

Press release

Multimedia

October 23, 2010 -

May 15, 2011

Diplomacy and Sèvres Porcelain, prestige and the French art of living in the 18th century

Louvre – DNP Museum Lab
Seventh presentation in Tokyo



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The musée du Louvre and Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd. (DNP) joint project, which seeks to explore new approaches to artworks, reopens in October 2010 for the project's second phase, due to last for three years.

The first round of six presentations, which took place from 2006 to 2009, attracted some 46,000 visitors, and the highly original approach to art viewing using the latest technology proved very popular.

The project's second phase is set to cover four presentations over three years, as well as the systematic relocation to the musée du Louvre in Paris of multimedia displays developed in Tokyo. Use of Museum Lab's results is also to be promoted in other museums and galleries.

Kicking off this second phase, the 7th presentation will focus on Sèvres porcelain and the important political and cultural role it played in the 18th century in the form of diplomatic gifts presented by the French monarchy. Museum Lab seeks to offer various leads on how best to approach these pieces of decorative art, suggesting various slants and footholds, for example by showing how the objects were used or by explaining the nature of their materials and manufacture.

Two of the multimedia displays developed for this presentation are subsequently to be relocated to the musée du Louvre in Paris, in the future renovated portion of the Department of Decorative Arts.

Academic adviser : Marie-Laure de Rochebrune, curator

In partnership with JAL

Address:

DNP-Gotanda Building, 1st floor
3-5-20, Nishi Gotanda, Shinagawa-ku,
Tokyo, Japan

Dates :

From October 23, 2010 (Sat.) to May 15,
2011 (Sun.)

Opening times :

From 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Fridays,
and from 10.00 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays
and Sundays

Closed on Fridays if a public holiday, during
periods of maintenance and artwork
replacement, and during New Year holidays.

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The exhibits

Porcelain from China and Japan, which made its way to Europe, became known in the 18th century as "white gold," its precious nature being compounded by a manufacturing process long swathed in mystery.

In 1758, Louis XV considered that the porcelain produced by the Sèvres Manufactory under his jurisdiction would make fitting diplomatic gifts for other European royal households. On display in the 7th presentation are ten pieces of Sèvres porcelain from the musée du Louvre collections, chosen both as examples of the essential diplomatic role they played and for the diversity of the wonderful workmanship of their forms and decoration.



Plate of Empress Maria Theresa
The Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory, 1757
Musée du Louvre, Department of Decorative Arts
© 2010 musée du Louvre / Martine Beck Coppola

Plate from the service presented to Empress Maria Theresa

The Sèvres Manufactory, 1757, soft-paste porcelain, H. 3.5 cm; Diam. 24 cm
This "garland" plate comes from a some 200-piece service decorated with green ribbons presented by Louis XV to Empress Maria Theresa on December 2, 1758 to seal the "reversal of alliances" between Austria and France that occurred the previous year, concluded by the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on May 1st, 1757. This historical reconciliation of two long-standing hostile nations would later give rise to the marriage between the Austrian princess Marie-Antoinette and the future Louis XVI, dauphin of France.



Tureen of Marie Antoinette
The Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory, 1784
Musée du Louvre, Department of Decorative Arts
© 2010 musée du Louvre / Martine Beck-Coppola

Tureen of Marie Antoinette

The Sèvres Manufactory, 1784, soft-paste porcelain, H. 25 cm; W. 28.5 cm; Diam. (lid): 23 cm

A service with a border "rich in color", originally commissioned by Marie-Antoinette for the Palais des Tuileries, was finally presented to King Gustavus III of Sweden. This tureen comes from a second, completely identical service that was immediately put to manufacture for the queen of France. Its elegant flower and pearl decoration illustrates the taste for Neoclassicism that reigned in France during the last third of the 18th century, while its older style of form is still reminiscent of the rococo.

Viewing methods and aids to artwork appreciation

At the registration counter, visitors are given a personal authentication card equipped with BAN* technology to allow them to listen to audio commentaries and read on-screen explanations in the language of their choice (Japanese, French, or English).

1. Presentation room

The theme of the presentation is "Diplomacy and Sèvres porcelain." Not only are visitors able to admire the actual pieces exhibited, but they can also understand more about them by means of multimedia displays that highlight the points to look out for or provide an explanation of the context in which they were produced.

Main multimedia systems

The Prestige of France in the 18th century

Before entering the exhibition space, a two-part video program shown on two screens set up at the entrance allows visitors to learn about the historical, geographical, and cultural context in which the works exhibited were created



© Photo DNP



© Photo DNP

Diplomatic gifts.

When a visitor sets down the pamphlet detailing each of the exhibits, a sensor placed above the table recognizes the printed marker and projects onto the table information in the form of audio-visual animated images each time a page is turned. This system offers a new potential for the pamphlets distributed in museums.

Studying a piece of porcelain.

This system offers a solution for providing explanatory information in close proximity to the work without detracting from the viewing process itself - one of the major concerns of Museum Lab ever since its inception. A beam of light directed toward the work highlights the main points to look out for on a piece of Sèvres porcelain, followed by a written commentary that appears on the base of the display case

2. Foyer

In this area, visitors can learn about Sèvres porcelain in a fun and interactive way using intuitive multimedia displays

Main multimedia systems

French-style service



© Photo DNP

Visitors discover video images projected onto a table that reproduce the supper held by Louis XV on April 21, 1751 at the Château de Choisy, revealing how Sèvres porcelain was used and the order in which the various courses were served. Moreover, when the visitor goes up to the table a sensor triggers a change in the background wall image to give a taste of the atmosphere of a royal dinner party. This multimedia display is subsequently to be relocated to the musée du Louvre in Paris, in the future renovated portion of the Department of Decorative Arts

Richness and variety of form and decoration / Design your own decoration



© Photo DNP

There are two parts to this display devoted to a discovery of the decorative effects of Sèvres porcelain. In the first section - "Richness and variety of form and decoration" - by touching the screen visitors can move computer-generated images of the works exhibited around at will in order to understand how the form and decoration contribute to the overall ornamental effect. The second section - "Design your own decoration" - gives visitors the chance to design their own Sèvres porcelain decoration, thereby offering a fun and creative experience. The visitor's chosen design is projected onto the white ground of a piece of porcelain set before him; the individual designs can be printed out and taken home

Manufacturing technique of soft-paste porcelain

By means of a visual demonstration combining animated images with actual materials exhibited in a display case, this multimedia system offers visitors an insight into traditional manufacturing techniques and the materials used to produce soft-paste porcelain ever since the founding of the Sèvres Manufactory in the 18th century. It is subsequently to be relocated to the new portion of the Department of Decorative Arts of the musée du Louvre in Paris.

3. Theater

Screened at the theater is a ultra-high-definition film entitled "Porcelain stories: from East to West" (17mn) that recounts the links forged by porcelain between East and West. Exceptional big-screen images retrace the first French attempts at imitating the Chinese and Japanese porcelain that had so fascinated Europeans ever since they first discovered it in the 13th and 17th centuries, and present many works subsequently produced in Europe, indicative of the keen interest in Chinese and Oriental arts at that time.



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The plan to relocate displays to the musée du Louvre

In their development, the multimedia displays designed throughout Museum Lab's second phase take into account all necessary requirements for their relocation to the musée du Louvre in Paris. Two of the multimedia displays developed for the 7th Museum Lab Presentation - "French-style service" and "Manufacturing technique of soft-paste porcelain" - are therefore to be relocated to the renovated portion of the Department of Decorative Arts, due to open in 2012, after a temporary reinstatement in the current Department of Decorative Arts as of summer 2011.

The new exhibition space devoted to 18th-century furniture will be designed to provide the richest possible aesthetic and historical setting for the exhibited works. Diversity of offerings will be the watchword for museum mediation in order to correspond to the wide variety of visitor requirements and encourage a deeper relationship between visitors and artworks. Incorporating multimedia displays within the exhibition space is one way to achieve this.

Louvre - DNP Museum Lab

Born of the collaboration between Dai Nippon Printing (DNP) and the musée du Louvre, Museum Lab was first launched in 2006.

Its main dedicated space in Gotanda (Tokyo) is the site of unique exhibitions, offering an original, multi-faceted, and leisurely take on artworks from the musée du Louvre by incorporating the technological advances of original multimedia displays.

Free admission, booking required

Information and reservation :

Website

<http://museumlabor.eu>

Telephone :

Louvre-DNP Museum Lab Customer service center
+ 81 (0) 35435 0880

from Monday to Thursday from 11 a.m.
to 5 p.m., Fridays from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.,
and Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m.
to 6 p.m.

* BAN (Body Area Network) technology: a form of technology that uses the human body as a platform for communication without the need for cables or radio waves. Museum Lab uses a system that takes advantage of the static electricity produced on the surface of the human body.