

Press Release

Louvre Abu Dhabi opens new exhibition *Japanese Connections: The Birth of Modern Décor*

6 September – 24 November 2018

Abu Dhabi, 4 September 2018: Louvre Abu Dhabi's latest exhibition of 12 artists including renowned French group, *the Nabis*, and five Japanese *Ukiyo-e* masters from the 19th and 20th century, opens today at the museum. In collaboration with Musée d'Orsay, the exhibition showcases 50 paintings, prints and folding screens that explore the artistic and cultural dialogue between Japan and France.

Curated by Isabelle Cahn, General Curator of Paintings at Musée d'Orsay, the works of the 12 French and Japanese artists making up the exhibition have been assembled from the collections of Louvre Abu Dhabi, Musée d'Orsay, Musée national des Arts asiatiques - Guimet and Musée des Arts Décoratifs (MAD).

Manuel Rabaté, Director of Louvre Abu Dhabi, said: "It is with pleasure that we kick off our new season at Louvre Abu Dhabi with *Japanese Connections: The Birth of Modern Décor*. Following our inaugural exhibition *From One Louvre to Another*, which detailed the birth of the Musée du Louvre, and *Globes: Visions of the World*, which explored the history of the spherical representation of the world, we now explore the links between Japan and France that inspired a new artistic movement within European decorative arts. With our international exhibitions, we aim to bring the world to our visitors, highlighting connections between cultures and societies that have shaped who we are today."

Artists represented include French artists Paul Sérusier, Pierre Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Ker-Xavier Roussel, and Édouard Vuillard, who made up the renowned Nabis group of artists; Marguerite Sérusier and Odilon Redon; and five Japanese *Ukiyo-e* masters: Katsushika Hokusai, Hara Zaimej, Utagawa Hiroshige, Kano Tanshin and Toshusai Sharaku.

Isabelle Cahn, General Curator of Paintings at Paris's Musée d'Orsay and Curator of the exhibition, said: "For the first time, the exhibition *Japanese Connections* traces the fundamental contribution of Japanese aesthetics to the development of decorative principles of modern painting in France at the end of the 19th century. This dialogue between East and West celebrates creativity and cross-cultural inspiration between the *Ukiyo-e* artists and the Nabis painters through a coloured, vibrant and refined expression. We are very pleased to gather this exceptional selection of works and to uncover a crucial moment when Western paintings emancipated from a realistic representation of the world."

The exhibition is divided into four sections that illustrate the influence of central *Ukiyo-e* aesthetic principles, including representing the world in two-dimensions without using illusions of perspective; narrative compositions that show the passing of time; innovative use of folding panels for storytelling; and symbolic refinement exploring intellectual, dreamlike and spiritual ideas.

Japanese Connections presents 10 prints and three folding screens from Japan in dialogue with 24 paintings and three screens from France. The Japanese works include *South Wind, Clear Sky* from the series *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* (1831-32), one of Katsushika Hokusai's most famous works, on loan from the Musée national des arts asiatiques – Guimet; *Yôrô Waterfall in Mino Province* (1830-1834) by Katsushika Hokusai, the most renowned *Ukiyo-e* master, from the collection of Louvre Abu Dhabi; Utagawa Hiroshige's *Tôto Sumida tsutumi* (1858); and a six-panel screen depicting a *Cherry Tree in Blossom on a Plain Gold Ground* by Hara Zamei, celebrating the ephemeral nature of the beauty of the world and life.

Édouard Vuillard's *Public Gardens* (1894), a nine-panel decorative painting of which five are in the collection of Musée d'Orsay; Pierre Bonnard's folding screen *Nannies' Promenade, Frieze of Carriages* (1897); Paul Sérusier's *Women at the Well* (1899) and *The Field of Corn and Buckwheat* (1900); an outstanding set of 15 panels by Odilon Redon for Baron Robert de Domecy; and *Rolling Landscape* (1900), a folding screen painted by Marguerite Sérusier with Japanese-style motif inspired by the engravings of Hiroshige, are among the French pieces on loan from Musée d'Orsay.

Using period photographs and films, projections in the exhibition also offer visitors a walk through Paris at the turn of the 20th century, the city then considered the world's capital of arts.

The exhibition will be accompanied by programming that celebrates Japanese arts and culture. The weekend of the exhibition opening will feature the Emirati-Japanese Kharsha Drums group, who will play traditional *waikaido* percussion performances played by Japanese and Emirati musicians to the museum. The programme will offer film screenings curated by Hind Mezaina, a talk entitled '1000 years of Manga' exploring how Japanese traditions inspired the phenomenon and a project with renowned street artist *Myneand yours* whose collaboration with several UAE schools will be showcased in the museum. The programme culminates with a *Big in Japan* weekend including a spoken word by award-winning Emirati Afra Atiq, and a performance by the Turntable Symphonograph Orchestra from Japan. The museum's café will feature a special Japanese inspired menu.

The Manga Lab, a creative and experimental space for youth, will offer a variety of entertaining experiences exploring contemporary Japanese culture, including virtual reality, retro arcade gaming, an expression wall, a chill-out reading area, and a series of masterclasses and workshops about Manga and graphic art. As part of this spectacular space, we will display Manga-inspired art works from four Emirati artists. The Manga Lab will be located in Louvre Abu Dhabi's forum.

Entrance to the exhibition is free with the museum ticket. Visitors can tour the exhibition through a multimedia guide that is available in Arabic, English and French. The exhibition catalogue is available in the museum's boutique.

For more information on the exhibition or ticket bookings, please visit www.louvreabudhabi.ae or call Louvre Abu Dhabi at +971 600 56 55 66.

Visitor Information

Louvre Abu Dhabi hours are: Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 10 am–8 pm; Thursday and Friday, 10 am–10 pm. The museum is closed on Mondays.

Last entries and ticket purchases end 30 minutes prior to closing. Special visitor hours will be in effect during some holidays and Ramadan.

General admission tickets are 60 AED (excluding 5% VAT). Tickets are 30 AED (excluding 5% VAT) for visitors ages 13-22, UAE education professionals, and members of the military.

Admission is free for members of the museum's loyalty programme, children under the age of 13, ICOM or ICOMOS members, journalists, visitors with tickets to workshops and auditorium events, and visitors with special needs and their companions.

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Notes to editors:

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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, international 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 international exhibitions organised by these institutions for 15 years.

ABOUT MUSÉE D'ORSAY

Located in an old railway station opened in 1900 before being refurbished for its current purpose, the Musée d'Orsay has been renowned worldwide since its opening in December 1986. Musée d'Orsay shows the great diversity of artistic creation in the western world between 1848 and 1914. Its multidisciplinary nature brings together all artistic fields: sculpture, painting, decorative art, art objects, architecture, drawing and photography. The museum's collections include masterpieces by Monet, Renoir, Cézanne, Van Gogh, or Courbet, Rodin and Carpeaux that have brought it an international reputation, as well as recognition for its expertise in the history of art in the second half of the 19th century.

As one of Louvre Abu Dhabi's museum partners, the Musée d'Orsay has lent artworks that are displayed in the museum's galleries along with the Louvre Abu Dhabi's permanent collection.

ABOUT AGENCE FRANCE-MUSÉUMS

Created in 2007 following the intergovernmental agreement between Abu Dhabi and France, Agence France-Muséums has been for 10 years a key link between France and the UAE in the accomplishment of the Louvre Abu Dhabi.

By gathering for the first time the collections and the expertise of the French cultural institutions involved, AFM has provided since its creation 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 organization of temporary exhibitions, guidance with the creation of a permanent collection, and support with the museum's policy on visitors.

AFM now continues its missions for Louvre Abu Dhabi after its opening with the training of the museum's professionals, the coordination of loans from French museums for 10 years and the organisation of temporary exhibitions for 15 years.

Agence France-Muséums brings together the Louvre Abu Dhabi partner institutions: Musée du Louvre, Centre Pompidou, Musées d'Orsay et de l'Orangerie, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac, Réunion des Musées Nationaux et du Grand Palais (RMN-GP), Château de Versailles, Musée national des arts asiatiques-Guimet, Musée de Cluny – musée national du Moyen-Âge, École du Louvre, Musée Rodin, Domaine National de Chambord, Musée des Arts Décoratifs (MAD), 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).

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 8.1 million guests in 2017, the Louvre is the most visited museum in the world.