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Louvre - DNP Museum Lab

Second presentation in Tokyo

“Tanagras, Female Figures of Ancient Greece”

April 26 - September 8, 2007

Dai Nippon Printing (DNP) and the musée du Louvre are continuing their joint Museum Lab project with a new presentation, housed in a dedicated area at DNP’s Gotanda headquarters in Tokyo, Japan.

Louvre - DNP Museum Lab is an experimental project exploring new approaches to artworks in the musée du Louvre's collections, drawing on DNP’s expertise in information technology and state-of-the-art digital imaging, and public outreach expertise developed at the Louvre. From 2006 through 2009, Museum Lab proposes a series of six different presentations, each lasting around five months, in the DNP building. The theme of each presentation is also explored in conferences and screenings as well as on the Web site of the project, www.museumlab.jp.

The first presentation in the series, inaugurated in October 2006, featured the portrait of *A Carabineer*, by one of the greatest French painters of the 19th century, Théodore Géricault. Now, the second Museum Lab event presents an experimental approach to three-dimensional works: terracotta statuettes from ancient Greece, known as Tanagras. The Paris World Fair of 1878 sparked a veritable craze for Tanagra figures throughout Europe. They became a source of inspiration for many artists, such as Auguste Rodin. For the first time in Japan, visitors can discover three important, representative ancient Greek works in terracotta from the musée du Louvre: the Titeux Dancer, a Phainomeride Figure, and a Woman with a Cloak.

Tools for the visit

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Scientific researchers:
 Juliette Becq, Néguine Mathieux,
 Department of Greek, Etruscan and
 Roman Antiquities.

After registering their linguistic preferences (Japanese, French, English), visitors are equipped with a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) and a ticket with a wireless RFID¹ tag, on which a personal ID has been stored. By inserting their RFID ticket in the readers next to each display, visitors are able to listen to audio commentaries streamed² in their chosen language, delivered via bone-conduction headphones, which relay sound through contact with the skull rather than directly over or inside the ear.

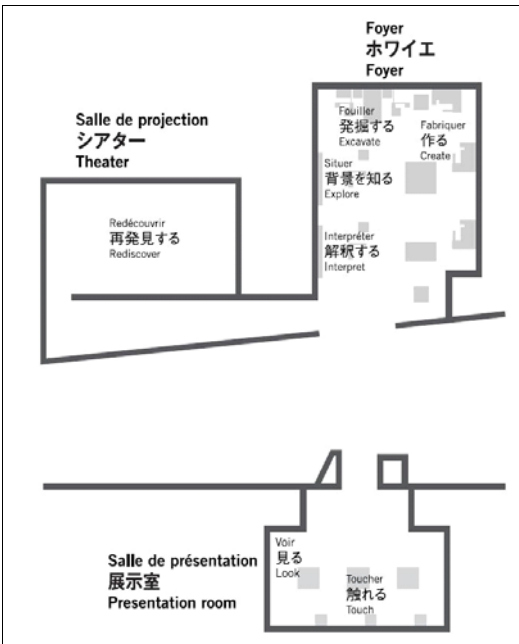
¹ Radio frequency identification (RFID) is used for remote data storage and retrieval, using markers known as RFID or IC tags, incorporating a transponder enabling them to receive and reply to data requests from a radio transmitter / receiver.

² Live data transfer.

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Map of the area

New developments for the second presentation

- * Audio-guidance by art historians :
 - The audio-guidance by specialists of Greek antiquities, including scientific researchers at the Louvre, and Museum Lab's multimedia production team, takes the form of a lively discussion.
 - Besides providing background and interpretive information about the Tanagra figures, the commentaries also offer information about their presentation in the context of Museum Lab, and orientation in the Museum Lab space.
- * Specific displays for the apprehension of three-dimensional artworks :
 The Tanagra figures have been measured using a high-precision laser and photographed in ultra high definition to create extremely realistic computer-generated 3D reconstructions, enabling visitors to examine the statuettes from a variety of viewpoints by zooming and making them turn around vertical and horizontal axes to see the bottom or the reverse of the figurines.

Organization of the visit

The visitor discovers a succession of seven multimedia displays set in three different zones.

Presentation room

Visitors look at the Tanagras and manipulate virtual reconstructions of the statuettes.

- * Manipulation of the artworks in 3D :
 This display allows visitors to freely manipulate 3D reconstructions of the Tanagras using touch screens while looking at the artworks presented.
- * Formal analysis of the figurines :
 This 42-inch display analyzes the figurines' artistic styles, examining how their clothing reveals their bodies, and how they occupy their personal space. This stylistic study helps the visitor situate the Tanagras within the wider context of the evolution of ancient Greek sculpture.

Information area: the Foyer

Large screens provide informative illustrations and animations about the works presented.

- * Function and meaning of the statuettes :
 This 100-inch display explores the meaning and function of the Tanagra statuettes. The subjects are varied – even though most of the statuettes represent women – and are often associated with funerary rituals and rites of passage.

* Historical and geographical context of the Tanagras :
Using animated maps and illustrations, this 100-inch display presents the places where Tanagra figurines have been discovered and shows how they spread around the Mediterranean basin, and as far as India, following the expansion of Greek civilization.

* Reconstruction of an archaeological dig :
This floor projection reconstructs the ancient tomb where one of the statuettes presented, the so-called “Phainomeride Figure”, was discovered. Using a touch screen, visitors “dig up” funerary objects and access background information.

* Making a virtual figurine :
With this 50-inch interactive display, visitors can create their own virtual Tanagra in the manner of an ancient Greek craftsman. The touch screen, together with RFID-tagged blocks, allows the visitor to select a particular type of clay, mold, and various accessories, as well as the color of the skin or drapery, to create their very own Tanagra figurine. They can then print a picture of their creation at the reception desk or view it again later on the Museum Lab Web site, www.museumlab.jp.

Address:

Louvre - DNP Museum Lab
Tokyo, Shinagawa-ku,
Nishi Gotanda, 3-5-20,
DNP-Gotanda Building,
Ground floor

Opening period :

April 26 - September 8, 2007

Opening hours :

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 5 p.
m. to 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Friday: late opening
from 5 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

Saturday: 11 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Closed Sundays and public holidays,
including summer holidays from
August 11 to 19, 2007.

Free admission

(advance booking only)

Tickets must be booked in ad-
vance,
on line:

<http://www.museumlab.jp>

by phone:

+81 (0)3 54 35 08 80
(9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on week-
days, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on
Saturday)

Theatre

* “Tanagra mania” in 19th-century Europe :

The theater houses a digital cinema, screening an ultra high definition program which tells how the statuettes became the last word in fashion, in the 19th century.

New approaches to public outreach

Museum Lab is part of an ongoing project at the Louvre to develop and implement a new public outreach policy, in particular at the new Louvre-Lens museum in northern France, and in the context of “Project Pyramid.” Both projects aim to promote public access to information and expert knowledge about the museum’s collections via innovative educational programs, and to develop new visitor services and exhibition facilities.

Since 1998, the Louvre and DNP have been collaborating on a series of projects, conceiving documentaries about the musée du Louvre's collections in ultra high definition images, creating and managing the CyberLouvre – a multimedia information center located on the Allée du Grand Louvre – and launching the Japanese version of the museum’s Web site in 2006.