

Press release

Exhibition

April 18 –
July 21, 2008

Musée du Louvre,
Richelieu Wing

**Related exhibition on view at
the Musée Condé in Chantilly
from April 9 to July 21, 2008.**

Exhibition curator: Nicole Garnier-
Pelle, chief curator, Musée Condé.



Prosper Lafaye (1806-1883)
Salon of princess Marie at the Tuileries
Around 1838
Oil on canvas. H. 55 cm; W. 87 cm
Château de Versailles, inv. MV 6120
© RMN / DR

Exhibition curator

Anne Dion-Tenenbaum,
chief curator in the Department of
Decorative Arts, Musée du Louvre.

In collaboration with
the following media partner:

femina

Marie d'Orléans, 1813-1839 Princess and Romantic Artist

As one of several events in 2008 paying tribute to female artists and patrons, with *Marie d'Orléans, 1813-1839* the Louvre honors a figure emblematic of the tastes and aspirations of her time. Bringing together drawings, sculptures, paintings, furniture and personal objects—some made available thanks to exceptional loans from her descendants—this exhibition offers viewers insights into the artistry of Marie d'Orléans as well as her celebrated neo-Gothic salon.

This portrayal is paired with an exhibition held at the Musée Condé in Chantilly, which presents sculptures executed by the princess preserved by her brother the Duc d'Aumale and restored especially for the exhibition. The Louvre and the Condé are thus the first museums to pay homage to an individual who made an exceptional contribution to the history of taste, both as a princess and patron of the arts and as a romantic artist herself.

A Princess of Orléans

The second daughter of Louis-Philippe, Marie was born in Palermo in 1813. Like all the king's other children, she received a solid and well-rounded education. As a young girl, she already exhibited unusual curiosity and an openness to new ideas, like her elder brother the Duc d'Orléans, a great patron of the arts and avid collector. With more modest means at her disposal and despite an even shorter life span, Marie was able to forge close ties with several artists, including the silversmith Charles Wagner, the architect Théodore Charpentier, and especially the painter Ary Scheffer. This last individual, the art tutor for Louis-Philippe's children, served as her mentor, intellectual guide, even influencing her selection of reading materials, as well as her artistic advisor. The marriage of her sister Louise with King Leopold I of Belgium in 1832 brought about a change in the temperament of Marie d'Orléans, according to her own entourage. Marie herself, in her voluminous correspondence with Louise, often expresses her profound despair at being separated from her sister. However, evincing the critical bent for which she was well known, she also reports on her readings, recent concerts and plays she has attended, current events, and public opinion. As was made clear, Marie had little interest in the events on the social calendar customarily of vital importance to someone of her station. Indeed, it was from this point forward that she began increasingly to devote herself to drawing, then sculpture, while finding consolation and strength in her increasing piety.

In 1837, Marie married Duke Alexander of Württemberg and gave birth to a son in 1838. All was not rosy however, as for some time she had suffered from a persistent cough. Her physicians sent her to Italy, where she died, in Pisa, in January 1839. Learning of the sudden passing of the princess, Jules Janin spoke for all of his contemporaries when he wrote, "*We artists have lost a sister.*"

Marketing and Communications

Aggy Lerolle
aggy.lerolle@louvre.fr

Press relations

Charlotte Lacombe
+33 (0)1 40 20 53 14 / 84 52 (fax)
charlotte.lacombe@louvre.fr



Ary Scheffer (Dordrecht, 1795 - Paris, 1858)
Marie d'Orléans Drawing in Her Studio
 Black pencil. H. 0,353 m; W. 0,245 m
 Dordrecht, Dordrechts museum,
 inv. DM/S/T86 © Dordrechts Museum



Auguste Trouchaud, after Marie d'Orléans
Jeanne d'Arc, 1835-1837
 Marble. H. 2,01 m; W. 0,75 m; D. 0,82 m
 Musée National du Château de Versailles,
 inv. MV 1854 © RMN / DR

Visitor information

Hours: Open daily except Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and until 10 p.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Admission fees: Access to the exhibition is included in the purchase of an admission to the museum's permanent collections: 9; 6 after 6 p.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays. Free admission for youths under 18, the unemployed, and holders of the "Louvre Jeunes", "Louvre Professionnels", "Louvre Enseignants", "Louvre Etudiants Partenaires" or "Amis du Louvre" cards.

Further information

+33 (0)1 40 20 53 17 / www.louvre.fr

Auditorium du Louvre

Information : +33 (0)1 40 20 55 55
 Box office : +33 (0)1 40 20 55 00

Marie d'Orléans the Artist

While still very young, Marie d'Orléans took up drawing, under the tutelage of the painter Ary Scheffer, without much success. Beginning in 1832, she tried her luck with historical subjects colored with wash, displaying considerable talent in composition, although she was hampered by certain difficulties in execution. Losing hope of advancing any further as an artist, in 1834 she turned to sculpture, at the prompting of Ary Scheffer, who was as intrigued as his pupil by this new idea. Most of the portraits of Marie d'Orléans at work are of his hand (*Marie d'Orléans Drawing in Her Studio* and *Portrait of Marie d'Orléans in Her Studio*). Works by Marie d'Orléans, few in number but often re-executed as gifts for the various members of her family, are generally either religious in inspiration (*Angel of Submissiveness*), or deal with historical or literary subjects (*The Parting Glance*, after *The Tear* by Byron or *Ahasvérus* by Edgar Quinet). Marie bequeathed her sculptures and drawings to her mentor. In addition, between 1848 and 1858 Scheffer preserved certain furnishings from Marie's salon in his studio on rue Chaptal in Paris.

A Neo-Gothic Salon in the Tuileries

Théodore Charpentier, most likely selected on the recommendation of Ary Scheffer, was commissioned in 1835 to redesign Marie's studio in the Tuileries as a salon. He had already proven his ability to assimilate styles of the past, having built a neo-Gothic manor for the poet Alcide de Beauchesne. Later he would gain renown for his scenic designs (Salle Favart). For Marie's salon, Charpentier installed a décor offering considerable theatrical flair, with a Renaissance-style coffered ceiling, a sculpted wooden cornice, windows and doors curtained in crimson damask within an atmosphere softened by stained-glass panels (*Salon of Princess Marie in the Tuileries*). And yet, although in imagining the decoration of her neo-Gothic salon the Princess d'Orléans had expressed her Gothic sentiments, Charpentier left behind fantasy and troubadour-style approximations in favor of greater historical accuracy. Marie filled this space with furniture specially created for the salon, after designs by Théodore Charpentier, by the sculptor and ornamentalist Michel-Victor Cruchet and the cabinet-maker Charles-François Petit (*Fretwork Fence*) as well as antique pieces, most of which were purchased in Belgium and also restored under the direction of the architect. The purpose of this restoration work, which may seem rather ill-advised from today's perspective, was to harmonize these furnishings and adapt them to their modern use (*Credenza*, known as the *Gothic Secretary*). This salon therefore provided the ideal backdrop for Marie's works, such as the sculpture of Joan of Arc on horseback. This subject was a favorite theme of the princess and she executed a version with Joan of Arc standing for the Musée d'Histoire de France at Versailles, which thereafter became a very popular and widely disseminated work.

Related events and publications

Catalogue

Marie d'Orléans, 1813-1839, edited by Anne Dion-Tenenbaum and Nicole Garnier-Pelle, joint catalogue for both exhibitions, co-published by Musée du Louvre Editions and Somogy, 250 p., €32.

The publication of this work was sponsored by Arjowiggins.

In the Auditorium du Louvre

Art on stage, Wednesday, May 14 et 12:30 p.m.: *Credenza*, known as the *Gothic Secretary* by Anne Dion-Tenenbaum, Musée du Louvre.

Series of conférences on *The rise of the Neo-Gothic in France*: Mondays, May 19, 26 and June 2 at 6:30 p.m. at the Louvre and Saturday, June 7 at 3 p.m. at the Château de Chantilly.