Art and Power

Presentation

Let and political power, the only form of power to be examined here, are frequently and inevitably related. The various, often overlapping, roles of artists, foundry, obeyed, supported, artists and artworks can be a precise auxiliary to this end, although this does not imply that power will not support art and artists for other reasons, even sometimes purely aesthetic. As for the artists, they wish their work to be seen, published or exhibited, possibly bought and sometimes even celebrated. Whatever the nature of their ambitions, artists have to determine the character of their relationship with the political establishment of their time, serve, oppose or indifference, with all possibilities in between. In 19th-century France, this relationship took on a special importance: revolutions and counter-revolutions succeeded each other, unstable political regimes became the norm, and it was difficult to avoid becoming involved in the debate on the social and political future of the country, especially regarding the question of liberty and the principles proclaimed by the French Revolution. In addition, the social upheavals of the time had profound consequences for the status of artists. Below the Revolution, artists had barely risen above the status of courtiers. The most successful, generally members of the Academy – and who remain the best known today – had moved away from the patronage of the Church into the service of princes and men of power, or more rarely, the king himself. However, the Romantic era of the 19th century saw the emergence of independent artists, who stood before the world and claimed total liberty for their works and for the art itself: was the message frequently advanced by Gustave Courbet, Flaubert, or those in his entourage (Boucher, Courbet, Daumier...). In the case of certain techniques (sculpture, decorative arts), the political aspect may be included in the commission itself and the chosen iconographic themes can be linked to collective values. Thus the dressing room furniture presented to Louise-Marie, the daughter of the Diderot, the deified king Charles X, included allusions to the political hopes of its commissioners. In the century of Guizot and Thiers, the representation of a worker or a manual activity may not only suggest lesser or vulgar, but also reveal the social question which occupied the spirit of the time and its depiction of the political establishment of their time, serve, oppose or indifference, with all possibilities in between. In 19th-century France, this relationship took on a special importance: revolutions and counter-revolutions succeeded each other, unstable political regimes became the norm, and it was difficult to avoid becoming involved in the debate on the social and political future of the country, especially regarding the question of liberty and the principles proclaimed by the French Revolution. In addition, the social upheavals of the time had profound consequences for the status of artists. Below the Revolution, artists had barely risen above the status of courtiers. 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Before the visit

This visit to the Musée d'Orsay is based primarily on history, whilst presenting a number of important artworks of the period which should enable pupils to reflect on the relationship between art and politics, at a level which suits them. One should explain to the pupils that because the essential function of the Museum is to exhibit works of art, as opposed to illustrating historical events and the atmosphere of specific eras. In this, Hugo, Flaubert, Maupassant, Zola, etc. are, of course, invaluable. L'œuvre by Zola addresses the artist's condition and issues of artistic creation. A short story by Balzac, Pierre Grégoire, provides a portrait of an establishment artist that can be transposed from the July monarchy to the second Empire. Monzie Salomon by the Gourmont brothers may also be cited for its descriptions of studios, although the somewhat ‘arty’ style and certain features tainted with anti-Semitism make it difficult to use in schools.

After the visit

The visit to the Museum may be complemented by following a prepared circuit in the streets of Paris places connected with the monarch by the Republic, and with times of upheaval (1848 revolution, Commune and Bloody week) (for instance using Jean-Brune, Rue les Travaux des communards - enquête dans les rues de Paris d'avril 1848, Aims de la Commune de Paris, 1886) or with moments of glory and their memorials (celebrations, palaces and exhibitions), not forgetting those noticeable absences which can be almost as meaningful (palais des Tuileries, never reconstructed after the 1871 fire, unlike the Hôtel de Ville). Visits to the Louvre, the Musée Carnavalet, both the Musée national d'art moderne, housed in the Georges Pompidou Centre, the Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris and the Musée d'histoire du Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte (Musée Louis-Philippe) are also worth considering depending on the selected angle of study.

Another option is to extend the theme to include the study of a cross-scientific literary work as part of a project coordinating the teaching of history and literature. The body of available texts is enormous. Whilst it is notoriously difficult to portray well-known, historical figures in literature (cinema suffers in a similar way), it is nonetheless largely through the work of novelists that we remember historical events and the atmosphere of specific eras. In this, Hugo, Flaubert, Maupassant, Zola, etc. are, of course, invaluable. L’œuvre by Zola addresses the artist’s condition and issues of artistic creation. A short story by Balzac, Pierre Grégoire, provides a portrait of an establishment artist that can be transposed from the July monarchy to the second Empire. Monzie Salomon by the Gourmont brothers may also be cited for its descriptions of studios, although the somewhat ‘arty’ style and certain features tainted with anti-Semitism make it difficult to use in schools.
Objectives

This visit aims at helping secondary-school pupils to think about the complex relationships between art, artists and the political establishment in the second half of the 19th and the first years of the 20th centuries. It presents paintings, sculptures and objects of art which should encourage pupils to begin to reflect on the nature and functions of artworks. It introduces the difficult debate about the possible connections between artists, styles and ideologies. It is not a substitute for a lesson, but aims to encourage reflection on the various specific interests at stake in any historic commentary made on an artwork.

Before the visit

This visit to the Musée d’Orsay is based primarily on history, whilst presenting a number of important artworks of the period which should enable pupils to reflect on the relationship between art and politics, at a level which suits them. One should explain to the pupils that because the essential function of the Museum is to exhibit works of art, as opposed to illustrating history, it is not a substitute for a lesson, its educational value is much greater because the essential function of the Museum is to exhibit works of art, as opposed to illustrating history, and to present them. One should explain to the pupils that it is difficult to use in schools.

After the visit

The visit to the Museum may be complemented by following a prepared circuit in the streets of Paris places connected with the manner by, the Republic, and with times of upheaval (1848 revolution, Commune and Bloody week [for instance using Jean文化交流, Vue des tours des communautes - enquête dans les rues de Paris d’aujourd’hui, Amis de la Commune de Paris, 1886], or with moments of glory and their memorials (celebrations, palaces and exhibitions), not forgetting those noticeable absences which can be almost as meaningful (palais des Tuileries, never reconstructed after the 1871 fire, unlike the Hôtel de Ville). Visits to the Louvre, the Musée Carnavalet, both the Musée national d’art moderne, based in the Georges Pompidou Centre, the Musée d’art moderne de la ville de Paris and the Musée d’histoire du Château de Versailles (Museum Louis-Philippe) are also worth considering depending on the selected angle of study.

Another option is to extend the theme to include the study of a c.a-vant literacy work as part of a project coordinating the teaching of history and literature. The body of available texts is enormous. Whilst it is notoriously difficult to portray well known, historical figures in literature (cinema suffers in a similar way), it is nonetheless largely through the work of novelists that we remember historical events and the atmosphere of specific eras. In this, Hugo, Flaubert, Maupassant, Zola, etc. are, of course, invaluable. L’œuvre by Zola addresses the artist’s condition and issues of artistic creation. A short story by Balzac, Pierre Grassou, provides a portrait of an establishment artist that can be transposed from the July monarchy to the second Empire. Montzie Salomon by the Goncourt brothers may also be cited for its descriptiveness of studios, although the somewhat “arty” style and certain features tainted with anti-Semitism make it difficult to use in schools.

The visit: list of artworks

N.B. this list of artworks is indicative only and is not comprehensive. The Museum guide selects the artworks which support these presentations and which is limited to roughly a dozen artworks per visit.

- Émile Baumann : Les Célébrations du “juste milieu” (the Celebrations of the “juste milieu”), 1875-1876
- François Rude : Napoléon s’adressant à l’immortalité (Napoleon Addressing to Immortality), 1846
- François-Désiré Froment-Meurice : Table et garniture de toilette (Dressing Table and accessories), 1847-1855
- Émile Baumann : La République (The Republic), 1848
- Émile Baumann : Ratapoll, 1850
- Gustave Courbet : L’Héritier du prisonnier, allégorie réelle décrivant une phase de sept ans du ma son artiste, (The Artist) Studio, a Real Allegory of Seven-Year Phase in My Artistic Life, 1855
- Alfred Stevens : Le Guerrier allégorie le captivité d’Henri III en empreinte (What is known as Vagrancy), 1895
- Jean-François Millet : Des glaneuses (Gleaners), 1857
- Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux : La France impériale portant la lumière dans le monde et protégeant l’agriculture et la science (Impperial France Bringing Light to the World and Protecting Agriculture and Science), 1865-1866
- Émile Massonnet : Campagne de France (The French Campaigns), 1848
- Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux : Le Prince impérial et son chien Néro (The Imperial Prince With His Dog Néro), 1865
- Antoine-Louis Barye : Napoléon Ier en empereur romain (Napoleon I as a Roman Emperor), 1865

- Claude Monet : Napoléon III, 1865
- Paul-Charles Galbrunner : Napoléon III, 1866
- Louis Cogniet : Napoléon I assis sur un angle (Napoleon I Sitting on an Angle), 1865
- Pierre Puvis de Chavannes : Le Pigeon (The Pigeon), 1873
- Pierre Puvis de Chavannes : Le Ballon (The Balloon), 1874
- Gustave Doré : L’Enigme (The Enigma), 1871
- Pierre Puvis de Chavannes : L’Espérance (Hope), 1872
- Jean-Paul Laurens : L’Excommunication de Robert le Pieux (The excommunication of Robert the Pious), 1873
- Pierre-Auguste Renoir : Le Bal du Moulin de la Galette (Dance at the Moulin de la Galette), 1876
- Claude Monet : La Rue Montorgueil à Paris, Fête du 10 juin 1878 (The Rue Montorgueil in Paris, Celebration of June 10, 1878), 1878
- Édouard Manet : L’Étudiant de Rochefort (Rochefort’s Student), 1879
- Édouard Manet : Georges Clémenceau, 1900
- Léon Bonnat : Jules Ferry, 1890
- Alphonse de Neuville : Le Cimetière de Saint-Priest (The Cemetery in Saint-Priest), 1881
- Jean-Joseph Wicres : Mort de Joseph Bara (Joseph Bara’s Death), 1885
- Jean-Paul Aubry : Monument à Léon Gambetta (model), 1886
- Édouard Detaille : Le Roi (The King), 1888
- Louis Welden Haydt : Madame Sénèque, 1893
- Léon Frédéric : Les Jours de l’Iseran (The Days of the Iseran), 1895-1896
- André Dessanges : Le Château (The Chateau), 1902-1905
- Maximilien Luce : Un ruisseau à Paris en mai 1871 (A Paris Street in May 1871), 1895-1905
Bibliography

- Marie-Claude Chaudenson, La Figure de la République. Le portrait de 1848-1900, RAN, 1987.
- “Le sculpteur dans la rue en 1848”, article joint à la notification dans le Journal des débats, 1848.

Presentation

- Objectives
- Before the visit
- After the visit
- The visit: list of artworks
- Bibliography

Art and Power

Presentation

When art and political power, the only form of power to be examined here, are frequently and inevitably related one to the other, one is led to believe that the image followed, obeyed, supported: artists and artworks can be perceived as auxiliaries to this end, although this does not imply that power will not support art and artists for other reasons, even sometimes purely aesthetic. As for the artists, they wish to see their work to be seen, published or exhibited, possibly bought and sometimes even celebrated. Whatever the nature of their ambitions, artists have to determine the character of their relationship with the political establishment of their time, serve, oppose or indifferentize, with all possible nuances in between. In 19th-century France, this relationship took on a special importance: revolutions and counter-revolutions succeeded each other, unstable political regimes became the norm, and it was difficult to avoid becoming involved in the debate on the social and political future of the country, especially regarding the heritage of 1789 and the principles proclaimed by the French Revolution. In addition, the social upheavals of the time had profound consequences for the status of artists. Below the Revolution, artists had hardly risen above the status of courtier. The most successful, generally members of the Academy — and who remain the best known today — had moved away from the patronage of the Church into the service of princes and men of power, or more rarely, the king himself. However, the Romantic era of the 19th century saw the emergence of independent artists, who stood before the world and claimed total liberty for the arts and art work: such was the message frequently advanced by Gustave Courbet, Flaubert, commissioned Vigny, Monneret Courbet or L’Héritier. David had already opened the way, in the time of revolution. Relatively short period that spanned from Thirroul (1746) to the Congressional Act 1789, in which he was organized an exhibition of the Salons which charged an entry fee. This role in the Republic (1789-1832), 1986, when artists determined to “break off the yoke of opinion and authority” and questioned the selection process for the Salon. The result eventually led to the 1848 free Salon, followed by a reform of the Jury and finally, on May 15, 1848, the opening of the Salon des refusés which to a certain extent, concerned cursing the effects of modernity in painting. At the end of the century, the heralds of Art Nouveau were to openly describe themselves as belonging to the “Secessions”. It would be meaningless to endeavour to categorize artworks or artists according to their relationship with the establishment: those who served it, those who fought against it, the possible beneficaries or victims of favouritism, censorship, or any other kind of domination. There would be too few examples unequivocal enough to illustrate each category. Artists are not wholly concerned with expressing their feelings about the state of the world. Even when they work on a commission, they are often more interested in manifesting their own talent than in serving a cause for its own sake. It does not necessarily follow that even an artist’s personal commitment and artistic commitment will be reflected in their work. The case of Pisani, a committed anarchist and a painter of pastoral landscapes, is often used to illustrate the gap between an artist’s concerns as a citizen and as an artist, even if his predilection for painting out of town settings of the simple life and of smallholders is hardly neutral, referring the collective imagination back to the “companions” of Anarchism. The artists who were sympathizers of the libertarian period of Temps noirs (Lacroix, Signac, Cross, Van Ruysselegeren) found it difficult to draw in “order” illustrations requested by the editorial. Finally, it may seem a little excessive to search for political connotations in such and such item of furniture or objet d’art in pretend to question the ideological nature of a chair or dresser. Conversely, the direct impact made by certain artworks is one of the phenomena that marked the emergence of public awareness in the 19th-century “The Raft of the Medusa (1830) by Géricault, Liberty Guiding the People (1830) by Delacroix, and possibly The Execution of Maximilien (1867) by Manet caused as much controversy and passion as the books by Lamartine and Michelet.

In the case of certain techniques (sculpture, decorative arts), the political aspect may be included in the commission itself and the chosen iconographic themes can be linked to collective values. Thus the dressing room furniture presented to Louise-Marie, the daughter of the 18th king Charles A. in Val-de-Grâce, the oil paintings of the political hopes of its commissioners. In the century of Guizot and Thiers, the representation of a worker or of a manual activity may not only suggest Ceres or Vulcan, but also to reflect the social question which occupied the spirit of the 19th-century man in a manner which was already being tumultuous. Persuaded that art should elevate public morality, artists were sometimes in a position to make, through their work, more or less overt references to the social question or the compromising, the libertarian, Maximilien Luce, are no exception, although they did produce a few works with political messages sufficiently explicit to be read literally. Monumental sculptors more often contributed to the iconic popularization of the political themes dear to their patrons (notably the local or national political establishment); sculptors certainly,爱国, patriotism, nationalism, work, the erection of a statue could quite easily give rise to ideological hallucinations (statues of Gamble, Elmer Marcl, Charleslambe, Bossard, Blangy, etc.). When the President did consult, Gamble, inaugurated the statue of Benjamin in Vergy, aware of the risks he was taking, he wrote his will before leaving for Brittany. This extreme case illustrates the strength and fervour of public opinion which, until recent times, has so coloured the issue of civic sculpture.
Art and Power

• The visit: the artworks

The suggested circuit has been structured according to the order in which the artworks are to be seen in the Museum’s exhibition. No doubt influenced by Musset’s moving watercolour La Bivouaque, Jean-Baptiste Edouard Detaille is evinced in the vividness of the Museum’s collections (paintings, sculptures, decorative arts).

The imperial legend and Bonaparte’s victory

1. François Barte (1784-1855): Napoleon s’émancipant de l’Immoralité, 1846
Location: entrance of the central aisle, on the left

This painting cannot be considered as reportage of the imperial adventure. If Napoleon’s laurels (Rivoli, Lodi, Campo Formio, Arcole). One cannot therefore judge of the whole complex of artistic movements and the variety of the Museum’s collection.

2. Maximilien Luce (1858-1941): La Place Vendôme, 1903-1905
Location: entrance of the central aisle, on the left

Napoleon’s position, as the Bonapartist leader, was only just settling down in 1840 and Boulanger, often considered by Republicans as a reincarnation of Bonapartism, was only just settling down.
the exploits of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte was, in a way, the leader of the “Rataplan”, the author of as many hearts as prose articles, and promoter of a popular and authoritarian Bonapartism. He served as Minister of the Interior, and ambassador in London but, as the Empire became more liberal, he was progressively side-lined, though nevertheless covered with honours. The Emperor repeatedly exclaimed: “What a government I have!” “The empress is Legitimist, Napoleon-Jérôme is Republican, Murat (Ossian) is a socialist myself. There is only Paris which is a Bonapartist, and he’s mad!” This plate stands as a pictorial, Bonapartist manifesto. Beneath the Ducal crown of the FRères de la Patrie and their motto “Le Vrai” (“The True”), Napoleon III is shown as the inheritor of the four dynasties (Charlemagne, Clovis, Geoffroy-Dechaume, and Napoleon I), a great man both by virtue of the commanding world, evocations of campaigns and expeditions in Italy, including Magenta and Solferino, in Africa, Kanhampa, Syria and Acre, and by his literary and historical works the pen. It’s a juvénile Court (Life of Helen Caesarea) and Legitimists were waiting for a similar divine intervention to help restore the monarchy by insisting that France was being reintroduced the white flag, symbol of the Ancien Régime (as opposed to the red flag of the Commune). The victory of the Republicans, that of a “bourgeois minorité”. He had conceived with Gustave and Eugène Manet, brothers of the painter, Eugène Manet, Berthe Meunier’s husband, was municipal councillor of La Chapelle (1878-1881), in the 18th arrondissement, Clemenceau’s electoral list. Manet avoided any external anecdot (no setting) in favour of the intimate portrait of the orator, his chequered, crossing his arms in a position expressing refusal. He contrated the black of the free coat with the white of the shirt and sleeves. After Manet’s death, his widow gave this painting to Clemenceau, who sold it to 10,000 francs in 1928 to the American collector Louise Havemeyer. This amount represented the annual salary of a deputy (9,000 francs), whereas Clemenceau, temporarily exiled in New York, insured his painting following the Panama affair (1913) was in a difficult legal position. In 1924, Louise Havemeyer donated the portrait, of the man who in 1901 had become the “père de la Vinteuil”, to the Louvre, Clemenceau was often quoted in the unfurling commoners for his portrait about his portrait “My portrait by Manet! Very bad, I do not have it and I do not feel the worse for it. Its in the Louvre… and I wonder why it was put there”. These comments are from a late in his life memoir (1890) of a “petty bourgeois” society and lifestyle. The victory of the Republicans, that of a “bourgeois minorité” was that marked the end of the belle époque, the 1870s were years of prosperous renewal and progress. Monet’s paintings reflect the impressionism of his time. His works, such as “The Rue Montorgueil”, “Le Bal du Moulin de la Galette”, “Sunset on the Seine”, or “The Fishermen of Flamanville” are all made using the techniques of the Post-Impressionists. They have been described as “primitive” elements, and even unimportant. But these paintings are among the most important works of art in the world. The painting offers a picturesque, distanced, vision of an urban landscape by a painter who observed the world with the eye of a child. Monet’s paintings show a fascination for nature, and the beauty of the world as seen through the eyes of a young child. It is also entitled The Republic Fees and Instructs Her Children. Yet, “protective, reasonable”, (Politics for Fun and Meyer-Heine). This emphasis was not forgotten, remarked it also shows “the point is not to start the Revolution again, but to tidy it, once and for all, under the auspices of the Republic”. Exemplifies, despite the ups and downs of the 1848 competition, such an image has ended up becoming the image par excellence of the Republic, with all its nuances and potentialities.


3. Claude Monet (1840-1924): Le Bal du Moulin de la Galette (The Dance at the Moulin de la Galette), 1876 Location: upper level, gallery 52


6. Honoré Daumier: La République (The Republic), 1848 Location: upper level, gallery 28 (Morau-Nesle collection)

8. Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919): Le Bal du Moulin de la Galette (The Dance at the Moulin de la Galette), 1875 Location: upper level, gallery 52

9. Claude Monet: Georges Clemenceau, 1888, huile sur toile, 81 x 50,5 cm

10. Honoré Daumier: Georges Clemenceau, 1888, huile sur toile, 81 x 50,5 cm

11. Pierre-Auguste Renoir: La BD du Moulin de la Galette, 1875, huile sur toile, 175 x 300 cm

12. Claude Monet: La Rue Montorgueil, 1878, huile sur toile, 180 x 260 cm

13. Honoré Daumier: Jules Gabriel Cauchois, 1864, crayon et fusain, 14 x 10 cm
**Legitimist nostalgia**

5. François-Desire Fremiet-Morere (1802-1885): Drawing table and screen, 1847-1851. Location: ground floor, gallery 8

Louise-Marie-Thérèse de Bourbon (1816-1916), granddaughter of Charles X, elder sister of the Legitimist pretender, marries Charles de Bourbon, Count of Parma (1825-1854) on November 10, 1845. The Legitimists decided to present her with this dressing table by public subscription. It is a luxurious commission using enamelled silver and gilted and silvered bronze, engraved iron, canvas painted on copper, garnished with marquetry, and decorated motifs, it is also a political manifesto. It was commissioned from the workshop of the Goulard Frères, established in Paris since 1714. It involved the cooperation of one architect (Urban), two sculptors (Feuchères and Boulanger-Duchartre), the sculptor who was to save Daumier’s Ratapoils, a draughtsman (Laziard) and three enamellists (Morgan, Gérard and their authorisation), in the workshop of the enamellist Gagneraux.

**The Republic and the republican spirit**

6. Honoré Daumier: La République (The Republic), 1848

This sketch was one of the jury of the competition chosen by the provisional government in March, 1848 in order to determine the official representation of “The Republic” in painting. Daumier was already well-known as a draughtsman, but he was known as a painter. Twenty paintings, including this one, were selected from 50 by a commission including Lamartine, Delacroix, Ingres, etc., but political events prevented the competition from reaching a conclusion. Founding inspiration in the traditional iconographic language of Charles X, Daumier’s Republicanism is convincing in its strength and reality by its subject of an iconographic language. It becomes apparent that the attributes that were in symbolic advanced republicanism are still there. It was accepted as the homage of the Legitimists to “the Republic” and to the memory of the Breton of which they were so proud, the second Republic, abundant and mean-spirited. It bears the signature of Barbe-Bretonnais. In the succession of casts of arms while the illustrious ladies who served France and its monarchs are represented prominently on the caskets, particularly those related to the Bourbon, inheritance of the Capetian (Saint Clothilde, Saint Bathilde, Blanche de Castille, Anne de Beaujeu, Valentine de Milan, Anne de Bretagne, Marguerite de Valois, etc., even the Protestant Jeanne d’Albret...). Women of more modest extraction are also represented. Jean of Arc, Joan Hachette. All belong to the Middle-Ages or early Renaissance, like the male heroes chosen: Du Guesclin, Olivier de Clisson, Lahoire, Sainte-Heulaine, Dunois, Gaston de Foix, La Tremouille, and Bayard. Their common virtue is to have shown remarkable fidelity, a virtue expected from a woman towards her lover, but also and above all from France towards its royal family. There is a discreet reminder of difficult times past when Charles VII, the “king of Bourges”, was left alone after recovering his throne, thanks to divine intervention manifested through Jean of Arc. In a country marked by crimes and revolution (1848), the Legitimists were waiting for a similar divine intervention to help restore “the Republic”.

8. Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919)

The Republic Feeds and Celebrates at the Moulin de la Galette (The Dance at the Moulin de la Galette), 1876

The Capital, well known for painting The Sainte Denis composer’s work, is often seen today as a celebration of the World Fair, a manifestation of French nationalism and the eclecticism that dominated the decorative arts of the second Empire. It also illustrates the human Franco-French definition of the Legitimist as a “schism, revolt, exile, memory”. The faithfulness of the old French provinces to their king is indicated by the succession of casts of arms while the illustrious ladies who served France and its monarchs are represented prominently on the caskets, particularly those related to the Bourbon, inheritance of the Capetian (Saint Clothilde, Saint Bathilde, Blanche de Castille, Anne de Beaujeu, Valentine de Milan, Anne de Bretagne, Marguerite de Valois, etc., even the Protestant Jeanne d’Albret...). Women of more modest extraction are also represented. Jean of Arc, Joan Hachette. All belong to the Middle-Ages or early Renaissance, like the male heroes chosen: Du Guescin, Olivier de Clisson, Lahoire, Sainte-Heulaine, Dunois, Gaston de Foix, La Tremouille, and Bayard. Their common virtue is to have shown remarkable fidelity, a virtue expected from a woman towards her lover, but also and above all from France towards its royal family. There is a discreet reminder of difficult times past when Charles VII, the “king of Bourges”, was left alone after recovering his throne, thanks to divine intervention manifested through Jean of Arc. In a country marked by crimes and revolution (1848), the Legitimists were waiting for a similar divine intervention to help restore “the Republic”.

8. Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919): Le Bal du Moulin de la Galette (The Dance at the Moulin de la Galette), 1876

Renoir, painter of the joys of life, children at play and young girls, famously said: “painting must be a likeable, joyful and pretty thing. Yes: pretty. There are enough aggravating things in life for us not to make others”. Despite his opinions, Renoir’s work can still express or evoke sentiments which do not prevail: “I demand my liberty for the sake of your principles and I forbid you for the sake of mine”.


This objet d’art, painted enamel on copper and blackened wood was commissioned by Victor Payin (1806-1872), Count, and later Duke of Persigny. This former hussar, associated with all the exploits of Napoleon Bonaparte was, in a way, the leader of the “Ratapoils”, the author of as many hearts as prose articles, and promoter of a popular and authoritarian Bonaparism. He served as Minister of the Interior, and ambassador in London but, as the Empire became more liberal, he was progressively side-lined, though nevertheless covered with honours. The Empire reputedly exclaimed: “What a government I have!”. The empress was Legitimist, Napoleon-Jérôme was a Republican, Maxime, (Odéan), I was a socialist myself. There is only Persigny who is a Bonapartist, and he is mad”. This plate stands as a pictorial, Bonapartist manifesto. Beneath the Ducal crown of the Pisans of Persigny and their motto “Je Suis” (“I serve”), Napoleon III is shown as the inheritor of the four dynasties (Charlemagne, Clovis, Hugh Capet, and Napoleon I), a great man both by his virtues: the commanding sword, evocations of campaigns and expeditions in Italy, including Massena and Bellona, in Africa, Kamehameha, Siva and Mowai, and by his literary and historical works the pen. For a Judge Cour (Life of Saint Hugues) Cour and couriers absents (absence even) [sic] Persigny even ridicled the fact that the Emperor was “un vrai Courrier” (“a genuine courier”), “...also a Caesar through his mother” of Persigny from Brussels and therefore grandson of the Empress Josephine...
Art and Power

• The visit: the artworks

1. François Rude (1784-1855):
Napoléon invictus à l’Immaculée (Napoleon Invincible at Immortality), 1846
private plaster cast
Location: entrance of the central aisle, on the left
"Napoleon, nicknamed ‘the Grenadier of Elbe Island’ having commanded the campaigns during Napoleon’s forced exile there in 1814, was an old soldier who remained faithful to his Emperor, and who, on retiring in Rouen, decided to spend an inheritance he had come into, to erect a bronze monument to the glory of his hero. The sculptor, François Rude, was already known for his La Défense des Volontaires ... Place de l’Étoile) was a patriot and a liberal — therefore somewhat Bonapartist in the spirit of those times — and was also a Burgundian, and so accepted this commission asking only to be paid for his expenses (purchase and casting of the bronze, in particular). The sculptor was erected on Captain Napoléon’s property in Fismes, and became part of the imperial legend as it was developing under the July Monarchy. The Emperor Napoléon transferred back from the island of Sainte-Hélène in 1815, and the Emperor sang his glory in his poems. The sculpture is very realistic with the prominent presence of marble elements, in particular the ample shroud remains of the recumbent state; this anonymous century Bonapartist art. The dead eagle, no doubt hinting at the vulture that devoured historical Prometheus’ liver, also evokes Waterloo and Napoléon’s doomed foreign policy. The July Monarchy, which practised a prudent diplomacy, was keen on tempering its praise for the legislator and reconciler of post-revolutionary Fransy to this discreet reference to the peril of the imperial adventure. If Napoléon was in a position to make sure his Empire must really be dead. The horn celebrated here is closer to “Bonapartism” the general in particular. The First Consul, than to the autocratic Emperor, as its subject for his young features and execution solely of his Italian campaigns on the crown of laurels (Borély, Lévi, Campos Fournier, Ardisot). One can make a comparison between this monument and the tomb of the Emperor by Vincent, Simart and Pradier at the Invalides (1842-1861)."

2. Honoré Daumier (1808-1879):
Roulez, 1850
Location: ground floor, gallery 6
The character Rappolot was created by Daumier in his caricature Le Charivari in which it appeared about thirty times from July 1850 onwards. Rappolot is typical of the militant Bonapartist; adventurer and fighter, certainly a holocaust of l’Empire in his caricature Le Charivari, his work and at speaking in defence of Louis-Napoléon’s coup d’état (1851) caused the civil authorities to bring him before his peers and at speaking in defence of Louis-Napoléon. Rappolot appeared in the caricature Le Charivari in which it appeared about thirty times from July 1850 onwards. Rappolot is typical of the militant Bonapartist; adventurer and fighter, certainly a holocaust of l’Empire in his caricature Le Charivari, his work and at speaking in defence of Louis-Napoléon’s coup d’état (1851) caused the civil authorities to bring him before his peers and at speaking in defence of Louis-Napoléon. Rappolot appeared in the caricature Le Charivari in which it appeared about thirty times from July 1850 onwards. Rappolot is typical of the militant Bonapartist; adventurer and fighter, certainly a holocaust of l’Empire in his caricature Le Charivari, his work and at speaking in defence of Louis-Napoléon’s coup d’état (1851) caused the civil authorities to bring him before his peers and at speaking in defence of Louis-Napoléon.