

= Louvre Abu Dhabi =

The Louvre Abu Dhabi is a planned museum , to be located in Abu Dhabi , UAE . On Tuesday 7 March 2007 , the Louvre in Paris announced that a new Louvre museum would be completed by 2012 in Abu Dhabi , with a revised estimate in early 2013 for a completion date of 2015 . These both fell short of the current projection of an opening in late 2016 . This is part of a thirty @-@ year agreement between the city of Abu Dhabi and the French government . The museum is to be located on the Saadiyat Island Cultural District , and will be approximately 24 @,@ 000 square metres (260 @,@ 000 sq ft) in size . The final cost of the construction is expected to be between ? 83 million and ? 108 million . In addition , US \$ 525 million was paid by Abu Dhabi to be associated with the Louvre name , and an additional \$ 747 million will be paid in exchange for art loans , special exhibitions and management advice .

Artwork from around the world will be showcased at the museum , with particular focus placed upon bridging the gap between Eastern and Western art . However , the construction of the museum has caused much controversy in the art world , as many objections have been raised as to the motives of the Louvre in this deal .

= = History = =

The establishment of this museum was approved by the French Parliament on 9 October 2007 . The architect for the building will be Jean Nouvel and the engineers are Buro Happold . Jean Nouvel also designed the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris .

The museum will be part of a US \$ 27 billion tourist and cultural development for Saadiyat Island , a complex which is planned to include three other museums , including a Guggenheim Museum and the Zayed National Museum . According to the government sponsored website UAE Interact : " The French Museums Agency will operate in collaboration with the Tourism Development and Investment Company (TDIC) , which is behind the transformation of Saadiyat Island . It will be chaired by French financier and member of the country 's Académie des Beaux @-@ Arts , Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière , publisher of the periodical Revue des Deux Mondes . " Bruno Maquart , the former Executive Director of Centre Georges Pompidou , will take the position of Executive Director . "

By choosing the Louvre , the emirate of Abu Dhabi not only sealed a partnership with the world 's most visited and well @-@ known museum , but selected one which , from its very inception , had a vocation to reach out to the world , to the essence of mankind , through the contemplation of works of art .

= = Design = =

= = = Location = = =

Saadiyat Island 's Cultural District plans to house the largest single cluster of world @-@ class cultural assets . In addition to the Louvre Abu Dhabi these are intended to include : Zayed National Museum , to be designed by United Kingdom @-@ based architectural company Foster and Partners under the direction of Lord Norman Foster ; the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi contemporary arts museum - the world 's largest Guggenheim and the only museum to be located in the Middle East ; a performing arts centre designed by Zaha Hadid ; a maritime museum with concept design by Tadao Ando and a number of arts pavilions .

= = = Architecture = = =

The museum will be designed as a " seemingly floating dome structure " ; its web @-@ patterned dome allowing the sun to filter through . The overall effect is meant to represent " rays of sunlight

passing through date palm fronds in an oasis . " The total area of the museum will be approximately 24 @,@ 000 square metres (260 @,@ 000 sq ft) . The permanent collection will occupy 6 @,@ 000 square metres (65 @,@ 000 sq ft) , and the temporary exhibitions will take place over 2 @,@ 000 square metres (22 @,@ 000 sq ft) ,

= = = Construction = = =

Construction works at Louvre Abu Dhabi officially started on 26 May 2009 . Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan , the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and the President of France , Nicolas Sarkozy inaugurated an exhibition titled , Talking Art : Louvre Abu Dhabi at the Gallery One of the Emirates Palace Hotel which includes 19 works of art bought over the last 18 months for the Louvre Abu Dhabi , as well as loans from the French national museums to mark the beginning of the construction work . Piling works In Louvre were to be completed by August 2010 , with the piling and enabling works package awarded to the German specialized company (Bauer International FZE) . The total of 4536 piles consisted of RC Piles and H @-@ Piles and was completed on 3 August 2010 .

On 29 October 2011 , Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC .) , the project manager owned by the government of Abu Dhabi , announced it would delay establishing the museum . The company gave no new date . According to the UAE newspapers Gulf News and The National , the delay could be explained by a review of the emirate 's economic strategy .

In January 2012 it was confirmed that the Louvre Abu Dhabi 's new opening date would be 2015 .

Construction on the main phase of the museum began in early 2013 by a consortium headed by Arabtec , Constructora San José and Oger Abu Dhabi . This stage includes waterproofing and the two basement levels , along with four concrete pillars that will support the 7 @,@ 000 tonne dome .

Work on the construction of the gallery spaces and initial preparation for the dome began in the fourth quarter of 2013 . On 5 December 2013 , the first element of the museum 's canopy was lifted into place .

On 17 March 2014 TDIC announced the completion of the first permanent gallery structure to mark the first anniversary of the start of construction . At this time , it was claimed that a total of ten million man hours had been worked and 120 @,@ 538 cubic meters of concrete used .

On 22 September , the final super @-@ sized element in the canopy was fitted in place , marking a significant milestone in the museum 's construction phase . In October , The Tourism & Development Investment Company announced that the Louvre Abu Dhabi was more than 50 per cent complete .

= = = Brand and visual identity = = =

The logo and typeface for the Louvre Abu Dhabi was designed by Studio Philippe Apeloig , and is implemented in both Roman and Arabic script . Frutiger typeface was extended to create Frutiger LT to accommodate use across different languages .

Lebanese typographer , Kristyan Sarkis created the Arabic typeface , designed to reflect both the architecture of the building and the heat of the region .

The logo is completed by a broken line of shapes that reflect the shapes of the individual letters in the wordmark . Apeloig says the inspiration for both typeface and logo was the museum ? s architectural elegance and lightness .

= = Collection = =

Questions have been raised as to the nature of the artworks to be displayed at the museum . However , according to the National : " the type and nature of the exhibits planned for the Louvre Abu Dhabi have been affected to no extent by the fact the new museum would be in a Muslim country , said Mr. Loyrette . "

Subjects and themes have been freely discussed with our partners in Abu Dhabi and no request to

avoid such subjects has been made . The exhibition policy will be set up regarding excellence and high @-@ standard quality . As a new museum we hope the Louvre Abu Dhabi will be part of the international community .

It has been noted that the museum will showcase work from multiple French museums , including the Louvre , the Centre Georges Pompidou , the Musée d 'Orsay and Palace of Versailles . However , Donnedieu de Vabres , the French Culture Minister , stated at the announcement that the Paris Louvre " would not sell any of its 35 @,@ 000 @-@ piece collection currently on display " .

It will not be dedicated to occidental art but will show all kinds of artistic creations . It will set up a dialogue between west and east , between north and south . As such , art from the Middle East will be shown within the Louvre Abu Dhabi .

In 2012 , the Louvre Abu Dhabi started collecting photography , making its first acquisitions in the field , including works by Joseph @-@ Philibert Girault de Prangey , Roger Fenton and George Wilson Bridges . The museum also acquired a sculpture of a Bactrian princess dating from the third millennium BC , a pavement and fountain set from the early Ottoman period , as well as the paintings Breton Boys Wrestling (1888) by Paul Gauguin and The Subjugated Reader (1928) by René Magritte .

Further details of the museum 's collection on opening were revealed in October 2014 , with a number of important works to be loaned under the agreement with Agence France @-@ Muséums and the Musée du Louvre , including Leonardo Da Vinci 's La Belle Ferronniere and works by Henri Matisse , a self @-@ portrait by Vincent Van Gogh , Jacques @-@ Louis David 's Napoleon Crossing the Alps and Claude Monet 's Gare Saint @-@ Lazare , .

= = Exhibitions = =

The Louvre Abu Dhabi first started sharing its collection with the public through an exhibition entitled " Talking Art : Louvre Abu Dhabi , " which opened in May 2009 . The exhibition presented the first 19 acquisitions for the institution , including a Mamluk holy Koran from the 14th century , a 5th @-@ century Fibula from Domagnano , a Virgin and Child by Bellini , and Mondrian ? s Composition with blue , red , yellow and black from 1922 .

A second exhibition , Birth of a Museum , opened at the exhibition space Manarat Al Saadiyat in May 2013 , ending in August that year . The first large @-@ scale preview of the collection , it featured 130 works acquired by the government of Abu Dhabi for the permanent collection . They included a never @-@ before seen work by Picasso , a Bronze Age terracotta statue from Cyprus , along with artifacts from Greece , Turkey , Japan and Syria .

In May 2014 , the Birth of a Museum exhibition , featuring works shown in Abu Dhabi and a number of new acquisitions opened at the Louvre in Paris . A number of new works were presented , including Chirisei Kyubiki by the Japanese artist Kazuo Shiraga and painted in 1960 .

= = Other programmes = =

The Louvre Abu Dhabi has also been working with the Paris Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi to set up a master ? s program for museum professionals to train them and help them respond to local needs .

= = Management = =

= = Contract = =

Louvre Abu Dhabi is an entirely separate museum from the Louvre in Paris , although the two are linked by a thirty @-@ year branding and training agreement and the Paris Louvre is one of the 12 shareholders in Agence France @-@ Muséums . The thirty @-@ year agreement , signed by French Culture Minister Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres and Sheik Sultan bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan ,

will prompt the construction of a Louvre museum on Saadiyat Island , near central Abu Dhabi , in exchange for US \$ 1 @. @ 3 billion . The contract prohibits the creation of any similar operation with the name of the Louvre in any of the other emirates of the UAE , Saudi Arabia , Kuwait , Oman , Bahrain , Qatar , Egypt , Jordan , Syria , Lebanon , Iran , or Iraq . French President Jacques Chirac praised the museum deal with Abu Dhabi , saying it reflects " a certain idea of the world " in which each party to the accord , " proud of its roots and of its identity , is conscious of the equal dignity of all cultures . "

= = = Cost = = =

US \$ 525 million was paid by Abu Dhabi to be associated with the Louvre name , and an additional \$ 747 million in exchange for art loans , special exhibitions and management advice . Arabtec is leading a consortium that is building the museum under a \$ 653 million contract awarded early in 2013 .

= = = Cost estimates = = =

US \$ 525 million was paid by the city of Abu Dhabi for the use of the Louvre brand name , with US \$ 195 million payable within a month . In addition to this , US \$ 247 million will be paid for the loan of artworks from the Louvre over a ten @- @ year period , with a total of between two hundred and three hundred artworks expected . The Parisian Louvre will also be providing management advice to its Middle Eastern counterpart , at a cost of US \$ 214 @. @ 5 million . An additional US \$ 253 @. @ 5 million will be paid for various special exhibitions . A total of four exhibitions will be hosted per year over a period of fifteen years . The city of Abu Dhabi will also make a direct donation of US \$ 32 @. @ 5 million to the Louvre to refurbish a wing of the Pavillon de Flore for the display of international art .

= = Controversies = =

The deal has sparked much controversy in both artistic and academic circles . According to Maymanah Farhat , " the controversy that has surfaced in France is led by art historian Didier Rykner , one of the most outspoken critics of the French ? Emirati deal . " A petition against the deal , signed by 4 @, @ 650 museum experts , archaeologists and art historians , has insisted that " museums are not for sale . " The Louvre has been accused of behaving " like a corporation with a clearly @- @ defined strategy : profit maximization . " In the words of Didier Rykner :
We have lost a battle , but the combat continues .

= = = Human rights abuse controversies = = =

In April 2011 , over 120 international artists urged a boycott of both the Louvre and Guggenheim museums over concerns regarding the abuse and exploitation of construction workers employed to develop the complex . In December 2013 , The Guardian reported that conditions for the workers at the construction sites amount to modern @- @ day slavery .

= = = Response = = =

According to the New York Times , " Henri Loyrette , the president and director of the Louvre , has responded to growing criticism of the museum ? s new policy of establishing footholds abroad , arguing that the Louvre cannot ignore the ' internationalization ' of museums . " He had the following to say in the museum 's defence :

It 's a fair fee for the concession of the name . This tutelary role deserves reward . It 's normal .
We 're not selling the French legacy and heritage . We want this culture to radiate to parts of the world that value it . We 're proud that Abu Dhabi wants to bring the Louvre here . We 're not here to

transform culture into a consumer product .

Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan , UAE President and Ruler of Abu Dhabi said :

This is a major achievement in Abu Dhabi 's vision to become a world @-@ class destination bridging global cultures . This accord further strengthens international dialogue , which will embrace all cultures . This initiative is a unique milestone in international cooperation and bilateral relations and a tribute to the longstanding and friendly ties our two nations have enjoyed . It also creates an enriching environment to be treasured by and to educate generations to come .