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(liste at August 1, 2001)

**THE TITANESQUE STRUGGLE
FOR THE LOUVRE PYRAMID**

based on the film

«*La bataille de la pyramide du Louvre*»

in the presence of its director

Frédéric COMPAIN

with

Jean LEBRAT

Former Chairman of the *Établissement
public du Grand Louvre*

Michel MACARY

Architect in Partnership
with Ieoh Ming Peï

discussion chaired by

Michel BERRY

École de Paris du Management

Monday, March 20th 2000

at the Ministry of Research, Paris

Report by Elisabeth Bourguinat

Translation by Rachel Marlin

Overview

How is it possible to successfully carry out a construction project worth about eight million Francs, entrusted to a foreign architect who refuses, on principle, to submit to a competition ; a project which is booed by government officials in charge of historical monuments, creates a media storm and raises huge and hitherto unheard of technical problems ? And all this, concerning one of the most treasured symbols of French culture... Such is the background for Frédéric Compain's film '*La Bataille de la pyramide du Louvre*', compiled with interviews from the main actors in this epic story.

A discussion with Jean Lebrat, former Chairman of the *Établissement public du Grand Louvre*, and Michel Macary, architect in partnership with Ieoh Ming Peï, followed the projection of the film.

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THE FILM

Frédéric Compain's film is based on a series of extracts from studio interviews with the main actors in the so-called 'battle of the pyramid' : notably, the architect Ieoh Ming Pei ; his assistant Yann Weymouth, who kept precious sketches which helped illustrate different stages of the project as it progressed ; Émile Biasini, chosen by François Mitterrand to chair the *Établissement public du Grand Louvre* ; Jack Lang, Culture Minister at the time of the launch of the project ; Hubert Landais, former Director of the *Musées de France* ; Michel Laclotte, former Chief Curator of the Picture Gallery and first Chairman and Director of the Louvre ; Pierre Rosenberg, current Chairman and Director of the Louvre ; Jean Lebrat and Michel Macary, and also Michel Caldaguès, Mayor of the first *arrondissement* of Paris and ardent opponent of the project.

By switching from one point of view to another in turn, the director achieves a very lively narrative which can even be comic at times when the characters present - each in his own very convincing manner - two radically different versions of the same facts : who was the first to suggest the extravagant idea of moving the Treasury in order to vacate the Richelieu Wing ? who had the great idea of entrusting the direction of the project to Emile Biasini ? As Jack Lang remarks « it's strange how people's memories reconstruct or change the events ».

Essential building work

Whatever the precise origin of the project, it was clear to everyone concerned that the museum was in a sorry state and that important work was necessary : the *cour Napoléon* was overrun by cars of government officials at the Treasury, and by postcard sellers ; the entrance to the museum was difficult to find, almost as if it was a disreputable place ; inside, the museum did not have enough space either to exhibit thousands of works of art which therefore had to be kept in vaults, or to organise the collections more coherently, let alone welcome the public : it lacked a bookshop, a restaurant, telephone boxes, toilets, etc.

The choice of architect

The first job of Emile Biasini was to sound out the architects. He immediately thought of Ieoh Ming Pei, but Pei, who had had his fingers burnt over the failure of a project in la Défense, was only prepared to accept the proposition if it was a certainty, in other words, if the project was not subject to a competition ; the French President gave his consent, and Pei got to work.

Why a pyramid ?

Pei started by coming on four different occasions to Paris in order to study the history of the Louvre but also to visit the museum incognito, making lots of notes which enabled him to make a diagnosis : the 'L' shape of the museum was not conducive to visits ; if the Richelieu Wing were vacated, then the museum would take the form of a 'U', making it much more compact, but the entrance would then have to be situated at its centre of gravity, in other words, right in the middle of the *cour Napoléon*.

Furthermore, in order to prevent this underground entrance looking like the entrance to a *métro*, it had to be a big opening and one which would let in a lot of light. A horizontal glass roof would bring in light but not volume ; a high glass roof would bring both volume and light, and it would have the added advantage of making the entrance very visible.

But what form should this modern structure, which was to be placed right in the middle of the *cour Napoléon*, take ? Ideally a simple shape, in its natural state, but one which at the same time had a symbolic value ; this shape also had to be the most discreet possible and not visually

obstruct the façades of the museum. The idea of a pyramid was accepted because the orientation of its sides avoided reflections which would have distracted the eye ; moreover, one only had to take a few steps in order to put the apex to one side and see the building behind. Determining the right angle of the slope presented a further difficulty : the pyramid should not be too high, but, on the other hand, if the slope was too slight it would give the impression that the structure was in the process of melting and getting flattened ; finally, the angle which was chosen was that which the Egyptians had used for their own pyramids, namely close to 51 %.

The prince's consent

The first person to discover the pyramid was Émile Biasini when he went to New York to see Peï's model ; it showed the *cour Napoléon* void of cars and trees. Peï then took a little pyramid out of his pocket and put it on its intended place. Following a moment of astonishment, Émile Biasini exclaimed « It's like a diamond ! »

The model was then presented to President Mitterrand. Since Peï insisted that no-one else should see it before him, his assistant had kept it shut in a box whose lid had been screwed on. Having inspected the model for a few minutes, the President asked « Is anyone repulsed by this project ? » ; a deathly silence came back. He then congratulated Peï and told him that he would not allow him to leave like Le Bernin, referring to the architect to whom Louis XIV had entrusted the completion of the Louvre and who had been banished by a coalition of French architects back in the seventeenth century.

Public outcry

A more difficult step was the presentation to the *Commission supérieure* of historical monuments which had to give its opinion before work could begin. Émile Biasini had warned Peï, who was not used to these commissions, that he most likely would be heavily criticised by the architects and inspectors who made up the commission, but that this would not in any way prevent the continuation of the project. The government officials, for their part, had received instructions to '*kindly follow the government line, regardless of personal opinions*'. Journalists were also invited to this meeting.

Firstly Peï presented his project, then the discussion started. Criticism immediately came from all sides : what right did he have to cast a slur on the grandeur of this place ? During the slide show, under the cover of darkness, people were talking during Peï's explanations, laughing at inopportune moments, making fun of this *Chinaman*, or shouting out « *It isn't Dallas here !* » etc. In the end, the translator was struck dumb and then burst into tears. According to Émile Biasini, whereas Peï had thought that he had come to meet representatives of French culture, the atmosphere he found was closer to that of a classroom racket.

Little by little, however, the morning progressed, and when lunchtime approached, the government officials got up one by one, whereupon one of them took it into his head to ask when the vote would take place. Jean-Pierre Weis, Heritage Director, reminded everyone that the regulations of the commission did not allow for a vote systematically, and, in view of the circumstances, this seemed superfluous, inasmuch as everyone had been able to express his opinion at length, as the minutes taken at this meeting would surely show.

As soon as the project became public, there was a general outcry. When the Mayor of the first *arrondissement*, Michel Caldaguès, found out about the model of the pyramid, at first he thought it was a joke, but soon after, he took charge of the petition against the project. The press flew into a rage against the scandal and *Le Monde* published a particularly vicious article. In certain fashionable Parisian social circles, one risked being thrown out, treated as a good-for-nothing, or

even accused of being a philistine traitor, if one admitted to having anything to do with the Louvre project.

Michel Macary, Pei's French partner, was a favourite target of the journalists : that an American architect did not understand a thing about French culture was normal (according to Macary, who knew of Pei's immense culture, such an affirmation was totally out of place), but that, of all things, a French architect could lend his support to such a project was simply appalling. According to an saying quoted by Émile Biasini, « when the troughs aren't very full, the horses fight » ; it seems that Michel Macary suffered a great deal from the jealousy of his fellow architects.

Support of the curators of the Louvre

Luckily, the curators of the Louvre were very frank and numerous in their support of the project. Émile Biasini had the idea of gathering them together for three days at Arcachon, far from the upheaval, for what he considered to be the key stage in the project of the Grand Louvre : the moment when those who had studied the project had to present it to the future clients.

In the course of these three days of work which helped bring together the team, the curators, undoubtedly for the first time in their history, issued a communiqué which opposed the official line held by the management of the *Musées de France* : they argued that this project was the opportunity to finally obtain the means, so lacking in the museum, in order to welcome the general public in the best possible conditions. Their support was extremely precious and very comforting for Pei.

Support of the Mayor of Paris

Another decisive element was the support of the Mayor of Paris, who, quite naturally, had his own word to say about the project. In a very pragmatic way, he announced that he could not possibly come to a decision about it until he had seen, in life-size, what the pyramid would look like in the middle of the *cour Napoléon*. Therefore, a simulation took place, at dawn, by means of a crane which suspended a metallic structure corresponding to the shape and size of the future pyramid. Jacques Chirac visited the entire building site, accompanied by several people who kept on saying how 'impossible' and 'unbearable' it was, but, in the end, he announced to the press that the project seemed reasonable.

From that moment onwards, the political angle of the battle was brushed aside : one did not have to be a paid-up member of the Socialist Party in order to admire the project.

The excavation

The first stage of the construction project was to excavate the *cour Napoléon* and the *cour Carrée*. The archaeologists chosen by Émile Biasini said that it would take them ten years to excavate the whole site, which appeared to show great archaeological promise. Aware of the fact that they had based their calculations on the time necessary for a team of ten people, Émile Biasini made it known that they should employ one hundred workers since they only had a year in which to complete the work.

The first hole dug in order to consolidate the perimeters of the excavation site revealed a wall which had been thought to no longer exist : it was a conversion made by Le Vau on the wall of the counterscarp of Philippe Auguste's castle. It was decided straight away that it had to be preserved ; a decision which not only forced Pei to revise his plans, but also incurred an additional cost of about one hundred million Francs.

The organisation of the construction site

The allotted time for preparing the study, putting it into practice and construction was a total of four years. The building therefore had to advance at a devilish pace.

One of the first difficulties was that of day-to-day management : how on earth do you make French and American teams work together with the linguistic and cultural barrier, not to mention the differences in building regulations between the two countries ? The head of the Grand Louvre project, Jean-Michel Vincent, recounted how once a week there was a big co-ordination meeting which often lasted from 2pm to 8pm, following which he found it generally impossible to get to sleep, in view of the sheer number of problems left to tackle : as he said, « Each time we solved one problem, another three cropped up ».

When Pei was on site, he made decisions quickly which he then stood by ; but, at the same time as the Louvre, he also had other sites to tend to, such as the World Headquarters of IBM in the United States, and that of the Bank of China in Hong Kong, and could only devote ten days a month to each one.

A huge bottle of Coke

Next, the materials for the construction had to be chosen, and importantly, the glass to be used for the pyramid. Most glass, especially thick glass, has a slightly greenish colour, because it contains iron oxides. Pei, however, insisted that the glass for the pyramid be perfectly transparent, so that it did not look like a huge bottle of Coke in the middle of the *cour Napoléon*.

The company, Saint-Gobain, which had been chosen, at first claimed that it was impossible to make glass which was really white. In reality, it was impossible using the industrial procedure of *floating system* : this process involves pouring the liquid glass onto molten zinc, thereby making it perfectly smooth, like the surface of the zinc. After much insistence from Pei and the Chairman himself who had understood the nature and the importance of this technical problem, the company agreed to test samples of white glass using the *drawing* procedure. On seeing the result, the architect was firstly very complimentary about the colour obtained, but remarked that the glass was not completely flat and that the image of the Louvre buildings through the pyramid would be deformed, and to him, this was unacceptable... After months of discussion, and despite everything, the desired quality was obtained.

What if the pyramid was blown away ?

A controversy arose concerning the resistance of the pyramid to wind. Without saying that a structure of ninety tonnes could simply be blown away, the engineers from the company Eiffel maintained that the dimensions of the structure of the pyramid were insufficient and that there were problems of stability.

In fact, the Canadian research unit to which this matter had been assigned, had not studied the question of the deformation of the structure sufficiently, and had even slightly simplified the problem, in particular without taking into account the portal entrance of the pyramid. Émile Biasini had to intervene so that the architect agreed to slightly increase the size of the elements of the structure, namely from forty-five to fifty-two millimetres in thickness.

No laughing, please

Another controversy arose from the choice of the sculpture which, according to Pei's initial plans, was to be placed on a pillar inside the pyramid. Different suggestions had been put forward, including the *Chevaux de Marly*, or the *Victoire de Samothrace*. The latter had the disadvantage, in view of the intended position for the sculpture, of recalling all too clearly Rolls Royce car radiator plugs. An attempt with *The Thinker* by Rodin proved to be disastrous, since this magnificent sculpture, when viewed from underneath, took on a frankly scatological connotation. In the end, the idea was discarded.

The end result

The entire project, including the pyramid, the building work carried out in the Louvre and in the *Musée des Arts décoratifs*, the restoration work of the façades and the gardens, the shops in the *Carrousel du Louvre*, and the Solferino footbridge, came to a grand total of nearly eight billion Francs. The number of visitors to the museum has increased from 2.5 million per year before the building work, to six million today.

The pyramid is regarded almost universally as a beautiful success, and far from spoiling the *cour Napoléon*, adds to its beauty – despite the fact that one of the actors of this venture rates the tower of the Bank of China in Hong Kong as Pei's most beautiful work. One architect noted that for the entire body of French architects, the fact that such a project was successfully carried out and that public opinion finally came down in its side, is very encouraging.

The main criticism of the pyramid even today is that it does not drain satisfactorily the flow of visitors, and this in spite of its large entrance hall. Not only is there only one entrance, but there is only one descending escalator added to which there is a tiny lift which can only take a very small number of people. The cloakroom lockers are also too small and were designed to take baggage the size of a briefcase, whereas many tourists arrive laden with backpacks.

As far as Pei is concerned, he sees this project as the greatest challenge of his life and as an opportunity that an architect cannot hope to have twice in his career ; he considers that he was very lucky to have been entrusted with this project.

DISCUSSION

The art of editing

Question : *How does one go about making this sort of film ? Do the interviewees answer your questions without any problem ?*

Frédéric Compain : I recently made a film about the story of the guerrilla movement in Argentina during the 1970's and the bloody *coup d'état* which followed, leading to the disappearance of thirty thousand people. I wanted to interview the former Argentine President, Alfonsín, who was in power from 1983 to 1989, but my questions about human rights clearly annoyed him and he stopped the interview. This was the first time that that happened to me. By comparison, the subject matter of this film about the Louvre pyramid was less serious. Having said that however, I wasn't able to interview either the journalist who wrote the article for *Le Monde* or the historian who had written an extremely vicious book against the project. As for Jack Lang, I didn't trick him : since I had started off by interviewing Émile Biasini, I told him exactly what the latter had said, thinking that this would needle him ; he replied to my questions

in his own way, but he did not leave the set ; I have no idea if he saw the film, but for the time being, he hasn't complained about it.

Q. : *I imagine that you spent hours speaking with each of the actors and that the bulk of your work is at the editing stage, once you have chosen the minutes of footage that you will use for each interview ?*

F. C. : As you rightly say, the editing is a crucial stage which requires a certain sense of ethics : it would be very easy, for instance, with this type of device, to make the different characters look ridiculous and to intimate that they are all incompetent hypocrites. Even if the laughs I heard tonight show that the film was rather funny, I honestly tried hard to respect each account, and not to manipulate what the actors said.

For or against a competition ?

Q. : *In the film, there were several people who were clearly put in an awkward position by the fact that this contract was not subject to a competition. How is such a breach of the rules possible ?*

Michel Macary : Before the 1970's, competitions were very rare in France, even in the case of an important project such as a school or a big public building. The architects who had won the *Prix de Rome*, or were elected architects of the *Bâtiments Civils* or even of the *Monuments Historiques* took it in turns between them to take on the orders. On the other hand, in other countries, international competitions were organised for the biggest orders. One fine day, it was decided to do the same thing in France, and, as is so often the case, we went from one extreme to the other : today in engineering, the law imposes a competition for every single operation financed by the authorities.

Is this system good or bad ? Without doubt, a certain number of competitions are rigged and the winner is chosen in advance without necessarily being the best candidate. In other cases, the jury is incompetent and chooses the wrong one. Luckily, there are lots of good competitions which give rise to good projects, like that of the Arch at la Défense.

As far as the project for the pyramid is concerned, it was certain that by organising a competition, we would have been letting ourselves in for big trouble because of the large number of decision-makers : the Director of the museum, the seven Chief Curators, the Heritage Director, the Chief Architect of the *Monuments Historiques*, the Mayor of Paris, and even the Mayor of the *arrondissement*. It was highly unlikely that all these people could agree on a common project. The only possible solution seemed to be the choice of an architect with an international reputation who had already proved himself in the construction of a museum, and had demonstrated that he knew how to take into account the pre-existing environment. Peï had carried out the extension to the National Gallery in Washington and it was widely recognised that it fitted into the surrounding urban environment with great success ; one was therefore led to believe that this 'undeniably talented' architect would manage to convince the different representatives of the merit of his project.

Q. : *But how was it possible to wrongly apply the law when you were up against a considerable weight, namely the Treasury, whom at the same time you had to dislodge from the Richelieu Wing ?*

Jean Lebrat : Strictly speaking, there was no misappropriation of the law. According to the regulations, a competition is compulsory only if an historical monument is concerned and if one calls upon the help of a chief architect in charge of this monument. By welcoming the architect in charge of the Louvre into Peï's team, the exercise became legitimate...in inverted commas.

Naturally, the market commission, which effectively is responsible to the Treasury, did not see this in a very favourable light ; luckily, the project was firmly backed by the French President.

Q. : *But if the competition had taken place, would this project have won despite all the controversy it aroused ?*

J. L. : Most probably not, which, with hindsight, justifies the initial decision not to host a competition...

How was it possible to keep within the budget ?

Q. : *Generally speaking, between the initial budget and the final budget, there is a multiplying coefficient of as much as three times the cost, however I know that the budget for this project was scrupulously kept to. Is it because the Treasury repeatedly refused to agree to additional sums ?*

J. L. : It's true that keeping to the budget was a good way of avoiding conflict with the Treasury, or, more precisely, with the Ministry for the Budget. As for how come we managed it, one of the reasons must be that the budget was so large, as you mentioned. Another reason is that we divided it up into separate parts so as to preserve the budget of each party interested in the project ; during the monthly monitoring commissions of the project, each participant made sure that no-one encroached on his part, which greatly helped balance up the expenses.

But above all, at each stage, compromises were made between the architects and the curators, who were the end customers, so that the intended budget was not exceeded. For example, when the façades were restored, not all the sculptures were renovated ; some were favoured more than others, because they were more visible. Thanks to numerous arbitrations of this sort, the budget was not overstepped.

M. M. : As far as I'm concerned, I'm convinced that the contractor plays a fundamental role, and that it is good contractors who make beautiful architecture : they have to know how to hold their course and stand up to possible tantrums from the architects, but they also have to understand the architectural problems of the project manager team. The worst scenario for an architect is a contractor who decides at the last minute to replace leather with imitation leather, or to remove benches without understanding or wanting to understand that what may seem a small detail to him, may undermine the whole architectural project. During the course of this project, we realised that the budget for the Richelieu Wing was going to amount to eight hundred and eighty million Francs, whereas it had been fixed at eight hundred million at the beginning ; thanks to relentless efforts, we managed to find the eighty million without having to abandon the coherence of the entire project. The Grand Louvre is the success of an exemplary contractor, and of a project manager who did his job.

Q. : *In spite of everything, I still tend to think that the first reason put forward was the right one, and that it was because the budget was so big that it was not exceeded.*

J. L. : When a budget is not kept to, you claim that it is because the estimates were bad, and when it is kept to, you say the same thing ! It happens, however, from time to time, that you make good estimates and that you keep to the budget, even if it means that you have to compromise on certain points, in case you have a bad surprise. All in all, in view of the favourable verdict, as shown by the huge increase in the number of visitors to the museum, we consider that, even though it was not possible to do everything, we were obviously able to reply properly to the expectations of the general public.

The colour of the glass

Q. : *How in the end did the company Saint-Gobain meet Pei's demand ? Was the role of the French President decisive, as Pei suggests ?*

J. L. : It's true that everyone tried to put pressure on the company. But the decisive factor was, without a doubt, the added competition from the German company Schott, which had sent us some samples of white glass which were perfectly satisfactory. The problem arose from the fact that the white glass gave off very high temperatures during manufacture, due to a problem of convection linked to the absence of iron oxide ; the ovens which we use for the *floating system* process get hot and can even explode ; and in fact the ovens in question have a very big capacity. Saint-Gobain had to agree to take the risk of losing one of its ovens in order to secure the order, which is what they ended up by doing.

M. M. : Another argument which carried weight, and which I said to the people in charge of the company at the time, is that, at the completion of this project, they could anticipate lots of French architects wanting in turn to use white glass. And, in fact, whereas we had built up stocks of sheets of this glass in case we needed it in the future, this concept of transparency has become one of the keywords of architectural jargon, and white glass is now manufactured industrially.

The tricky problem of the queues

Q. : *You often see, even in the middle of winter, queues of unhappy tourists waiting in the cold in front of the entrance to the pyramid ; isn't there another way to improve the situation ?*

J. L. : Pei wanted the entrance to be very visible, and he managed to achieve this beyond all expectations. The problem is that whatever you do now to try and attract the crowds elsewhere, they'll always make for the external entrance of the pyramid first. There are other underground passages which lead to the entrance hall : the Richelieu passage, the entrance by the shopping centre, or even the entrance from the car parks. Having said that, they all converge on the big reception hall, which poses not only problems of capacity, despite the fact that the hall is very big, but also problems of security. A second entrance was made, on the Seine side, at the *Porte des Lions*, with a ticket counter, cloakrooms etc., but few people know about it.

M. M. : Despite everything, there could be a simple solution to eliminate these queues : a cashier could be assigned to each planned ticket counter, whereas normally cashiers are located at only one third of the counters. It would still not necessarily solve the problem : a few minutes after the visitors have bought their tickets, you find most of them massed in front of the *Mona Lisa* or the *Venus de Milo*, whereas many rooms of the Louvre are practically empty. If you don't want there to be a big jostle in front of these very famous works of art, you have no option but to slow down the flow.

J. L. : The museum is concerned by this problem, and has recently introduced tariffs which vary according to the time of day : most visitors arrive at 9am ; if you come in the afternoon, you can have a cheaper tariff.

The parking area for coaches

Q. : *I once crossed the parking area for coaches which was almost totally empty ; I was told that it was not popular since the spaces were very expensive. What's the story behind this ?*

J. L. : At the *Musée d'Orsay*, the Government refused to make a parking area, which resulted in a conflict with the Paris City Council, because the coaches congested the roads around the

museum. When the demand was made for the building permit for the Grand Louvre, the City Council agreed, provided that a coach parking area was built. Unfortunately, this factor was not taken into account in the budget and so private concessionaires had to be found who would take care of this. Out of this, came the idea to implant some shops, the service charges from which would more than satisfy the parking budget.

Despite this, they were still short of sixty million Francs. It was at this occasion that Émile Biasini proved himself to be a great negotiator : he announced to the Paris town hall that he had half the required sum , and that it seemed reasonable to him that the City Council make up the other half since it was the Council who wanted the parking area in the first place ; once this was granted, he then turned to the government, explaining that since the City Council had given thirty million Francs for this parking area, the government could well do just the same, and he won his case.

The parking area for coaches was therefore built, but it turns out that for the past few years, the city's policy has completely changed : today, they consider that traffic should be limited as much as possible, and they are trying to discourage coaches coming into the city by creating as few parking spaces as possible.

What about the *Grande Bibliothèque* (Big Library) ?

Q. : *In order to understand why certain things are a success, it is perhaps useful to look at the failures. Sharing the same fortune as the Grande Bibliothèque, a lot of ink, if not blood, has been split over the pyramid ; both constructions were backed by President Mitterrand and managed by Émile Biasini. How do you account for such different results, and notably such a contrast in public opinion, since everyone seems to agree that the pyramid is a success after all, and that criticisms still rain down on the Bibliothèque ?*

J. L. : One fundamental difference is that the Louvre already existed before the construction project and that the curators were veritable representatives, whereas the work on the *Bibliothèque* started before the public body responsible for managing the site had been created.

Q. : *Listening to you tonight, I am impressed to see how it was possible to carry out such a wonderful project, and this despite all the obstacles, the weight of administrative details, and despite the opposition of all those who had something to lose in this venture ; but it's true that when you think about the Bibliothèque, it's a shame that certain elements were not curbed so as to avoid certain errors. Is it true to say that there is a price to be paid so that ventures such as the pyramid can exist ?*

M. M. : I know that there is always a risk of deviation in this type of project, but frankly, don't let's add to the curbs that already exist ! There are already so many controls, and it is already so difficult to do just a little bit of architecture in France...

The miraculous side of the pyramid can be explained for the most part, in my view, by the talents of Émile Biasini and the way in which he was able to unite his team behind him. He's a former rugbyman, and like all sportsmen who have played to a good standard, he knows what makes a group work. He knew how to create a climate of solidarity and complete trust within his team – which naturally had its downsides : those people who didn't play the game disappeared overnight...

The speakers :

Frédéric Compain : has made more than forty films, documentaries, as well as fictional films for cinema and television. Prize-winner *Médicis hors les Murs*.
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Jean Lebrat : honorary senior engineer of the *Ponts et Chaussées*, he was Chairman of the *Établissement Public du Grand Louvre* from 1989 to 1998, having been its Director since 1983.
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Michel Macary : is one of the four architects of the *Stade de France*. In association with Ieoh Ming Peï, he also carried out the redevelopment of the Louvre and the Richelieu Wing, in particular. He is President of the association *Architecture et Maîtres d'Ouvrage*.

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