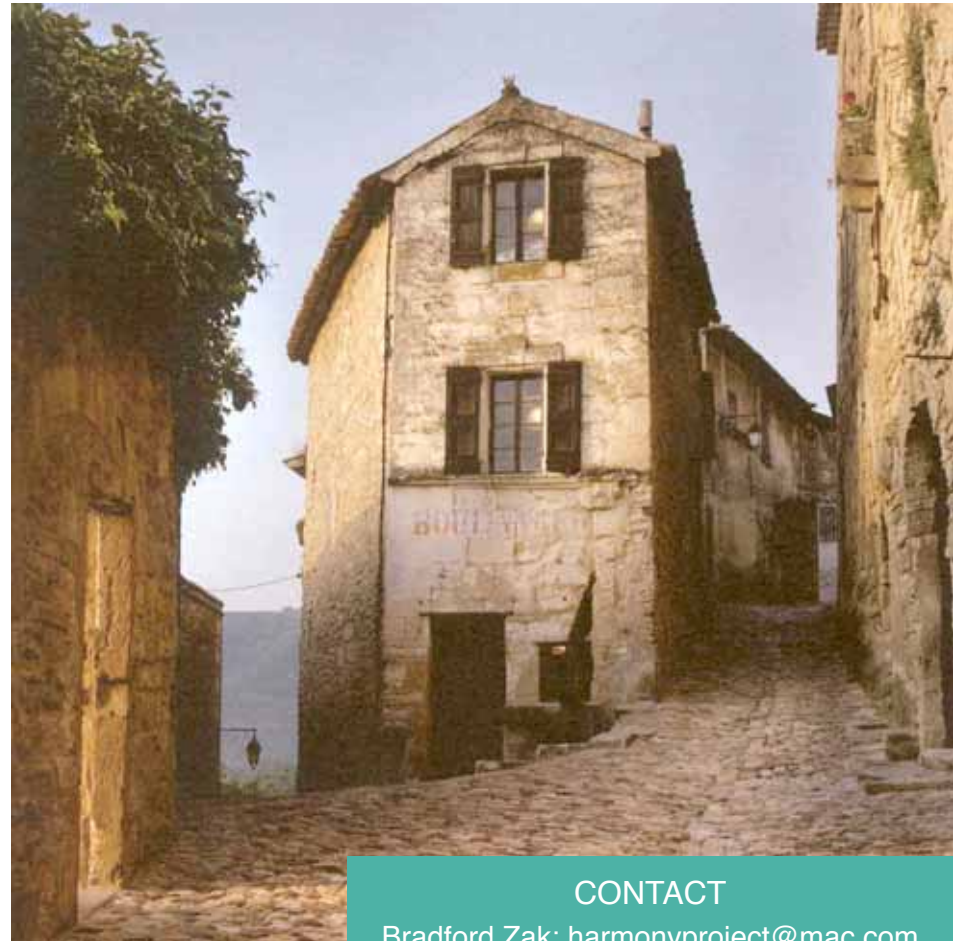
The complex also includes a large grange, or multi-use barn, and two small adjacent buildings. The grange structure also reflects change and growth over time in wall and roof expansion and the addition of various windows and doors. Ceiling heights on the centerline of the structure are in excess of six meters, creating a potentially spectacular space for use by residents. The grange is freestanding and situated 90 degrees to the main house, which creates a vast and well-protected courtyard area.

The Estate as Harmony Project, Lacoste

In partnership with the Savannah College of Art and Design and its world renowned historical preservation Department of Architecture, the farm will be lovingly restored to house a dozen accommodations honoring its sense of place, to include dining rooms, farm kitchen, a small swimming pool and restored flower, herb and vegetable gardens (representative sketches and photos included).



The collage offers 78 degree programs in 30 areas of study leading to a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Masters of Architecture, Masters of Arts, Masters of Fine Arts or Masters of Urban Design. The Lacoste school was started in 1970 by American artist Bernard Pfriem. Thirty years later, the academic programs are administered by SCAD. The Lacoste program specialties include historic preservations, performing and visual art, media, fashion, graphic and industrial design.



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Programming

Life at the farm residence for the New Tourist will be rich with recreation, art and healthfulness:

- Experiences within the ancient farm valley and nearby Mediterranean coast, ancient villages of Southern France
- Peasant French food preparation, dining and wine viniculture
- Naturopathic wellness grounded in the European Living Spa and the artistic community