



## MAISON AUTRIQUE

The Maison Autrique, Victor Horta's first building of note, is a milestone in Brussels architectural heritage. Firstly, this house (built in 1893) represents an essential step in the evolution of the greatest of Belgian architects, and secondly, this building has recently undergone a groundbreaking renovation particularly relevant to a better understanding of the birth of Art Nouveau (the renovation has been executed by the architectural firm MA<sup>2</sup>, with the help of a specially appointed scientific committee).

The building today resurrected goes to our heart : it is the first significant realisation of a young architect who gave it his all, on the strength of his client's good will and his wish to make his mark. Stylistically Maison Autrique gives into eclecticism, but the use of industrial materials and the premise of an ornamental language based on the curve augur of Art Nouveau. The building is still constrained in forms borrowed from the past, but a breath of fresh air runs through it, the harbinger of much architectural innovation. The mere range of colouring of the house, the richness of which has been reconstructed thanks to many test drills, suffices to cast a totally new light on the work of the young Horta.



## THE MEMOIRS OF A HOUSE

Memory is no doubt the key to the scenographic project thought up to bring Maison Autrique to life. Who among us, when thinking of a house does not have in mind a whole lot of images linked to childhood? A maze of corridors and concealed stairs, perhaps the darkness of a cellar or a loft. Those are the feelings, the dreams that Maison Autrique would like to summon.

Forget the museum visit, the discovery of the building is conceived like an actual story, a journey, almost an initiation, which takes us across several layers of time and space. Just as if the walls remembered the years gone by, the quirks, the mysteries, the imprint left by successive dwellers.