

TINTORET

NAISSANCE D'UN GÉNIE

MUSÉE DU LUXEMBOURG

FROM 7 MARCH TO 1 JULY 2018

Jacopo Robusti was born in Venice in 1518 or 1519 into a family of craftsmen, a dyer's son. His family origins and small stature earned him the nickname *Tintoretto*, literally “the little dyer”. It is said that, from a very young age, he used his father's dyes to create remarkable graffiti. He then quickly trained as a painter, probably with Bonafazio de'Pitati. In January 1538, before he even turned twenty, he was already an independent master with his own studio. This exhibition showcases the first years of Tintoretto's work, marked by his determination and ambition to succeed and make a name for himself in a highly competitive city filled with great painters. It tells of his ascension into a cosmopolitan Venice, where artists and intellectuals flocked from the rest of Italy and all of Europe, and where Croatian builders, Greek Madonna painters and German printers rubbed shoulders.



1. TAKING OFF

As a dyer's son, Tintoretto belonged to the class of the *popolani* excluded from political life, which made up the majority of Venetian society with its powerful caste system. Nevertheless, the strategies that he used, commercial and interpersonal as well as aesthetic, allowed him to forge a path that would take him from wealthy households to public space, from churches to the Doge's Palace. For him, painting was a way to shed his anonymity and express a vivid imagination, with often spectacular imagery that caught the eye and the mind. This section brings together Tintoretto's major early works, produced as he was starting out as an independent painter, beginning with *The Adoration of the Magi* from the Prado museum. All attest to the way in which he was influenced by the latest inventions of Titian, his elder and Venice's top painter, whom he sought to equal or even surpass. These works also demonstrate his openness to new forms from elsewhere and his desire to measure up to the greatest masters of his time, including Raphael, Giulio Romano and Michelangelo. His free spirit and taste for experimentation are conveyed in the way in which he combined different sources of inspiration to formulate an original vision.

2. DECORATING SALONS

Unlike other city-states such as Florence or Mantua, Venice had neither a royal family, nor a court, nor royal patronage. An art market emerged here earlier than elsewhere, offering independent paintings produced of the painter's own volition, rather than by commission. Decorating furniture and panelling provided some painters with a significant source of income. Like his friends Paris Bordone and Andrea Schiavone, Tintoretto allocated some of his time to this particular activity, as shown by this small

decorative paintings displayed in this room. Terrifying or erotic tales, inspired by ancient mythology or the Old Testament, fuelled their preferred themes. The unique pictorial technical of this kind of work, characterised by freer, faster brush strokes, left an indelible mark on Tintoretto. His ambition, character and pride nevertheless meant he aspired to a grander scale for the décor of affluent noble households. To gain access to such commissions and build a network of high-society contacts, Tintoretto displayed a visual audacity, as demonstrated here by two large panels painted for a palace owned by the Pisani family. Nor was he beyond undercutting prices in order to win himself a market that would increase his visibility. This was, unquestionably, a very effective commercial strategy, but not one that earned him a great deal of good will among his peers!

3. CAPTURING THE GAZE

Tintoretto made a great many enemies in Venice. Developing his network of contacts and maintaining his standard of living drove him to paint numerous portraits. In Venetian dialect, "*ritrar*" has two meanings: to paint a portrait or to take advantage. Tintoretto brought both these meanings together. Genre, with all its conventions and compromises, was no doubt distasteful to a free spirit such as him, with his proclivity for humour and impertinence. His understated style, with its rare embellishment but incisive rendering of faces, attracted a certain Venetian clientèle. Even in his early days, the portraits he painted betrayed Titian's influence, but they are masterful in their technique, sensitive and intense in their expression: windows into the soul. Many subjects have not been identified. Some of the smaller portraits no doubt depict close friends and family, or patrons, among them painters, writers or musicians.

4. SHARING THE WORKSHOP

In 1995, experts on Tintoretto had their certainties challenged. The American Art historian Robert Echols asserted that numerous works thought to be by the young Tintoretto were produced by a near-unknown painter from Bergamo, Giovanni Galizzi. The debate still remains open today : Tintoretto the genius, Giovanni Galizzi the craftsman? Opinions are divided, perhaps because the young Tintoretto's production is not unanimously established. Galizzi was perhaps a little older than Tintoretto. Both painters are likely to have met in the large workshop of Bonifazio de'Pitati, where they trained. They joined forces around 1544, as Tintoretto was developing his production. Tintoretto may have invited Galizzi to use his rented studio in the San Cassiano district, and continued working with him after moving into a new one in Madonna dell'Orto. Displayed in this room, *San Marco in trono* (Saint Mark sitting between two saints), signed by Giovanni Galizzi and dated 1547, features a style very similar to that of the young Tintoretto. Their paths diverged around 1554, at a time when Galizzi had taken to mimicking Tintoretto, as is perhaps already visible in some of the Madonnas displayed here. Was it the reason for their separation, or a consequence of it? It is very difficult to tell.

5. STAGING

Tintoretto's first biographer, Carlo Ridolfi, recounts that the artist himself was involved in creating shows by designing mockup costumes, inventing gags and no doubt also some special effects. Between approximately 1442 and 1565, Venice had over fifty theatre troupes, known as *compagnie della calza*, made up of young patricians who put on a highly diverse range of spectacles. *La Talanta* by Aretino, shown at the 1542 carnival, was etched in people's memory. For the occasion, Giorgio Vasari visited from

Florence to design and make the set, creating a roman scene with its most famous monuments. The paintings on display in this room attest to Tintoretto's contact with the world of theatre, with their taste for décor and mise en scène. Indeed, Andrea Calmo, the playwright and actor, was among his closest friends. All of these works showcase the architecture and the deep perspectives, edged with columns or ancient monuments, that at times outweigh the rest of the composition. The painter was also inspired, sometimes rather literally, by engravings depicting the treatises of Sebastiano Serlio, an architect living in Venice between 1526/7 and 1541, whom he most likely met. They are also a reminder of the architectural renaissance Venice was experiencing at the time, spearheaded in particular by Jacopo Sansovino, a Florentine architect and sculptor whom Tintoretto knew well.

6. OBSERVING SCULPTURE

Around the mid-16th century in Italy, written works on art pitched painting and sculpture against one another in a kind of competition, referred to by the term '*paragon*'. The debate was reflected in the work of Tintoretto, who was overwhelmed by a desire to feed off another, more textural art form that explored the third dimension. Studying sculpture through drawing played a major part in his creative process, and was included in the training of his young apprentices. The will of his son Domenico, his heir and successor, mentions numerous small or life-size wax and plaster figures, reserved for use in the workshop. Some of them are identified, including a head of Laocoön and an ancient bust thought at the time to represent the emperor Vitellius. Carlo Ridolfi, his first biographer, explains that money was no object for the painter when it came to obtaining ancient marble casts or small replicas of

sculptures by Michelangelo. According to him, Tintoretto studied them carefully and produced highly contrasted drawings by lamplight, achieving a style of remarkable plasticity. The abundant reference she introduced into his paintings clearly attest to his admiration for this other medium.

7. PAINTING THE FEMALE

By the early 1550s, Tintoretto's reputation was established and major commissions flooded in. He is likely to have trained many new assistants at the time, some of them Flemish. This is when he produced his first major collection of paintings on the theme of Genesis, including *Original Sin*, on display in this room. Between 1551 and 1556, the female nude occupied a central place in his production, such as Eve, Susanna and the Muses. Although he was not yet married, was Tintoretto using these images to immortalise the features of his mistress, the mother of Marietta, his favourite daughter? By exploring this motif, he was probably positioning himself as a rival of Titian, who at the time worked on mythological scenes full of female nudes for King Philip II of Spain. Women – seductresses or victims of sexual violence, servants or muses, princesses or prostitutes – played a very particular role in Tintoretto's work at this time. He attempted to explore episodes in their life with an empathy and intensity that was unique for this period. The exhibition ends here in around 1555, when Tintoretto was on the brink of glory. He was still to receive the most prestigious commissions for the Madonna dell'Orto, the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, the Doge's Palace, and more. Despite the criticism sometimes levelled at him, Tintoretto managed to assert himself as one of Venice's greatest artists, the one who best set the foundations for the future evolutions of painting and bridged the gap between the Renaissance of the 16th century and the Baroque era of the 17th century.

Curators:

Head Curator: Roland Krischel, Curator of Medieval Painting at the Wallraf-Richartz Museum & Fondation Corboud, Cologne

Scientific advisor: Michel Hochmann, Director of Studies at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE, PSL)

Deputy Curator of the Paris exhibition: Cécile Maisonneuve, Scientific Advisor to the Rmn - Grand Palais

Set design: Véronique Dolfus

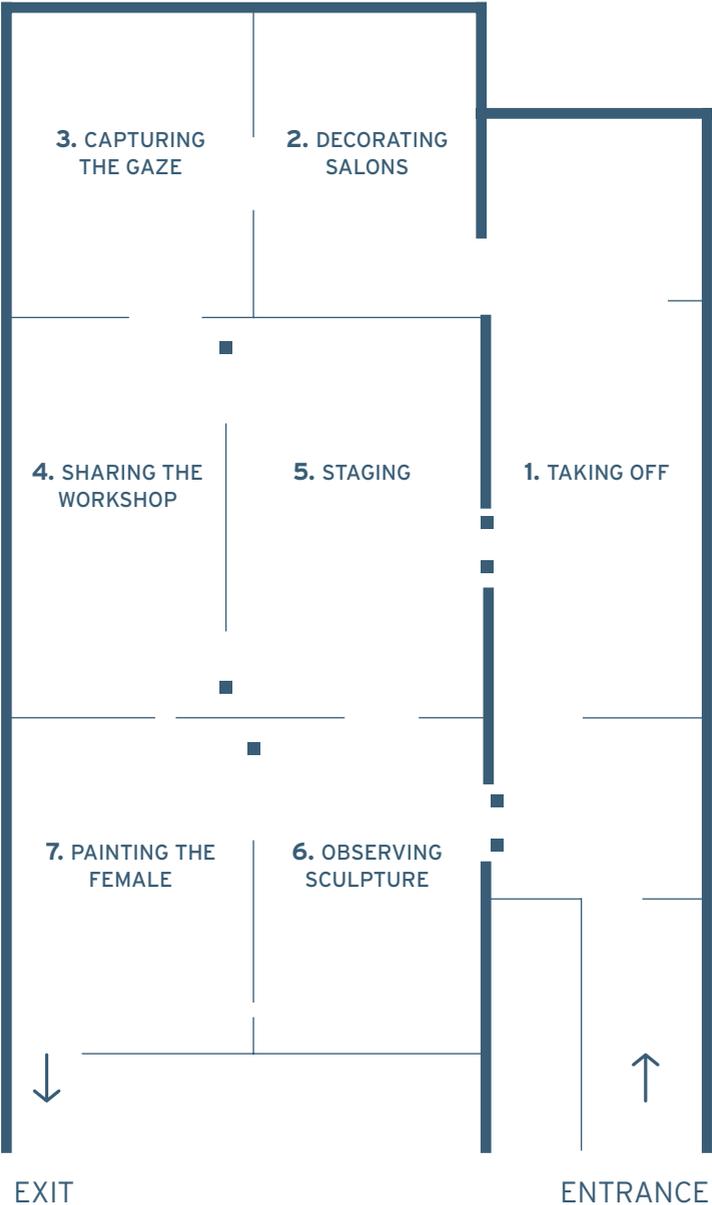
Graphics: Claire Boitel, Atelier JBL

Lighting: Sarah Scouarnec

This exhibition is organised by the Réunion des Musées nationaux - Grand Palais and the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud, Cologne.



EXHIBITION MAP



AROUND THE EXHIBITION

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

MUSEUM LECTURES

Lectures are free to attend

They take place at the Hungarian Institute, 92, rue Bonaparte 75006 Paris

Compulsory registration opens 15 days before the event at museeduluxembourg.fr

PRESENTATION OF THE EXHIBITION

Thursday 22 March at 6.30 pm

Roland Krischel, Medieval Painting curator at the Wallraf-Richartz Museum & Fondation Corboud, Cologne, Michel Hochmann, Director of Studies at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (EPHE, PSL) and Cécile Maisonneuve, scientific advisor at the Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais

Through a lively and spirited conversation, the curators of the exhibition reveal the new light it sheds on our understanding of Tintoretto's work, especially with regards to the attribution of several paintings.

"THE PAINTER SELLS HIS VISIONS". SARTRE AND TINTORETTO

Thursday 12 April at 6.30 pm

Heiner Wittman, committee member and director of the Groupe d'Etudes Sartriennes and the Sartre Gesellschaft.

Jean-Paul Sartre developed his aesthetic theory by studying major artists. In particular, he analysed a large number of paintings by Tintoretto, thereby offering an explanation for the Venetian painter's immense success.

A BIBLICAL SUBJECT DEPICTED BY THE YOUNG TINTORETTO: THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

Thursday 17 May 2018 at 6.30 pm

François Boespflug, theologian, art and religious historian, professor emeritus at the University of Strasbourg, Chair of the Louvre 2010. Come and unlock the secrets of this painting by the young Tintoretto, which rivalled work by his illustrious elders on a highly popular subject of the time: an episode in the life of Christ taken from the Gospel of Saint Luke.

TINTORETTO AND SCULPTURE

Tuesday 19 June at 6.30 pm

Guillaume Cassegrain, professor of modern art history at Grenoble Alpes University

The young Tintoretto would closely examine the contemporary or ancient sculptures found in his city, or depicted in drawings and engravings. Working from this model, he invented unique compositions, in which depth and foreshortening gave his painting an original sculptural dimension.

EVENTS AT THE MUSEUM

SKETCHBOOK EVENING

Tuesday 3 April, 6 pm - 9 pm

A tradition at the Musée du Luxembourg: whether a seasoned illustrator or a complete beginner, come and enjoy this evening and make the Musée du Luxembourg your studio where you can draw in special surroundings.

Bookings required at museeduluxembourg.fr

NIGHT OF MUSEUMS

Saturday 19 May, from 7.30 pm to midnight, last entry 11.30 pm

Free entry, no reservations

For the Night of Museums, take the time for an exceptional visit: the students of the Conservatoire Jean-Philippe Rameau have concocted a live musical performance for you that echoes Tintoretto's paintings.

Shows at 8 pm, 9 pm, 10 pm, 11 pm

SPECIAL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WEEKEND

Saturday 19 May, from 2 pm -6 pm and 7.30 pm - 11 pm

Saturday 20 May, 7:30 pm - 1 am

You can't miss them in their bright blue polo shirts: posted around the museum rooms, students from Paris - Dauphine University have plenty to tell you about the young Tintoretto. Come and chat with them - you'll never see the works in the same way again!

TOUR TO SONG

For adults and children aged 13 and above; duration: 1 hour

Thursday 24 May, Tuesdays 5 and 12 June at 6 pm

Your ticket gives you access to the exhibition from 5 pm onwards.

Did you know that Tintoretto was a great music lover?

Through guide and tenor Grégoire Ichou, you'll learn about the exhibition in an original way over three exceptional evenings.

Bookings required at museeduluxembourg.fr

FILM SCREENINGS



At the Les 3 Luxembourg cinema, 67 rue Monsieur le Prince, 6th

Practical information is available on the website lestroisluxembourg.com

CANALETTO & THE ART OF VENICE, DAVID BICKERSTAFF, 2017

Thursday 29 March at 8.30 pm

Through this film, produced for the exhibition at the Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace in 2017, enter the world of another great Venetian painter, Giovanni Antonio Canal, or "Canaletto".

MUSEUM HOURS, JEM COHEN, 2013

Thursday 14 June at 8.30 pm

A life-changing encounter between a museum guard and a chance visitor to the Kunsthistorisches Art Museum in Vienna, the museum that is home to Tintoretto's Man with a White Beard.

CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

Bookings at museeduluxembourg.fr

AUDIOGUIDES

In-situ, in French, English, Spanish and German
Tour for young people in French
Price: €5 Sésame+ pass: €4
App: €3.49 on Google Play and the App Store

GUIDED TOURS

The young Tintoretto: Venetian ambition

For ages 13 and over. Duration: 75 minutes

The 500th anniversary of Tintoretto's birth is an opportunity to look back on the work of his youth and the personality of this unusual artist. Come and explore his body of work, with its incredibly diverse themes and, above all, its great artistic ambition in the competitive context of 16th century Venice.

At 12.15 pm from Thursday to Sunday, 4.15 pm on Saturdays and Sundays and 2.30 pm on studio days for children

Family tour: small stories, big paintings

For ages 6 and over. Duration: 1 hour

Who were Callisto, Bathsheba or the Queen of Sheba?
Why does Susanna appear so frequently in the artist's paintings?
Come and hear the secret stories behind the biblical or mythological works of the young Tintoretto.

At 2.30 pm on Sundays and Saturdays in school holidays

TOUR FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

These visitors can call upon an "image prompter" free of charge.
More information at www.crth.org

SOUFFLEURS
D'IMAGES

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP TOUR

The little architect

For ages 6 and over. Duration: 2 hours

Temples, labyrinths, palaces: after a tour of the exhibition specially designed for you, recreate the spectacular backdrops and astonishing architecture in Tintoretto's paintings with a colourful pop-up!

At 2.15 pm, Sunday 8 April, Thursday 26 April, Friday 27 April, Thursday 10 May and Sunday 27 May

LITTLE EXTRAS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Ask for the free family circuit, available free of charge at the museum reception, to guide your children as they explore the exhibition.

At museeduluxembourg.fr, you can also view the "jeune public" (young people) section to find special games and resources.

PUBLICATIONS

THE EXHIBITION CATALOGUE, *Tintoretto. Birth of a genius*, published by Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais, 2018
Under the guidance of Roland Krischel.
23 x 30 cm, 224 pages, 170 illustrations, €39

THE EXHIBITION ALBUM, *Tintoretto. Birth of a genius*, published by the Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais. Author, Roland Krischel, in collaboration with Cécile Maisonneuve.
22 x 30 cm, paperback with no gatefold, 48 pages, 40 illustrations, €10

MULTIMÉDIA



TINTORETTO: THE AUDIOGUIDE-APPLICATION
on Google Play and the Appstore : 3,49€

ENRICH YOUR VISIT

at museeduluxembourg.fr and find articles, videos, a biography of Tintoretto, and play-activities for young people.

Share #ExpoTintoret



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SPRING 2018 SEASON

GRAND PALAIS

KUPKA

21 March - 30 July 2018

This retrospective introduces you to the world of the artist, with his early work marked by symbolism followed by his gradual evolution towards abstraction, becoming one of its most eminent pioneers.

ARTISTES & ROBOTS

5 April - 9 July 2018

The exhibition presents works of art made by machines, which in turn have been invented by artists. This interactive journey immerses visitors in the future of contemporary creation.

TINTORET

NAISSANCE D'UN GÉNIE

FROM 7 MARCH TO 1 JULY 2018

AT THE MUSÉE DU LUXEMBOURG, 19 RUE DE VAUGIRARD
75006 PARIS

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FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS FROM 10.30 AM TO 7 PM

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