

The Body in Motion

Exhibition on the occasion of the Cultural Olympiad

15 May - 17 November 2024



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

Informations
petitpalais.paris.fr



Léopold Cavalière, *Basketteur devant Le Botteleur* (1886) de Jacques Perrin.
Photo © Paris Musées / Petit Palais / Laurent Julliard.

On the occasion of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Petit Palais is celebrating "The Body in Motion" starting on 15 May 2024. This exhibition connects art and sport within its collections. Fifty works from the museum were selected, complemented by interviews with athletes and para-athletes who share their view of the artworks with visitors, weaving links between the artists' practice and their activity as high-level sportspeople.

The exhibition, with a scenography design reflecting the colours of the Olympics, presents fifty works from the collections of the Petit Palais, ranging from antiquity to the early twentieth century, some of which have been specially taken out of the reserves. These paintings, sculptures, and art objects, as well as drawings and prints from the museum, were chosen for the way in which they highlight the body, anatomy, and sport. The exhibition is divided into eight sections.

It begins in the Galerie des Antiques, taking visitors back in time to **the origins of the Olympic Games** with visual evocations of a discus or javelin-throwing event on vases and amphoras dating from the fifth century BC. The nearby icon collection highlights the representation of the **"heroic body"** through the figure of Saint George slaying the dragon, embodying the notion of the quest and of surpassing oneself.

The section entitled **"The Drawn Body"** recalls the importance of human models in Western art and presents studies of male nudes by Dürer and Rembrandt. The exhibit continues with a dancing interlude focusing on **"suspended bodies"**. This selection of works demonstrates that throughout the ages, dance has fascinated artists, especially sculptors, keen to capture its essence, as seen in Carpeaux's *Trois Grâces* (*Three Graces*) or Desbois' *Salomé*. Embodying the dynamism visible throughout the exhibition, the section called **"Sculpting the Body"** sheds light on this quest for vitality by sculptors seeking to capture movement. These artists succeed in breathing life into works, which like Youriévitich's *Dancer Sacha Lyo*, conveys a kind of perpetual tension. Further on, in the section entitled **"Saddle Up!"**, the

Press contacts:

Mathilde Beaujard
mathilde.beaujard@paris.fr
+ 33 1 53 43 40 14

Ximun Diharce
ximun.diharce@paris.fr
+ 33 1 53 43 40 23



theme of the emancipation of women through sport is explored with paintings by Jacques-Émile Blanche and Léon Comerre. **"The Body at Play"** on the other hand, presents children's games like shuttlecock and pick-up sticks in eighteenth-century hangings, the respective ancestors to today's badminton and mikado. The concluding section of the exhibition, titled **"Sport in Vogue"** looks at the early twentieth century, which marked the arrival of the modern Olympic Games, transporting visitors into a new era leading up to the present day. For example, for the one-hundredth anniversary of the Paris Olympics, the Petit Palais is showcasing two Bracquemond vases, which, in 1924 were given as prizes to the most deserving athletes.

The exhibition is complemented by videos, titled **"In the Words of Athletes"**, presenting the sports men and women, supported by the companies of Groupe BPCE, premium partner of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games and main sponsor or patron of the Petit Palais. Each artist has chosen a work that particularly resonates with their specific sport and practice, their personal life, and the physical challenges they have faced, along with the art of the perfectly executed gesture, and the ambitions or objectives they have set for themselves. These moving videos shed light on the link that exists between art and sport, with the participating athletes becoming, in their own words, "artletes".

This exhibition is open free-of-charge to the public and offers numerous activities and visits for all types of audiences.

This exhibition benefits from the support of



Curators:

Annick Lemoine, Petit Palais Director and Head Curator.

Anne-Charlotte Cathelineau, Chief Heritage Curator, Head of the Sculpture Department.

Fabienne Cousin, Head of the Cultural and Educational Department.

Laurène Dupuy, Head of Cultural Mediation.

Groupe BPCE

The main sponsor of the Petit Palais for a three-year period, Groupe BPCE is demonstrating its engagement through three major initiatives: the restoration of the building's peristyle and fresco; renovations and work to improve the energy performance of the Petit Palais, and the production of the exhibition "The Body in Motion" reflecting its commitment to the world of sport.

Groupe BPCE companies (Banque Populaire, Caisse d'Épargne, Casden Banque Populaire, Crédit Coopératif, Natixis Investment Managers, Natixis Corporate & Investment Banking, Banque Palatine, and Oney) are the Premium Partners of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games and are the sponsors to over two hundred and forty French athletes.

With one hundred thousand employees, Groupe BPCE—the second largest banking group in France—serves thirty-five million customers around the world. It is the leading French bank for the SME sector; the second largest bank for private individuals; and the leading financier of local authorities, social housing projects, hospitals, social and solidarity economy sector companies, micro-credit, and "fragile" customers.

In the Words of Athletes



Aziza Benhami, para-archery / *La Belle Otéro* (between 1898 and 1900) by François-Rupert Carabin.

"We might have the impression that [sports and art] are two completely different worlds. But the more we think about it, the more they resemble, even merge into each other."

Valentin Belaud, modern pentathlon / *Croquis de gestes dansés d'Isadora Duncan* (1912) by Maurice Charpentier-Mio.

"Sport benefits from being connected with culture. Our sporting culture is a heritage that dates back to the dawn of time and should be associated [with other disciplines]."

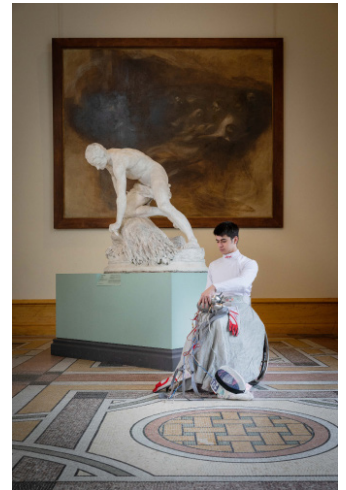


Léopold Cavalière, basketball / *Le Botteleur* (1886) by Jacques Perrin.

"There is a parallel [between art and high-level sport], success comes from precise gestures and the sense of efficacy sought in both domains."

Gaëtan Charlot, para-fencing / *Le Botteleur* (1886) by Jacques Perrin.

"This sculpture by Perrin spoke to me [...], in any combat sport, every athlete has a secret skill, a technique that is unique and works just for them."

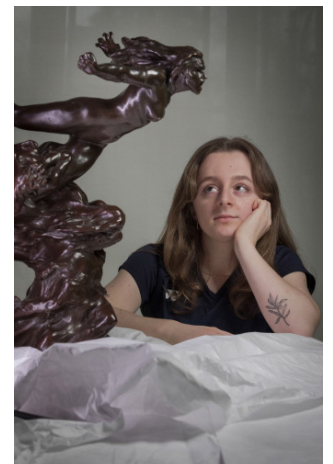


Dimitri Jozwicki, para-athletics (100 m) / *Académie d'un homme assis à terre* (1646) by Rembrandt.

"We can compare high-level sport to art, [...] the sprint is a succession of perfectly executed movements done to optimize one's time."

Marilou Maurel, para-badminton / *La Tempête et ses nuées* (1899) by Raoul Larche.

"As in this work, sport is full of trials and obstacles. [The sculpture] represents the trials that we go through [...], it shows that we can get through them despite the difficulties, as in my journey."





Jade Maréchal, fencing / *Danseuse de corde* (1906) by Edgar Chahine.

"I am advancing towards my goal exactly as Chahine's dancer does: step by step."



Charline Picon, sailing / *Vases* (1924) by Émile Bracquemond and Octave Guillonnet.

"I invite visitors to question the emotions they feel when looking at a sport or an artwork which [like the two Bracquemond vases] evokes movement and victory."



Mathieu Thomas, para-badminton / *La Danseuse Sacha Lyo* (1932-1933) by Serge Youriévitich.

"It is because of my uniqueness that I can play a sport at high-level today [...] and that I can do great things."



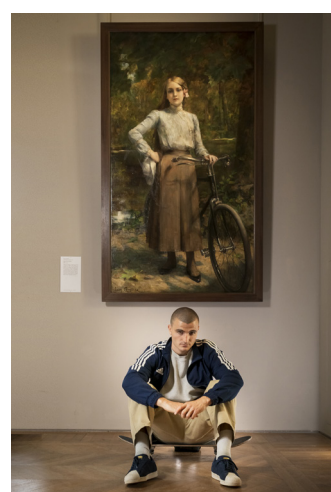
Romain Valadier-Picard, judo / *Le Dénicheur d'aigle* (1890) by Louis Gaussin.

"The struggle [depicted in this work] reminds me of judo, through the physicality and sense of combat represented."



Blandine Pont, judo / *Les Trois Grâces* (1874) by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux.

"The artwork I have chosen is called *The Three Graces*; grace is something that I find very often in judo."



Vincent Milou, skateboarding / *Bicyclette au Vésinet* (1903) by Léon-François Comerre.

"[In skateboarding], the choice of tricks is very personal, it falls within the realm of art and self-expression."

The participating athletes are sponsored by the various companies of the Groupe BPCE:

- Aziza Benhami is sponsored by BPCE Infogérance & Technologies.
- Valentin Belaud is sponsored by BPCE Digital & Payments.
- Léopold Cavalière is sponsored by La Caisse d'Épargne Grand Est Europe.
- Gaëtan Charlot is sponsored by Technologies & Opérations / Groupe BPCE.
- Dimitri Jozwicki is sponsored by Natixis Investment Managers.
- Marilou Maurel is sponsored by La Fondation Banque Populaire.
- Jade Marechal is sponsored by BPCE Assurances.
- Vincent Milou is sponsored by BPCE Assurances.
- Charline Picon is sponsored by La Banque Populaire Aquitaine Centre Atlantique.
- Blandine Pont is sponsored by DNCA.
- Mathieu Thomas is sponsored by La Banque Populaire Rives de Paris.
- Romain Valadier-Picard is sponsored by DNCA.