**Press Release**

**Louvre Abu Dhabi welcomes two million visitors since opening**

**Abu Dhabi, 10 November 2019**: Louvre Abu Dhabi celebrates its second-year anniversary this month on the heels of several major achievements for the institution and the launch of new programmes, as well as a significant number of new artworks in the galleries.

Since opening in 2017, Louvre Abu Dhabi has welcomed over two million visitors from around the world who have come to enjoy the museum’s rich cross-cultural collection, eight ground-breaking international exhibitions and a range of cultural programmes for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The institution has further solidified its commitment to education, inaugurating the Children’s Museum in July 2019 – the first museum of its kind in the Arab world – and welcoming over 60,000 student visits while offering training and job opportunities for Emiratis and the local community.

**HE Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chairman of The Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi** said, “Two years ago, we launched this museum as a gift from Abu Dhabi to the world. Our vision was for a truly universal museum, a place that shines a light on our shared humanity through an incredible collection of artworks and artefacts from every corner of the globe. Today, I could not be prouder of how that vision has been brought to life. Louvre Abu Dhabi celebrates the connections between cultures and tells a story of our collective history, present and future – a story that is now even more important in a world that tends to focus more on our differences than our similarities.”

Highlights in the galleries include: a *dagger with lion-shaped handle* (1100–600 BCE) excavated at Saruq al-Hadid in Dubai and on loan from Dubai Municipality; the monumental Egyptian marble *Portrait of Cleopatra?* (305–30 BCE, Ptolemaic Dynasty), a recent Louvre Abu Dhabi acquisition; a silver *vase decorated with biblical figures* (575–625) from Emesa (modern Homs, Syria), on loan from Musée du Louvre; a bronze *aquamanile in the form of a peacock* (972) from Spain*,* also on loan from Musée du Louvre*;* Rembrandt’s *Head of a Young Man, with Clasped Hands: Study of the Figure of Christ*, from ca. 1648-56; the portrait of *Francis the First, King of France* (1539 CE) by Tiziano Vecellio (Titian), on loan from Musée du Louvre; an *Imperial armour* from18th-century China, on loan from Musée des Arts Décoratifs; Francesco Primaticcio’s *Laocoon and his Sons (Laocoon et ses fils)* on loan from Château de Fontainebleau and Chinese imperial jades from the Qing dynasty (imperial seal decorated with two dragons and *Ruyi* sceptre), on loan from Musée national des arts asiatiques – Guimet.

New works have been installed in the museum’s modern and contemporary galleries, including Elisabeth-Louise Vigée-Le Brun’s *Portrait of Countess Skavronskaia (1761-1829), Lady of Honor of Catherine II, Empress of Russia* on loan from Musée du Louvre, *The Seine and the Louvre (La Seine et le Louvre)* by Camille Pissarro (1903) on loan from Musée d’Orsay, Auguste Rodin’s *The Thinker (Le Penseur) (1881-1882)* on loan from Musée Rodin, *Van Gogh in a landscape (Van Gogh dans un paysage)* by Francis Bacon (1957) and Syrian painter Marwan Kassab-Bhaci’s *Mann mit grüner Weste (Man in a Green Waistcoat)* (1967), both on loan from Centre Pompidou – Musée national d’art moderne, as well as Emirati artist Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim’s works *Window 1 (Fenêtre 1)* and *Untitled 1,* both from 2016 and both on loan from Centre Pompidou – Musée national d'art moderne*.*

For the final gallery, Susanna Fritscher’s *Für die Luft* *(For the air)* is a maze constructed from thousands of silicon threads that visitors walk through. Stretched between the floor and the ceiling like the strings of a giant musical instrument, the artwork acts as a mist-like filter between visitors and the architecture that surrounds them, transforming their perception of the space.

**Manuel Rabaté, Director of Louvre Abu Dhabi**, added, “In just two years, Louvre Abu Dhabi has established its reputation as a space for cultural exchange, community engagement and progressive dialogue. We have realised some significant milestones during this time, from major acquisitions of artworks for the museum’s collection, to outstanding special exhibitions that have garnered global attention. Education is also at the core of our mission and values. We have placed a huge emphasis on building a museum that is accessible to visitors of all ages and are cultivating a new generation of cultural leaders through training programmes and career opportunities. We are so thankful to all who have made this vision possible and look forward to the year ahead.”

During the anniversary month, Louvre Abu Dhabi will offer diverse experiences for visitors, from landmark exhibitions to interactive public programmes across the galleries.

On the wider programme, Dr. Souraya Noujaim, Scientific, Curatorial and Collections Management Director, Louvre Abu Dhabi, said: “Louvre Abu Dhabi’s cultural seasons offer an opportunity to further explore key historical and aesthetic episodes in history from our unique Universal perspective, often re-examining the ways in which mutual discovery and appreciation have always informed human history. In *Changing Societies*, our main objective is to shed light on how culture and creativity have acted as a manifestation of shifts and changes in society and civilisations.”

Currently on view, *10,000 Years of Luxury* –the first comprehensive exhibition on the history of luxury in the world and the largest presentation at Louvre Abu Dhabi to date—has received high acclaim from the public and media. Open through 18 February 2020, this exploration on the multifaceted nature of luxury presents 350 objects including fashion, jewellery, visual art, furniture and design. The exhibition was organised by Louvre Abu Dhabi, Musée des Arts Decoratifs, and Agence France-Muséums. It is curated by Olivier Gabet, Director of Musée des Arts Décoratifs.

Coinciding with the exhibition, the museum presented this weekend a public programme of pop-up performances called *Experience the Unexpected* inspired by the concept ‘money can’t buy’. Featuring 30 international artists, singers and dancers from 8 countries, these performances were set against the backdrop of Louvre Abu Dhabi’s collection and exhibitions, taking viewers on new paths of discovery spanning time and civilisations, and filling the galleries with music and dance. The programme was curated by Ruth Mackenzie CBE, artistic director of Paris’s Théâtre du Châtelet and former director of the Holland Festival in Amsterdam and cultural programme for the London 2012 Olympics.

A concurrent exhibition—*Rendezvous in Paris: Picasso, Chagall, Modigliani & Co. (1900–1939)*—was organised by Louvre Abu Dhabi, Centre Pompidou, and Agence France-Museums, and will be on view through 7 December. It was curated by Christian Briend, Head Curator, Modern Art Collection, Centre Pompidou.

Finally, in a special surprise to celebrate the anniversary, Al Fursan—the UAE’s airforce aerobatic display team—flew over the museum’s iconic dome on Saturday, 9 November. Air show attendees received free admission to the museum for the rest of the day.

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**Notes to editors:**

Follow Louvre Abu Dhabi on social media: Facebook ([Louvre Abu Dhabi](https://www.facebook.com/LouvreAbuDhabi)), Twitter ([@LouvreAbuDhabi](https://twitter.com/LouvreAbuDhabi)) and Instagram ([@LouvreAbuDhabi](http://instagram.com/LouvreAbuDhabi)) #LouvreAbuDhabi

**Visitor Information**

Louvre Abu Dhabi hours are: Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 10 am–8 pm; Thursday and Friday, 10 am–10 pm. The museum is closed on Mondays.

Last entries and ticket purchases end 30 minutes prior to closing. Special visitor hours will be in effect during some holidays and Ramadan.

General admission tickets are 60 AED (excluding 5% VAT). Tickets are 30 AED (excluding 5% VAT) for visitors ages 13-22, UAE education professionals, and members of the military.

Admission is free for members of the museum’s loyalty programme, children under the age of 13, ICOM or ICOMOS members, journalists and visitors with special needs and their companions.

**ABOUT LOUVRE ABU DHABI**

Created by an exceptional agreement between the governments of Abu Dhabi and France, Louvre Abu Dhabi was designed by Jean Nouvel and opened on Saadiyat Island in November 2017. The museum is inspired by traditional Islamic architecture and its monumental dome creates a rain of light effect and a unique social space that brings people together.

Louvre Abu Dhabi celebrates the universal creativity of mankind and invites audiences to see humanity in a new light. Through its innovative curatorial approach, the museum focuses on building understanding across cultures: through stories of human creativity that transcend civilisations, geographies and times.

The museum’s growing collection is unparalleled in the region and spans thousands of years of human history, including prehistoric tools, artefacts, religious texts, iconic paintings and contemporary artworks. The permanent collection is supplemented by rotating loans from 13 French partner institutions, regional and international museums.

Louvre Abu Dhabi is a testing ground for new ideas in a globalised world and champions new generations of cultural leaders. Its international exhibitions, programming and Children’s Museum are inclusive platforms that connect communities and offer enjoyment for all.

In 2019—the declared Year of Tolerance in the United Arab Emirates—Louvre Abu Dhabi will continue to be a hub for all cultures and a symbol of openness, hope, tolerance and inclusivity in the Arab world.

**ABOUT AGENCE FRANCE-MUSÉUMS**

Created in 2007 following the intergovernmental agreement between Abu Dhabi and France, Agence France-Muséums has been for 12 years a key link between France and the UAE in the accomplishment of the Louvre Abu Dhabi.

By gathering for the first time the collections and the expertise of the French cultural institutions involved, AFM has provided since its creation assistance and expertise to the authorities of the United Arab Emirates in the following areas: definition of the scientific and cultural programme, assistance in project management for architecture including museography, signage and multimedia projects, coordination of the loans from French collections and organisation of temporary exhibitions, guidance with the creation of a permanent collection, and support with the museum’s policy on visitors.

AFM now continues its missions for Louvre Abu Dhabi after its opening notably with the training of the museum’s professionals, the coordination of loans from French museums for 10 years and the organisation and production of temporary exhibitions for 15 years.

Agence France-Muséums brings together the Louvre Abu Dhabi partner institutions: Musée du Louvre, Centre Pompidou, Musées d’Orsay et de l’Orangerie, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac, Réunion des Musées Nationaux et du Grand Palais (RMN-GP), Château de Versailles, Musée national des arts asiatiques-Guimet, Musée de Cluny – musée national du Moyen-Âge, École du Louvre, Musée Rodin, Domaine National de Chambord, Musée des Arts Décoratifs (MAD), Cité de la Céramique – Sèvres & Limoges, Musée d’Archéologie nationale – Saint-Germain en Laye, Château de Fontainebleau, and OPPIC (Opérateur du patrimoine et des projets immobiliers de la culture).

**ABOUT MUSÉE DU LOUVRE**

The Louvre in Paris opened in 1793, during the French Revolution, and from the very beginning was intended to provide inspiration for contemporary art. Courbet, Picasso, Dalí and so many others came to its hallowed halls to admire the old masters, copy them, immerse themselves in masterpieces and improve and fuel their own art. As an ancient royal residence, the Louvre is inextricably linked to eight centuries of French history. As a universal museum, its collections, among the best in the world, span many millennia and miles, from the Americas to Asia. Over 38,000 artworks are grouped into eight curatorial departments, including universally-admired works such as the Mona Lisa, the Winged Victory of Samothrace and the Venus de Milo. With 10.2 million guests in 2018, the Louvre is the most visited museum in the world.

**ABOUT SAADIYAT CULTURAL DISTRICT**

[Saadiyat Cultural District](http://www.saadiyatculturaldistrict.ae/) on Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi, is devoted to culture and the arts. An ambitious cultural undertaking for the 21st century, it will be a nucleus for global culture, attracting local, regional and international guests with unique exhibitions, permanent collections, productions and performances. Its groundbreaking buildings will form a historical statement of the finest 21st century architecture; [Zayed National Museum](http://www.saadiyatculturaldistrict.ae/en/saadiyat-cultural-district/zayed-national-museum/), [Louvre Abu Dhabi](http://www.saadiyatculturaldistrict.ae/en/saadiyat-cultural-district/louvre-abu-dhabi/) and [Guggenheim Abu Dhabi](http://www.saadiyatculturaldistrict.ae/en/saadiyat-cultural-district/guggenheim-abu-dhabi/). These museums will complement and collaborate with local and regional arts and cultural institutions including universities and research centres.

**ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM – ABU DHABI**

The Department of Culture and Tourism conserves and promotes the heritage and culture of Abu Dhabi emirate and leverages them in the development of a world-class, sustainable destination of distinction, which enriches the lives of visitors and residents alike. The organization manages the emirate’s tourism sector and markets the destination internationally through a wide range of activities aimed at attracting visitors and investment. Its policies, plans and programs relate to the preservation of heritage and culture, including protecting archaeological and historical sites and to developing museums, including Zayed National Museum, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, and the Louvre Abu Dhabi. DCT - Abu Dhabi supports intellectual and artistic activities and cultural events to nurture a rich cultural environment and honour the emirate’s heritage. A key role is to create synergy in the destination’s development through close co-ordination with its wide-ranging stakeholder base.