The Baschet Sound Structures Association’s mission is to ensure the work of the Baschet brothers lives on.

Founded in 1982 by Bernard Baschet, the Association brings together teachers, artists, researchers, instrument makers and many other people interested in continuing the legacy of the two French brothers throughout the world.

In close collaboration with the Baschet family, the Association continues the work started by Bernard and François Baschet in the 1950’s: to make sound art accessible to all.

There are three main poles of the Association’s work:

- **EDUCATION**: active, social pedagogy in sound
- **CULTURE**: experimental sound creation
- **PRESERVATION**: of the Baschet brothers’ legacy
The Baschet brothers created striking **visual forms** which are determined by **sound**. Their work is also strongly inspired by the notion of the **social function of art, in particular the participation of the public.**

As pioneers, they did not hesitate to blend the visual arts, cinema, live performance, poetry, music, architecture, acoustics, social action, education and therapy: their motto was “**artists are also researchers**”.

“My brother Bernard and myself are seeking to blend **forms, sound and public participation**”

François Baschet
Bernard Baschet (1917-2015)
An meticulous worker, engineer, entrepreneur, philosopher and a research director of the pioneering “Musical Research Group” in the ‘60s, he was captivated by the potential of his brother’s sound inventions and decided to devote himself to what would become their life’s work.

François Baschet (1920-2014)
Spontaneous and spirited, a cabaret artist, inventor, writer, sculptor, illustrator, acoustician and designer, he invented an inflatable guitar that accompanied him during his trip around the Pacific in 1952. This guitar and his collaboration with his brother sparked a new approach to music, visual arts and instrument-making.

KEY FACTS:
- A glass rod used for the first time in a sound structure in 1955. This would lead to the development of the Cristal Baschet, and the foundation in 1956 Lasry-Baschet Sound Structures group,
- Several patents: inflatable guitar, sound amplifier and polytonal musical instruments,
- More than 500 unique pieces created from 1952 to 2015,
- Around twenty monument sculptures between 1968 and 1988,
- A hundred personal and collective exhibitions from 1964,
- Creation of the “Instrumentarium Pédagogique Baschet” (Baschet Educational Instrumentarium) in 1980.
Invented in the 1980’s, the Baschet Educational Instrumentarium consists of 14 sound structures which make a “sound palette” of around 100 different tones.

Its purpose is to initiate children, adults and people with disabilities in collective musical discovery through games and experimentation, and without any previous musical knowledge.

“We give children a palette of colours so that they can create freely.
Why not do the same thing with sound?”

Bernard Baschet
Based on the large, original Baschet sound structures, the Baschet Educational Instrumentarium creates a broad spectrum of sounds, including those not in the classical European repertoire, as well as some which resemble electroacoustic sounds.

Education in sound culture is stimulated through listening to sounds, to oneself and to others. The experience of sound is not only through listening, it is also through hands-on learning and musical improvisation.

This Instrumentarium is also used in concert by musicians.
What is the Baschet Educational Instrumentarium?

- The Three Crosses
- The Cristal
- The Strings
- The Whistler
- The Double Spring
- The Arc
The Baschet Sound Structures Association possesses an exclusive licence to produce the Baschet Educational Instrumentarium.
The Cristal Baschet

A type of musical instrument designed by the Baschet brothers in the 1950’s, the Cristal Baschet is played with wet fingers on glass rods.

Its continuous, enchanting sounds have inspired many artists and composers.

The current Cristal Baschet models produce a variety of sounds and can also be used in percussion. They can be fitted with numerous resonators including “moustaches” and different types of diffusers: cones and metal sheets.

The Baschet Sound Structures Association possesses an exclusive licence to produce the Cristal Baschet.
The Cristal Baschet

Artists who have used the Cristal Baschet:

- Damon Albarn (Gorillaz)
- Florence Baschet
- François Bayle
- Nicolas Becker
- Thomas Bloch
- Catherine Brisset
- Matthieu Chedid (M)
- Jarvis Cocker (Pulp)
- Lindsay Cooper
- David Coulter (The Pogues)
- Xiaojie Cristau
- Daft Punk
- Michel Deneuve
- Manu Dibango
- Loïk Dury
- Luc Ferrari
- Beatriz Ferreyra
- Fred Frith
- Arthur H
- Karinn Helbert
- Jean-Michel Jarre
- Lokua Kanza
- Jacques et Yvonne Lasry
- Phil Minton
- Lenka Morávková
- Yael Naïm
- Vanessa Paradis
- Radiohead
- Michel Redolfi
- Guy Reibel
- Ryuichi Sakamoto
- Philippe Sarde
- Ravi Shankar
- Stuart Staples
- Roger Steptoe
- Cathy Tardieu
- Tom Waits
- Toru Takemitsu

Films in which the Cristal Baschet has been used:

- March of the Penguins
  Director: Luc Jacquet, Composer: Émilie Simon (documentary, 2004)
- Solaris
  Director: Steven Soderbergh, Composer: Cliff Martinez (science-fiction, 2002)
- Traffic
  Director: Steven Soderbergh, Composer: Cliff Martinez (police drama, 2000)
- Testament of Orpheus
  Director: Jean Cocteau (fantasy, 1960)
Other Baschet Sound Structures

The quest for new sounds led the Baschet brothers to combine new materials of the time, usually through folding metal sheets into geometric shapes.

Their sculptures range from small folded sheet metal of a few centimeters up to structures several meters high with loud, impressive and complex sounds.

Their exhibitions were shown in prestigious museums throughout the world - the United States, Japan, Germany - as well as in small villages in France, always with the aim of making art accessible to all.

The Rotating Whistler ("Le Sifflant Tournant")

Created in 1962, the Rotating Whistler produces the sharpest and longest sounds of all the Baschet Sound Structures. Turning the keyboard produces an unusual sound effect which does not need an amplifier cone.

The Polytonal Percussion ("La Percussion Polytimbre")

Created in 1967, this Polytonal Percussion includes large, straight rods that create deep, resonant sounds. The keyboard is organized with different percussive devices and cones diffuse the sound.

The Voice Leaf ("La Tôle à Voix")

Created in 1965 to mimic the Indian tempura, the metal sheets serve as resonators which transform the human voice when vibrated.
The Baschet brothers also created several public monuments such as clocks, fountains, bell towers and chimes - some ephemeral, some still in existence.

One of the first fountains created was made for the World’s Fair in San Antonio, Texas in 1968. They made others in the early 1970’s, including in Cologne, New York, Mexico City, London and Barcelona.

Subsequently, they worked on bell towers and clocks. The Baschet “signal sonore” (or school bell) of a school has just been restored in Saint-Michel-sur-Orge - the town where Bernard Baschet’s studio has been since 1970 - was recently restored by the Association.
Baschet Timeline: inventions, performances, exhibitions, films...


First Baschet instrument: the inflatable guitar

First Cristal Baschet

First film soundtrack: “Testament of Orpheus”

First Lasry-Baschet concert

First exhibition: Paris Design Museum (Musée des arts décoratifs)

First exhibition abroad: Museum of Modern Art, New York

Creation of metal dresses for the film “Who are you, Polly Maggoo?” by William Klein

First outdoor monument sculpture for the World’s Fair in Texas, USA
International Exposition, Osaka, Japan

International retrospective at the Barbican Centre, London

Creation of the Baschet Educational Instrumentarium Association

Exhibition at the Paris Music Museum (Cité de la musique)

Centenary of the birth of Bernard Baschet at UNESCO. Exhibition in collaboration with the Week of Sound Association.

Exhibition at the Palais de Tokyo (Paris)

Baschet around the world

Countries with a Baschet Educational Instrumentarium:
- France
- Belgium
- Germany
- Austria
- Italy
- Spain
- Portugal
- United Kingdom
- Norway
- Switzerland
- Canada
- Mexico
- Japan

Countries with Baschet pieces in a public art collection:
- France
- USA
- Canada
- Mexico
- Sweden
- Denmark
- Belgium
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Japan

Canada - University of Quebec (Montreal) - educational research

Mexico - Interdisciplinary sound sculpture experimentation and research group (GIEIES, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México).
- Centre for research and musical studies (CIEM)

Spain - Baschet Workshop, Universidad de Barcelona

France - Headquarters of the Baschet Sound Structures Association - 500 Baschet Educational Instrumentariums

Japan - Osaka Bampaku - Association for the Preservation of the Heritage of the International Exhibition of 1970
- Arts University, Kyoto
- Baschet Association of Japan
The Baschet Sound Structures Association offers:

- artistic residences for composers, musicians, visual artists, dancers, instrument makers ...
- scientific residences for researchers
- Baschet Educational Instrumentarium training for educators
- production and maintenance of Baschet Educational Instrumentariums
- production and maintenance of Cristals Baschet, Voice Leaf, Rotating Whistlers, Polytonal Percussion
- information about the Baschet story, the importance of the work in the history of art and scientific research ... *in short, all our enthusiasm and knowledge about this legendary work!*

direction@baschet.org
presidence@baschet.org
communication@baschet.org

The Baschet Sound Structures Association is a non-profit organisation, registered under the number 342 484 797 and domiciled at 17 rue des Fusillés de la Résistance, 91240, Saint-Michel-sur-Orge, FRANCE

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