

## **2021: A NAPOLEON SEASON**

FROM 31 MARCH 2021 TO 30 JANUARY 2022

**2021 marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Emperor Napoleon I. For the occasion, the Musée de l'Armée and the Fondation Napoléon are proposing a cultural season entirely dedicated to this major figure in France's history at the Invalides. A restored necropolis, a reinvented permanent exhibition tour, a large heritage exhibit, and for the very first time at the Musée de l'Armée, the work of contemporary artists to question Napoleon's legacy... plenty of opportunities to discover or rediscover the person who has been resting under the Dôme since 1840, "in the midst of the French people, whom [he has] loved so well".**

The director of the Musée de l'Armée is also the "guardian of the Emperor's tomb". By its very nature, the institution had to play a central role in the final stage of the commemorations which have been taking place in succession over the last twenty years, following the pace of significant events in Napoleon's career. 2021, the year of the bicentenary of his death, offers a unique opportunity to attempt a synthesis, to highlight different aspects of Napoleon's history, and to analyse the meaning it has for us nowadays.

By joining forces with the Fondation Napoléon, whose mission is to study and inform on everything relating to the Napoleonic history, the mMusée de l'Armée is offering, throughout the year, a great variety of cultural events, as well as a fresh perspective on the site's history and its permanent collections linked to Napoleon.



## NAPOLEON IS NO MORE

From 31 March to 19 September 2021 – temporary exhibition rooms (3<sup>rd</sup> floor)  
Exhibition presented by the Musée de l'Armée and the Fondation Napoléon

Island of Saint Helena, 5 May 1821. At 5:49 in the evening, the exiled Emperor took his last breath.

Relegated to the other side of the world for more than five years, he no longer had any influence on the world. However, his death aroused passions. Soon, memories, accounts, pictures and relics abounded. A new story emerged, in which the death in exile of the great man played a key role. However, uncertainties marked by legends and contradictions remain. So many facts which reason has attempted to dissect, gaps which imagination has hastened to bridge and rumours to comment on.

The exhibition *Napoleon Is No More* continues the reflection process initiated by the Musée de l'Armée during previous events dedicated to Napoleon (*Napoleon and Europe*, in 2013; *Napoleon in St Helena: His Fight for His History*, in 2016; *Napoleon the Strategist*, in 2018). Having covered his political actions, his military talent, and his fight for posterity during his exile, the Musée de l'Armée is proposing to examine the final chapter of his story.

Investigating all aspects of his final moments, his funeral, the return of his ashes and the monuments which perpetuate his memory, the exhibition is proposing a tour which comprises nearly 250 works combining fine arts, archives, and folk art objects to understand Napoleon's triumphal march towards eternity.

### Commissariat :

**Pierre Branda**, Head of Service Patrimoine, Fondation Napoléon

**Léa Charliquart**, Head of the extension program, Musée de l'Armée

**Chantal Prévot**, Head of Librarian, Fondation Napoléon

**Émilie Robbe**, Chief Heritage Curator, Head of the Department of 19<sup>th</sup>-Century and Symbolic Art, Musée de l'Armée

### Echoing the exhibition:

Conferences, seminars, screenings, concerts, and many guided or fun tours accompany the exhibition.



## NAPOLEON ? ENCORE !

### FROM MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ TO YAN PEI-MING

From 7 May 2021 to 30 January 2022

Echoing the commemorations of the bicentenary of the death of the Emperor, the Musée de l'Armée is presenting, for the first time in its history, a contemporary art tour at the Invalides. The presentation of pre-existing works and specially commissioned orders entrusted to renowned or emerging artists, from France and abroad, evokes the figure of Napoleon as well as the impact of his action in today's world. Presented in conjunction with the exhibition *Napoleon Is No More*, the curation of this contemporary tour was entrusted to **Éric de Chassey**, Director of the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, and **Julien Voinot**, collections manager in the department of 19<sup>th</sup>-Century and Symbolic Art of the Musée de l'Armée.

This ambitious project involved inviting around thirty contemporary artists, giving them carte blanche to invest the permanent exhibition spaces of the Musée de l'Armée and to question the legacy of this symbolic figure of history who leaves none indifferent and declared: "Imagination rules the world."

Designed in two stages, this tour will unveil, from 7 May 2021 to 30 January 2022, works by **Pascal Convert**, **Ange Leccia**, **Fabrice Hyber**, **Marina Abramović**, **Julian Schnabel**, **Georges Tony Stoll**, and **Hélène Delprat**, among others, in the permanent exhibition rooms as well as under the Dôme des Invalides, where the Emperor rests, and in places usually closed to the public, such as the Grand Salon.

Then, from October 2021, the Belgian artist **Hans Op de Beeck** will invest one of the Musée de l'Armée's temporary exhibition rooms with an installation inspired by the death of Napoleon. The second exhibition room will propose a reflection on cinema and the Napoleonic history through a series of pre-existing film excerpts staged by the French artist collective "**La Méduse**" and paying tribute to great filmmakers such as Godard and Kluge.

The Emerige Endowment Fund accompanies the exhibition *Napoleon? Encore!* organised by the musée de l'Armée. Thanks to the support of the Emerige Endowment Fund, strong advocate of young creators, five artists less than 35 years old will be on the spotlight on that occasion.

#### Commissariat :

**Éric de Chassey**, director of the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA), Professor at the École Normale Supérieure in Lyon

**Julien Voinot**, collections manager, Department of 19<sup>th</sup>-Century and Symbolic Art of the Musée de l'Armée



Marina Abramović. Excerpt from the work *The Hero*, 2011, colour video with sound, 17 minutes, Collection of the artist © Adagp, Paris, 2020 / Courtesy of the Marina Abramović Archives

## PERMANENT EXHIBITION TOUR

### A reinvented exhibition tour dedicated to Napoleon

The Louis XIV–Napoleon rooms of the Musée de l'Armée offer one of the world's most beautiful collections of uniforms, weapons, pieces of equipment and works of art relating to the military history of France from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They include, amongst other things, precious testimonies on the Napoleonic Wars and the First Empire.

Some of the sequences in the rooms inaugurated in 2009 underwent a significant refurbishment which was entrusted to the architectural firm Helft & Pinta. The overhaul of the room dedicated to Napoleon's bivouac thereby offers a renewed approach of his everyday life and actions during campaigns, while taking into account the progress in research during the production of recent exhibitions. In line with the creation imagined for the exhibition *Napoleon the Strategist* in 2018, the model of the battle of Lodi was fitted with a mediation device inspired by "sound and light" technologies to provide clear and precise explanations on the different stages of the battle. In autumn 2021, the historical tour dedicated to the 19<sup>th</sup> century will incorporate a space dedicated to the Emperor's exile, to his relics and to this memory which, despite the defeat and fall, had a profound impact on future generations.

Furthermore, to better evoke the Emperor's contemporaries, and especially those who took part in the imperial epic, some of the large paintings benefited from a new hanging, including the portraits of Count Daru (1767–1829), Minister of State, by the painter Antoine-Jean Gros and of General Frère (1764–1826) by the painter Nicolas Gosse.

### Restoration of the Napoleonic monuments at the Invalides

During his lifetime, Napoleon had initiated the transformation of the Hôtel impérial des Invalides into a pantheon of military glories. In particular, he ordered the transfer of the remains of Marshal de Turenne (1611–1675) in 1800 and, in 1807-1808, he had a monument erected under the Dôme in honour of Marshal Vauban (1633–1707), featuring an urn containing his heart.

Napoleon, who died in exile, was buried in Saint Helena, where he remained for almost twenty years. It was in 1840 that the government of Louis Philippe decided to repatriate his ashes to France.

After some hesitation, the Dôme des Invalides was quickly chosen as his eternal home. Architect Visconti's truly original project was selected. Extensive excavation work and iconographic reorganisation were undertaken in order to welcome the imperial tomb in the former royal church of Louis XIV. Napoleon's coffin was first presented in the Saint Jérôme chapel and found its final resting place on 2 April 1861, when it was transferred to the huge sarcophagus at the heart of an open crypt.

Nowadays, the Emperor's tomb is an iconic place in the Hôtel National des Invalides. Each year, it welcomes over 1.2 million visitors from around the world.

The majestic tomb of red quartzite is constantly looked after by the Musée de l'Armée, and although its general condition is satisfactory, it has suffered from the ravages of time and required restoration procedures of an unprecedented scale.

For the bicentenary of the Emperor's death, the Musée de l'Armée and the Fondation Napoléon set up a large international subscription with the aim of restoring the red quartzite tomb; the floor's stone, enamel, and marble marquetry; the statuary, as well as other Napoleonic monuments, such as the tombs of Kings Joseph and Jérôme, the

Napoleon chapel located in the Cathédrale Saint-Louis-des-Invalides, which was used as a second chapel of rest for Napoleon's ashes during the development works in the Dôme, and finally the tombstones from Saint Helena, deposited during the return of the ashes in 1840 and presented to the public in a converted garden.



© Paris, musée de l'Armée/Anne-Sylvaine Marre-Noël

## SEASON PARTNERS

This 2021 Napoleon Season was organised with the Fondation Napoléon, a major partner of the bicentenary, with the support of CIC, great patron of the Musée de l'Armée, of the Emerige Endowment Fund, great patron of the contemporary art tour, of the Fondation Roc Eclerc, great patron of the subscription, of Souvenir Napoléonien, of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, and of Veolia.



## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Full programme and online booking at [musee-armee.fr](http://musee-armee.fr)

The Musée de l'Armée is open every day from 10am to 6pm, and on Tuesdays until 9pm during temporary exhibitions.

**Musée de l'Armée**  
**Hôtel national des Invalides**  
**129, rue de Grenelle 75007 Paris**

[musee-armee.fr](http://musee-armee.fr)

**#SaisonNapoleon**  
**#NapoleonNestPlus**  
**#NapoleonEncore**  
**#2021AnneeNapoleon**



©Paris, musée de l'Armée/Anne-Sylvaine Marre-Noël

## CONTACT PRESSE

Agence Alambret Communication  
Margaux Graire  
[margaux@alambret.com](mailto:margaux@alambret.com)  
01 48 87 70 77 - 06 27 42 53 72

## MUSÉE DE L'ARMÉE

With an average of more than 1.2 million visitors over the last five years, the Musée de l'Armée is one of the most visited museums in Paris. The public is invited to discover the Hôtel des Invalides and its famous Dôme, which houses the tomb of Napoleon I, and to travel through the history of France through its collections. The establishment, founded in 1905, holds one of the world's finest military history collection, with some 500,000 pieces, from the Bronze Age to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Guided tours and educational workshops, temporary exhibitions, conferences and seminars, screenings, entertainment activities, concerts and events are held throughout the year.