European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards (2026)
1865-Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising 4. Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising

Gardens of peace

azXwNZGw

Entry details

General information

Main country of application	France

Brief description of the project

> The Gardens of Peace Project is Europe's first landscaped European Peace Pathway trail. Spanning the entire length of the First World War front line in France and Belgium, and complementing existing memorial sites, the project explores the potential of public gardens as participative spaces to work on current and future European peace issues. It aims to raise awareness of the need to develop a 'positive' culture of peace in Europe.

Start date of the project	2018-01-01
Website(s) of the project/nominee	https://www.artetjardins-hdf.com/en/directory-project/jardins-de-la-paix/
Facebook page of the project, if any	https://www.facebook.com/artetjardinsHDF
Twitter page of the project, if any	https://x.com/art_jardins
Instagram page of the project, if any	https://www.instagram.com/art_jardins_hdf/
Any other relevant social media	https://www.linkedin.com/company/art-jardins-hauts-de-france
Does the site or heritage in question have national/regional/ local cultural heritage designation or protection status in its country?	Yes

If yes, please specify:

> Citadel of Le Quesnoy (Nord, France) : classified as a French historical monument
>
> Citadel of Arras (Pas-de-Calais, France) : classified and registered as a French historical monument

National Necropolis of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette (Pas-de-Calais, France) : registered as a French historical monument

Citadel of Amiens (Somme, France) : classified and registered as a French historical monument

Castle of Peronne (Somme, France) : classified as a French historical monument

Memorial of Thiepval (Somme, France) : registered as a French historical monument

Chinese Cemetery of Nolette (Somme, France) : registered as a French historical monument

Armistice Glade of Compiègne (Oise, France) : classified as a French historical monument

The monument "To the Dead of the Armies of Champagne" of Navarin (Marne, France) : registered as a French historical m

National Necropolis of Pétant of Montauville (Meurthe-et-Moselle, France) : registered as a French historical monument

National Necropolis of Chambière of Metz (Moselle, France) : registered as a French historical monument

National Necropolis of La Fontenelle in Ban-de-Sapt (Vosges, France) : classified as a French historical monument

Hartmannswillerkopf - National Monument of Wattwiller (Haut-Rhin, France) : classified as a French historical monument

Romanian cemetery of Soultzmatt (Haut-Rhin, France) : registered as a French historical monument

Is the project focused on or taking place in heritage included on the UNESCO World Heritage List, either as an individual site or as part of a larger World Heritage property? If so, please specify which one.

13 sites classified as UNESCO World Heritage : 4 National Necropolis (Chestres-Vouziers, Chambière of Metz, La Fontenelle and Notre-Dame-de-Lorette), 5 international memorial or cemeteries (Canadian, Czechoslovakian, Chinese, Danish, Romanian), 4 monuments (Arras citadel, Thiepval, monument "To the Dead of the Armies of Champagne" in Navarin, Hartmannswillerkopf-Wattwiller).

Is the project focused on or taking place in a heritage designated as a European Heritage Label? If so, please specify which one.

non applicable

If relevant, is the site/heritage accessible to the public?	Yes

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Contact details

Name of the entrant	Karl TOURAIS
Entrant's position	Administrative and financial manager
Organisation of the entrant	Association des jardins paysagers des hauts-de-France et des Hortillonnages - named Art et Jardins / Hauts-de-France
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Telephone of the entrant (mobile number)	+33679499586
Website of the entrant	https://www.artetjardins-hdf.com/en/
Organisation of the owner	Association des jardins paysagers des hauts-de-France et des Hortillonnages - named Art et Jardins / Hauts-de-France
Name of the project leader	Gilbert FILLINGER
Project leader's position	director
Organisation of the project leader	Association des jardins paysagers des hauts-de-France et des Hortillonnages - named Art et Jardins / Hauts-de-France
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Other relevant participants

> Nathalie VALLEE, Artistic and production manager
>
> Catherine CORDELLE, Administrative assistant
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> Vincent GALLEMAND, Technical Director
>
> Farid KADERI, Landscaping works manager
>
> Mélanie POITRE, Social and professional integration advisor
>
> Hélène RIGOLLE, Head of communication
>
> Marianne ANSELIN, Public relations and mediation manager
>
> Zoé GAMBIER, Communication assistant

Concise summary

Concise summary

> The Heritage-led Gardens of Peace Project was initiated in 2017 to mark the centenary of the First World War. It aims to create Europe's first landscaped Peace Pathway trail along the entire length of the front line in France and Belgium. The project is designed to complement the approach to memorial sites and explore the potential of gardens as active and inclusive spaces for engaging with our conflicts and war legacies. With 24 public gardens already open (13 of which are located on UNESCO-listed sites), six ready to open by the end of the year, and nine more in preparation, the project aims to establish 40 public Peace gardens alongside memorial sites by 2027. These gardens will stretch from Belgium through the regions of Nord, Pas-de-Calais, Somme, Aisne, Oise, Ardennes, Marne, Meuse, Moselle, Meurthe-et-Moselle, Vosges, Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin to Alsace. The project already enables over

160,000 local, European and international citizens each year to relax and discuss challenging heritage and peace issues in a safe space. This new type of public space serves as a collective refuge, facilitating connections with the local area's history and that of other European citizens. It also aims to build foster a sense of responsibility and ownership among European citizens towards our peaceful common future. By bringing together a variety of partners and engaging citizens in participatory initiatives, the project supports the cohesive, inclusive and whole-of-society approach required to foster a culture of preparedness, resilience and peace. This approach is endorsed by the European Commission in its 2025 strategy. It also extends peacebuilding to cultural and civil professionals working with and for citizen resilience, which is one of the main current and forward-looking issues emphasised by UNESCO. Ultimately, the project operates at the intersection of European strategies: Preparedness and Readiness (Peace Culture and Resilience), the New European Bauhaus (Aesthetics and Sustainability), the Green Deal (Biodiversity), and Creative Europe (Cultural and Democratic Resilience). The project's total budget for the period 2018–2025 is €2,700,000. The project is managed entirely by the association's team.

Objectives and work undertaken

Aims and objectives of the project/initiative.

As emphasised by the United Nations at its 2021 High-Level Forum, particular attention must be given to fostering a culture of peace, especially among young people. A 'culture of peace' is essential for building a better, fairer and more sustainable future for everyone. This requires us to actively and inclusively address past and present conflicts. Europe has many memorial sites that serve as a reminder of the consequences of war. The 'Gardens of Peace' project aims to complement these sites with a creative and sensitive approach that encourages citizens to engage with the legacies of conflict and consider peace issues in today's and tomorrow's complex world. The project was initiated in 2017 to mark the centenary of the First World War and is an experiment in creating Europe's first landscaped peace trail along the entire length of the front line in France and Belgium. It explores the potential of gardens as spaces for reflection, healing and education on peace issues, while raising awareness of the concept of a 'positive' European culture of peace based on public participation. By 2027, the Path of Peace will comprise almost 40 public gardens stretching from Belgium through the regions of Nord, Pas-de-Calais, Somme, Aisne, Oise, Ardennes, Marne, Meuse, Moselle, Meurthe-et-Moselle, Vosges, Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin to Alsace. Thirteen of these gardens are located on UNESCO-listed sites.

Any historical and technical research undertaken for the project/initiative.

To implement the project, Art & Jardins first collaborated with the First World War Centenary Mission (2017–18), and has worked since 2019 with the French Ministry of the Armed Forces and the National Office of Veterans and War Victims (ONACvg). The aim was to compile a list of potential sites along the First World War front line in the Hauts-de-France and Grand Est regions of France, as well as in Belgium. The project also sought to identify the most suitable locations, negotiate with local and international partners, and assess technical and financial feasibility, including soil studies, inclines, and dimensions. Prior regulatory authorisation was also requested. Drawing on research at the intersection of cultural heritage, critical and transformative landscapes, and gardens as art, the project aims to create contemporary public gardens that serve as transformative social spaces. Finally, the project builds on recent research concerning positive peace and 'peace as a civil construct', broadening the scope of peacebuilding to encompass civil society and explore methods of fostering peace and resilience in the present day.

Activities carried out and stages of implementation of the project/initiative.

The first stage of implementation involved experimenting with the concept and creating an appropriately sized 'Gardens of Peace' landscaped trail. In 2018, Art & Jardins launched the project with the first 12 gardens in the Hauts-de-France region. By 2025, a further 11 gardens had been completed and inaugurated in the Hauts-de-France and Grand Est regions, as well as in Belgium. A further 7 gardens have been created in the Grand Est region and will be inaugurated before June 2026. Nine other gardens are under construction. A total of 74 landscape designers and architects from the 21 countries that were formerly at war were invited to design gardens symbolizing the nations affected by the conflict. These included professionals from Europe (France, Germany, England, Wales, Scotland,

Denmark, Ireland, Portugal, Italy, Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic), the Mediterranean region (Algeria and Morocco) and the rest of the world (the United States, New Zealand, Canada, Australia, China and India). The aim was not only to create the gardens, but also to encourage participation and mediation at every stage of the project (see the question below on participation), consolidate partnerships with key stakeholders – particularly those responsible for garden maintenance when it was not Arts et Jardins (e.g. ONACvg and municipalities) – and engage a variety of stakeholders (international, national and local public authorities; schools; civil society organizations working on memory and heritage; tourist offices; journalists, etc.) with each garden and the trail. This will enable the gardens to be incorporated into educational and tourist routes, raise awareness of positive peace issues and facilitate the gardens' sustainability (see the questions below on dissemination).

Challenges or problems encountered and solutions found to overcome them.

Various challenges emerged, particularly the need to achieve critical mass for the new concept within a few years and to ensure the gardens were well maintained, sustainable and offered dynamic activities. Various solutions were found, including careful preparation (e.g. preparatory studies or securing the landowner's commitment to maintenance after ten years), participation from the outset (e.g. involving local professionals, such as gardeners, from the beginning), transferring skills for future maintenance (e.g. providing a maintenance toolkit for each site and integrating climate change considerations) and investing in press coverage. Private funding was also sought from various sources (see the question at the end regarding the economic model) and investment was pooled by hiring a patronage officer, a landscaping works manager, and a coordinator for mediation development (e.g. mediation, tour guides, and partnerships with tourist offices) to sustain a collective approach.

European significance

European significance of the project/initiative/nominee.

The project aims to foster a European culture of preparedness and resilience that enables us to navigate uncertainty, facilitate peaceful transitions, and build a sustainable future. To achieve this, it promotes a more engaging, dynamic and forward-looking approach to European history and heritage. By exploring the intersection of heritage and creation, it allows us to engage with our European past, develop resilience in relation to past conflicts and promote peaceful dialogue within our own societies and with the rest of the world. Gardens offer an opportunity to experience history in a more personal and sensitive way. Through participation, mediation and education, they can also promote mutual understanding and a shared sense of identity. Ultimately, the project operates at the intersection of the following European strategies : preparedness and Readiness (Peace Culture and Resilience), New European Bauhaus (Aesthetics and Sustainability), Green Deal (Biodiversity) and Creative Europe (Cultural and Democratic Resilience).

Results and impact

Summary of the main results achieved and knowledge that has been gained. List the ways that the project/initiative contributes to the preservation and/or enhancement of the historical, cultural, environmental, educational and/or social values of the heritage in question. Mention the project's impact on conservation policy and practice, if any.

The Gardens of Peace Project preserves European history, fosters cultural exchange, promotes sustainability and empowers communities, establishing it as a pioneering model for heritage conservation and social innovation. The project has transformed war-scarred landscapes into living spaces for reflection, healing, and dialogue by creating 40 public gardens by 2027, 24 of which are already open, including 13 on UNESCO-listed sites. The gardens activate the heritage sites on which they are established, complementing and interpreting the sites' legacy in new ways and bringing in new audiences. These gardens offer a positive, participatory approach to peacebuilding and heritage preservation, giving the memorial sites new visibility and opening new ways to imagine mediation. Each landscape designer has strengthened its ability to combine artistic, cultural, and landscape elements with a heritage site. Young people invited to participate in building the gardens and mediation activities will know that they have a place to rest,

connect with their complex histories and look to the future. They will also learn how to promote heritage and peace locally, for example through volunteering or organising mediation within their communities. Inhabitants, tourists and visitors will benefit from visiting the gardens, enjoying the healing and reflective space individually and collectively, and engaging in dialogue around heritage. The inhabitants will benefit from experiencing peace in the garden every day. In these turbulent and polarised times, when the information environment can be threatening or overwhelming, the garden offers a new type of public space that provides collective refuge and a connection to the history of the local area and that of other European citizens. This will make them more aware of our shared European past and future, and of the importance of building it together.

Aspects of the project that can be considered innovative within its area or field.

The Garden of Peace Project is a heritage initiative involving the creation of living, co-designed gardens to complement memorial sites. The project is innovative in terms of gardens, landscapes and heritage. As adaptable living spaces, the gardens can serve as open archives offering spaces for reflection on the visible and invisible layers of our past in dialogue with all life forms. The project also uses gardens as tools for social healing, designing drought-mitigating gardens to encourage discussion. The project broadens the scope of peacebuilding to encompass civil society. It combines landscape design, conflict resolution and environmental approaches. In 2021, the project received the European Garden Award from the European Garden Heritage Network for its innovative concept of a contemporary garden or park. In 2022, it received the Special Prize of the Jury for the entire Gardens of Peace project.

Please provide the following information in bullet points:
Participation in the initiative: Indicate the number of participants, audience members, or users per year. For websites or digital platforms, please include visitor statistics and any relevant data on online engagement or interaction.
Involvement of specific groups: Describe the involvement of youth, local communities, non-traditional audiences, and/or people with disabilities.

Since 2018, the project has brought together young and adult citizens, civil society organisations (including veterans and victims of war), schools, landscape designers, architects and public authorities at regional, national (including the Ministries of Culture and Defence) and international (including UNESCO and the European Union) levels, encouraging them to collaborate on the design, creation, animation and maintenance of peace gardens. These gardens attract a large audience each year. Located in well-known places of remembrance, they benefit from visitors to the memorials. To date, 4,030 people have attended the openings of the 22 established gardens. More than 168,000 people (including local residents and tourists from various countries) visit them annually. The association estimates that approximately 220,000 people will visit the Trail of Peace each year by 2028. Moreover, the gardens encourage participation at every stage. Between 20 and 50 volunteers, including war veterans, horticulture and design students, and members of local associations, were involved in creating and building each of the 30 gardens (over 750 people in total). Between 100 and 800 people participate in mediation activities in each of the open gardens every year (over 4,750 people per year participate yearly in educational programs, promoting peace culture and environmental awareness). For example, the construction of the Belgian garden, which was funded by the INTERREG programme, involved more than 150 high school students in Le Quesnoy and Passchandaele. The Richebourg Italian and British gardens were constructed with the help of 100 children from local schools, and the Vimy garden was built with the assistance of young Canadian volunteers. Additionally, schoolchildren participate in planting bulbs in the German garden every year. In terms of digital platforms, the Gardens of Peace received 57,526 website visitors and 45,500 Instagram views in 2024, as well as 16,400 Facebook views. Specific events are organised each year for European Heritage Days.

Environmental, social, and economic sustainability of the project (e.g. contribution to climate action and environmental protection; measures to ensure long-term financial sustainability or future viability; benefits for people and communities, where relevant).

> All Gardens of Peace are designed with environmental preservation in mind. Eco-design is a central theme of the project. The project focuses on gardens as local, site-specific artistic creations that engage local communities. The gardens are designed to be permanent and climate-adaptive. The following principles are integrated into the design: respect for the principles of agroforestry; use of endemic, non-invasive plants and vegetation; use of local materials for built elements; supply according to the principles of short circuits; creation of new biodiversity; gardens that consume little water for maintenance; reuse of materials; use of organic and natural fertilisers; use of agro-grazing where possible; and use of trimming and mowing tools that run on renewable energies. The project addresses issues of sustainability, biodiversity and climate resilience. It demonstrates how gardens can be tools for future resilience, addresses the sustainability of the gardens themselves, and raises awareness of climate change through mediation. Work has also begun to formalise comprehensive protocols to reduce the environmental impact of our activities, such as mediation and exhibitions. This includes energy sources and consumption, waste management, green procurement, and the mobility of staff, artists, and audiences. The gardens are also designed for minimal maintenance. To maintain the gardens, Art & Jardins employs over 100 disadvantaged people each year to support their social and professional reintegration. The project is part of an integration project for the Somme department, involving the construction and maintenance of Somme gardens, as well as a community service programme to prevent imprisonment in three departments: Pas-de-Calais, Somme and Aisne. Arts et Jardins has developed a contract with the Ministry of Justice with the intention of extending it to all the gardens. Finally, long-term financial sustainability has also been incorporated from the outset through partnerships and the sharing of resources for the creation, maintenance and animation of the gardens.

Dissemination of the project's results and knowledge gained and any outreach or educational activities.

> Dissemination is essential for achieving visibility and notoriety, as well as attracting a large audience each year. This involves developing contacts and partnerships with remembrance sites, departmental and local tourist offices, ONACVg and others. It also involves creating an annual roadmap for mediation and awareness-raising activities and providing information and ready-to-use materials, such as educational sheets on each garden and a mobile exhibition for schools, museums, institutions, and sponsors. Participation in conferences in France and Europe is important, as is participation in the Global Peace Summit. Investing in strong local, national and European communication activities and campaigns each year is also essential. To date, the project has been in contact with over 200 journalists from local, regional, national, European and international TV, radio and press outlets, 120 of whom have visited the gardens, resulting in articles or reportage in publications such as The Guardian, Le Monde and France Inter.

Contribution to intercultural dialogue and to the protection of cultural diversity.

> The Gardens of Peace project promotes intercultural dialogue and diversity. The trail consists of 30 different interpretations of gardens of peace, each of which is linked to the First World War depending on its location and the country with which it is associated. Sometimes, two or three gardens explore the same site from different perspectives. The creation of each garden brings together international landscape architects, mediators and local residents. Once completed, the gardens provide dynamic spaces for mediation between young people and local or international visitors from a variety of backgrounds. The project transforms gardens into inclusive spaces where different communities can exchange ideas, collaborate, and share narratives, thereby facilitating discussions about historical, philosophical, and social issues. Finally, the gardens preserve ecological knowledge, linking cultural and biological diversity. By promoting pluralism, the gardens counteract far-right strategies.

Transferability of the initiative to other contexts and its scalability potential.

> The project incorporates transferability and scalability. Its evolution now centres on three key strategies: maintaining a structured approach to networking and mutualisation between existing sites (e.g. maintenance and mediation); expanding the concept internationally to encompass other territories and peace issues (a garden will open in Agrigento, the Italian capital of culture in 2025); and investing in research-driven innovation to anticipate future challenges. In May 2025, the Re-imagining Peace Project, a flagship initiative, was submitted to Creative Europe. This collaborative, interdisciplinary, pan-European research project is the first of its kind to explore how sites affected by climate change, wars, and other crises can become participatory gardens that foster healing, dialogue, and reflection. The project brings together 14 partners from 13 countries and 15 cities, ranging from Amiens and Kyiv to

> Kaunas, Lisbon and Tunis. It aims to transform gardens into hubs for collective resilience and forward-looking peacebuilding.

Costs of the project/initiative

Costs of the project (in euro), financial and management arrangements, funding partners and/or the type of funding.

> The cost of the production of the Gardens of peace (2018-2025) is 2 700 000 euros. 900 000 euros is coming from the French Ministry of Army. 816 000 euros (30%) is coming from private national and international funders. All the structural cost of the association linked to the project, beside the production of the gardens, are covered by the Region Hauts-de-France. The project is entirely managed by the team of the association.
>
> Art & Jardins has established specific partnerships in competencies for attractiveness, maintenance, tourism and mediation for instance with European and international institution (European Union, UNESCO), national public authorities (French Ministry of the Armed Forces and of Culture, Portuguese and Indian Ministry of the Armed Forces) and diplomacies (French Institutes, Indian Embassy in France, British Embassy in France, Irish Embassy in France, Canadian Embassy in France, New-Zeland Emabssy in France), regional (Hauts-de-France Region, Grand-Est Region) and local public authorities (Somme Department, Pas-de-Calais Department, Béthune-Bruay, Lys Romane Urban Community, Amiens Métropole, city of Cambray, cities of Jutland, City of Richebourg), and 27 private partners (French, danish, portuguese, slovak, etc.) (Caisse des Dépôts, EDF, Gueudet, Credit agricole, Fondation de France, Komarek Foundation and many other sponsors).

Funding provided by the European Union or the EEA/Norway Grants (including programme, year and amount of the Grant), if any.

> INTERREG France-Wallonia-Flanders for the belgian Garden of Peace in Le Quesnoy and for the French Garden of Peace in Passchendaele : 30 500 € / 2019

Additional information

How would winning the European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award benefit you, your project and/or your organisation?

> It will strengthen the European development of the project and the recognition approach of heritage, landscape and peace for the European future.

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, what will the monetary award be used for?

> The monetary prize will be used for the organization of "re-imagining peace" european conference gathering representatives of all the stakeholders that can be interested in such an approach.

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, who will be the recipient of the monetary award?

> The recipient will be the Association Art & Jardins.

How did you find out about the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards?	Other

Is this the first time that this entry has been submitted to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards?	No
If it is a resubmission, write the registration number and title of the previous submission here:	1089
On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with this online submission form?	✓ 10
By submitting your data, photographs and other material to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards you agree to the processing and sharing of your data in accordance with Europa Nostra's Privacy Policy. Please check the box to indicate you agree with the Privacy Policy.	✓

Log in to european-heritage.awardsplatform.com to see complete entry attachments.



Thiepval _ Angle... 1.4 MiB



JDP anglais _ Th... 1.2 MiB



JDP anglais _ Th... 2.5 MiB



JDP Australien p... 1.4 MiB



JDP australien _ ... 1.5 MiB



JDP australien - ... 2.4 MiB



05-inauguration...265 KiB



JDP marocain - ... 3.0 MiB



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JDP français _ P... 412 KiB



JDP français _ P... 2.6 MiB



JDP polonais _ ... 1.7 MiB



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JDP irlandais & ... 220 KiB



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newzealand.jpg 434 KiB



JDP britannique... 2.8 MiB



JDP danois _ Br... 3.1 MiB



JDP écossais _ A... 2.5 MiB



JDP France-Alle... 2.6 MiB



JDP _ France-All... 2.9 MiB



JDP italien - Cra... 353 KiB



JDP tchèque et ... 1.7 MiB

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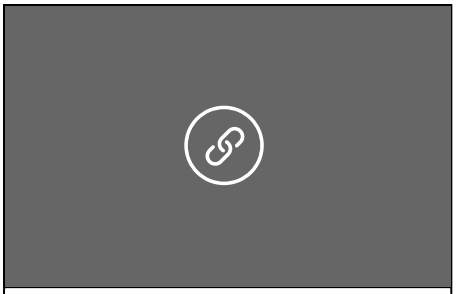
Gardens of pea... 1.0 MiB

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Learning to Buil... 618 KiB

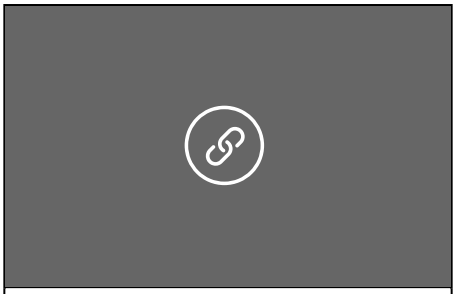
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Art et Jardins de... 328 KiB



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