

Press release

Louvre - DNP Museum Lab

Fifth presentation in Tokyo

« Van Hoogstraten, *The Slippers*:
Experimenting with one's gaze »

December 6, 2008 to May 16, 2009



Samuel van Hoogstraten, *The Slippers*,
H. : 1,03 m. ; L. : 0,70 m, musée du Louvre
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The Louvre - DNP Museum Lab is a joint project begun by the musée du Louvre and Dai Nippon Printing (DNP) in 2006, and dedicated to the exploration of new approaches to artworks. This fifth presentation showcases a painting by Van Hoogstraten, *The Slippers*, one of the finest works in the Louvre's collection of Dutch paintings.

Visitors to the presentation have access to ICT (information and communication technology) tools designed to demonstrate Van Hoogstraten's lifelong reflection on space and fascination with the gaze; these tools help deepen the visitor's understanding of the painting and of the ways in which the artist manipulated the viewer's gaze.

About the work

Van Hoogstraten, a pupil of Rembrandt and contemporary of Vermeer, was one of the greatest Dutch painters of the 17th century—a period known as the Golden Age. The interior represented in *The Slippers* is typical of Dutch genre scenes, but is highly unusual for the absence of human figures. Longstanding uncertainty about its date and the identity of its painter sparked a multitude of interpretations—another artist's signature was even added to the painting in the 19th century. However, it is now recognized on several accounts as a Van Hoogstraten masterpiece, in which the painter made bold use of optical effects and original ways of representing space, guiding the viewer's gaze to convey an extraordinary sensation of depth.

Visiting the presentation; multimedia displays

• **Museum Lab Reception**

Visitors to Museum Lab are given their pre-reserved guidance tools at Reception, and can select one of three languages (Japanese, French and English) for the audio commentary. Three types of guidance tool are available: a cell phone audio guide, a cell phone incorporating an Augmented Reality* system, and an ultra-portable PC using Augmented Reality (AR-UMPC) with a guide tailored to younger visitors (aged about twelve)—a humorous tribute to Dominique-Vivant Denon, the first director of the Louvre, who appears as an animated character over the real image captured by the device's built-in camera.

*AR, Augmented reality : a new technology that makes it possible to combine real and virtual images.

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- **Presentation room**

The fifth Museum Lab presentation showcases *The Slippers*, by Samuel Van Hoogstraten. After using the various multimedia displays in the presentation, visitors are encouraged to go back and observe the painting afresh, to see to what extent the information they have gleaned has changed their original perception of the work.

Share your impressions

During their observation of the painting, visitors can express their personal impressions or interpretations by choosing from a selection of words on a touch screen.

- **Theater**

A multilingual audio commentary is provided in the Theater, with a system combining a WiFi network, a bone conduction headset, and an audio guidance tool. So in addition to the principal language (Japanese) broadcast by high definition speakers, audio commentaries can be transmitted simultaneously in the additional languages (French and English).

Discover 17th-century Holland

The 17th century in Holland is known as the Golden Age. During this period the country experienced a major economic boom, and the arts flourished.

- **Foyer**

Step into the painting

The presentation includes a human-size reconstruction of the interior represented in *The Slippers*, in the form of an interactive projection based on 2.5D technology—a computer graphic process that makes it possible to reproduce the impression of perspective thanks to the various planes that make up the scene. Visitors can move freely around this area as if they have stepped into the painting, and physically perceive how Van Hoogstraten treated space in his painting.

Study the painter's techniques

Visitors can use a multimedia display in the form of a work table on which a reproduction of the painting appears; by manipulating this image, they gradually understand the techniques used in *The Slippers* to represent space, such as perspective and the play of light and shadow. Users of this resource can record photographs of their work at various stages, and have these pictures printed before leaving Museum Lab.

Exploring the possible meanings of the work

A 65-inch liquid crystal touch screen enables visitors to explore various motifs that may have symbolic value. Explanatory comments are provided, and users are encouraged to question the need to look for hidden meanings.



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Meet the artist

The painter's life is illustrated by a program of images highlighting the creativity that characterizes his art. A purpose-designed space is provided where visitors can take their time to view the main works featured in the film. Museum Lab has also reconstructed a perspective box—a one-of-a-kind tool that the artist used for his experiments with the gaze—allowing visitors to experience some amazing optical illusions. A built-in ultra-miniature projector reserves a surprise for visitors equipped with the AR-UMPC guidance tool...

Your impressions

The terms selected on the "share your impressions" resource in the Presentation room are processed according to frequency of selection, and projected onto a wall of the Foyer in the form of a word cloud. This allows visitors to share their impressions and interpretations, and perhaps discover that the same painting can mean different things to different people.

Situate the painting in the Louvre's collections and in its time

Museum Lab presents the prototype of a system co-developed by Mr. Hiroshi Ishii (Assistant Director of Media Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), the Musée du Louvre, and DNP. When users select the reproduction of an artwork that interests them on a touch screen, a group of works with shared visual characteristics appears; visitors can thus refine their perception by identifying the links between these works. The base contains some 150 artworks corresponding to three groups relevant to *The Slippers*: genre painting, 17th-century European painting, and the De Croy collection.

The Louvre - DNP Museum Lab project is the result of collaboration between Dai Nippon Printing (DNP) and the Musée du Louvre. Its aim is to explore new approaches to artworks, particularly through the use of multimedia tools. The innovative design of the Museum Lab presentations combines cultural outreach expertise and the results of research undertaken by the Musée du Louvre. The presentations are orchestrated using information and imaging technologies operated by DNP.

Six different multimedia presentations are scheduled between 2006 and 2009 on the DNP premises in Tokyo. Each exhibition is scheduled for a 6-month duration, and is supplemented by on-site lectures, screenings and workshops. The project website, museumlabor.eu, provides a follow-up to the presentations.

Address:
 Louvre - DNP Museum Lab
 DNP-Gotanda Building, Ground Floor
 Nishi Gotanda, 3-5-20,
 Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo

Opening period :
 December 6, 2008 to May 16, 2009

Opening times :
 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 5 to 7 p.m.
 Wednesday, Friday: 5 to 8.30 p.m.
 Saturday: 11 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.
 Closed Sundays and public holidays.

**Reservation compulsory
 (admission free)**

Information and reservation:
 On line :
<http://museumlabor.eu>
 By telephone :
 +81(0)3 54 35 08 80,
 Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
 Saturday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The website museumlabor.eu

The information needed to prepare a visit to Louvre-DNP Museum Lab can be found on the Museum Lab website (<http://museumlabor.eu>). Visitors can review their own visit afterwards thanks to the code on their admission ticket.