As part of the works promoted for Marseille Provence European Capital of Culture 2013, a large-scale operation to redesign the public spaces around the Old Port has restored urban dignity to a mythical place of modernity, much loved by Moholy-Nagy, Le Corbusier and Pouillon.

Our proposals for the area’s revitalisation are based on a landscape and geographical vision of Marseille that seeks to clarify and distinguish the nature of the city’s public spaces according to their positions within the territory. This geographic overview led us to identify a number of major contrasting project entities.

The Old Port (25 ha): the old port is the unitary foundation of the city, its threshold to the sea. It is resolutely a mineral public space, reflecting its urban and utility history.

The chain of parks (30 ha): the objective is to transform the various forts and military areas into one vast park. On a scale comparable to that of the port, this park is to recompose the landscape of Marseille and its maritime facade.

The garden public spaces in the city centre: The green public spaces laid out as an archipelago pragmatically offer diversity, landmarks and distinctiveness: an archipelago of gardens around the Old Port.

This broad perspective and its respect for history determines the character of each place.

Client
Communauté urbaine Marseille Provence Métropole

Operationnal management
Direction des Infrastructures

Design team
Michel Desvigne Paysagiste (team mandatary)
Foster + Partners (architecture)
Tangram (urban planning)
Ingérop (structural engineering)
AIK Yann Kersalé (lighting material)

First phase (completed): 2013
(45 M€ excluding fiscal charges)

Second phase: 2016
(30 M€ excluding fiscal charges)