

French geeks plan world's biggest video game museum

October 19 2023, by Quentin TYBERGHIEN, avec Mathias CENA à Tokyo



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French gaming nerds are planning to open the world's biggest video game museum near Disneyland Paris.

The Odyssey Project—named after the first ever console designed by Magnavox in 1972—will house one of the biggest collections of games ever assembled.

The complex, which will also include a "Japanese village" dedicated to the country's popular culture and cuisine, is the brainchild of collector Ludovic Charles and YouTuber Benoit Theveny, better known to his million followers as Tev.

Charles, 49, has amassed a collection of 2,200 consoles over the last two decades, with every imaginable version of Nintendo, Sega, Sony, Microsoft and other [game](#) systems.

"I do not want them to sit pointlessly on the shelves any longer," he told AFP at the warehouse where he stores them in southern France.

"Gathering them all was what interested me," he added, "but the goal was always a museum" with an exhaustive overview of the evolution of [video](#) games.

The pair have already crowd funded more than one million euros to get the project off the ground.

They put their heads together last year when Charles put the collection up for sale online for around one million euros.

Real part of culture

Theveny, who lives in Tokyo and has been producing popular videos on Japanese and geek culture there, said the idea was to create an all-encompassing survey of video game history.

"The philosophy is not to leave anyone out... from kids of three who play

Minecraft to the oldies of 50 or 60 who were there at the beginning and started on the first Pongs," the early tennis-like computer game.

He said that video games deserved to "have their own museum and be recognized as a part of our culture, and I think more and more people would agree with me on that."

The museum, called "Projet Odyssee" in French, is planned for an extensive greenfield site in the eastern Paris suburb of Bussy-Saint-Georges, not far from Disneyland Paris.

Previous attempts to cash in on video game [culture](#) have a checkered history in France. The Pixel Museum in a suburb of Strasbourg close to the German border closed in 2020 after three years and a museum of video games in La Defense, the Paris financial district, only lasted 10 days.

"We have learned from these attempts," insisted Theveny, saying they had the full support of the local mayor who was already working on an e-sports project which will also be accommodated in the complex.

They hope construction will start in 2025 with the [museum](#) and entertainment village opening the following year.

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