

For Immediate Release

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ROMAN ART FROM THE LOUVRE

RARE ANCIENT WORKS FROM THE LOUVRE'S ESTEEMED COLLECTION
TO TOUR THREE AMERICAN CITIES



New York, NY (October 12, 2007) – The American Federation of Arts (AFA) and the Musée du Louvre are pleased to announce the three-city tour of *Roman Art from the Louvre*, an unprecedented exhibition of ancient masterworks drawn from the Louvre's unparalleled collection. This exhibition provides a rare and historic opportunity for American audiences to view these magnificent works, many of which have not been seen by the public in decades and most of which have never traveled to the United States. Furthermore, many of the objects in the exhibition have recently been restored, bringing to light their original beauty and strength of expression.

Organized by the American Federation of Arts and the Musée du Louvre and selected by Daniel Roger and Cécile Giroire, curators in the Greek, Etruscan, and Roman Antiquities Department at the Louvre, the exhibition features 184 masterworks that highlight the diversity of artistic production that characterizes Roman art. These exceptional pieces date from the early first century B.C. to the sixth century A.D. Included are a variety of monumental sculptures, sarcophagi, marble busts and reliefs, bronze and terracotta statuettes and implements, jewelry, glass and metal cups and vessels, mosaics, fresco paintings, and a cache of more than one hundred major silver pieces from Pompeii.



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Portrait of Augustus Wearing a Toga, ca. 10 A.D. (head), ca. 120 A.D. (toga)
Marble
85 x 35 3/8 x 23 5/8 in.
Musée du Louvre, Paris (MA 1212—INV. MR 100; 1577)
©AFA/Musée du Louvre—Daniel Lebée and Carine De Ambrosio

Medallion Coin, ca. 324–26 A.D.
Gold
3 7/8 x 3 1/4 x 1/2 in.
Musée du Louvre, Paris (BJ 2280—INV. MNE 684)
© AFA/Musée du Louvre—Daniel Lebée and Carine De Ambrosio

Arranged thematically, the exhibition examines the manifestations of Roman public and private life through an exploration of several themes, including religion, urbanism, war, imperial expansion, funerary practices, intellectual life, and family. *Roman Art from the Louvre* shows the full range of Roman artistry and taste, juxtaposing “official” art with more modest, private works.



AFA Director Julia Brown commented, “It has been such a great pleasure to work with the Musée du Louvre on the presentation of this fascinating selection of ancient masterworks. Bringing these works to an American audience is exceptionally gratifying for our organization and is the result of a complex preparation many years in the making. We are delighted that communities across the country will be able to enjoy these marvelous treasures from the Louvre.”

Roman Art from the Louvre traces the genealogy of the four main Roman dynasties, including the Julio-Claudians, the Antonines, the Severans, and the family of Constantine, through an examination of works made between the first century B.C. and the early fourth century A.D. These works illustrate the evolution of aesthetics, as well as the changing social influences under the Roman emperors, who exerted both secular and religious powers.

The diverse artistic influences from the various far-flung regions of the empire are presented in the first section, “Introduction to Rome and Its Empire.” Among the items shown are contemporary renderings of ancient Roman cities, monuments, and landscapes—among them, the Forum of Trajan and the villa Hadriana—by J. C. Golvin, a draftsman and archaeologist noted for his stunning recreations of ancient sites.



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Statue of a Woman, 1st or 2nd century A.D.
Marble
76 3/4 x 34 1/4 x 30 3/8 in.
Musée du Louvre, Paris (MA 1143)
©AFA/Musée du Louvre—Anne Chauvet

Fragment of a Relief of a Double Suovetaurilia Sacrifice, 1st or 2nd
quarter of 1st century A.D.
Grey veined marble
70 7/8 x 90 5/8 x 6 3/4 in.
Musée du Louvre, Paris (MA 1096—INV. MR 852)
© AFA/Musée du Louvre—Daniel Lebée and Carine De Ambrosis

Featuring portraits of the emperors Augustus, Marcus Aurelius, Septimus Severus, and Maxentius, the large section titled “The Emperor and His Surroundings” focuses on the evolution of taste, aesthetics, and society under the Roman emperors. The ways in which the political and economic powers of the emperors influenced art production across four dynasties are evident in artworks ranging from life-sized marble statues and portrait busts to small bronze figurines.



The exhibition also examines the concept of *civitas*, or citizenship, and its ramifications and includes a section devoted to non-citizens of Rome: foreigners, freedmen, and slaves. A rich grouping of stelae, friezes, and lamps depicting these heroic figures are a component of this section as well as a varied selection of ceramics and mosaics included to represent production techniques and the working conditions of servants, peasants, slaves, harvesters, craftsmen, and tradesmen.

The portrait busts of anonymous men, women, and children featured in “The Roman Citizen” reveal the styles and fashions popular during the Roman Empire. Clothing, hairstyles, jewelry and other accessories, perfume bottles, and cosmetics are examined within the greater context of the role of women in the Roman Empire. Other topics addressed include the art of Roman portraiture, the Boscoreale treasure, and Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli and the Maritime Theater.



“Religion and Death” is the final section of the exhibition. Encompassing official religion, private cults, and magic and the cult of mystery, religion had a complex and important role in imperial Rome. The importance to the Roman people of being remembered after death and reminded of the dead is illustrated through a selection of extraordinary monuments with inscriptions, names, and images of the dead.

Among the many highlights of the exhibition are busts of prominent Roman leaders including Augustus, Marcus Aurelius, and Agrippa; statues of Isis, Venus, Minerva, and Bacchus; early depictions of theatrical scenes, portraits of actors, and theatrical masks; military diplomas and army medallions; sarcophagi, urns, and related ritual objects; military diplomas and army medallions; imperial rings, necklaces and earrings; household objects; and relief sculptures depicting scenes from Tivoli.

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Jar with Four Handles, 4th century A.D.
Glass
3 7/8 x 3 1/8 x 3 1/8 in.
Musée du Louvre (MNE 171)
© AFA/Musée du Louvre—Anne Chauvet

Mosaic Panel, 2nd half of 1st–early years of 2nd century A.D.
Marble, limestone, and molten glass
73 1/4 x 73 1/4 x 5 7/8 in.
Musée du Louvre, Paris (MA 3443 – INV. MND 1945)
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