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Le Carnet de France: La Rentrée 2024

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The Paris 2024 Olympics Games are over, the Paralympics are ending and many Parisians are looking forward to welcoming tourists back to the city. During July and August, museum attendances were down by 25 percent. Many hotels, restaurants and taxi drivers have also seen their patronage decline, but on the other hand, the Metro has been running better than normal and Paris was cleaner and safer than ever.

“La Rentrée” is the French term for the return to work and school in September each year. What does this year’s Rentrée offer us? Le Musée Jacquemart-André, located at 150 Boulevard Haussmann in Paris, not far from the Arc de Triomphe, is reopening on September 6, after a year of refurbishing. It is housed in one of the most beautiful mansions of Paris. Edouard André (1833-1894), a wealthy banker and collector, commissioned the architect, Henri Parent (1819-1895), to build his home in 1868, a project that lasted from 1869 to 1875. It’s possible to pass by the property without realizing how elegant it is, since the entrance is through a porte-cochère (a double paneled door wide enough for horses and carriages to enter). However, at the end of the passageway as you slowly walk up a wide round ramp, you’ll discover a beautiful garden leading to the magnificent entrance to the *Hôtel particulier* (private mansion).

In 1872, Edouard André, a Parisian born in a Protestant family, met the portraitist Nélie Jacquemart (1841-1912) who came from a modest provincial Catholic background. Edouard André ordered Nélie to paint his portrait. Being from such different backgrounds, it took almost a decade before they got married (keep in mind that this was during the 19th century). Both were extremely interested in art; Nélie was fascinated by the Italian Renaissance, and they traveled every year. They created a very rich art collection which visitors may admire in the sumptuous Hôtel where they lived and lavishly entertained guests. On the walls, visitors may admire paintings by Canaletto, Boucher, Chardin and many other famous artists. The ceiling of one of the salons was painted by Tiepolo and some pieces of furniture are signed by Riesener — not to mention the spectacular collection of tapestries and the sculptures.

The Musée is owned of the Institut de France (more about the Institut in a future article) and organizes a temporary exhibit every year. This fall’s exhibit is not to be missed: *Masterpieces* from the Borghese Gallery in Rome. The Borghese Gallery, a magnificent villa in Rome, will be going through major renovation this fall and as such is lending some of its more spectacular pieces to Jacquemart-André. Paintings by Caravaggio, Titian, Botticelli, Veronese, Raphael, Bernini and many other renowned artists will be shown exclusively between September 6 and January 5, 2025.

While admiring these treasures, you may wish to take a break in one of the dining-rooms of the Hôtel, such as Le Café Jacquemart-André, which (like the Musée) is open every day of the week (unlike



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Musée Jacquemart-André.

many other museums in Paris, which are closed on Tuesdays). To visit the exhibit, a reservation is highly recommended, and you may want to consider going early morning or late afternoon.

Should you be in Paris on a gray day, the Musée Yves Saint Laurent will be a site to visit at 5 Avenue Marceau, in the 8th Arrondissement. The new exhibit is entitled *The Flowers of Yves Saint Laurent*, running from September 20 to May 5, 2025. (The Musée YSL is closed on Mondays).

Yves Saint Laurent and his partner Pierre Bergé loved flowers. You may recall they saved one of the most beautiful gardens in the world, the Jardin Majorelle in Marrakech, Morocco. He was very inspired by flowers, represented in many fabrics used for his creations. Yves Saint Laurent’s favorite writer was Marcel Proust and many quotes from the famous novel *In Search of Lost Time* are displayed throughout the exhibit. In addition, the walls are adorned with works by the American artist Sam Falls (b. 1984), who also finds his inspiration in floral landscapes.

The Musée d’Orsay will exhibit some 70 paintings by Gustave Caillebotte from October 8 to January 19, 2025, to commemorate the 130th anniversary of his death. Caillebotte was born in Paris in 1848 and died in 1894. He is known for his paintings of the streets of Paris and of domestic and familial scenes, but he also painted many men standing, walking or working, leading to the theme chosen by the Musée d’Orsay: *Gustave Caillebotte: Peindre les hommes* (“painting men”).

In 1994, a major retrospective of his work was shown at the Grand Palais in Paris and in 1995 at The Art Institute in Chicago. Since then, Caillebotte has been regarded as one of the major Impressionist painters. (The Musée d’Orsay is also closed on Mondays). From October 16 to Febru-

ary 24, the Fondation Louis Vuitton will present *Pop Forever, Tom Wesselmann & ... , 2025* — an exhibition dedicated to Pop Art, one of the major artistic movements of the 1960s that continues influence art across all continents and generations. The exhibition will be centered around Tom Wesselmann (1931-2004), one of the leading figures of the movement and will feature a selection of 150 paintings and other works in various materials. The exhibition will also feature 70 works by 35 artists of different generations and nationalities who share a common sensibility for “Pop,” from its Dadaist roots to its contemporary manifestations and from the 1920s to the present day.” (Fondation Louis Vuitton presentation).

The Fondation Louis Vuitton opened 10 years ago, which is unbelievable. The incredible building in the middle of the Bois de Boulogne was designed by Frank Gehry and is worth a visit in itself. The Fondation is committed to present contemporary art works and has been extremely successful. A few past exhibits have presented Joan Mitchell, Cindy Sherman, Egon Schiele, Matisse and Ellsworth Kelly, but also *Being Modern: MoMA in Paris, Icons of Modern Art, the Shchukin Collection, The Courtauld Collection: A Vision for Impressionism*. Don’t forget that there is a convenient shuttle that goes from the Arc de Triomphe to the Fondation and back every 15 minutes.

Bonne Rentrée!

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