

From Watteau to David

PRESS KIT
february 2017

THE HORVITZ COLLECTION

21 march - 9 july 2017



Petit Palais
Musée des Beaux-Arts
de la Ville de Paris

Tuesday-Sunday
10am – 6pm
Late opening - Friday until 9 pm

INFORMATION
www.petitpalais.paris.fr



François Boucher, *Reclining Female Nude (detail)*, circa 1740. Red chalk. © The Horvitz Collection – Photo: M. Gould

The exhibition is organised in partnership with the Horvitz Collection

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PRESS RELEASE

The Petit Palais is delighted to be presenting an anthology of some 200 18th-century French paintings, sculptures and drawings from the Horvitz Collection in Boston. The work of thirty years, this is the largest private collection of 18th-century French drawings outside France, and is home to such artists of the first rank as **Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard, Greuze and David**. It also offers an overview of all the major artists of the period, ranging from **Oudry to De Troy**, from **Natoire to Bouchardon** and from **Hubert Robert to Vincent** – and all of them at their best.

The exhibition offers the visitor an exhaustive panorama of French painting and drawing from the Regency to the Revolution, together with a small but impeccable selection of sculptures, including pieces by Lemoyne, Pajou and Houdon. It comprises **fifteen chronologically organised thematic and monographic sections**, whose elegant scenography provides an overview of a century rich in artistic innovation.

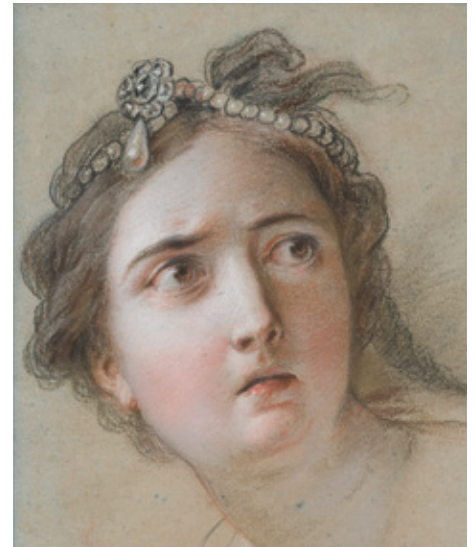
The itinerary opens with portraits by **Rigaud, Largillière and Jean-François de Troy**, before addressing the mythological and religious painting of the early 18th century via works by **François Lemoyne and Charles de la Fosse**. The viewer then moves on to the *fête galante*, with drawings by **Watteau and Lancret**, and to landscape and animal painting, with **Oudry and Desportes**. The exhibition also takes in architecture and the triumph of ornamentation as typified by the whimsicality of **Oppenord and Lajoüe**. An entire section given over to **François Boucher** is followed by a group of academic nudes and head studies by **Coypel, Lépicié, Vien** and others. Next comes mid-century history painting, represented by **Natoire and Carle Van Loo**, and the tour continues with drawings by sculptors like **Bouchardon and Pajou**. A second monographic section is dedicated to **Fragonard**, after which visitors are treated to views of ruins and landscapes by **Hubert Robert and Joseph Vernet**, and, in a more sentimental vein, works by **Greuze, Prud'hon and Boilly**. The exhibition closes with an assertion of Neo-Classicism by **Jacques-Louis David, Perrin and Vincent**.

The Horvitz Collection, with its meticulous documentation and works in perfect condition, has become a touchstone for the period. Its presentation in Paris is a major event whose prestige and intimist character make it a perfect complement to *Enlightenment Baroque: 18th-century masterpieces in the churches of Paris*, the exhibition devoted to the big, forgotten religious paintings of the period.

CURATORS

Alvin L. Clark, Jr., The Horvitz Collection and The J.E Horvitz Consultative Curator Department of Drawings, Division of European and American Art, Harvard Art Museum, in association with Isabelle Mayer-Michalon, Doctor of Philosophy in Art History.

Christophe Leribault, Director, Petit Palais



Charles Coypel, *Head of Potiphar's Wife*, 1737. © The Horvitz Collection- Photo: M. Gould



GUIDE TO THE EXHIBITION

Introduction

Since the 1980s, Jeffrey E. Horvitz, an art-loving Francophile, has amassed an exceptional collection in the United States. Among its treasures are drawings by the most famous names in French art. In addition, he has succeeded in building an encyclopedic reference collection. Each work reflects carefully considered criteria that balance such issues as quality, format, condition, and significance for the history of art. In this manner, over thirty years, The Horvitz Collection has become the largest panoramic group of French drawings from the late sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries in private hands. Supplemented more recently with paintings and sculptures, the collection has grown to more than 1,800 works.



Nicolas de Largillière, *Louise-Marguerite Bertin de Vaugien, Comtesse de Montchal*, 1735, oil on canvas
© The Horvitz Collection – Photo : M.Gould

The exhibition, designed for the Petit Palais, is focused on the eighteenth century in France and offers an unprecedented selection of around two-hundred works that establish a broad survey of the period—from Watteau, Boucher, and Fragonard, to Greuze and David. The exhibition is presented thematically: portraits, historical subjects, scènes galantes, landscapes, academic studies, scenes of daily life, and projects for the decorative arts.

The Art of the Portrait

At the end of the seventeenth century, a generation of exceptional portraitists emerged, who excelled at rendering their sitters, both elegant and majestic. Their frequent choice of composition—three-quarter length, either standing or seated—made it possible to lend their clients either an official or a more intimate quality. The artists, who competed with each other in their virtuoso rendering of materials, also took great care in faithfully conveying the rank and personality of their models, be they magistrates, country gentlemen, or high-ranking members of the royal court.

History Painting at the Dawn of the Eighteenth Century

The Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture established a hierarchy of pictorial genres that gave precedence to history painters: artists who could depict characters in complex, multi-figure scenes drawn from the Bible, and Greek and Roman mythology, as well as both ancient and modern history.



Carle Van Loo, Fantasy figure, 1748
© The Horvitz Collection – Photo:
M. Gould

Early Eighteenth-Century Landscapes

As early as the 1720s, artists frequently drew directly from nature either during forays into the countryside or during their travels. This new respect for nature itself transformed their approach to the genre. They eschewed the habit of justifying these pictures with mythological or historical references, allowing them to give free reign to their imaginations with less conventional formats.

Scènes galantes

Watteau was the originator of a new pictorial genre: “fêtes galantes” that were inspired by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century pastoral scenes from Venice and the Low Countries. The artist, heavily influenced by stage performances, depicted flirtation, love, and romance, as well as dance or music in idyllic and refined settings. These elegant motifs inspired artists such as Pater, Lancret, Boucher, and Fragonard.

Academic studies

Drawing nudes from life constituted the basis of instruction at the Royal Academy through the early nineteenth-century, as mastery of the human figure was essential to composing history paintings. These drawings even became known as “académies”. These exercises were supplemented with studying how to depict the passions through both facial expression and an established gestural vocabulary.



François Boucher, *Reclining Female Nude (detail)*, circa 1740. Red chalk. © The Horvitz Collection – Photo: M. Gould

François Boucher

One of the most talented artists of his generation, Boucher was awarded every honor the Academy could bestow, from the Grand Prix he received in 1723, to his election as director of the Academy in 1765 and his elevation to the rank of First Painter to the King. His extraordinary talent as a draftsman, combined with his verve and inventiveness with nearly every genre, led to an exceptional body of work.



Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *Gardener of an Italian Villa with a gardener and two children*, circa 1780
© The Horvitz Collection – Photo : M. Gould



François-André Vincent, *Rinaldo and Armida*, circa 1787
© The Horvitz Collection – Photo : M. Gould

Drawings by Sculptors

The training of sculptors, as well as painters, was based on figure drawing. Later in their career, some sculptors chose to draw very little, while others—like their colleagues working in oil—considered it to be an essential tool at every step, from preliminary sketches to the final delivery of a commission. Red chalk (or, sanguine) is one of the favorite media of these artists, whose most finished pieces share a precision and sureness of line. Certain sculptors such as Bouchardon and Pajou, who were both extremely accomplished draftsmen, even exhibited stand-alone drawings at the Salon.

Jean-Honoré Fragonard

A student of Boucher, Fragonard quickly demonstrated an interest in studying Italian and Flemish masters. He returned from his studies in Rome (1756-1761) with magnificent red-chalk landscapes. After his acceptance into the Academy in 1765, he gradually abandoned his career as a history painter for a clientele of private patrons, who appreciated the virtuosity of his lively wash drawings and the brushwork that can be seen in his canvases.

Landscapes in the Second-Half of the Century

A rekindled interest in Antiquity transformed the aesthetics of landscape painting. One of the most recognized representatives of this new visual poetry of ruins was Hubert Robert. While a new sentiment in literature and the arts slowly brought contemporaries into a closer relationship with nature, the theory of the Sublime elicits subjects—such as the shipwrecks and storms by Joseph Vernet—that depict man at the mercy of the elements.

History Painting from the Middle of the Eighteenth-Century

Tremendous artistic and political developments affected history painting during the eighteenth century. While religious themes continued to inform a high proportion of canvases, the number of subjects illustrating the love affairs of pagan gods from ancient history grew enormously, allowing artists to explore their imaginations in new directions.

The Reinvention of Academic Studies

In the middle of the century, several theorists—alarmed by the casual style that had taken over French painting (“petite maniere” or Rococo)—published essays that aimed to reform and reaffirm the practice of drawing from life. In 1759, this movement prompted the Academy to create a prize for the “most expressive head” which, for the first time enabled women to pose at the Academy. Once again, studies of the passions became one of the cornerstones of artistic practice.



Louis-Leopold Boilly, *Conversation in a Park*, 1800-1810 © The Horvitz Collection
Photo: M. Gould

History Painting at the End of the Eighteenth Century

Beginning in the 1760s, which were marked by the discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii, artists began to revisit and reconsider Antiquity. While some remained true to the Baroque aesthetic, others sought a renewal of both form and theme. Antiquity offered the occasion to stage moral subjects in minimal décors that corresponded to the notions of virtue promoted by contemporary philosophers.

Feasts and Celebrations

When great events take place, artists are often drafted into duty to heighten the visual impact of the event. The production of large, highly-detailed drawings intended for reproduction in the form of commemorative prints, was standard under Louis XV, as it was during the Empire.

Genre Scenes

Intimate by nature, genre scenes present familiar images drawn from daily life. However, they often require a second reading that reveals moralizing, romantic, sometimes even libertine, undertones that would have been obvious to contemporaries.

The End of an Era

During the Revolution, artists received neither royal nor religious commissions. Most of their clients were the aristocracy and émigré financiers, and artists turned to smaller-scale work such as landscapes, and genre scenes to satisfy a new clientele. These new amateurs were also hungry for recognition, making the portrait a critical component of subsistence for artists during this period.



Marie-Gabrielle Capet, *self-portrait*, circa 1790
© The Horvitz Collection – Photo : M. Gould



SCENOGRAPHY OF THE EXHIBITION

La scénographie s'inspire de la disposition architecturale d'un intérieur du XVIII^e avec ses enfilades de salons, de cabinets et d'alcôves.

Sans être une reconstitution, la scénographie déploie des sensations narratives subtiles, des instants de surgissements pour accompagner aujourd'hui la présentation des œuvres.

Elle tranche l'espace de la galerie de ses constructions suivant un axe perspectif central qui ouvre sans cesse sur des espaces latéraux.

Les cimaises, d'allures classiques, sont couronnées d'une corniche. Une ligne fine de métal plat figure l'emplacement d'une moulure d'appui comme la trace d'une boiserie de soubassement et sert de support à plat pour les cartels.

Les tranches des constructions renforcent le propos et montrent le dessin des découpes tranchées des architectures. Les plafonniers de la salle sont habillés de vues de ciels peints donnant la sensation de la lumière et de l'air.

Trois couleurs aux effets poudrés sont choisies pour identifier les trois grandes parties du parcours.

Scenography : Studio Tovar





From Watteau to David, The Horvitz Collection - 21 march - 9 july 2017

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

L'ALBUM

À l'occasion de l'exposition que lui consacre le Petit Palais, Paris Musées publie l'album de l'exposition. Nourri par de courtes notices, véritables clefs de lecture pour chacune des œuvres présentées, et rédigées par les meilleurs spécialistes, cet ouvrage présente des œuvres marquantes de la Régence à la Révolution. Il permet ainsi d'appréhender toute la créativité d'un siècle riche en renouvellements stylistiques et offre au visiteur un bel aperçu de cette incroyable collection.

Format : 22 x 28 cm

Reliure : Broché rabats

88 pages / 36 illustrations

Prix : 14,90 euros

Éditeur : Paris musées

LE CATALOGUE

*Tradition and Transitions : Eighteen-Century
French Art from the Horvitz Collection*

Le catalogue scientifique complet, en langue anglaise, est publié parallèlement par la Collection Horvitz.

680 pages/ 725 illustrations

Prix : 65 euros

Éditeur : The Horvitz Collection

La traduction française des textes sera accessible sur le site internet du Petit Palais pendant la durée de l'exposition.

Paris Musées éditions

Paris Musées issues some thirty art publications every year: handsome exhibition catalogues, guides to collections and brochures that are eloquent testimony to the artistic wealth of the City of Paris's museums and the variety of their temporary exhibitions.



PARIS MUSÉES A NETWORK OF PARIS MUSEUM

Under the aegis of the Établissement public Paris Musées, the fourteen museums of the city of Paris contain collections of exceptional diversity and quality: fine arts, modern art, decorative arts, Asian arts, history, literature, archaeology, fashion – they cover a huge number of fields and reflect the cultural diversity of the capital of France and its rich history.

In an important gesture of outreach and an urge to share this fabulous heritage, admission to the permanent collections was made free of charge in 2001*. This has been completed by new policies for welcoming visitors, and more suitable admission charges for temporary exhibitions; particular attention is also now being paid to a public deprived of cultural amenities. The permanent collections and temporary exhibitions therefore include a varied programme of cultural activities.

In addition to this, developments in the frequentation of the museums are being accompanied by a policy of seeking a more diverse public. Paris Musées, in partnership with people working in the social sectors of the greater Paris area, is consolidating and developing activities for a public unfamiliar with museums. In 2014, more than 8000 people took advantage of these activities in the museums of the city of Paris.

Our outreach extends to the Internet, with a website giving access to the complete programme of museum activities and to online details of the collections, so that people can prepare their visit.

www.parismusees.paris.fr

This breakdown of visitor numbers confirms the success of the museums:

Visits : 3 010 000 visitors in 2016

Temporary exhibitions : 1 650 000 visitors

Permanent collections : 1 360 000 visitors

* *Except for establishments charging an admission fee for temporary exhibitions as part of the visit to their permanent collections (the archaeological Crypt under the forecourt of l'île de la Cité and the Catacombs). The Palais Galliera collections are only shown during temporary exhibitions.

PARIS MUSÉES CARD FOR EXHIBITIONS AT YOUR OWN PACE!



A card can be bought from Paris Musées, which gives unlimited access, ahead of the queue, to the temporary exhibitions in all 14 of the museums of Paris*, as well as special tariffs for activities. It entitles the holder to reductions in the bookshop-boutiques and the cafe-restaurants, and to receive prior information about events in the museums. In 2014, the card was bought by 9000 people.

Information is available at the Museum ticket offices or via the site:

www.parismusees.paris.fr

* *Except the archaeological Crypt under the forecourt of l'île de la Cité and the Catacombs



THE PETIT PALAIS



© L’Affiche-Dominique Milherou



© L’Affiche-Dominique Milherou

The Petit Palais was built for the **Exposition universelle in 1900** by the architect Charles Girault. In 1902 it became the Musée des Beaux-arts de la Ville de Paris. It has a very fine collection of paintings, sculptures, furniture and objets d’art dating from the **Classical era to 1914**.

There is an exceptionally fine collection of Greek vases and a large number of Flemish and Dutch paintings from the 17th century, focused around **Rembrandt’s** Self-portrait with a Dog. The magnificent collection of French paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries includes major works by **Fragonard, Greuze, David, Géricault, Delacroix, Courbet, Pissarro, Monet, Renoir, Sisley, Cézanne and Vuillard**. The museum has a fine collection of sculpture, including works by **Carpeaux, Carriès and Dalou**. The decorative arts collection is particularly rich in works from the Renaissance and works from the 1900s. There is glassware by **Gallé**, jewellery by **Fouquet and Lalique**, and also the dining room designed by **Guimard** for his private town house. The museum also has a fine collection of prints and drawings, which includes complete series of engravings by **Dürer, Rembrandt, and Callot**, and a rare collection of North European drawings.

The programme of temporary exhibitions has been reconceived to concentrate more on the periods covered by the museum’s extensive collections. In addition to the two principal temporary exhibition spaces on the ground floor and on the first floor, special shows and spotlight exhibitions extend the trail into the permanent galleries.

A **café-restaurant** opening onto the courtyard garden and a bookshop-boutique are available to add to the pleasure of a visit.

Remember to consult the programme for the **auditorium** (concerts, screenings, literary events, and lectures) on the museum website.

The museum is open to the public every day from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm except Mondays.

Late opening on Fridays until 9:00 pm for temporary exhibitions.

Entry to the permanent collections and the museum garden is free.
petitpalais.paris.fr



PRactical INFORMATION

From Watteau to David The Horvitz Collection

21 march - 9 july 2017

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday to Sunday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
Late opening Friday until 9:00 pm.
Closed on Mondays and 14 july

ADMISSION CHARGES

Free entry to the permanent collections
Charges for temporary exhibitions:

Full price : 10 euros
Reduced price : 7 euros

Combined ticket for both 18th century season
exhibitions

Full price : 15 euros
Reduced price : 11 euros

Free up to and including age 17

COMMUNICATION MANAGER

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PETIT PALAIS

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Avenue Winston Churchill - 75008 Paris
Tel: + 33 1 53 43 40 00
Accessible to handicapped persons.

Transport

Metro station Champs-Élysées Clemenceau



Station Invalides

Bus : 28, 42, 72, 73, 83, 93

Activities

It is necessary to reserve for all activities (children, families, or adults) apart from lecture-visits, at least 72 hours in advance. This can only be done by e-mail to petitpalais.reservation@paris.fr

Programmes are available at the reception desk.

Charges for activities are in addition to the exhibition admission charge

Auditorium

Information about the programme is available at the reception desk
www.petitpalais.paris.fr

Café Restaurant 'le Jardin du Petit Palais'

Open from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Late opening Friday until 7:00 pm.

Bookshop-Boutique

Open from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
Late opening Friday until 9:00 pm