

Press release

From One Louvre to Another: Opening a Museum for Everyone

Louvre Abu Dhabi's first special exhibition opens 21 December, exploring the history of France's Musée du Louvre

Abu Dhabi, UAE, 19 December 2017: Louvre Abu Dhabi's first special exhibition, *From One Louvre to Another: Opening a Museum for Everyone*, will open to the public on 21 December 2017 and run until 7 April 2018. The exhibition traces the history of France's Musée du Louvre in the 18th century through 150 paintings, sculptures, decorative arts and other works of art from the world-renowned collections of the Musée du Louvre and the Château de Versailles.

From One Louvre to Another: Opening a Museum for Everyone tells the story of the creation of the Musée du Louvre two centuries ago, when Europe's first museums were founded to share access to magnificent royal collections with the public. Divided into three sections, the exhibition explores the royal collections at Versailles under Louis XIV, the Louvre as a palace for artists, and the creation of the Musée du Louvre.

The first museum of its kind in the Arab world, Louvre Abu Dhabi opened on 11 November. It offers a new perspective on the history of art in a globalised world. Alongside its collection of artworks and artefacts in its galleries spanning the entirety of human history, the museum will present four special exhibitions a year organised by the French museum partners and Agence France-Muséums as per the intergovernmental agreement for 15 years between the Government of Abu Dhabi and France.

HE Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chairman of the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi, said: "The opening of Louvre Abu Dhabi is a momentous achievement of which the UAE is very proud. Louvre Abu Dhabi's programme of first exhibitions will tell stories from around the world, reflecting and building upon the diverse themes of the permanent galleries. It is fitting that the inaugural exhibition explores the creation of the Musée du Louvre, an institution which shares Louvre Abu Dhabi's universal values."

Manuel Rabaté, Director of Louvre Abu Dhabi, said: "Louvre Abu Dhabi's vision is to be a place where we stimulate imaginations and open minds to new connections while redefining what an art museum can be. Our inaugural exhibition captures an extraordinary story: the birth of the world's most important museum. The opening of the Musée du Louvre was a transformational milestone in history. It's significance as a world treasure cannot be underestimated. This prescient first exhibition is timely as it captures our own values and principles of hope and collaboration. Following the museum's historic recent opening, we are moving into a new period, offering our visitors an exciting programme of exhibitions and events. We are a place of incredible vitality which is also creating its' own reputation of all that is good in art and culture."

Jean-Luc Martinez, President-Director of Musée du Louvre and chief curator of the exhibition, commented: "As a new Louvre has been created in Abu Dhabi, it seemed crucial to us to evoke the history

of the creation of the Musée du Louvre in Paris, more than 2 centuries ago. Tracing the process that led to the opening of the museum in 1793 allows light to be shed on the contemporary history of museums and puts into perspective the roots and ideals shared by the Louvre Museum and Louvre Abu Dhabi.”

From One Louvre to Another begins with Versailles in the late 17th century, showing how the royal collections were displayed in the gardens, the state apartments, and the king’s private apartment. Notable works displayed in this section will include Jean Garnier’s stunning oil painting *Portrait of Louis XIV with the allegory of good government* (1670-72), and the 1st-2nd century AD Roman statue, *Diana of Versailles*, formerly found in the grounds of the great palace.

It then moves on to the Louvre palace, a great hive of artistic activity in the 18th century, home to artists’ studios, the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, and the Salon, a contemporary art exhibition that was held in the Salon Carré every other year. A section devoted to the workshops housed within the Louvre palace features such items of master craftsmanship as the *Clock of the Creation of the World*, by astronomer and mechanist Claude-Siméon Passemant and silversmith François-Thomas Germain. Nicolas Bernard Lépicié’s painting *The Young Draughtsman* (1772) is an example of output from members of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, also housed in the palace.

An epilogue to the exhibition evokes the transformation of the Louvre into a universal museum in the 19th century, with the discovery of periods of history and peoples that were not familiar in Europe at the time. A highlight is the Barberini vase, a copper work masterpiece executed for an Ayyubid prince who reigned in Aleppo between 1239 and 1260. This section aims to inspire visitors to reflect upon what a universal museum is, and the parallels between Musée du Louvre and Louvre Abu Dhabi.

During the 18th century, the French Crown owned the largest art collection in Europe. It became clear that the Louvre, dedicated to the arts, was the ideal location for a museum that would give an opportunity for everyone to study and view the royal collections. The exhibition concludes with the acquisitions and commissions made under Louis XVI for this future museum, which would finally open during the French Revolution, in 1793. Among these are a Japanese porcelain vase and cover decorated in the Kakiemon style (c 1770) and a sculpture of Montesquieu by Clodion, part of the Great Men of France series.

The exhibition’s scenography ingeniously recreates the outdoor lighting of the gardens at Versailles and the lavishness of the château’s apartments, bringing to life the hustle and bustle of the artists’ studios within the Louvre, the crowded fashion in which paintings were hung for the Salons, and the eclecticism of the Musée du Louvre’s collections in the nineteenth century. Short immersive films enhance the experience.

Louvre Abu Dhabi is the result of a unique collaboration between Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, and France. Its ongoing special exhibitions programme is organised in collaboration with French partner museums. This rich and diverse programme will complement the museum’s permanent collection and enhance its universal narrative, which focuses on shared human stories across civilisations and cultures.

From One Louvre to Another: Opening a Museum for Everyone is curated by Jean-Luc Martinez, President-Director, Musée du Louvre, and Juliette Trey, Curator, Prints and Drawings Department, Musée du Louvre.

In addition, *Co-Lab: Contemporary Art and Savoir-faire* will also open on 21 December at Louvre Abu Dhabi's Forum. The display features four contemporary works of art of different media created by UAE-based artists Talin Hazbar, Zeinab Alhashemi, Vikram Divecha, and Kahlid Shafar in collaboration with renowned French manufacturers, which is part of the Emirati-French Cultural Programme established in January 2016 by the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi and France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, Ministry of Culture and Communication and the Institut Français.

Opening hours for the museum galleries and exhibitions are: Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday: 10 am - 8 pm; Thursday and Friday: 10 am - 10 pm. Last entry and purchase of tickets is 30 minutes prior to closing. The museum is closed on Mondays. Special opening hours will be in operation during Ramadan and some holidays.

Tickets for the museum cost 60 AED for general admission and 30 AED for visitors ages 13-22 and UAE education professionals. Free entry will apply to members of the museum's loyalty programme, children under 13 years, ICOM or ICOMOS members, journalists, and guests with special needs as well as their companion.

Special exhibitions are open during all public hours and will be free with museum admission.

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Notes to editors:

Follow Louvre Abu Dhabi on social media: Facebook ([Louvre Abu Dhabi](#)), Twitter ([@LouvreAbuDhabi](#)) and Instagram ([@LouvreAbuDhabi](#)) #LouvreAbuDhabi

ABOUT LOUVRE ABU DHABI

[Louvre Abu Dhabi](#) is a universal museum on [Saadiyat Island](#) that exhibits art and artefacts from ancient times to the present day. Designed by French architect Jean Nouvel, the museum contains 12 chapters in the galleries, special exhibition spaces, a Children's Museum, auditorium, restaurants, retail and a research centre. Surrounded by the sea, the buildings are connected by waterfront promenades beneath the museum's stunning dome.

Louvre Abu Dhabi has developed a rich collection of works originating from throughout human history and around the world, brought together to highlight universal themes and influences. To date, Louvre Abu Dhabi has acquired more than 600 artworks, exhibited alongside 300 works on loan from 13 leading French institutions.

Louvre Abu Dhabi was born out of a unique intergovernmental agreement between the governments of Abu Dhabi and France in 2007. As part of the agreement, Louvre Abu Dhabi has access to expertise and training from 17 French partner institutions, as well as loans from 13 leading French museums for 10 years, and will benefit from special exhibitions organised by these institutions for 15 years.

ABOUT AGENCE FRANCE-MUSÉUMS

[Agence France-Muséums](#) has been entrusted with the task of carrying through the commitments of France to the project of the universal museum of Louvre Abu Dhabi, and of structuring the expertise of the French cultural institutions involved. It provides assistance and expertise to the authorities of the United Arab Emirates in the following areas: definition of the scientific and cultural programme, assistance in project management for architecture including

museography, signage and multimedia projects, coordination of the loans from French collections and organisation of temporary exhibitions, guidance with the creation of a permanent collection, and support with the museum's policy on guests.

Chaired since its creation by Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, Agence France-Muséums brings together Louvre Abu Dhabi's partner institutions: musée du Louvre, Centre Pompidou, musée d'Orsay and musée de l'Orangerie, Bibliothèque nationale de France, musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, Réunion des Musées Nationaux et du Grand Palais (RMNGP), Château de Versailles, musée national des arts asiatiques-Guimet, musée de Cluny, École du Louvre, musée Rodin, Domaine National de Chambord, musée des Arts Décoratifs de Paris, Cité de la Céramique – Sèvres & Limoges, musée d'Archéologie nationale – Saint-Germain en Laye, Château de Fontainebleau, and OPPIC (Opérateur du patrimoine et des projets immobiliers de la culture). Jean-Luc Martinez chairs the Scientific Council of Agence France-Muséums.

ABOUT SAADIYAT CULTURAL DISTRICT

[Saadiyat Cultural District](#) on Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi, is devoted to culture and the arts. An ambitious cultural undertaking for the 21st century, it will be a nucleus for global culture, attracting local, regional and international guests with unique exhibitions, permanent collections, productions and performances. Its ground-breaking buildings will form a historical statement of the finest 21st century architecture; [Zayed National Museum](#), [Louvre Abu Dhabi](#) and [Guggenheim Abu Dhabi](#). These museums will complement and collaborate with local and regional arts and cultural institutions including universities and research centres.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM – ABU DHABI

The [Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi](#) conserves and promotes the heritage and culture of Abu Dhabi emirate and leverages them in the development of a world-class, sustainable destination of distinction that enriches the lives of visitors and residents alike. The Department manages the emirate's tourism sector and markets the destination internationally through a wide range of activities aimed at attracting visitors and investment. Its policies, plans and programmes relate to the preservation of heritage and culture, including protecting archaeological and historical sites and to developing museums, including the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the Zayed National Museum and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. The Department of Culture and Tourism supports intellectual and artistic activities and cultural events to nurture a rich cultural environment and honour the emirate's heritage. A key role played by the Department is to create synergy in the destination's development through close co-ordination with its wide-ranging stakeholder base.

ABOUT MUSÉE DU LOUVRE

The Louvre in Paris opened in 1793, during the French Revolution, and from the very beginning was intended to provide inspiration for contemporary art. Courbet, Picasso, Dalí and so many others came to its hallowed halls to admire the old masters, copy them, immerse themselves in masterpieces and improve and fuel their own art. As an ancient royal residence, the Louvre is inextricably linked to eight centuries of French history. As a universal museum, its collections, among the best in the world, span many millennia and miles, from the Americas to Asia. Over 38,000 artworks are grouped into eight curatorial departments, including universally-admired works such as the *Mona Lisa*, the *Winged Victory of Samothrace* and the *Venus de Milo*. With over 7.4 million guests in 2016, the Louvre ranks as one of the world's most visited museums.