

## Press Release

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### Louvre Abu Dhabi Reveals Three Must-See Exhibitions for the 2025-2026 Season

- 17 September 2025 – 25 January 2026: ***Mamluks: Legacy of an Empire*** in partnership with Musée du Louvre and France Muséums
- 8 October 2025 – 28 December 2025: ***Art Here 2025*** and the ***Richard Mille Art Prize*** in partnership with Richard Mille
- 21 January – 31 May 2026: ***Picasso, the Figure*** in partnership with Musée national Picasso-Paris and France Muséums

**Abu Dhabi, UAE – 20 May 2025:** Louvre Abu Dhabi's 2025-2026 season presents an ambitious lineup of exhibitions that span centuries and continents, bringing together diverse artistic traditions and perspectives. With a focus on historical legacies, contemporary expressions, and groundbreaking collaborations, the upcoming season reinforces the museum's role as a hub for cultural dialogue and artistic discovery.

The season will open with ***Mamluks: Legacy of an Empire***, organised in partnership with Musée du Louvre and France Muséums, and offers a deep dive into the powerful Mamluk dynasty and its cultural influence across vast territories. Following this, ***Art Here 2025*** and the ***Richard Mille Art Prize***, in partnership with Richard Mille, will highlight the works of contemporary artists based in the GCC and Japan, as well as artists based in the MENA region and connected to the GCC. A major highlight of the season, ***Picasso, the Figure***, organised in partnership with Musée national Picasso-Paris and France Muséums, will explore Picasso's revolutionary approach to the human form, tracing his engagement with mythological, surrealist, and classical themes throughout his career.

"Louvre Abu Dhabi's exhibitions embody our commitment to offering visitors enriching and inspiring experiences," said **Manuel Rabaté, Director of Louvre Abu Dhabi**. "This season, we are proud to present a compelling dialogue between Eastern and Western artistic traditions, showcasing masterpieces that celebrate cultural heritage and innovation. Through these exhibitions, we reaffirm the museum's role as a space for meaningful exchange, fostering a deeper appreciation of artistic expression across different cultures and time periods."

**Dr. Guilhem André, Director of Scientific, Curatorial, and Collections Management at Louvre Abu Dhabi**, stated: "We aim to offer a space where art serves as a bridge between cultures, inviting visitors to engage with diverse artistic traditions and perspectives from ancient worlds to contemporary periods. These exhibitions will provide a unique opportunity to explore the connections between different movements and histories, deepening our collective appreciation of creativity and shared human stories."

The three upcoming exhibitions at Louvre Abu Dhabi are:

### **Mamluks: Legacy of an Empire** (17 September 2025 – 25 January 2026)



*Reception of a Venetian Delegation by the Mamluk Governor of Damascus* (after restoration), 1500–1540, Paris, Louvre Museum, INV100, © Grand Palais RMN (Louvre Museum) / Gabriel De Carvalho

*Mamluks: Legacy of an Empire* explores the rich heritage of the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517), a powerful dynasty that ruled for over two and a half centuries. The sultanate controlled a vast expanse of territory, including Egypt, Bilad al-Sham (modern-day Levant), a small part of Eastern Anatolia (modern-day Turkey), and the Hejaz (modern-day Saudi Arabia), which encompassed the most significant Islamic holy sites.

Jointly curated by Dr. Souraya Noujaim, Director of the Department of Islamic Arts at Musée du Louvre, and Dr. Carine Juvin, Curator, Medieval Near and Middle East, Department of Islamic Arts at Musée du Louvre, with the support of Fakhra Alkindi, Senior Curatorial Assistant at Louvre Abu Dhabi, the exhibition offers a comprehensive exploration of the diverse Mamluk society, through a remarkable selection of objects. The exhibition also highlights the Mamluks' role as active participants in a vast network of international exchanges linking Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Fakhra Alkindi shares key highlights on loan from Musée du Louvre including *Reception of a Venetian Delegation by the Mamluk Governor of Damascus*, 1500–1540 and *Baptistry of Saint Louis* (Syria or Egypt, c. 1330–1340), an exceptional masterpiece that epitomizes the height of Mamluk artistry and continues to be a symbol of cultural exchange and artistic achievement, reflecting the enduring legacy of the Mamluk dynasty. She also highlights a notable piece from Louvre Abu Dhabi's collection: *Carpet Decorated with Three Medallions*, produced in Egypt in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here 2025 and the Richard Mille Art Prize** (8 October 2025 - 28 December 2025)

The fifth edition of *Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Here*, in partnership with Swiss luxury watchmaker Richard Mille is currently accepting proposals from contemporary artists based in the GCC and Japan, as well as artists based in MENA and connected to the GCC. Curated by Swiss Japanese curator Sophie Mayuko Arni, this year's theme, *Shadows*, explores the interplay of light and darkness, drawing inspiration from both Japanese and Arabian Gulf artistic traditions. The exhibition invites contemporary artists to reimagine these influences through site-specific monumental works, reflecting on how shadow and light shape architectural and cultural narratives. Works by the shortlisted artists will be displayed in the *Art Here 2025* exhibition starting in October, and one of these outstanding artists will be awarded the prestigious Richard Mille Art Prize in December 2025.

### **Picasso, the Figure** (21 January – 31 May 2026)



*Woman with a Madolin (Miss Léonie seated)*, France, 1911, Pablo Picasso (Malaga, 1881 – Mougins, 1973), Oil on canvas, Louvre Abu Dhabi, © Succession Picasso 2025. Image: ©Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi / Photo: Noora Alzaabi

In partnership with the Musée national Picasso-Paris and France Muséums, *Picasso, the Figure* explores Pablo Picasso's evolving depiction of the figure and encompasses various techniques such as painting, sculpture, and drawing. Featuring key works from the early 1900s to his later years, the exhibition highlights how Picasso redefined shape, expression, and meaning revolutionizing modern art. Jointly curated by Cécile Debray, President of

Musée national Picasso-Paris, Virginie Perdrisot, Chief Curator and Head of Sculpture, Ceramics and Giacometti Furniture at Musée national Picasso-Paris, and Aisha AlAhmadi, Senior Curatorial Assistant at Louvre Abu Dhabi, the show offers a rare insight into the artist's continuous experimentation with the human form across different periods of his career.

As the Associate Curator for this exhibition, Aisha AlAhmadi shares key highlights including paintings by Pablo Picasso from Louvre Abu Dhabi's collection such as *Woman with a Mandolin (Miss Léonie seated)*, dating to 1911, and *Portrait of a Seated Woman (Olga)*, dating to 1923, in addition to loans from Musée national Picasso-Paris such as *Woman Sitting in Front of the Window*, dating to 1937.

In addition to these major exhibitions, Louvre Abu Dhabi will host a dynamic range of cultural and educational programmes, a new immersive experience, and events designed to foster curiosity, engagement and dialogue. The 2025 – 2026 season at Louvre Abu Dhabi is set to be a celebration of creativity, cultural exchange and artistic exploration.

**-ENDS-**

#### NOTES TO EDITORS

Louvre Abu Dhabi is open Tuesday – Sunday from 10 am – 6:30 pm; closed on Mondays. Pre-purchased tickets are required to visit the museum. E-tickets can be reserved via the museum's [website](#).

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

For more information on Louvre Abu Dhabi's acquisitions policies and principles, visit [our website](#).

#### 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 19 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 LOUVRE

Formerly a royal palace, the Louvre became a national museum in 1793, during the French Revolution. Its collections, divided among nine departments, encompass over eight millennia of world history. The 33,000 works of art on public display in the museum bring different cultures together, breaking the barriers of time and space and ensuring the Louvre is home to all kinds of artistic creation. Even before the Revolution, many artists had their workshops in the Louvre, and today it continues to welcome the greatest contemporary creators, thereby bringing its collections alive, boosting their contemporary relevance, and opening the museum ever wider to the world.

#### ABOUT RICHARD MILLE

From the very inception of the brand in 2001, Richard Mille's approach to watchmaking has always centred on releasing the watch from its restricted role as a mere tool for timekeeping, augmenting and extending its visual potential by placing it directly in the crosshairs of design, art and architecture. Today, 20 years later, the Richard Mille watch collection now comprises of more than eighty models, each designed and produced with the same passion, uncompromising principles and visionary aesthetics that guided Richard Mille's first creation.

Richard Mille's watches are marvels of technology designed specifically for those with a keen appreciation and love for fine Swiss watchmaking, playing up the full possibilities of three-dimensional space, defined by both the volume of the watchcase and the movement itself. Within these highly confined areas spanning just a few centimeters that serve as a blank canvas for horological creativity.

This assimilation of watchmaking to artistic endeavors is also reflected in the company's close connections with the arts. The brand's partnerships in support of contemporary art and artists include sponsorship of the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art in New York City; collaborations with choreographer Benjamin Millepied, and acquisition of Éditions Cercle d'Art, a publishing house created with the support of Pablo Picasso in the 1950s.

#### **ABOUT MUSÉE NATIONAL PICASSO-PARIS**

By virtue of its quality and breadth, as well as the diversity of the artistic fields represented, the Musée national Picasso-Paris collection is the only one in the world that allows us to explore all of Picasso's painted, sculpted, engraved and drawn work, as well as the precise evocation - sketches, drawings, sketchbooks, successive states of etching, photographs, illustrated books, films and documents - of the artist's creative process.

This collection is the result of two successive donations by the heirs of Pablo Picasso in 1979 and then by the heiress of Jacqueline Picasso in 1990. In 2021 and 2024, two bequests by Maya Ruiz-Picasso and her heirs added 14 new works to the collection.

#### **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.

#### **ABOUT SAADIYAT CULTURAL DISTRICT**

Home to Louvre Abu Dhabi, Berklee Abu Dhabi, Manarat Al Saadiyat, Abrahamic Family House and the soon-to-open Zayed National Museum, teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi and Natural History Museum Abu Dhabi, Saadiyat Cultural District is one of the greatest concentrations of cultural institutions.

Saadiyat Cultural District is a global platform, emanating from a rich cultural heritage, celebrating traditions, and advancing equitable culture. It is an embodiment of empowerment, showcasing museums, collections, and narratives that supports the region's heritage while promoting a diverse global cultural landscape.

Saadiyat Cultural District is a testament to Abu Dhabi's commitment to preserving heritage while embracing a forward-looking vision. The District invites the world to engage with diverse cultures, fostering dialogue exchange, and offers a global cultural space that supports the region and the global South.