



PRESS RELEASE
 Contemporary Art
 May 25, 2019–February 24, 2020
 Cour Puget

Jean-Michel Othoniel at the Louvre

To mark the 30th anniversary of its Pyramid, the Musée du Louvre is hosting an original creation by artist Jean-Michel Othoniel. Inspired by a detail in a Rubens painting, the display will feature six paintings and a book.

La Rose du Louvre at the Cour Puget

From May 25, 2019 to February 24, 2020, Jean-Michel Othoniel will present his installation of six original ink paintings on gold leaf amidst the Cour Puget’s masterpieces of 17th and 18th-century garden statuary. The artist’s works were inspired by the rose Rubens painted in his *Wedding of Marie de’ Medici to Henri IV (1621-1625)*.

Jean-Michel Othoniel sees the rose as an emblem of the museum. A triumphant symbol of power and passion, Rubens’ unique interpretation of the ‘queen of flowers’ represents a woman’s destiny, her beauty, and her death-defying love, as well as the history of both France and the museum. Jean-Michel Othoniel’s installation invites visitors to take a walk through a dreamlike universe of paintings, gardens and sculptures, and to discover an extraordinary herbarium.

L’Herbier Merveilleux, copublished by the Louvre and Actes Sud

The book contains Jean-Michel Othoniel’s collection of notes on the secret language and symbolism of flowers, revealing their hidden meanings through a selection of myths and legends.

For the artist, this installation is about reconnecting with his roots. During his studies, he worked day and night shifts as a warden at the Louvre. In 2018, he came back as a fully-fledged artist to explore the empty rooms of the world’s largest museum once again, seeking out the painted, sculpted, drawn, embroidered and enameled flowers concealed in masterpieces across its eight departments. While passing through the museum’s rooms, Othoniel photographed the flowers he found in sculptures, tapestries, frescoes, architectural features, furnishings and paintings to compile his own original herbarium. Among the floral details appearing in the book are the thistle from Dürer’s self-portrait, the apple from the stool depicted in Fragonard’s *Bolt*, the peony from the open blouse of Greuze’s young girl with a broken pitcher, the palm leaf from the arms of Zurbarán’s *Saint Apollonia* and, of course, the triumphant rose from Rubens’ painting immortalizing the wedding of Marie de’ Medici and King Henri IV. Inspired by the artist’s floral find at the Louvre, the watercolor and ink drawings in the book’s middle section complete the collection



Jean-Michel Othoniel, *La Rose du Louvre*, 2019. Future location of the artwork in the Cour Puget.



The Secret Language of Flowers
Notes on the hidden meanings of the Louvre’s flowers
 13 x 21 cm, 208 pages,
 162 color illustrations . Blue cloth bound hardcover
 Available in French and English.
 Copublished by the Louvre and Actes Sud
 Price: €35



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Opening hours: every day (except Tuesdays) from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Night openings until 10:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays, free night openings until 10:00 p.m. on the first Saturday of the month.

Admission: €15 (permanent collections + exhibitions)

Online ticket sales: www.ticketlouvre.fr

Further information (including free admission): www.louvre.fr/en

#OthonielAuLouvre

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Originally published in French under the title *L'Herbier Merveilleux : Notes sur le sens caché des fleurs du Louvre*, the book acts as an inventory filled with photographs of flowers and details from paintings, as well as drawings and texts related to the secret language of flowers, all of which the artist found in the museum's rooms.

RELATED EVENTS

Lecture at the Louvre Auditorium (in French only)

Wednesday, June 5 at 7p.m.
Free admission

Presented by Jean-Michel Othoniel and Dominique de Font-Réaulx, Musée du Louvre.
After the lecture, the artist will sign copies of *The Secret Language of Flowers*.

Guided visit of the Tuileries rose garden (in French only)

Friday, June 7 at 2 p.m. and 3.30 p.m.
Book online: www.louvre.fr

Rediscover this part of the garden, guided by two experts:

- An experienced gardener, who will paint a botanical portrait of the garden's antique roses and reveal the secrets of their care and splendid fragrances;
- A curator, who will continue the journey, using five artworks to reveal an unexpected world filled with roses—the paintings of the Louvre.



Peter Paul Rubens, *The Wedding by Proxy of Marie de' Medici to King Henri IV, in Florence, 5 October 1600*, oil on canvas. Paris, Musée du Louvre © 2000 RMN-GP (Musée du Louvre) Ojéda /Le Mage