

Artisans & Kings



Selected Treasures
from the Louvre

DENVER
ART
MUSEUM

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Denver Art Museum Brings Treasures from Louvre to Western United States for the First Time

DENVER, June 26, 2007— This fall, the Denver Art Museum (DAM) will host *Artisans and Kings: Selected Treasures from the Louvre*, presented by Accenture, bringing masterpieces from one of the world's most renowned museums to the western United States for the first time. Organized by the Denver Art Museum, the exhibition will feature more than 125 paintings, sculptures, and decorative arts representing works from the reigns of Louis XIV, XV, and XVI. On view October 6, 2007—January 6, 2008, *Artisans & Kings* is the first international exhibition to be shown in the DAM's new Frederic C. Hamilton Building.

This exhibition marks the beginning of the Denver Art Museum featuring objects from the Louvre, including two additional shows in 2008 and 2009.

"We are thrilled to partner with the Louvre to bring these masterpieces to the West for the first time," said DAM Director Lewis Sharp. "Our visitors will have the unprecedented opportunity to see works from the world's greatest collection of European art. The expansion of the Denver Art Museum enables us to host an exhibition of this magnitude, and we are delighted to launch our traveling exhibition program with a show of this caliber."



Titian, *Woman with Mirror*, c.1515.
Oil on canvas; 39 x 29-15/16 in.
Musée du Louvre.



Gianlorenzo Bernini, *Pope Urban VIII* (1568-1644),
Maffeo Barberini, c.1640.
Bronze.

Originally the private possessions of the French monarchs, the Louvre's royal collections were appropriated by the state during the French Revolution and became the core of the museum's holdings in 1793. *Artisans & Kings* will present masterpieces from these collections, including numerous works that have never traveled to the United States. Exhibition highlights include works by such masters as Gianlorenzo Bernini, Anthony Van Dyck, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Nicolas Poussin, Rembrandt van Rijn, Peter Paul Rubens, Titian, and Diego Velázquez.

About the Exhibition

Featuring an array of master works—painting, sculpture, tapestry, drawings, silver, porcelain, and furniture dating primarily from the 17th and 18th centuries—*Artisans & Kings: Selected Treasures from the Louvre* tells the intriguing stories of royal patronage during the reigns of Louis XIV, XV, and XVI.

In Denver, the exhibition has been organized by Timothy Standring, the DAM's Gates Foundation Curator of Painting and Sculpture, and Melora McDermott-Lewis, Director of Education and Master Teacher for European and American Art, into four thematic groupings:

- **Collections of kings** provides a rare look into the formation of the royal collection's masterworks of painting, drawing and sculpture. Among the highlights is Titian's *Woman with Mirror*, c.1515, a quintessentially Venetian masterpiece that exemplifies the artist's deft handling of color and light. Additional highlights include Velazquez's *The Infanta Margarita* of 1653, Poussin's *Et in Arcadia Ego (The Arcadian Shepherds)*, c. 1638, a 17th century bronze of Pope Urban VIII by Bernini, and more than 40 drawings from the royal collection including works by Peter Paul Rubens, Albrecht Dürer, Hieronymus Bosch, Pieter Breughel the Elder, and Anthony Van Dyck.
- **Politics of style** reveals the kings' influential role in cultivating the production of luxury goods by promoting and investing in the porcelain, tapestry, and glass industries, which fostered the greatest period of development for French decorative arts. Highlights include a silver platter cover of exceptional detail by François-Thomas Germain, and a porcelain and bronze gilt Sèvres vase.
- **Trappings of power** explores the role art played in promoting the public image of the king through public sculpture, painting and decorative furnishing at Versailles. Works include an equestrian statue of Louis XIV by Thomas Gobert and a large-scale tapestry produced at the Gobelins' factory which includes the coat of arms of France.
- **Crafting a lifestyle** features objects produced for the kings' opulent public and private lives at Versailles, such as a collection of rare gold Sèvres porcelain including porcelain pots-pourris owned by Madame de Pompadour, mistress of Louis XV. Additional highlights include a nécessaire given to Louis XV's wife on the occasion of the dauphin's birth, and a pair of 1785 wing chairs of the finest craftsmanship, commissioned by Louis XVI's sister, Madame Elisabeth, who never received the chairs because of the French Revolution.

Louvre at the Denver Art Museum

Following *Artisans & Kings*, the Denver Art Museum's 2008 Louvre presentation will feature the work of Jean-Antoine Houdon, a major artist of the French Enlightenment whose portraiture depicted prominent intellectual and political figures of the era. In 2009, the DAM will present a third exhibition showcasing work from the Louvre's collection; a theme to be announced in the coming year.

Henri Loyrette, director of the Louvre, explains that "a major component of the Louvre's strategy is to fulfill our universal vocation as completely as we can, while at the same time renewing it. It seems especially natural for us to turn to the United States, with whom we have very special, longstanding ties. In this respect, the exhibitions at the Denver Art Museum will contribute to bolstering our ties with the United States."



Secretary, Paris, c.1780, by Martin Carlin. Oak, ebony, rosewood, amaranth, fruitwood, aventurine, *pietra dura*, slate, gilt bronze, Spanish brocatelle marble; 46-5/8 x 34-7/8 x 16-3/4 in.

Programming and Education

As part of the DAM's innovative educational initiatives, the *Artisans & Kings* exhibition will feature working metalsmiths, porcelain painters, and weavers in a stage-like demonstration area. These tradesmen will reveal the creative processes used centuries ago in the design and manufacture of objects on view. The exhibition will also feature instructional photographs, period drawings, hands-

on materials, and step-by-step illustrations in “craftsmanship bars”—in-depth focus areas that explore the artisans and artistry behind the royal collections.

This exhibition is accompanied by a 163-page, full-color catalogue entitled *Artisans & Kings: Selected Treasures from the Louvre*. Published by the Denver Art Museum and the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the catalogue features a collection of scholarly essays by museum curators and additional contributors.

Exhibition Support

Artisans & Kings: Selected Treasures from the Louvre is presented in association with Louvre Atlanta, a collaboration between the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, and Musée du Louvre, Paris. This exhibition is presented by Accenture and generously supported by AXA Art. Additional funding is provided by The Adolph Coors Foundation Exhibition Fund, Atlantic Trust, Avande Inc., U.S. Bank, and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District. Promotional support is provided by Comcast, *The Denver Post*, The Integer Group, and *5280 Magazine*.

Presenting Partner, Accenture, a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, is collaborating with the DAM to provide consulting expertise across a number of key areas designed to enhance the experience for museum attendees and annual members.

Musée du Louvre

The Musée du Louvre and its continual architectural transformation have dominated central Paris since the late 12th century. The history of this extraordinary structure and the museum that has occupied it since 1793 created universal appeal for more than eight million visitors in 2006. The Louvre’s collection spans works of art up to 1848. With 35,000 works of art on display, the museum is organized into eight curatorial departments—Near-Eastern, Egyptian, and Greek, Etruscan and Roman Antiquities; Islamic Art; Sculptures; Decorative Arts; Paintings; and Prints and Drawings. Celebrated works in the collections include Leonardo Da Vinci’s *La Joconde*, best known as *The Mona Lisa*; Egyptian antiquities such as the *Seated Scribe*, the *Jewels of Rameses II* and the *Code of Hammurabi*; and Greek antiquities such as the *Winged Victory of Samothrace* and the *Venus de Milo*. For more information about the Musée du Louvre, please visit www.louvre.fr.

Denver Art Museum

Founded in 1893, the Denver Art Museum is one of the largest art museums between Chicago and the West Coast, with a collection of more than 60,000 works of art from around the world. The museum’s holdings include an internationally renowned American Indian art collection, outstanding architecture, graphics and design galleries, and Asian, Pre-Columbian, and Spanish Colonial galleries. The Denver Art Museum nearly doubled the size of its facility on October 7, 2006, with the opening of the 146,000-square-foot addition of the Frederic C. Hamilton Building, designed by architect Daniel Libeskind.

For further information on the Denver Art Museum and the presentation of *Artisans & Kings*, please visit www.denverartmuseum.org/press.

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For images, please visit <http://images.denverartmuseum.org>; password “Louvre1Denver.”