

New Galleries
for the Louvre's
18th Century
Decorative Arts



Jean-Baptiste Oudry,
painted panel for the Château
de Voré, c. 1720-1723,
acquired through the patronage
of PGA Holding and Nicole and
Pierre Guenant, 2002

The Louvre's extraordinarily rich 18th century decorative arts collection is a magnificent testimony to French design and craftsmanship, admired throughout the world and inspiring to generations of artists and artisans.

To create a fitting showcase for these priceless masterpieces, the galleries of the north wing of the Cour Carrée, which have been their home since the late 19th century, will be completely renovated for the first time since 1960.

Through the realization of this project, the Louvre will once again demonstrate its commitment to meeting the special requirements of exhibiting fragile works of art while enhancing the visitor experience within a dramatic architectural setting.

I'm delighted to invite you to join us in writing a new page in the history of the Grand Louvre.



Henri Loyrette
President - Director
Musée du Louvre



An Unrivaled International Collection

The Louvre's collection of 18th century decorative arts is one of the most significant and comprehensive holdings in a public collection. This global resource - which includes royal furniture and bronze furnishings, carpets and tapestries, gold, silverwork and porcelain masterpieces, jewelry and scientific instruments - contains the highest examples of French creativity that have inspired the world and continue to inform design and style today.

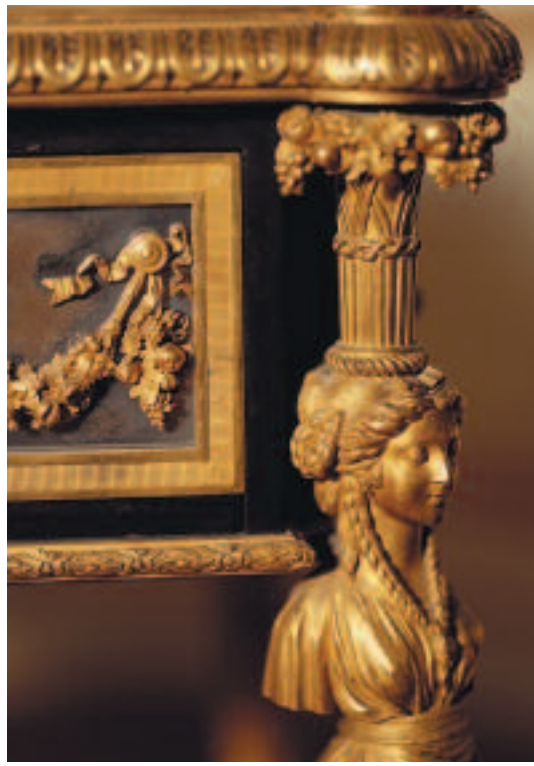
Created from works drawn from the Garde-Meuble Royal (now part of the Mobilier National, the national furniture depository), these collections grew throughout the 20th century through the continued generosity of countless art lovers, the support of the Société des Amis du Louvre and, more recently, generous donations from a number of individuals and corporations. This department will now provide them with a unique setting on par with the collections of Munich, London, Lisbon, New York, and Los Angeles.

To complement the exceptional acquisitions that have enriched the collections over the past fifty years and to showcase the true splendor of these masterpieces by artists and craftsmen from the Enlightenment, the decorative arts galleries renovation project will incorporate elements of graphic design, architecture and exhibition display.

In this way, we will bring life to this prestigious collection, as part of the Grand Louvre's continuing program of refurbishment.

Marc Bascou
Chief Curator
Department
of Decorative Arts

André-Charles Boulle,
Armoire (from a pair),
ebony, brass marquetry
and tortoiseshell, gilded bronze,
Paris, c. 1710,
Gift of Count de Bendor, 1950



History of the Collection

At the Louvre, one can admire a vast number of masterpieces of renowned 18th century Parisian cabinet makers, carpenters, tapestry makers, framers, gilt painters, gold and silversmiths, jewelers and porcelain masters. However, the exemplary creations of decorative artists and artisans such as Boulle, Cressent, Riesener or the Germans, have only recently become part of the Museum's collections.

The collection was created at the beginning of the 19th century from pieces from the Mobilier National. In 1870, the most beautiful pieces of furniture from the St. Cloud Palace and Tuileries Palace were given to the Louvre. The first collections of porcelains and snuffboxes entered the museum in 1874 and 1884.

Shortly thereafter, Emile Molinier, art historian and curator of the department, secured a permanent home at the Louvre for the Garde-Meuble's historic collections of the Crown, which had been reassembled for the 1900 World's Fair. The galleries of the Department of Decorative Arts were inaugurated in the west wing of the Cour Carrée on May 20, 1901.

The collection expanded considerably during the 20th century with gifts of exceptional pieces of furniture, faïence and porcelain ensembles, metal works, clocks, and snuffboxes. In addition to these enrichments, the Société des Amis du Louvre has gifted the collection with Parisian silver.

Corporate philanthropy has also played a major part in creating a cohesive collection. The Louvre received the Grand Salon of the Château d'Abondant through the gift of Laboratoire L. Lafon in 1989; the magnificent ensemble of Sèvres porcelain enameled furniture, reunited in homage to Baron Edmond de Rothschild, in 1990; and the Oudry panels from the Château de Voré through the generosity of PGA Holding in 2002.



Adam Weisweiler,
Writing table with detachable
desktop commissioned for Marie-
Antoinette's inner chamber at Saint-
Cloud, ebony and sycamore, Japan
lacquer, steel, gilded bronze, Paris,
1784, transfer from the Mobilier
National, 1870



Vase "à queue de poisson" (pair) around 1765, soft paste porcelain, gift from Mr Gérard Stern and Mr Philippe Stern, 1983



Edme-Pierre Balzac, Terrine, Paris, 1757-1758 and 1763-1764 (tray), gift from M. et Mme Edmond Safra, 1995

Jacques-Nicolas Roettiers de la Tour « pot à oille », 1770-1771, gift from la Société des Amis du Louvre and from M. David David-Weill, 1933



Thomas Germain, Pair of bottle buckets from the service Penthièvre-Orléans, silver, Paris, 1727-1728, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. David David-Weill, 1946





Galleries in Need of Renovation



The 18th century decorative arts galleries located in the north wing of the Cour Carrée have not been modified since 1960 when they were installed by Pierre Verlet, chief curator of the department between 1945 and 1972. The galleries have been closed to the public since the summer of 2005.

The collection has outgrown its current configuration which occupies 21,500 square feet of exhibition space. The goal of the renovation is to create the highest quality display for visitors while respecting the need for the maximum security of the objects. The architects selected for the project are Laurence Carminati, Aurelo Galfetti and Yann Keromnes.

The reinstallation of the collections will enhance the presentation of these exemplary creations by artists and artisans of the period and imbue them with new visibility and clarity within the architectural setting of the Louvre palace.

They will be organized into four periods:
 1700-1725 – The end of Louis XIV’s reign and the Regency
 1725-1750 – The rise and flowering of Rococo
 1750-1775 – Neoclassical reaction
 1775-1790 – The triumph of Neoclassicism

Each period will explore a number of themes, such as styles, artists, sponsors, functions, techniques, and modes of production. Furniture will be exhibited in one of two ways. “Period Rooms” will recreate four self-contained decorative scenarios. “Interior Recollections” will provide an overview of works in the same style and period to allow visitors to discover the function and use of the objects. The alternation of period rooms with themed rooms will offer a more comprehensive overview of the collection’s exceptional richness. Works from the departments of paintings, sculptures and graphic arts will be incorporated into the presentations.

Four historic rooms in the west wing of the Cour Carrée will showcase the Crown Jewels in an entirely new installation, recreating the interior design and furnishings of the grand private rooms of the Tuileries Palace during the First Empire and Restoration periods.

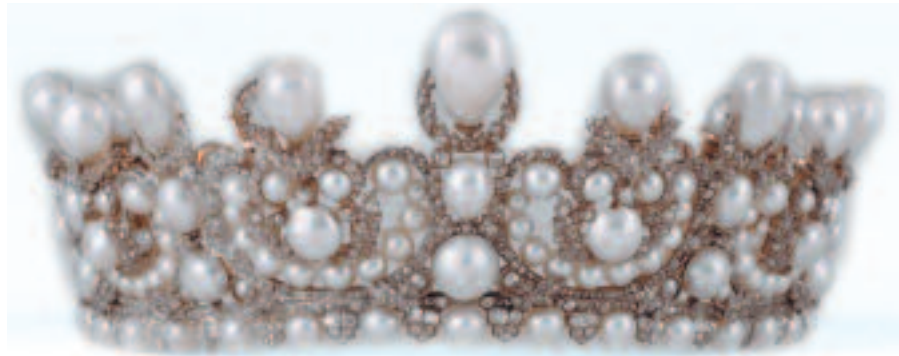


Cour Napoleon and Cour Carrée
 Architect’s first draft for the new galleries

A New Setting for the Crown Jewels

The Louvre is the guardian of the most exceptional jewels of the crown. Holdings include the *Sancy*, worn by Queen Maria Leczinska and Marie-Antoinette, the famous 140-carat *Regent*, which has adorned the crowns of kings and the emperor's two-edged sword, and the *Hortensia* diamond, bought by the Sun King. The creation of a secured gallery equipped with protected

display cases will make it easier for visitors to admire these sensational gems along with magnificent pieces of jewelry designed for the sovereigns of France by leading Parisian jewelers such as Empress Eugénie's pearl encrusted crown.



An Ambitious Educational Project

The Louvre is the most popular art museum in the world. The number of visitors to the museum has doubled over the past ten years, and the annual attendance figure of 8.3 million visitors is predicted to rise even further. Visitor amenities are always a key concern for the Louvre, which continually strives to enhance the quality of service and provide comprehensive information relating to the collections.

The new decorative arts galleries will enrich the visitor experience through educational and interpretive elements integrated into the displays and wall texts, and information and orientation support areas where members of the public can consult cultural and educational tools relating to the collections. Particular attention will also be paid to improving disabled access throughout the galleries.



Alexandre-Gabriel Lemonnier, Empress Eugénie's pearl and diamond diadem, Paris, 1853, gift from Société des amis du Louvre, 1992

Empress Eugénie (1826-1920) by Guillemet Pierre Désiré after Winterhalter Franz Xaver 1856, Oil on canvas, Paris, musée d'Orsay

Henri Nicolas Cousinet, service given to Maria Leczinska to commemorate the birth of the Dauphin, gilded silver, Chinese and Japanese porcelain, ebony and rosewood, Paris, 1729, gift from the Société des amis du Louvre with the help of Stavros Niarchos, 1955





Financing the Project

The total cost of renovating the 18th century decorative arts galleries is approximately \$40 million. The French government is providing half of this sum. The remaining funds are being raised through a special campaign in France led by the Cercle Cressent, from an initiative undertaken by American Friends of the Louvre and through partnerships between the Louvre and two U.S. museums.

Cercle Cressent

The Louvre has organized a special committee in France, the Cercle Cressent, to raise \$5 million for the project. The Cercle, which takes its name from the great French cabinetmaker Charles Cressent, is headed by Maryvonne Pinault and brings together art lovers and collectors who wish to ensure that the Louvre's exceptional collections gain the stature they deserve.

American Friends of the Louvre

The Louvre's 18th century decorative arts galleries are extremely popular among American visitors who appreciate the high level of art and craftsmanship achieved during this period. In recognition of this fact, American Friends of the Louvre has pledged \$4 million toward the renovation project. Funds will be raised from individuals and foundations as well as from fundraising events organized in cities throughout the country.

Partnerships with U.S. Museums

During the renovation period, the Louvre has arranged for two U.S. museums to exhibit select masterpieces from the 18th century decorative arts collections – the High Museum of Art in Atlanta and the Denver Art Museum. Approximately \$7 million will be generated for the renovation project through these partnerships.

Henri Nicolas Cousinet,
Set of Louis XV furniture,
1710-1766,
Commode Matthieu CRIAERD
Baron de Rothschild Collection



A Long Tradition of Sponsorship and Recognition

The Department of Decorative Arts would not be what it is today without the exceptional generosity of the many donors who have helped shape its character over the past two centuries. Following in this tradition, major donors to the renovation project will receive recognition for their support within the galleries and will also have the opportunity to enjoy a close affiliation with the department and its curators.

Donors to American Friends of the Louvre's campaign will be recognized for their generosity in the library from the hôtel de Villemaré, one of the refurbished period rooms featured in the galleries. This exceptional study, originally located at number 9 Place Vendôme, was acquired for the Louvre in the early 20th century by Emile Molinier who admired its remarkably authentic décor.

Individuals interested in learning about additional naming opportunities should contact the offices of American Friends of the Louvre.

Paneling and furniture from the Grand Salon of Château d'Abondant, painted oak, Paris, c. 1747-1750, gift from the Laboratoire Lafon, 1989



Charles Cressent,
"Monkey" Commode (detail),
satinwood and amaranth veneer,
gilded bronze, Sarrancolin marble,
Paris, c. 1745, Basile de Schlichting
bequest

Martin Carlin,
Enameled Sèvres porcelain
commode, rosewood, sycamore,
maple, lemon tree, and amaranth,
Paris, c. 1775, Anonymous gift,
1990

Paneling from the Hôtel Luynes
and Chevreuse, transferred
to the Hôtel Lebaudy in Paris,
Bequest from Mr Pierre Lebaudy,
1962



**Contact American
Friends of the Louvre**

For more information
on how to participate
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Photo 2^e de couverture :

Jean de la Fraye and d' Etienne Le Blond workshop
Tapestry : flower vase and trellis, Triumph of Flore
signed L.F. manufacture des Gobelins, wool and silk ,
Paris, beg XVIIIth century, gift from M. René Grog and
Mme Grog-Carven, 1973.

Photo 3^e de couverture :

Jean-Baptiste Hinart workshop, after Jean Berain,
Attributs de la Marine tapestry, silk and wool, gold
thread laminated on silver, Paris, c 1689-1692,
gift from M. and Mme Gilbert Chagoury, 2000

We would like to thank Christiane de Nicolay Mazery, Christina Venitsioti and Christie's France for their assistance with the photography.

Photos: J.-C. Ballot, 1^{er} rabat de couverture ; DR, p. 3, 9, 14 ; G. Rondeau/musée du Louvre, p.4 ; département des Arts de l'Islam, p.5, 15, 18 (1), 19 (1,2) ; M. Chassat/ musée du Louvre, p.6, 10, 11, 12 (h) ; G. Blot/RMN, p.7 ; A. Guyomard, p.8 ; É. Revault, p.12 (b), 2^e rabat de couverture ; C. Moutarde, p.13 ; H. Lewandowski, p.16.(1,2,3), 17 (1,2), 18 (3), 19 (3) ; J.G. Berizzi, p.17 (3) ; Chuzeville/RMN, p.18 (2).