



James Ensor, *Lumières effeuillées*, c. 1936 © Liège Museum of Fine Arts/La Boverie

La Boverie 10 years on Behind the Scenes of a Collection

29.05 > 23.08.26

Ticket office opens and launch offer available from 16 April

To mark the tenth anniversary of the reopening of La Boverie (2016–2026), the Liège Museum of Fine Arts is dedicating a major exhibition to the richness of its collections. Entitled *Les Coulisses d'une Collection* (Behind the Scenes of a Collection), this exhibition runs from 29 May to 23 August 2026 and is a highlight of the museum's summer programme.

TICKET SALES OPEN WITH AN ATTRACTIVE LAUNCH OFFER

Tickets for the exhibition go on sale this Thursday, 16 April. To mark the occasion, the museum is offering a particularly attractive launch deal: for one month, standard tickets will be available at a special price of €8 instead of €12.

Designed to encourage people to plan their visit in advance and to make this event accessible to as many people as possible, this initiative supports the launch of an exhibition that is exceptional, both in terms of its scale and its theme. It offers a unique opportunity to discover a project celebrating ten years of renewal for La Boverie.

IMMERSION IN THE HEART OF THE COLLECTIONS AND THE MUSEUM

Through a journey featuring three hundred works, displayed throughout the entire upper gallery, visitors are invited to move from the shadows into the light. It offers a glimpse behind the scenes of the museum through two major, interwoven themes: rediscovery of the collections and the inner workings of museums.

Thus, the exhibition route showcases the breadth of Liège's collections, ranging from masterpieces to works largely unknown to the general public or rarely exhibited. Moving from the storerooms into the light of the gallery walls, these previously unseen works are revealed along a visitor route dedicated to the museum's operations. They illustrate how the museum works, explore the world of art and detail its ins and outs.

The sections successively cover restoration, physical and chemical analysis, conservation in the storerooms, the building of the collection, research and its discoveries, collaborations and partners, as well as public engagement. Fascinating anecdotes and insights into the works punctuate the tour, which concludes with a stroll through a sculpture garden in the museum's glass-roofed atrium.

SHINING A LIGHT ON PROFESSIONS AND SKILLS

Through this exhibition, the museum aims to highlight practices that are often little known to the general public. Restorers, curators, collection managers, scientists, museum educators and researchers all play a part in the day-to-day management of the collections. Their work, though sometimes unseen, is nevertheless essential to the preservation, study and handing down of the artworks.

Les coulisses d'une Collection tells the story of these professions and skills by revealing the processes, choices and questions that come alongside each artwork: from its entry into the collections to its presentation to the public. This approach enables us to understand the museum as a living, constantly evolving space, where scientific perspectives, heritage concerns and a desire to share intersect.

A RICH AND COMPLEX INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY

The Liège Museum of Fine Arts has a unique history, marked by numerous transformations. From its earliest travelling collections, housed successively at the Town Hall, Saint-André Church and the Halle aux Drapiers, to its move to Rue des Anglais in the 19th century and then to La Boverie Park in the 20th, the museum has continually reinvented itself.

The 19th and 20th centuries saw collections become more structured, but also more fragmented, notably with the creation of a museum dedicated to Walloon Art in 1952, and the Prints and Drawings Cabinet. Urban developments in the 1970s led to further relocations. This dynamic continued with the establishment of a centre devoted to 20th- and 21st-century creation, culminating in the founding of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MAMAC) in 1993. In 2011, the collections were brought together again, before the conversion of the Palais des Beaux-Arts into La Boverie in 2016 provided a renewed and coherent setting for their display.

This anniversary exhibition is part of this long history of reconfiguration and redeployment, offering both a retrospective and forward-looking perspective on the role of the museum today.

A COLLECTION IN CONSTANT EVOLUTION

The richness of the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts of Liège is based on several centuries of successive enrichment. As early as the 18th century, private collectors helped form the first ensembles. Founding donations, such as those of Canon Henri Hamal or Louis-Pierre Saint-Martin, laid the foundations of a heritage that has continued to grow.

Over time, acquisitions, bequests, and deposits have enriched the collections, giving them a dimension that is at once local, national, and international. The acquisition policies carried out in the 20th century notably opened the Museum to modern and contemporary art, with works by major artists

Today, more than 40,000 pieces are preserved, covering a broad artistic panorama from the 16th century to the present day. This ensemble reflects a thoughtful policy, attentive to the coherence of the collections, their scientific relevance, and their place within Liège's cultural history.

A PROJECT THAT IS PART OF THE THE MUSEUM'S CORE MISSION

With *Les coulisses d'une Collection*, La Boverie is reasserting its fundamental mission: to preserve, study, enrich and hand down. By opening its reserves, revealing its practices, and highlighting its collections, the Museum is inviting everyone to take a renewed look at heritage.

This anniversary exhibition thus goes beyond simply displaying artwork: it offers an immersive and reflective experience, where the visitor becomes a witness to the dynamics that drive a museum today. It confirms the place of La Boverie as a major player in the museum landscape, in Belgium and beyond.



Inspection of the condition of works in the museum's storage facilities © Musée des Beaux-Arts de Liège/La Boverie



Inspection of the condition of Van Gogh's 1883 painting *Woman with a Bonnet* © Musée des Beaux-Arts de Liège/La Boverie

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Exhibition dates

from 29.05 to 23.08.2026

Opening hours

Tuesday > Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Location

La Boverie
3, Parc de La Boverie,
4020 Liège

Pricing

Adults €12.00/Advance sales €8.00
Seniors €8.00
Groups €8.00
Under 26 €0.00
School groups €0.00
Companion for disabled visitors €0.00
Disabled visitors €8.00
Art. 27 €1.25
ICOM €0.00
Press card €0.00
Teacher's card €0.00
muséePASSmusées €0.00

On the first Sunday of each month, for each ticket purchased, one free entry will be given to visitors.

Combined ticket for the exhibition Cleopatra Superstar at the Gare des Guillemins.

By showing a ticket for the exhibition *Japonisme and Art Nouveau* at the Grand Curtius Museum, opening this Friday 17 April, visitors will receive a €2 discount on the standard ticket. More info: www.grandcurtius.be

General information

www.laboverie.com

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