Musée universitaire de Louvain

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UCL Université catholique de Louvain

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About the Musée L.....
The first large-scale university museum in Belgium/ a university of culture / a DNA Musée L / 3 missions...2 - 4

Architecture
Transforming a library into a museum / building site and moving works .....5 - 7

Financing : public subsidies and sponsorship, a fruitful dynamic.....8

Museographical et scenographical journey
Resources (library and LabArt) / scenography / 5 themes journey .....9 - 12

The rich and astonishing collections
History / permanent collections .....13 - 14

The Musée L, an experience for all visitors
Guesthouse / accessibility, visitors & events / digital tools (media guide) .....15 - 17

Launch programme.....18

Programme of temporary exhibitions 2017-2018.....19

Project calendar .....20

The Musée L in figures .....21

Practical informations.....22

Louvain-la-Neuve, an outstanding setting.....23-24

Guided tours and events programme .....25

Press contacts and sources .....26

**Contacts presse :** Isabelle Decoster (attachée de presse UCL) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 88 70 / +32(0)486 42 62 20 / Isabelle.decoster@uclouvain.be / www.uclouvain.be/presse | Sylvie De Dryver (attachée de presse Musée L) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 48 47 / +32 (0)476 766 755 / sylvie.dedryver@uclouvain.be www.museel.be/fr/presse

## *Musée L, a calculated risk*

*Before becoming home to its outstanding collections, the Musée L was conceived and nurtured by UCL (Université Catholique de Louvain) which made a considerable investment in political, financial and technical terms to ensure its treasures were showcased to their best advantage.*

*A major decision was made for the Musée L's future: to place it in the emblematic building of the Bibliothèque des Sciences et des Technologies. It was a huge project and operational brainteaser but a real opportunity, because this transformation of the 'upper town' as a result of these new undertakings was an occasion to rethink the BST and to improve access to the upper town (in particular by building a walkway) and of course to pave the way for the metamorphosis of the current Musée L.*

*A successful joint sponsorship made the emergence of the Musée L possible. In addition to subsidies obtained from the public authorities such as Walloon Brabant Province, the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, the Walloon Region and others, a tenacious team of researchers made it their mission to raise awareness, spread the word and draw enthusiasm from private sponsors. It was a delicate and complex enterprise in the context of the recession in recent years.*

*These researchers' dedication bore fruit. The budget to be financed was €9.7m, excluding landscaping, and was found with the following breakdown of sponsorship: Private: 32%; Corporate: 20%; Foundations, Funds, etc. : 9%; Institutions: 39%.*

*Over these past 5 years, UCL has therefore led an all-new approach to seeking funding and has also established a true relationship of trust with its sponsors. Today, a large network of economic, political, cultural and university partners are celebrating the opening of the Musée L.*

*The 'L' of our Museum obviously refers to Louvain as well as to the word 'link'…*

*A link between many stakeholders working towards an ambitious project and diverse communities : university, local, regional, provincial and international.*

*A link with a whole project team that has been created with architects, engineers, members of the cultural community of course, museographers, scenographers, collection curators, prospectors, communications staff, etc.*

*A link with a public space in the midst of cultural reinvigoration,*

*Soon a link with the public in the broad sense of the term, who will shortly enter this greatly anticipated Musée L and will turn this new page in its history with us.*

***Dominique Opfergelt, UCL general administrator***

## *The first large-scale university museum in Belgium*

UCL's new museum, Musée L, will open on 18 November 2017 in an outstanding building and Louvain-la-Neuve's architectural beacon, designed by Belgian architect André Jacqmain. After two and a half years of renovation works, UCL will open the very first large-scale university museum in Belgium, with more than 3,830 m² accessible to the public. What are its special features? The dialogue that will be established between UCL's unique artistic and scientific collections and the 3 labs where the public can explore the works through substantive and technical approaches. The museum's future spaces are part of an intention to become a "guesthouse", a welcoming place that is open to all, where everything is possible. For its first exhibition, the Musée L will welcome the artist Barthélémy Toguo, who is engaged in human realities.

Moving through the doors of Musée L, you encounter science and art in a thousand forms. Behind the new UCL museum, covering more than 5,000m2, of which 3,830m2 is open to the public, is the will to make the university's heritage accessible to the public, to question it about its understanding of the world, to arouse emotion and to give it the desire to pioneer. How coherent are the collections? Such diversity, between the Antiquity, Modern Art, Popular Art, Etchings, Non-European Objects, Castings and the Sciences has its place because this is a university museum. From the 13th century, universities were the first institutions to gather objects and create collections, called 'museums'.

*"In the Museum, we look at works of art and ancient objects and are looked at ourselves; we are spoken to by them. Because they carry the memory, the gestures, the beliefs, the imaginings, the perception and the sensitivity of the artists, researchers and communities who fashion us in depth and breadth as humans. We are connected and situated in relation to one another as human beings in the visible and invisible, material and spiritual world". Anne Querinjean, Musée L director*

## *A museum in a university of culture*

*"UCL has chosen to be a university of culture. Culture forms an integral part of the university education. It's one of the ways of questioning the very heart of studies and research. Sharing knowledge and questions, dialogue and the circulation of ideas, respecting differences and being open to diversity: in this way, culture, just like teaching and research, helps the emancipation of mankind and their acquisition of intellectual independence: daring to think for themselves and free themselves from imposed truths." Vincent Blondel, UCL rector*

It is not insignificant that UCL is the first Belgian university to open a museum covering more than 5,000m². The Catholic University of Louvain is a 'university of culture', a university that places culture at the very heart of its approach and its identity. For more than ten years, UCL has established a cultural policy that places culture and art within the university life and education. This bold policy goes beyond hosting cultural events. In this perspective, UCL Culture develops varied missions: it hosts and supervises artists in residence (a unique project in Belgium); develops artistic practice workshops for the university community, encourages the deployment of cultural projects led by students and members of staff; supports various cultural venues, including the Musée L, and finally, schedules a bold, demanding, multi-disciplinary and multi-site cultural season.

The opening of the new Musée L, planned for 18 November 2017, fits in perfectly with this ambition. The works of art, objects from civilisations and scientific inventions creating a dialogue there will enable one to "look at man as a creator, an inventor relying on tradition to find meaning in his life, modify reality, make his mark and therefore build culture", explains Anne Querinjean, Musée L director. In sharing knowledge, questions and dialogue, by spreading ideas, respecting differences and being open to diversity, more than ever, culture at the university must encourage invention and creativity instead of passive consumption.

**Musée L for Louvain University Museum.**

This name embodies a living university heritage and a history shared with KULeuven. L for Louvain, to emphasise the 'Louvain brand', an emblem of UCL since 1425. Through its right-angled triangular and upright shape, the L also expresses solidity, anchorage and pronounced like the French for 'wing' – 'aile' it conveys openness; it breaks down barriers, like the principle of dialogue between the works on display. These are two necessary and complementary dimensions that art reinvigorates.

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**Contacts presse :** Isabelle Decoster (attachée de presse UCL) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 88 70 / +32(0)486 42 62 20 / Isabelle.decoster@uclouvain.be / www.uclouvain.be/presse | Sylvie De Dryver (attachée de presse Musée L) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 48 47 / +32 (0)476 766 755 / sylvie.dedryver@uclouvain.be www.museel.be/fr/presse

## A "MUSÉE L DNA"

In 1979, UCL Professor Ignace Vandevivere, specialist in art history and a central figure in museum history, created the Musée du Dialogue in Louvain-la-Neuve. His vision of the museum was a forum open to the public on the theme of dialogue between cultures, which created a huge legacy by diversifying the collections.

Today's Musée L is the result of important decisions that have changed its destiny. The decision to transform the former Bibliothèque des Sciences et Technologies into a museum of the 21st century, and the decision to join scientific heritage with artistic heritage, has created a new impetus, a new 'Musée L' experience for visitors. Anne Querinjean, Musée L director, and her whole team amplified this concept of dialogue by extending it to the sciences, by setting up little known and new collections and by creating themed reading while prioritising experimentation and direct contact with the works. This forms the DNA of today's, transformed, Musée L.

*Integrating the didactic and scientific collections*

The scientific and didactic collections of the Musée L, newly integrated in the permanent exhibition, are the result of 19th century teaching reform. In parallel to the creation of new schools and faculties, contact between the student and the material was encouraged at this time. To achieve this, the teaching body brought the outside world to the university. Among the various objects, castings or originals, gathered within the collections that the professors surrounded themselves with to teach, are minerals and fossils as well as classical antiques, anatomical collections, collections of photographs on glass plates, microscopic samples, herbariums or a zoological cabinet, etc. A precious testimony to the way in which knowledge was transmitted in former times.

Research takes pride of place too within the Musée L. The story of the University is told through the passion of a few of its most famous researchers. Three histories form one: the history of science, the history of the University and its scientific legacy, a legacy that is very diverse both in terms of the disciplines and the collection of observation and measurement instruments used by researchers in the past (microscope, spectrometer, electric egg, etc.). This work to incorporate the scientific and didactic legacy was the result of collaboration between several parties within UCL: the faculties, the research institutes and researchers, the archives and the museum.

*"The new museum is a new breath of air, a positive impetus. It's a change of framework that creates a change of habitual practices and encourages us to be more creative. Not only do we have the opportunity for our collections, which are already extensive, to be seen in a wonderful setting, but we are diversifying with pieces from scientific collections, which truly add value."* Elisa de Jacquier, collections manager, Musée L Exhibitions & Publishing Department

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## A laboratory museum

The Musée L, university museum of Louvain, has three roles: to enhance the university's collections in museographical, educational and scientific terms. It is therefore both a museum serving society and a teaching and research centre. The Musée L is a cultural place for meeting and discovering 'others' and their culture, not only for visitors but for UCL students, teachers and researchers. The collections are available to be studied, analysed and discussed in lessons, seminars, conferences or various scientific activities. The new Musée L spaces have been designed to develop, energise and facilitate these collaborations. Library, seminar room, auditorium and reserves are accessible to members of the faculties and research institutes to work directly in interaction with the works and collection objects. Seminars by UCL artists in residence will be held in the future as well as temporary exhibitions developed by university students, professors or research groups. The Musée L is a real museum-laboratory, a special place to diversify knowledge and stimulate curiosity, creativity and critical thinking.

One of the decisions that formed the DNA of the Musée L, was the move to transform the former UCL Bibliothèque des Sciences et Technologies into a 21st century museum. An ambitious project for all those involved.

## *Architecture : transforming a library into a museum*

The place des Sciences, the primary emblematic location of the new university campus, was designed and landscaped as a place for meeting and dialogue. Wherever one is in the square, one's glance moves to the former library, now the Musée L. This is no coincidence, because its architect, André Jacqmain, was asked to give the bibliothèque des Sciences et Technologies a symbolic dimension to signify a university invigorated by the transfer to Louvain-la-Neuve. This is why the building is monumental.

Designed and built from 1972 to 1973, from an architectural point of view, the building is characteristic of an atypical style that one could call 'sculptural concrete', through the use of volumes of non-rectilinear rough concrete. Yet André Jacqmain broke with custom in choosing a sloping roof in the contemporary fashion for flat roofs in the 70's. Based on a formwork construction system, this modernist architectural style has virtually never been used since. In the great tradition of leading architects who have designed libraries, André Jacqmain worked on the interior spaces with an intimist approach, which is in contrast with the overall monumental appearance.

*"I had to draw out its own reasons, fashion its originality and, if possible, go beyond a functional response by giving the project emotion and even mystery. There are abundant examples of very beautiful libraries. With the clearly deliberate slant of its large roof, the library is a work that displays a different kind of modernity."* ***André Jacqmain, architect, 2007***

### *Exterior renovations*

In principle, this remarkable yet very typical architecture was not conducive to housing a museum. The library had to be transformed carefully to preserve, or even emphasise the qualities of the building, while allowing for a new purpose.

This mission was entrusted by UCL to two of its own architects, Michel le Paige and Carole Deferière, who were given a free hand. First of all, they met with the architect André Jacqmain to consult him about the possible renovations to the building for its new use. The latter was delighted about opening the venue to the public, although he was a little sceptical given the scope of the challenge, and gave them total freedom of action.

What was the architects' primary aim? To enhance the existing legacy while formulating key choices to meet the museum's needs relating to collections and visitors. The architects' mission: To improve the layout and create natural light so that the space and works could be enjoyed without constraint.

*"We chose extremely simple language by reducing the materials used in order to exacerbate the presence of concrete as in the architect André Jacqmain's initial concept. We wanted contemporary architecture that followed pure and discreet lines, while improving the building's energy performance and its accessibility, to suit its new purpose."*
***Michel le Paige and Carole Deferière, UCL architects***

**Contacts presse :** Isabelle Decoster (attachée de presse UCL) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 88 70 / +32(0)486 42 62 20 / Isabelle.decoster@uclouvain.be / www.uclouvain.be/presse | Sylvie De Dryver (attachée de presse Musée L) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 48 47 / +32 (0)476 766 755 / sylvie.dedryver@uclouvain.be www.museel.be/fr/presse

The roof was raised by 12cm for better insulation. New window frames have been installed and their form has been modified to allow as much light as possible to enter and improve the insulation privided by the roof. Furthermore, by working on a building that is more than 40 years old, the functional and technical constraints have required consideration regarding the scheduling, safety requirements, etc. For all this work, the architects have been supported by two specialist design offices, one, Greisch, for stability, the other, DTS for special techniques.

Among the **most remarkable features**, the architects decided to opt for:

- **A new main entrance.** The notion of reception, essential for a museum, led the private entrances on the Place des Sciences side to be abandoned to make way for a broad recess that embraces an entrance hall, via a double-height airlock entrance. This new entrance, on the North façade, literally 'opens' the museum to the outside with the addition of large bay windows. It is no less than a 90° rotation from the existing layout providing better visibility and spatial interpretation.

- **Adding a goods lift.** Installing a goods lift that serves all the floors in order to move display items was essential. The architects chose to add new volume to the East façade, as well as an additional emergency exit. This volume is added on to the building to avoid destroying the remarkable interior spaces without modifying the emblematic façade on the West side. It has been designed identically to the original façades, in rough concrete with batten formwork. It is slightly detached from the building with two vertical wall chases.

The library also extended into the neighbouring building. The museum's surface area needs meant that this principle had to be kept, in order to provide for the administrative offices, temporary exhibition spaces and reception rooms. The public liaison between two buildings was maintained with the existing walkway but modified to create an event when walking along this passage. For this purpose, the cover was replaced by a glass roof providing a burst of light and a view of the sky. The private liaison (reserved for museum staff) was installed to meet circulation needs as well as to increase the museum's presence on the Place des Sciences and more specifically to direct one's glance towards the museum entrance. This work is incorporated in the existing architecture through the use of rough concrete identical to the concrete in the buildings, but is distinguished by the lightness of weight, provided by suspending the floor from the roof, to give it minimal thickness.

*Interior spaces*

Inside, clear choices were also made to follow the guiding thread, which is 'more clarity and legibility'. Libraries are by nature confined spaces. Yet, one must be able to see the whole area when one is in it, to always have a view of the outside. When the entrance was designed, becoming lateral, questions arose: "how will one circulate through the building?", "how will the visitor avoid getting lost?" The result is the fruit of mature reflection to guarantee optimal management of exhibition spaces and good circulation for the public and the display items. The change of entrance was studied to enable visitors to see more clearly where they are and thereby facilitate access, while creating an inviting reception area. Developments were also made to accommodate disabled persons and ensure they have easy access to the museum on all floors.

In general, the interior architectural choice was to highlight the concrete structures and spaces. To reinforce their limits, the external walls were coated and painted white, contrasting slightly with the grey concrete and 'lighting up' the internal limits. A minimum of different materials were used, concentrating on concrete (existing), glass and metal – three noble materials in architecture.

One size constraint was the low ceilings on the upper floors, which are 2.20 metres high when the minimal standard height is 2.5m. This is a complication that makes the choice of lighting complex because when there is low-placed lighting, it may be blinding. Another obstacle: there is no screed or plaster to hide the pipes. So they must be left visible. Also, when there is a more confined environment, there is limited air renewal. Yet this is essential within a museum. The architects demonstrated much ingenuity to overcome all these challenges, and successfully incorporate the lighting, ventilation and heating systems.

The involvement of the firm Kinkorn, in charge of museum scenography for floors housing the permanent collection, enabled the architects to come into contact with lighting specialists, and the selected a highly expert Italian supplier. Therefore, the lighting is provided on short rail sections installed systematically in the ceilings. They are so delicate that they do not create shadows. It was possible to reduce the heating to a strict minimum, by removing the heating units from the exhibition spaces, having high-performance roof insulation and replacing all the building frames. Ventilation was kept in the original copper casings and in conduits with grilles displaying the museum's logo.

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The architects stuck to their central theme and explored their concept to the limit, boldly retaining the rough concrete, the use of steel and black elements to create contrast and fit in with the scenography. It was done with a nod to Jules Wabbes, the designer behind the original fitting out of the bibliothèque des sciences et technologies and partner to André Jacqmain, because the door handles were kept, as well as the banisters, the monumental heating duct, the reception desk and the few library corner chairs. Other items of Wabbes fittings were re-used in the architecture, architectural engineering and urban planning faculties – Saint-Gilles and Tournai LOCI.

*Museum surrounds*

Special attention was given to the surrounds of the Musée L. A new car park for Musée L visitors, with one bus alighting area, was built. A small garden that, in time, could accommodate sculptures, surrounds the museum. All this creates a pleasant and practical approach to accessing the large pedestrian entrance to the Musée L. Finally, the place des Sciences, also designed by the architect Jacqmain and suitable for hosting outdoor events, is an urban extension of the Musée L which will play a cultural role in the city.

*Musée L, at the heart of a new cultural and tourist centre*

The proximity of the Musée L, the Ferme de Biéreau and the Point Culture (book/game/media library) creates a new cultural centre within the city. The creation of a tourist portal for all visitors to Louvain-la-Neuve therefore makes sense. The museum is also located in a neighbourhood with plenty of student events, in the midst of the UCL student associations and beside the Salmigondis concert venue, which hosts activities throughout the year by 'kots à projet' – theme-based flat shares – precious contributors to cultural and voluntary life. The Avenue du jardin botanique will become the entrance to the city via pedestrian streets (without having to go under the urban centre underground passages). Approaching the museum from the Pont Neuf and the place Galilée enables the visitor to discover it through its emblematic façade. First of all, they have the opportunity to appreciate the architectural complex of the Place des Sciences before crossing it and entering the museum.

To reinvigorate the upper town and especially the shops, the neighbourhood was redesigned by UCL architects and town planners. The adjacent place des Sciences has also undergone major renovation. The junctions between the different parts of the town will be improved to free up access to the museum and prioritise gentle methods of transport (bikes and pedestrians). Several roads have been and will be developed: a new walkway connecting the Musée L and the place Louis Pasteur, where the new bibliothèque des sciences et technologies is located, was inaugurated in May 2017, as the logical link between two libraries. In future, a pedestrian street will connect the Pont Neuf to the place Polyvalente, and the rue and place des Wallons - place des Sciences – place Sainte-Barbe axis should be extended towards the Croix du Sud and the UCL scientific park.

## *Building site and moving works*

The renovation project, managed by the general contractor TRADECO, began in 2015 and was completed during the spring 2017, at which point the Musée L began the scenography and movement of 32,000 objects which form part of it. This project, which lasted nearly 2 and a half years involved 50 people each day.

Moving the oversized works was planned over several months. The volume moved was estimated at 530 m³. It was also an opportunity to examine the collections: the works department team examined the 1,500 pieces to be exhibited in the Museum: hygiene report, presentation report, checking the conservation condition, quality, authenticity of works, etc. The largest pieces were moved with a crane – an impressive sight!

**The removals figures:** **800** crates, transported by **80** lorries (journeys), placed on **180** pallets, wrapped in **5.4km** of plastic film.

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# FINANCING : PUBLIC SUBSIDIES AND SPONSORSHIP, A FRUITFUL DYNAMIC

To make the transformation of the Musée L possible, UCL has led an all-new approach to seeking funding during these past 5 years. Managed successively by the rectors Bruno Delvaux and Vincent Blondel and by the general administrator Dominique Opfergelt, the joint sponsorship undertaking was a considerable endeavour to gather the 9.7 million euros needed to make the project reality.

In addition to the subsidies obtained from the public authorities such as the Walloon Brabant Province, the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, the Walloon Region and other, UCL approached sponsors to arouse their interest in being involved in this ambitious project, in cultural, architectural and educational terms.

Raising awareness, presenting the Musée L with enthusiasm and building this vision together were the daily tasks of the team led by the general administrator for 5 years. It was a human adventure and an opportunity for UCL to establish a trusting relationship with its sponsors. Today, a large network of economic, political, cultural and university partners is celebrating the opening of the Musée L, and the start of a new adventure.

**Musée L financing in figures**
The financial budget was **9.7 million euros** excluding the surrounds, or **7.4 million** for the building renovation and **2.3** million for the scenography. This sum was gathered with the following sponsorship breakdown :
- Private sponsorship **: 32%** ;
- Corporate : **20%** ;
- Foundations, Funds, etc. : **9%** ;
- Institutions : **39%.**

## *The Musée L sponsors and partners*

Bauchau family, Mr and Mrs Lucien Beauduin, Mrs Micheline Boyadjian, Solange and Robert de Baerdemaeker-Carnoy, Daniel and Vinciane de Callatay-Franck, Sir and Lady Guy de Cordes, Mr Jacques Crahay, Professor and Mrs Marc Crommelinck, M. and J. D.-C., Mr Edouard Descampe, Mr and Mrs Philippe Duvieusart and family, Mr and Mrs Bernard Fierens Gevaert, Mrs Marie-Madeleine Genicot (†), Mrs Marie-Marguerite d'Hooghe, Mr and Mrs d'Hoore, Mr Kervyn de Marcke ten Driessche, Baron (†) and Baroness Lamfalussy, Mrs Marie-Louise Manoyer (†), du Monceau family, Mr and Mrs Jacques Moulaert, Querinjean-van Cutsem family, Mr Alain Schockert, Mr and Mrs Bernard Van den Driessche, Mr Georges Walckiers, Mr Luc Willame, Amicale des retraités de l'UCL, Les Amis du Musée de L,

Les Anciens et Amis de l'UCL (AUL), Baillet Latour Archive, John Cluysenaar Foundation, Denise et Christian De Boeck Foundation, Louvain Foundation, Jean Praet Archive, Sedes Sapientiae Foundation – Legacy of Baron and Baroness Cecil de Strycker, Michel Woitrin Trust
AGC Glass Europe, AXA, BNP Paribas Fortis, Caisse d'épargne Hauts de France, Candriam, Cercle du Lac, De Graeve, Banque Degroof Petercam, Entreprises Jacques Delens, Duravit, Immobilière Guido Eckelmans, Eternit, Ginion Group, Immo Tilleul, Innovity, Nivel Invest, UCM, UI-Europe (United Investment Europe SA)

Belgian National Lottery, Walloon Brabant Province, Walloon Region, Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles

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## *The new Musée L, a human creation*

*"The Musée L as I see it is a place for special meetings.*
*It involves 3 components : a building that is a significant architectural achievement, astonishing collections and visitors from all backgrounds and their culture. As museum director and part of a team, our challenge was to bring these three components so they could harmonise together, resonate and dialogue with one another".*

*This is therefore a creation. And this creation is in essence a collective act, a human adventure. As architects, scenographer and museum staff, we work with the monumental force of rough concrete architecture, in a dialogue with a huge variety of objects and artwork, so that the public will be moved, their thoughts stirred and they will question, come together and grow in humanity. Creating a museum is defining a space removed from the noise of the city, a time to dream, to find oneself or be renewed, to act for the future, for human beings, to stand up, enlightened by beauty or by the awe that stimulates change.*

*I have a conviction that is increasingly precious in our changing societies: seeing art humanises us, it enables us to develop qualities for dialogue and peace, to open paths that are already beaten and intuited by artists, poets, musicians, researchers and sages from all cultures.*
*Inspired by these beliefs, it was nonetheless necessary to translate them with the fabulous diversity of the collections that the Musée L conserves.*

*We worked for nearly 2 years in a team in workshops, assisted by Martine Thomas-Bourgneuf, accomplished museographer, to find guiding principles that would enable visitors to connect and give meaning to the objects and artworks presented. A cross-functional themed journey emerged. One morning, it became clear and simple without being simplistic, broad without being vague, structured without being restrictive. It invites people to meet and converse unsystematically.*

*The museographical journey is designed as a narrative in time and space. It invites the visitor to experience five states that push mankind to invent and create. These are five human approaches which are part of the long history of man and at work in all cultures. They are five actions loaded with expression and intelligence that modify our interaction with reality: feeling wonder, questioning, passing on, being moved and contemplating. The journey through the permanent exhibition is not therefore chronological even if there are a few historical references. It places the visitor in the shoes of a curious man, who wants to understand the world's complexity, beauty and mystery.*

*In the vast space on the 2nd floor, there are three experiences for visitors: feeling wonder while being immersed in a black box so as to be amazed with the world's incredible diversity. Beyond wonder, children and adults need to understand and relentlessly ask questions like researchers who, in the white light of a laboratory, made scientific progress with their passion and rigour; to continue the long human history of knowledge sharing, passing it on requires tools; writing and calculation are among these. The diversity of writing in many cultures and the ingenuity of calculation machines are presented.*
*However, so many fields, doubts and flashes of brilliance can only be approached through artists' emotions and sensitivity, serving their community: death, life, suffering, mystery, meaning, beauty and the invisible. Art can shed light on these questions without answers. On the 3rd, 4th and 5th floors, daily objects or outstanding works of art transgress the rules to create newness. They dazzle the visitor. On the 6th floor, without the further silent discourse or music of objects ancient or distant cultures, modern artwork is a poetic invitation to contemplation in the intimacy of the collection of a great art lover.*

*As a university museum, I hope that students and their teachers will be at home here. An entire floor, the 1st, will enable them to study, to teach, to consult, to exhibit, to analyse and to develop projects in a behind-the-scenes atmosphere. Not to mention access to the reserves which, as you know, have a lot more works than those on display.*

*This museum that has been so anticipated, considered and developed is for you, to enjoy without moderation."*

***Anne Querinjean, Musée L director***

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## *5 stages, 5 themes for exploring the heart of the Musée L*

### *Scenography: simplicity and enhancement of the architecture*

Following a public tender, the firm Kinkorn was chosen to design the Musée L's scenography. This specialist agency, based in the Netherlands, had also already designed elements of scenography for the Museum Catharijne Convent (Utrecht) and MAS (Antwerp). The watchwords are to conserve and enhance the exceptional architecture of the building designed by André Jacqmain through the simple use of natural materials, in particular through the furnishings, and the wonderful lighting. Nothing to interfere with the dialogue that is built and evolves between the building, the works and the visitors. The colours chosen are black and white for their timelessness and elegance. In terms of the materials, blackened steel, leather and wool carpets (for better sound insulation) complement the architectural elements that are so characteristic of the former library, including the main component, concrete. The careful production of glass panes, plinths and lettering is the work of the Belgian company Potteau, which is also responsible for the scenographic devices of the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren on which work is in progress. Items are tailor made for each collection piece, in accordance with the designs created by the scenographer architects.

*"Rich with scientific objects and artworks, the museum collections are testimonies to the expression of human life and man's determined desire to grasp and understand the world: researching, experimenting and creating. The scenographical stance places the visitor in the shoes of this researcher, through his questions, about the world and the answers he gives through his experiments and creations. Each exhibition level addresses them through a permanent dialogue between the collections and between each one and the public. Various mediations are put in place to shed light on collections with authenticity and originality."*
*Maarten Mevis, Kinkorn*

©Kinkorn

### *Museographical journey: 5 themes for a voyage of encounters*

The permanent exhibition unfolds over 2,100m2 and 5 floors. It invites the visitor to experience 5 themes which push man to invent and create. The collections are sequenced for one to experience, as a human being, what amazes us and creates our questions and attachments, causing our hearts to beat and giving us memories.

- Feeling wonder
  To reveal the incredible diversity of the world is the aim of the large cabinet of curiosity developed from a fusion of objects taken from all the Musée L's collections. From a globe in old wood to a preserved flamingo and the anatomical reproduction of a skinned horse from the beginning of the 20th century, each object chosen with care by the museum team creates wonder. Weird, wonderful and quirky pieces greet the visitor in this 'black-box' on the second floor, a modern interpretation of the 16th century curiosities cabinet which plays both on the objects' aesthetics and the variety of shapes.
- Questioning
  After being dazzled by the black-box, the visitor needs to understand the world and joins the passionate researchers who revolutionised science. The questions of these key university figures are explored with archives and instruments of measurement and observation, objects with their own beauty and witnesses to scientific progress. Videos on touchscreen tablets place the issues in a modern context and appeal to visitors.

And research today? A film, written and directed by Pierre-Paul Renders, leads the visitor into current research topics and the motivations of UCL scientists. Humorous sequences and graphical animations are a dynamic showcase for the testimonies of around twenty UCL researchers who respond to the challenges of a changing word with passion and rigour. The film jostles and moves the viewer, who discovers the links between a scientific approach and an artistic quest.

The journey surrounding questioning continues with a reflection on the origin of humanity. From geology to palaeontology and archaeology, sedimentary rocks to fossilised species, from the production of the first tools to the emergence of prolific art creation, three disciplines recount this long history. Anthropology, through objects gathered, questions cultures and the rites of traditional medicinal practice. A choice of ornamental items is presented as evidence of everyday life or elements of identity. Shamans, soothsayers, ritualists, herbalists, etc. healers reveal their secrets through a collection of objects, jewels, instruments and photographic portraits, brought back from faraway locations in Asia and South America.

## *The 1st floor illustrates the museum's university role*

The first floor presents the features and specific purposes of a university museum. In a behind-the-scenes atmosphere, research, analysis, a teaching room and a library are available to visitors.

### *The small natural history cabinet*

In the resources centre, is the small natural history cabinet, a didactic space populated with stuffed animals, which used to exist in the former Bibliothèque des Sciences et Technologies. The Musée L decided to maintain this teaching tool designed for observing and handling specimens. Dedicated to children, to pupils, to teachers and to students, it enables one to learn through observation and telling stories in a first hand and relaxed environment.

### *The library*

A library designed as a resource centre gives access to books relating to the collections. These books are either general or very specific because they come from the donors' libraries. They can be read on appointment.

### *The LabArt*

On the 1st floor of the brand new Musée L, is the UCL LabArt, the 'Artwork study laboratory', created in the 60s by Professor Roger van Schoute which can be accessed on appointment or as part of guided tours. The aim of the LabArt is to offer an artwork expertise service to society. What's new? The work of the LabArt is at the heart of the new museum and is therefore gaining visibility. But who are the LabArt clients and what is their motivation? It is varied: as part of estate distribution, for example, to find out a bit more about one's inheritance, or at the request of an artwork salesroom or restorer… The laboratory manager is Jacqueline Couvert. Art historian and chemist, she analyses the work entrusted to the LabArt (essentially easel paintings) using specialist appliances, both from a stylistic and material angle. Concretely, after an initial opinion, if the parties decide to continue the analysis, Jacqueline Couvert carries out an in-depth study using non-invasive techniques: stereomicroscopy, ultraviolet fluorescence, reflectography, infrared, radiography and micro x-ray fluorescence, which culminates in potential authentication and dating.

LÉGENDES :
- Zone publique/accueil
- Expositions permanentes
- Expositions temporaires

**Contacts presse :** Isabelle Decoster (attachée de presse UCL) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 88 70 / +32(0)486 42 62 20 / Isabelle.decoster@uclouvain.be / www.uclouvain.be/presse | Sylvie De Dryver (attachée de presse Musée L) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 48 47 / +32 (0)476 766 755 / sylvie.dedryver@uclouvain.be www.museel.be/fr/presse

- Passing on
  After having asked questions, the researcher, whose shoes the visitor is wearing, must pass on their results. To do so, two disciplines are essential: writing and calculation. The journey invites the visitor to rediscover the birth of writing to understand its developments and its different cultural bases. The calculation devices exhibited demonstrate both the ingenuity of their inventors and the progress or science.

- Being moved
  The fourth space in the permanent exhibition, the largest out of three floors, is dedicated to encountering the art. Man in his quest for understanding discovers that some questions are left without answers. Art, through emotion, beauty and poetry, tirelessly poses these questions about meaning, life, death and the invisible without giving any explanation or demonstration, and thereby approaches the great enigmas and mysteries of human life. The artworks and objects presented cross all cultures and periods, from Antiquity to the 20th century. Modern art, Graeco-Roman and ancient Egyptian antiquities, art from the Middles Ages and modern times, engravings from the 15th to the 20th century, popular art from Europe and ritual art from Africa form the different sections of this space. Paul Delvaux's 'Les inconnues' can see a Roman vase, altarpiece items from the 15th century meet a French 16th century Pietà, or an Egyptian statuette from the Middle Kingdom contemplates a 19th century German etching. In terms of the 'Masters', Miro rubs shoulders with Kandinsky, Manet encounters Pissaro, Rembrandt joins Dürer and many others. Within the space devoted to the question of the invisible: magical African statues meet European reliquaries of popular piety. The subjectivity of modern artists makes the experience resonate by unveiling the power of imagination revealed through art and different artistic expression. This theme gives the visitor total immersion through great physical and visual proximity with the objects and works of art.

- Contemplating

The fifth experience, contemplation, requires no more words or speech, simply music or silence to dream. It's in the ambience of art lover Doctor Charles Delsemme's apartment that the journey ends. For nearly 40 years, Charles Delsemme painstakingly gathered works, guided by his own taste instead of by the market value of the object. Intent that each new acquisition should fit in with the ensemble, he created a dialogue among them. This indivisible collection, 'a carefully chosen set', according to Charles Delsemme, covers an astonishing variety of periods and cultures, including 20th century paintings, antique sculptures, Japanese calligraphies and African masks. The themes of the human face and body and formal simplicity are the guiding thread of the new display. A film put together from the testimonies of major collectors and donors to the Musée L enables one to approach these people with outstanding generosity and cultural curiosity.

*The three Labs*

To go further in the Musée L experience, 3 labs, experimentation laboratories, enable one to approach artwork through the senses and practically. Integrated in the museum's rooms, the Labs give the opportunity to leave the contemplative visit to spend a moment looking at the technical domain. **Three spaces**, each dedicated to practical experimentation, lay open, each in their own way, the themes **of colour, engraving techniques and sculptural techniques**. The concept behind these 'places', which is not exhaustive in its exploration and presentation, is to discover these topics through experiments, games, observations, handling and creative work. The concrete aspect takes precedence, in order to pass between looking and handling.

Looking at the different layers of colour prints of a Mediaeval statue through a magnifying glass, touching the traces of the engraver's and sculptor's tools, probing the different production stages of an antique vase, handling materials, playing with colours, etc. these are all explorations that the public will be invited to enjoy in these inspiring spaces.

There are more than **32,000 works** in the Musée L's collections which come from the five continents and cover a broad period, from Prehistory to the 20th century. At the outset, this legacy is from the sharing of collections between the two sections of the University of Louvain (which have become KU Leuven and UCL) and has constantly been enriched, through donations from private collectors, and been diversified since the establishment of UCL on the Louvain-la-Neuve site.

The Musée L's collections in figures

**32,000** works inventoried in the museum, **1,500** works exhibited
Castings: **1,000** pieces; Antiquities: **2,000** pieces; Popular art: **14,000** pieces, Modern art: **3,000** pieces; Etchings: **3,600** pieces; non-Western collections: **2,800** pieces including **700** African items; Mediaeval to 19th century art: **2,000** objects; Textiles: **400** pieces; Technological objects: **2,700** items;
Added to these works and objects are the works in storage from the other UCL collections, the 'Science' collection made up of **600** pieces and instruments which bear witness to the university's didactic and scientific legacy.

## *A little history*

The Musée L's collections are made up of several sets from the Catholic University of Louvain's antique archive. They are the result of a long series of initiatives led by teachers convinced of the need, for students, to be surrounded by authentic objects during their academic education. Among these old collections, the plaster castings collection was initiated in 1964 by canon Edmond Reusens, Christian Antiquity and Archaeology Chairholder. Partly destroyed in 1914 in the university hall fire in the war, all the plaster castings were nevertheless enriched in the interwar period thanks to the restitutions imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles and under the instigation of Professor Fernand Mayence, who obtained a donation of antique sculpture castings from the Greek government. In 1958, castings of Burgundy works were added to this collection.

From 1909, in the Belgian colonial context, Edouard De Jonghe, professor of general ethnology and the Congo within the Catholic University of Louvain School of Commerce, led a mission within the newly instituted colony. With the help of several missionary orders, the professor collected a considerable number of objects to be displayed on his return in an ethnographic museum (the first of its kind in a Belgium university). Added to over the decades, there are more than 700 inventory numbers for this set of African objects today.

A rich archaeological collection, reflecting the multiple facets of antique civilisations around the Mediterranean, forms the third set from the University's antique archive. This collection has several archaeological testimonies originating from Palestine and gathered, from 1910 and after, within a biblical museum founded at the initiative of the rector Monsignor Paulin Ladeuze. Expeditions in the 30s, such as those of Monsignor Lefort in Egypt and Professor Gonzague Ryckmans in Yemen, brought back certain specimens. Other antique objects, acquired by Professor Fernand Mayence, are also part of this collection. Following the University split in 1968, these various university collections were shared with KU Leuven. With the opening of the Musée L in 2017, the visitor will also discover a sample of UCL's scientific legacy. These collections, some of which were initiated in the 19th century (like the zoology cabinet created in 1830) are as much teaching aids as testimony to the researchers' work.

The growth of these collections has also been ensured thanks to the generosity of sponsors who donate their collected items to the university: in 40 years, the UCL museum inventory has increased from around 4,000 to more than 32,000 works today.

**Contacts presse :** Isabelle Decoster (attachée de presse UCL) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 88 70 / +32(0)486 42 62 20 / Isabelle.decoster@uclouvain.be / www.uclouvain.be/presse | Sylvie De Dryver (attachée de presse Musée L) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 48 47 / +32 (0)476 766 755 / sylvie.dedryver@uclouvain.be www.museel.be/fr/presse

## *Permanent collections*

### ▪ Castings

The casting collections were started in 1864 as a teaching aid for the University of Louvain professors and has more than 1,000 objects, including for example, two replicas of the Erechtheion caryatids, which are better preserved than the originals. The collection covers the major periods of Art History. The first pieces were used as a teaching aid in the first Christian archaeology course. The collection grew after the First World War, at the instigation of Professor Fernand Mayence and Professor Jacques Lavalleye, at the end of the 1950s, with Greek, Roman, Mediaeval and Renaissance sculpture castings. This whole collection was shared in 1968 between UCL and KU Leuven, when the two universities were separated.

### ▪ Antiquity

The Antiquity collections contain around 2,000 objects mainly from around the Mediterranean. Either in very good condition or fragmented, they were all initially gathered for teaching. Whether they are antique archives, linked to the history of the unified University, or donations which followed the creation of the Musée de Louvain-la-Neuve, the collection reflects the different facets of antique civilisations which are all possibilities for illustrating t[illegible]ism.

### ▪ Popular art

The popular art collections gather a little over 14,000 pieces, from between the 16th and 20th century. These works, which are sometimes unusual, reflect the habits, beliefs and expressions which existed in Europe, opening fascinating fields of research between art history and ethnology. The Noubar and Micheline Boyadjian collection, donated in 1997, is mainly focused on naïve painting, popular imagery (profane and religious) and objects of domestic piety. It bears witness to the fusion of creativity in our latitudes.

### ▪ Modern art

Modern art collections are focused on Belgium art in the 20th century, with nearly 3,000 paintings, sculptures and drawings. The movements most represented are abstraction in the 1920s and after the war, the geometric trends of the second half of the 20th century, as well as the artists heir to the Cobra group and the new portrayals in the 1970s. A large part of the collections come from donations made to the museum by Serge Goyens de Heusch and from the donation of Roger van Oteghem's collection, as well as the very dynamic Eddy Meeùs Foundation which, from 2002, enhanced these collections with drawings by contemporary Belgian artists.

### ▪ Etchings

The etching collections contain around 2,600 pieces covering the whole history of this art, from the 15th century to the present day. The main collection archive is the Suzanne Lenoir archive (nearly 1,500 etchings) donated to the museum by Eugène Rouir in 1994. It includes series of works by renowned artists such as Dürer, Rembrandt, Canaletto, Corot, Manet, Ensor, Miró and Picasso.

### ▪ Non-European objects

The museum conserves nearly 2,800 pieces from the African, Asian, American and Australasian continents. African art is best represented because of an old University collection assembled in the beginning of the 20th century, in the Belgian colonial context, which was then shared with KU Leuven in 1968 at the split. Several donations then added to this collection. The most important contributions result from two donations: the legacy of Doctor Charles Delsemme and the collection donated in 2013 by anthropologist and psychiatrist Robert Steichen (honorary professor of UCL) which offers an approach to placing objects in context, as witnesses to ritual practices that still exist.

### ▪ Mediaeval to 19th century art

There are nearly 1,800 works in the collections: sculptures, paintings and furnishings representative of sacred art in our regions, from the 14th to the 19th century, including a remarkable set of works dating from the end of the Gothic period and the beginning of the Renaissance style. The legacy of the collector Frans Van Hamme started, from 1967, a series of donations which would considerably enhance UCL's artistic heritage.

### ▪ Science

The Musée L will show nearly 600 pieces from UCL's scientific heritage: teaching aids of real research work testimonies (notebooks, preserved specimens, instruments, etc.) from fields as varied as medicine, biology, psychology, anthropology, geology and sometimes designed by the researchers themselves.

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## *The guesthouse concept*

Making the Musée L a welcoming place that is open to all, is the intention of UCL and its director Anne Querinjean, as well as the whole museum team. A real guesthouse for tourists, teachers, students, researchers, visitors on their own, as a family or in a group, schools and many others! Sofa areas, reading space for a relaxing break or 'contemplative' break, dining room for a family picnic, seminar room, library, specialist bookshop and local food tasting, etc. all the museum spaces embody this desire to be open and share experience, to visit and revisit, and why not study or work in a serene ambience conducive to creation and invention.

## *Accessibility, visitors and events*

Hosting a mix of visitors is one of the Musée L's permanent commitments. 'Feel at home in the Musée L!' could be its slogan. In this open venue, all visitors are welcome; children, teenagers, adults and senior citizens, whether alone, as a family or in a group. Students, researchers and teachers, during or outside lessons. International visitors and foreign residents are also invited to cross the museum's threshold because it offers a tour in three languages: English, French and Dutch. The museum also facilitates access to spaces and offers visit aids irrespective of age or disability. Therefore, the building and tours are adapted for disabled people. What are the watchwords? Friendliness, proximity, accessibility and diversity.

The new Musée L has a totally redesigned schedule. The Musée L visitors department offers a programme of events for school visitors (nurseries and primary schools, secondary schools and higher educational establishments) and a tailored programme adapted to visitors offering themed tours, courses and creative workshops. What's new? The Musée L has its own cultural season reflecting the temporary exhibitions (see launch programme) and events organised on the museum premises by UCL culture and its partners.

As a real guesthouse, the museum has also organised a series of events as an opportunity for meeting. Brunch at the weekend, 'Caramb'Art' creative workshops for children, 'Renc'Art' workshops for teenagers, 'Expertise dans le LabArt' workshops and courses for adults, afterwork at museum late openings every 3rd Thursday of the month, etc. many moments to discover and experience the Musée L!

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Firmly established in its region, the Musée L has a close connection with citizen and student voluntary groups, including:

- L'association des Amis du Musée L (Friends of the Musée L) has nearly 1,000 members, including thirty volunteers who are active on a regularly basis and are proud to contribute to the development of this unique cultural foyer. This enthusiastic network of friends has always given their support and has strongly contributed to the transformation of the Musée L. The association also publishes 'Le Courrier' the Musée L and its Friends' newsletter, a real mine of information and news about the museum.

- L'association des Jeunes amis du Musée L (Young Friends of the Musée L) organises events surrounding art and the Musée L for students.

- UCL kots à projets (theme-based flat shares): the location of the Musée L, at the heart of the university campus that also has several colleges, is ideal for educating students about culture and openness. As precious, dynamic contributors to university life, the kots à projets (in particular cultural KAPs) want to invest in the Musée L to organise activities there.

- L'association des habitants de Louvain-la-Neuve, (the Louvain-la-Neuve residents' association) which has 1,200 members is a place for city residents to get involved. It is very active in promoting quality of life in the broad sense of the term, in particular the city's urban and cultural development. A partner of choice to help create and maintain a special link between the inhabitants of Louvain-la-Neuve and the Musée L.

## *Digital tools adapted to all visitors*

The Musée L provides several multimedia tools to guide visitors through its permanent collections (films, media guide and tablets). The intended aim is to demystify the museum world by creating proximity with visitors and to welcome them. These multimedia tools are part of the Musée L's overall approach, as it intends to be a guesthouse where the visitor feels at ease and is warmly welcomed. The Musée L's multimedia equipment was obtained with support from the Belgian national lottery.

The media guide developed by the Musée L with the German company Tonwelt, which specialises in the field and works with many museums in Europe, Canada and the United States, was designed to create a dynamic tour, interacting with the works and suitable for all visitors. This tool enables us to achieve two essential aims for a modern museum: accessibility for visitors speaking different languages (translation available in English and Dutch, and in future in Spanish or Chinese, etc.) and accessibility for visitors with disabilities: audio description tour for people with visual impairment or a tour in sign language for people with hearing impairment. Special attention is given to creating a climate of closeness to put knowledge in context.

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The media guide is a touchscreen tablet with an original application providing a pleasant interactive tour of the museum. The filmed interview format was chosen. Via these videos, members of the museum team of UCL specialists (teachers and researchers) introduce the visitor to chosen pieces in the permanent collections (26 points of interest). The subject of each video is an object or a group of objects within the collections. In order to establish a guiding thread between the different subjects, the focus is 'the person behind the object', i.e. the person who created, made, invented, used or inspired it. Some videos also contain contextual images (archives, plans, etc.).

## *The visitor's guide*

Both a key and an Ariadne's thread, the Musée L guide was designed to provide the visitor with a passport and to accompany them through their amazing discoveries. It makes the collections accessible to all, with short texts, many illustrations and themed portfolios, as well as didactic pages with infographics on themes such as the use of Greek vases or African signs.

## *The auditorium*

The auditorium is a multi-purpose projection space that can host many activities (writing or reading workshops, student activities, films, conferences, concerts, debates, etc.). It's also a place dedicated to organising events which is open to all.

## *The temporary exhibitions*

What's the Musée L's catchphrase for its visitors? "Let's explore new horizons together!"

In addition to the permanent collections, the Musée L will offer temporary exhibitions in a dedicated 350 m2 space. The subjects of exhibitions will be as diverse as the museum collection domains: Antiquity, Modern Art, Popular Art, Etchings, Castings and Science. The scheduling will be balanced across these different domains. Special attention will be given to comparing disciplines around a societal topic, in order create a dialogue between the arts and science.

Four types of exhibition have been defined. The 'main exhibitions' are the most ambitious and are produced jointly with a partner institution. The 'secondary exhibitions' are limited to one room and are an opportunity for joint production with close partners. The 'focus exhibitions' showcase the legacy and research surrounding the museum collections. They are exhibition projects which may be the fruit of a students' seminar or the presentation of research. The 'carte blanche' offers people from a discipline other than history of art or a field other than the museum's to use the museum collections and spaces to present a different look at art and science.

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## *Musée L OPENING*

**18-19 November 2017**
Festive weekend for the public, tours and events for all visitors
Free to everyone
info : www.museel.be

The programme :

/ **STORIES AND ANECDOTES** BY THE MUSÉE L GUIDES
/ SCULPTURE, ENGRAVING AND COLOR **WORSKSHOPS IN THE LABS**
/ **MUSIC**
/ **STORYTELLERS**
/ FIRST **TEMPORARY EXHIBITION** INAUGURATION ( BARTHÉLEMY TOGUO)

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**BARTHELEMY TOGUO**
**Musée L inaugural exhibitions**
18 November 2017 – 18 February 2018

For its first exhibition, the Musée L will host the artist Barthélémy Toguo (born in 1967 in Cameroon). Politically and socially committed, Barthélémy Toguo's work reflects the current state of affairs, in particular, migration and climate change. The artist will present an exhibition surrounding his questioning of contemporary society, in particular his personal experience and observation of inequality between Northern and Southern countries. In a theatrical staging which fills the length of the vast 40-metre room, the artist wants to hold a mirror up to this world in which 'man is a wolf to man', and where he reveals himself to be the primary cause of his self-destruction, thereby contributing to his own vital imbalance and, in light of his egotism, to an increasingly individualistic and less and less welcoming society.

The exhibition will be aimed at all visitors. Along with the corresponding calendar of events (round tables, tours, conference and workshops, etc.) the exhibition will create links between the artistic disciplines and other domains, the subjects of research and teaching at UCL, in particular scientific; it will be 'food for thought' and a 'sounding board' for ideas and solutions to the problems that afflict our society; a place for debate and meeting others.

**OH LES BEAUX JOURS !**
**Biennale 9**
6 October – 10 December 2017

For its 9th Contemporary Art Biennale, entitled Oh les beaux jours !, the Centre culturel d'Ottignies-Louvain-la-Neuve called on the services of a duo of internationally renowned commissioners: the plastic artist Angel Vergara and the French curator and critic Joël Benzakin. More than 50 international artists will present installations, performances, images and videos in the public space. They will question the limits of the world in the Anthropocene era, while offering a 'Return to Earth' to re-establish the idea of community, both in relation to society and the environment and in relation to the art industry.

On Tuesday 28 November 2017 at 8pm, in the Musée L Auditorium, Fabrizio Terranova's film «Donna Harraway: storytelling for earthly survival» will be shown. Works will also be projected on the museum façades during the biennale.

**NICOLAS MAIGRET**
**UCL artist in residence**
23 March – 13 May 2018

Grouped around Nicolas Maigret, UCL artist in residence 2017-2018, emerging and established digital artists will exhibit their work in the Musée L's contemporary space.

'Digital art' is any innovative creation involving different media (data, animated or still images, sound, text, videos, etc.) using IT processes and digital technologies. Between immersive installation, net art and 3D printers, in the field of digital art there is a heterogeneous set of practices, problems and technologies in their approach, their production, their visibility strategy and their audience.

Like Nicolas Maigret, there are many artists who use digital tools in a critical manner, due to the profound changes brought about by computer technology in all our social relations and our daily habits. Either they question these changes through their own medium (painting, sculpture, writing, etc.) or they force one's attention towards the specific nature of digital technologies.

**A digital evening at the Musée L - 22 march 2018**
For the inauguration of the exhibition "Digital writings", the Musée L will vibrate to the sound of alternative electronic music and will host audio-visual performances and DJ sets. A unique event hosted by UCL Culture, the CCBW, PointCulture, the Kot & Mix, Chez Zelle, and the Ateliers d'Art de la Baraque. Not to be missed!

**CONTEMPORARY DRAWINGS**
**Eddy Meeùs Foundation**
23 March – 13 May 2018

The Eddy Meeùs Foundation supports the art of drawing by today's artists. The display will present a selection from the rich collection of this private foundation (Per Kirkeby, David Nash, Claude Viallat and Ernest Pignon Ernest).

**A PASSION FOR BELGIAN ART!**
**Donation from Serge Goyens de Heusch**
7 June – 2 September 2018

A doctor in history of art, passionate gallery owner and initiator of the Foundation for contemporary Belgian art, Serge Goyens de Heusch has devoted his life to art, in particular Belgian artists, with whom he has strong friendships. The legacy of the Foundation for Belgian art (nearly 2,000 works including more than 600 canvases), as well as the impressive archives entrusted to the Musée L by Serge Goyens de Heusch, make it one of the richest museums for studying Belgian art in the second half of the 20th century. This exhibition presents a new donation of canvases by modern Belgian artists (Delahaut, Bertrand and Lismonde) and drawings and etchings by international artists (Hartung, Hockney, Lam and Lankskoy).

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**May 2015**
Start of renovation works for the future UCL museum

**May 2017**
Opening of Livre et Art, Musée L café, shop and bookshop

**June 2017**
Moving and installation of works in the permanent collection space

**July to September 2017**
Museum lettering (notices, labels, etc.) and set up of multimedia and films

**October 2017**
Installation of the first temporary exhibition

**14 November 2017**
Press conference and Musée L VIP inauguration

**18 November 2017**
Museum public opening

**Contacts presse :** Isabelle Decoster (attachée de presse UCL) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 88 70 / +32(0)486 42 62 20 / Isabelle.decoster@uclouvain.be / www.uclouvain.be/presse | Sylvie De Dryver (attachée de presse Musée L) Tél. +32 (0)10 47 48 47 / +32 (0)476 766 755 / sylvie.dedryver@uclouvain.be www.museel.be/fr/presse

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- **5 828 m²** of which more than **3,830 m²** are open to the public, over **6 floors**
- **2 580 m²** of exhibition space (permanent collections and temporary exhibitions), **430 m²** of offices and workshops, **1,250 m²** of event spaces and public reception areas, **1,200 m²** of reserves and **350 m²** of space dedicated to temporary exhibitions
- **1 library, 1** seminar room, **1** auditorium with **100** seats, **1** modular reception room, **4** library corners, **2** mezzanines with comfortable furniture, **1** picnic area and **1** teaching workshop,
- **5 themed spaces** to present the permanent collection
- **3 Labs** for an immersive experience

- **32 000** works inventoried and **1,500** works exhibited
- Castings: 1,000 pieces; Antiquities: 2,000 pieces; Popular Art: 14,000 pieces, Modern Art: 3,000 pieces; Etchings: 3,600 pieces; non-European collections: 2,800 including 700 African items; Mediaeval – 19th century art: 1,800 objects; Textiles: 400; technological objects: 2,700. And in addition the works in storage from other UCL collections, 'Science': 600 pieces and instruments bearing witness to the university's didactic and scientific legacy
- **1 LabART** (expert laboratory) and a restoration workshop
- **1** media guide in **3** languages + sign language and audio description
- A **total cost of €10.4 million i.e.** €7.4 million for building renovation, **€2.3** million for the scenography and nearly **€0.7** million for landscaping the museum surrounds.
- **50 people** working on the site on a daily basis, for nearly **2 and a half years**
- When the works were moved, **800** crates (530 m³ of artworks and objects) were placed on **180** pallets and wrapped in **5.4 km** of plastic film. To reach their destination? **80 lorry** trips were necessary!

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## *The Musée L on the web and on social networks*

www.museel.be

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Musee.universitaire.Louvain/
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/20450488/musee-l-musee-universitaire-de-louvain/

## *Times*

Open from Tuesday to Friday from 9:30am to 5pm and the weekend from 11am to 5pm.
3rd Thursday of the month, evening until 10pm.
Closed on Monday, 21 July, 15 August and from 24 December to 1st of January inclusive.

## *Prices*

€6 : individual entry
€5 : senior citizen, Ottignies-LLN resident or Friend of the Musée Hergé
€3 : AUL or UDA member; group of at least 10 people
€2 : 13-25 years, person with disabilities, jobseeker
€1.25: Article 27
Free of charge: 0-12 years, UCL member, UCL student, Friend of the Musée L, UCL pensioner (Amicale des pensionnés de l'UCL), teacher or journalist
€2 : media guide (FR, EN, NL, French sign language and audio description for people with visual impairment)

Free entry on first Sunday of each month (media guide included)
Average length of visit: 2 hours

## *Accessibility*

Disabled access throughout the whole museum.
Aids for people with visual, hearing or cognitive impairments.

Guided tours for school and adult groups
Detailed programme and booking from the Visitor Department Tel. +32 (0)10/47.48.45 / publics@museel.be

Library
Open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10am to 1pm. On appointment only: bibliotheque@mussel.be

Access
to Musée L
Place des Sciences, 3, bte L6. 07.01
1348 Louvain-la-Neuve
Tel. +32(0)10 47 48 41 / info@museel.be
Free parking: Avenue Georges Lemaître, Rédimé Car park
SNCB train station: Louvain-la-Neuve / Université
TEC bus station: Louvain-la-Neuve / Bus station

The Musée L is located in Louvain-la-Neuve, in the centre of Belgium, only 30km from Brussels, a capital at the centre of the international scene. Louvain-la-Neuve is a new city, the most recent in the country, which has no shortage of assets or originality in terms of its cultural, architectural and economic offering.

## *First pedestrian city in Europe*

As the first pedestrian city in Europe, it was built in the image of the city designed by Leonardo da Vinci. Thus, Louvain-la-Neuve unfolds around the pedestrian slab stones into winding streets, passages and small squares as places for meetings, while car traffic runs underground and around the outskirts promoting gentle mobility.

From an architectural point of view, the city is astonishing. What was its founders' aim ? To integrate the university in a real city to promote social harmony. Many architects took part in the construction, giving free reign to their creativity and conferring on the city a unique appearance.

## *A close living space*

Around the town centre, the city divides into several residential neighbourhoods : Lauzelle, Hocaille, Biéreau and Bruyères. The Baraque neighbourhood should also be mentioned, as a stronghold of alternative living experiences. To support progressive growth, Louvain-la-Neuve will soon accommodate the new areas of Courbevoie (Baraque) and Athéna (Lauzelle), the Agora project, which will provide a 30,000m² urban resort, and the stopover lodge (hostel), which will reinvigorate tourism further, by targeting young people and short stays.

And the Musée L in all this ? It is located in the upper part of the town centre, within the science neighbourhood that has been reinvigorated and has all types of facilities. A new car park with one area for buses has been built to accommodate visitors.

## *Regional development centre*

The university city welcomes more than 45,000 visitors each day including 25,000 students and many workers. Attracted by the proximity with the university and its state-of-the-art research, an increasing number of companies that are mainly active in science and technology choose to set up there, in particular in the UCL science park, no. 1 in the country in terms of surface area, businesses and employment.

From the point of view of shops and the food service industry, Louvain-la-Neuve, in particular via the involvement of UCL's real estate arm (Inesu), which manages many commercial leases, makes a point of promoting and supporting independent businesses and local companies and cooperatives, in accordance with the initial vision of the city's founding fathers. And at the same time the city provides a diverse commercial offering.

In this 'local' spirit, the Musée L, in partnership with the contemporary art gallery *Livre&Art*, offers its own shop/library/café. Glossy books for young and old, original objects and tasting short supply chain products are all opportunities to extend the pleasure of discoveries made in the Musée L.

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## *A flourishing cultural offering*

Louvain-la-Neuve gives pride of place to culture and creation. 5 minutes on foot from the Musée L is the Musée Hergé, dedicated to the life and work of the Tintin author.

The Théâtre Jean Vilar, the Ferme du Biéreau, Ferme du Blocry and the Aula Magna offer an eclectic cultural calendar with dance, music and theatre. UCL also schedules a multi-disciplinary cultural season which blends cultural and artistic experience with university expertise.

Kots à projets (theme-based shared flats), precious contributors to city life, develop a myriad of activities: theatre festivals, improvisation battles, circus festivals, literary events and concerts of all styles…

The city is also punctuated by major annual events: the walloon Brabant contemporary art biennale, the Welcome spring festival, the comics festival, the 24 hours cycling, Louvain-la-Plage, the Kidzik festival, and Louvain-la-Neige and its Christmas market.

## *Sports in the heart of the city*

As a green city, Louvain-la-Neuve offers quality infrastructure for the practice of a physical activity. The university city has a sports center with 23 sports halls, outdoor sports grounds and a swimming pool, and will offer in 2018 an indoor athletic track for top class athletes where the elite will train. Louvain-la-Neuve is also home to several sporting events (Bike & Run, 24h bike, 10 miles of LLN, ...) and UCL is the first university of Belgium on the podium of university championships.

**Louvain-la-Neuve in figures**

More than **20,000** residents, including **11,000** permanent, nearly **21,000** UCL students in the day, half of whom are in student digs.
The **no.1 science park in Belgium** in terms of surface area (231 Ha), number of companies (240) and jobs (**6,700**), which also has 1 start-up incubator with 55 companies for 200 jobs.
More than **300** commercial outlets active in food, leisure, home and personal equipment, hygiene and beauty, catering and services.

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## *Programme of guided tours and events – Musée L visitor department*

Por adults:
- Musée L panorama
- Great and small stories of the university
- Dressing the body
- Gods and objects: instructions
- Belgian art
- Expertise and conservation: works are revealed
- The Musée L's engravings
- Engraving initiation (Tour-workshop)

For 3-6 year-olds:
- Awakening the senses
- The fabulous world of colours
- Voyage, Voyage
- The Musée L's menagerie

For 7-12 year-olds:
- Between dream and reality
- Museum exploration!
- Feathers and fur
- The Small natural history cabinet
- Sacred histories, sacred histories!
- Writing, a whole history! (Tour-workshop)
- Impressive impressions (Tour-workshop)
- Grab your paintbrush, choose your colours! (Tour-workshop)
- Creating in 3D (Tour-workshop)

For 13-18 year-olds:
- Antiquity: daily life
- The experts: beyond the visible
- How to look at a work of art?
- Made in Belgium: Belgian art in the 20th century
- Myths and legends: when works tell a story
- Of men and Gods
- Engraving TechnoLab (Tour-workshop)
- Colours TechnoLab (Tour-workshop)
- Sculpture TechnoLab (Tour-workshop)

For over 18s (students):
- This is Belgium! Cultural survival kit for Erasmus
- The museum, a tool!

Tél. +32(0)10 47 48 41
info@museel.be

**Contact points about Musée L**

- **Vincent Blondel, rector of UCL**: contact through Dominique Hoebeke, communications officer : 010 47 81 02 or 0496 11 51 77, dominique.hoebeke@uclouvain.be
- **Dominique Opfergelt, director general of UCL** : 010 47 88 25 (secr), dominique.opfergelt@uclouvain.be
- **Anne Querinjean, Musée L director** : 010 47 48 35, 0483 16 11 31, anne.querinjean@uclouvain.be
- **Michel le Paige, UCL architect,** co-project team leader for transforming the library into the Musée L : 010 47 95 06, 0478 96 39 09, michel.lepaige@uclouvain.be
- **Carole Deferière, UCL architect,** co-project team leader for transforming the library into the Musée L: 010 47 95 05, carole.deferiere@uclouvain.be
- **Emmanuelle Druart, collections manager at Musée L** and assistant to the Musée L project : 010 47 48 35, emmanuelle.druart@uclouvain.be
- **Sylvie De Dryver, Musée L visitors department manager,** african art specialist and communications officer for the Musée L : 010 47 48 47, 0476 76 67 55, sylvie.dedryver@uclouvain.be
- **Elisa De Jacquier, UCL scientific collections coordinator** and collaborator to the Musée L exhibitions and publishing department : 010 47 96 66, elisa.dejacquier@uclouvain.be
- **Jacqueline Couvert**, historian and chemist, in charge of **UCL LabArt** (art expertise) : 010 47 48 97, jacqueline.couvert@uclouvain.be
- **Frédéric Blondeau, UCL Culture coordinator** : 010 47 40 30, 0478 84 42 25, frederic.blondeau@uclouvain.be

## SOURCES

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Musée universitaire de Louvain

UCL Université catholique de Louvain

## PRESS CONTACTS

**Isabelle Decoster** (UCL press officer)
Tél. +32 (0) 10 47 88 70 / GSM +32 (0) 486 42 62 20
Isabelle.decoster@uclouvain.be
www.uclouvain.be/presse

**Sylvie De Dryver** (Musée L press officer)
Tél. +32 (0) 10 47 48 47 / +32 (0) 476 766 755
sylvie.dedryver@uclouvain.be
www.museel.be/fr/presse

**Agence Caracas - PR**
Tél. + 32 0 (2) 560 21 22, info@caracascom.com
http://caracascom.com

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