

PRESS RELEASE

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**Louvre Abu Dhabi's exhibition,
Bollywood Superstars: A Short Story of Indian Cinema, opens today**

Organised in partnership with Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac and France Muséums, the exhibition will run from 24 January to 4 June 2023

Abu Dhabi, UAE –23 January 2023: H.E. Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chairman of Louvre Abu Dhabi, inaugurated the museum's first exhibition of the year, *Bollywood Superstars: A Short Story of Indian Cinema*, opening from 24 January and running until 4 June 2023. Organised in partnership with Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac and France Muséums, the exhibition showcases the depth and richness of the Indian sub-continent's art and civilisation through its long tradition of image making, and the diversity of the Indian filmmaking industry.

Bollywood Superstars is co-curated by Julien Rousseau, Curator and Head of the Asian Collections at Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, and Hélène Kessous, PhD in Social Anthropology and Ethnology, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, with the support of Dr. Souraya Noujaim, Director of Scientific, Curatorial and Collections Management at Louvre Abu Dhabi.

Manuel Rabaté, Director of Louvre Abu Dhabi, commented: "*Bollywood Superstars* demonstrates our enduring commitment to showcase the wealth of cultures that define so much of life in the United Arab Emirates. Our staff and partners have worked tirelessly to present together the most ambitious collection of artworks with movie projection which are at the heart of Indian society and popular culture. We hope that, by offering a glimpse into the subcontinent's rich and diverse filmmaking history, visitors can better understand the myriad of our shared roots, common values and cultural connections."

The exhibition's curators, Julien Rousseau and Hélène Kessous, said: "This exhibition is a tribute to Bollywood and can be enjoyed by both Indian cinema fans and the wider public. We hope that it portrays the full richness of Asian traditions and tells the stories that led to the birth of this cinema. The exhibition celebrates Bollywood superstars who are adored by their fans in India in a way that is rarely seen elsewhere in the world."

As the world's leading film producer, India currently produces more than 1,500 films a year in about 20 languages, which are then exported throughout Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Indian pioneers utilised nascent image technologies such as lithograph and photography, kickstarting the journey from the birth of the first films to grand musical features. Visitors will gain a deeper understanding of the international success of Bollywood and an appreciation of the diversity of Indian cinematography. The comprehensive displays span the history of Indian cinema from storytelling, dance, and pre-cinema to the influence of religion and mythology and the rise of Bollywood superstars.

Dr. Souraya Noujaim, Director of Scientific, Curatorial and Collections Management at Louvre Abu Dhabi said: "Bollywood is more than just a film industry; it's a cultural phenomenon that has captivated audiences around the world. This exhibition offers a unique glimpse into the long and wondrous history and development of Bollywood and the Indian cinema, and underlines the continued presence

of the great mythological and literary narratives in Indian culture. *Bollywood Superstars* is a special exhibition that complements our collections and aligns with our curatorial approach and we hope that it provides our visitors with a better understanding of our shared roots, common values and cultural connections.”

Emmanuel Kasarhérou, President of the Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, said: “Indian cinema can be approached from countless perspectives. “*Bollywood Superstars*” reveals a variety of narrative and stylistic repertoires that mirror the diversity of the country’s histories, local identities, and languages. The exhibition stands out for the quality and originality of its content. Dedicated to promoting the richness of the arts and cultures of all continents, the Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac is honoured to be associated with Louvre Abu Dhabi, an inspiring and influential institution that shares values of beauty, opening and understanding.”

Through more than 80 artworks including photographs, textiles, graphic arts, costumes and over 30 film extracts, the exhibition explores the rich history of the Indian cinema from its beginnings in the late 19th century up to the present. The artworks come from the collections of Louvre Abu Dhabi, Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, Musée de l’Armée, Musée national des arts asiatiques – Guimet, al-Sabah Collection, Raja Ravi Varma Heritage Foundation and Priya Paul Collection.

Inspired by *Bollywood Superstars* exhibition, a rich cultural programme will be available to the public including an in-depth talk led by the exhibition’s curators on 24 January 2023, along with the screening of six iconic Bollywood films throughout March. The famous Secret Soirée event will return with a new larger scale edition, *Secret Soirée: Mumbai Nights 2*, allowing guests to immerse themselves in the world of Bollywood.

A range of educational activities will be available for visitors of all ages. These include an Express Tour of the exhibition; *Make and Play* activities where families can explore different kinds of storytelling techniques inspired by Bollywood film posters; and a Young Visitor’s Guide, offering young ones the opportunity to learn about Indian cinema.

Bollywood Superstars is supported by PureHealth, as Louvre Abu Dhabi’s exhibition season partner. Following its display at Louvre Abu Dhabi, the exhibition will be reinterpreted by Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac in Paris, offering new audiences the opportunity to explore this immersive experience. More than 150 objects and over 40 film extracts will be on view at Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac from 26 September 2023 to 7 January 2024.

A recorded podcast by the curators of the *Bollywood Superstars* exhibition will be available for the public on Louvre Abu Dhabi’s website and mobile application. The exhibition catalogue is available in Arabic, English and French at Louvre Abu Dhabi’s boutique.

For more information about the exhibition and to book tickets, please visit www.louvreabudhabi.ae.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Louvre Abu Dhabi’s operating hours:

Museum: Open: 10 am – 6.30 pm (Tue - Thurs); extended hours: 10 am – 8.30 pm (Fri - Sun); closed on Mondays.

Dome: Open: 10 am – midnight (Tues - Sun) - last entry 11 pm; closed on Mondays

Museum Café: Open: 10 am – 6.30 pm (Tue - Thurs); extended hours: 10 am – 10 pm (Fri – Sun). Closed on Mondays

Art Lounge: Open: 3 pm – 12 am (last orders 11 pm); closed on Mondays

Fouquet's Abu Dhabi and Marta Bar: Open: 12 pm – 12 am (last orders at 10 pm) (Tue – Thurs, Sun); weekends: 12 pm – 1 am (last orders at 10.30 pm) (Fri – Sat); closed on Mondays

Aptitude Café: Open: 9 am – 10 pm (daily including Mondays)

Follow Louvre Abu Dhabi on social media: Facebook ([Louvre Abu Dhabi](#)), Twitter ([@LouvreAbuDhabi](#)) and Instagram ([@LouvreAbuDhabi](#)) #LouvreAbuDhabi.

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.

ABOUT MUSÉE DU QUAI BRANLY – JACQUES CHIRAC

The Musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac is dedicated to the arts and civilisations of Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Americas. Designed by the architect Jean Nouvel, the building has become an iconic signature of Paris' heritage just a stone's throw from the Eiffel Tower. Since its opening in 2006, the museum welcomes some 1.3 million visitors from all continents every year.

With 370,000 objects, 700,000 images and over 200,000 reference works, its collection is one of the largest in the world and includes many masterpieces. A testament to human genius and the life of societies, these pieces are of major cultural and scientific interest. The many scientific, cultural and technical activities run by the establishment in partnership with the countries its collections originate from contribute to the study, conservation and circulation of works, thus encouraging the spread of knowledge to a broad audience, both in France and internationally. At the same time, a rich and multi-annual programme allows visitors to discover or add to their knowledge of non-European arts and societies.

Permanent and temporary exhibitions, concerts, performances, readings and conferences all play their part in making the musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac a living forum for culture where cultures meet every day in dialogue.

www.quaibrantly.fr

ABOUT MUSÉE DU LOUVRE

A former royal residence, the Louvre has been a part of French history for eight centuries. The collections it houses today, among the finest in the world, span nine millennia and five continents. Divided into nine departments, they feature some 33,000 artworks including universally renowned masterpieces such as the Mona Lisa, the Winged Victory of Samothrace and the Venus de Milo.

ABOUT FRANCE MUSÉUMS

Following the intergovernmental agreement between France and the Emirates of Abu Dhabi signed in 2007, France Muséums, a cultural consulting and engineering agency, was created to work towards the creation of Louvre Abu Dhabi and support the project in all its dimensions (strategic, scientific, cultural, building, human resources).

Since the opening of the UAE museum in 2017, France Muséums continues to support Louvre Abu Dhabi in four main fields of activity: the management and coordination of loans from French museums for the permanent galleries of the museum, the organisation and production of 4 international exhibitions per year, training of teams and a wide range of consultancy and auditing assignments in all areas of museum management.

France Muséums mobilise its teams based in Paris and Abu Dhabi and a network of 19 major French cultural institutions and museum partners : 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), le musée de l'Armée et le Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon.

www.francemuseums.fr

ABOUT SAADIYAT CULTURAL DISTRICT

Saadiyat Cultural District 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 ground-breaking buildings will form a historical statement of the finest 21st century architecture; Zayed National Museum, Louvre Abu Dhabi and 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 – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) drives the sustainable growth of Abu Dhabi's culture and tourism sectors and its creative industries, fuels economic progress and helps achieve Abu Dhabi's wider global ambitions. By working in partnership with the organisations that define the emirate's position as a leading international destination, DCT Abu Dhabi strives to unite the ecosystem around a shared vision of the emirate's potential, coordinate effort and investment, deliver innovative solutions, and use the best tools, policies and systems to support the culture and tourism industries.

DCT Abu Dhabi's vision is defined by the emirate's people, heritage and landscape. We work to enhance Abu Dhabi's status as a place of authenticity, innovation, and unparalleled experiences, represented by its living traditions of hospitality, pioneering initiatives and creative thought.