

# The Art of Peace

PRESS RELEASE  
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## SECRETS AND TREASURES OF DIPLOMACY

19 October 2016 - 15 January 2017



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

Tuesday - Sunday, 10am-6pm  
Open Friday evening until 9pm

INFORMATION  
[www.petitpalais.paris.fr](http://www.petitpalais.paris.fr)

Exhibition organised with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development.



The Art of Peace is the subject of an ambitious, ground-breaking exhibition organised by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development and the Petit Palais from 19 October 2016 to 15 January 2017.

**40 treaties and 60 or so other documents from the diplomatic archives highlighting key moments in the history of France's international relations will be on public display for the first time. They will be accompanied by paintings, sculptures, furniture, precious objects and archive film footage in order to set them in their historical context and make them more fully understandable by revealing the negotiating processes behind them.**

The exhibition aims to make visitors think about the ideal of peace promoted by France over the centuries while rediscovering key elements of the country's collective and individual memory.

Altogether, the exhibition contains **nearly 200 items from the Middle Ages to the present day**, shown in five thematic sections. On their way through the exhibition, visitors will encounter visually spectacular displays alternating with parts where the focus is more historical.

After an introduction evoking the horror of war, the exhibition proper opens on the subject of great conflicts and how they were resolved through alliances, often in the form of marriage. **Exceptional archive documents like the Treaty of Arras (1435) between Charles VII and Philip the Good** are accompanied by paintings such as the one by **Sebastiano Ricci** (Farnese Palace, Piacenza) commemorating the reconciliation of Francis I and Charles V under the auspices of Pope Paul III.

**The exhibition continues with a gallery of large-scale paintings from the 17th to the early 19th century**, celebrating the theme of Peace in allegories by artists such as **Procaccini, Vouet, Marot, Coypel, De Matteis and Boilly**. **The third section investigates the rules and protocols to be followed in order to achieve peace.** As time went by, diplomacy became the preserve of professionals and various negotiating techniques appeared. A number of rituals and practices became widespread in the 19th century, such as the joint drafting of documents, the exchange of gifts and codes of diplomatic entertainment, before the emergence of public international law. **Exceptional objects such as the Teschen Table, also known as the Table of Peace, recently acquired by the Louvre, are displayed here together with paintings by Philippe de Champaigne, De Troy and others.**

**Another highlight of the exhibition is the "treasure chamber"** containing an anthology of diplomatic documents chosen for their exemplary qualities or magnificence.



Claude Monet, *La rue Montorgueil, à Paris. Fête du 30 juin 1878*. Photo (C) Musée d'Orsay, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Patrice Schmidt



Multilatéral  
*Peace treaty with the empire, also known as « Treaty of Westphalia ».*  
Munster, 24 October 1648. Courtesy of Frédéric de la Mure / French Foreign Ministry

With their boasting velvet bindings embroidered with silver and gold thread, their miniatures and their finely crafted seal boxes, some treaties are true works of art, like the letter from the king of Siam to Napoleon III, engraved on gold leaf. Arranged by rank in chronological order to highlight France's national narrative, they aim to remind visitors that the constituents of our collective and individual memory are at work through these treasures of French diplomacy.

After recalling the role of thinkers on peace since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, **the final part of the exhibition evokes the emergence of public opinion, illusory moments of peace** like the League of Nations and the inter-war period, **decolonisation and peoples' right to self-determination**, the UN and, to close the exhibition and forge a link with more recent times, **the irreversible interdependence of humankind as demonstrated by the doctrine of mutually assured destruction, climate change issues and global governance**. This last section contains works from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including a large collection of posters from 1914 to 1970, caricatures by **Daumier** and others, the terrible Apotheosis of War (1871) by **Vasily Vereshchagin** (Moscow, Tretyakov Gallery), works by **Monet** (La Rue Montorgueil) and **Picasso** (The Dove of Peace) and historical objects like the **18<sup>th</sup> Century writing table by Charles Cressent on which the Treaty of Versailles was signed in 1919**. Audiovisual materials such as film footage, sound archives and interviews conducted specifically for the exhibition give a voice to politicians and specialists in diplomatic matters and provide an opportunity to raise issues of current interest.



Simon Vouet, *La Prudence amène la Paix et l'Abondance*, 1625-1650.  
Paris, musée du Louvre. © RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux

#### CURATORS :

**Richard Boidin**, Ex-director of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development

**Christophe Leribault**, Director of the Petit Palais

**Patrick Lemasson**, Chief Curator of the Petit Palais

**Isabelle Nathan**, General Curator of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development

**Isabelle Richefort**, General Curator, assistant to the Director of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development

**Gaëlle Rio**, Curator at the Petit Palais

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