

*For immediate release*

**Media Release**

**Be inspired by the Musée d'Orsay's collection of Impressionist paintings by Monet, Renoir and more at National Gallery Singapore**

*First exhibition on Impressionism in Southeast Asia shows how this influential art movement transformed painting with a bold new use of colour and style*

**Singapore, 13 November 2017** – If the conservative art academy in 19<sup>th</sup> century Paris had its way, the only paintings recognised as masterpieces today might be the carefully composed and often theatrical paintings that characterised the schools of Neo-Classicism and Romanticism. However, in the 1860s, a group of young painters such as Claude Monet and Auguste Renoir began to challenge the status quo by taking a revolutionary approach to painting light and using colour - giving rise to one of the most recognisable and beloved art movements today: Impressionism.

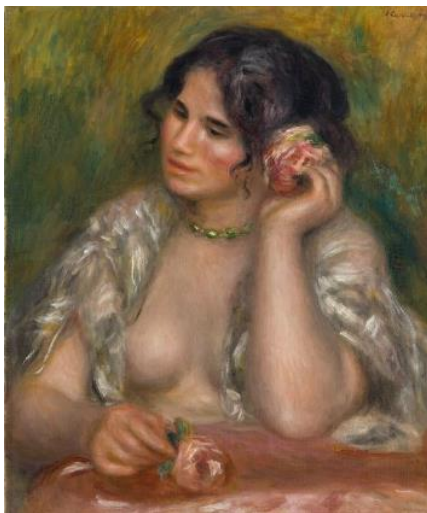
Inspired by the rapid technological innovations of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, these Impressionists moved out of their studios to open air to capture the fleeting effects of light as it appeared before their eyes, using newly available pigments and discoveries in the science and theory of colour. To trace the development of the movement most closely identified with the emergence of the modern era, National Gallery Singapore has collaborated with the Musée d'Orsay in Paris – one of the world's leading modern art museums – to present ***Colours of Impressionism: Masterpieces from the Musée d'Orsay***.

Dr Eugene Tan, Director of National Gallery Singapore said, "Impressionism is one of the most influential movements in the history of art, fascinating artists and art audiences around the world and across centuries. In fact, the influence of Impressionism can be seen in many works of Southeast Asian artists. As National Gallery Singapore endeavours to bring art closer to the people, we are excited to present the first Impressionist exhibition in Southeast Asia. The selection of works from the Musée d'Orsay's collection provides both art aficionados and the newly initiated an accessible and visually powerful introduction to Impressionism and some of its defining themes and ideas. We hope visitors will enjoy this rare opportunity to get up close with these significant paintings and deepen their understanding between the art of Southeast Asia and the world."

Curated by Marine Kisiel and Paul Perrin from the Musée d'Orsay, the exhibition features a collection of over 60 stunning masterpieces by the foremost innovators of the art movement. Giving a nod to the Impressionists' radical use of colour, the paintings are presented in thematic sections based on colours used by leading artists of Impressionism such as Édouard Manet, Claude Monet, Auguste Renoir, and Paul Cézanne at different stages of their careers.

Beginning with the blacks used by painters in the 1850s and 1860s to represent realities of their time, the exhibition examines how Impressionists used white and blue tones to capture snowscapes and their shadows; lush greens and blues to depict the French landscape; and in the latter stage of the movement, soft pinks and purples to create new harmonies and more subjective realities.

Visitors will get up close with *Le Bassin aux nymphéas, harmonie rose* (Waterlily Pond, Pink Harmony), a painting of one of Claude Monet's favourite subjects – his pond with a Japanese-style bridge, filled with waterlilies – which he painted repeatedly. Other masterpieces on display include Auguste Renoir's *Gabrielle à la rose* (Gabrielle with a Rose), which breathed new life into the great European tradition of the female nude; and *Le berceau* (The Cradle), arguably the most important work by the first lady of Impressionism, Berthe Morisot.



[Anti-Clockwise from top left] Claude Monet, *Le Bassin aux nymphéas, harmonie rose* (Waterlily Pond, Pink Harmony); Auguste Renoir, *Gabrielle à la rose* (Gabrielle with a Rose); Berthe Morisot, *Le berceau* (The Cradle)

Beyond the artworks, the exhibition expounds further on the artists' working methods through images of artists at work, and a display of brushes, paints and palettes, including those used by the artists themselves. It also addresses the shift to Neo-Impressionism, better known as 'Pointillism', with works from the key Neo-Impressionist artists Georges Seurat and Paul Signac.

Ms Laurence des Cars, President of the Musée d'Orsay shared, "We are delighted to partner National Gallery Singapore to showcase these treasures to audiences in Asia, and we hope that they will appreciate these beautiful and evocative paintings that were part of the first modern art movement in our history. The exhibition *Colours of Impressionism: Masterpieces from the Musée d'Orsay* will present carefully selected paintings from the museum's Impressionist collection, which is the best in the world in this domain.

An exceptional collection of ten paintings by Monet will be on display, including *La Pie* (The Magpie), *Un Coin d'appartement* (A Corner of the Apartment), *Le Bassin aux nymphéas, harmonie rose* (Water Lily Pond, Pink Harmony) and one of the Musée d'Orsay's five versions of the *Cathédrale de Rouen* (Rouen Cathedral)."

The exhibition is part of the *Century of Light* showcase of art from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It will be complemented by *Between Worlds: Raden Saleh and Juan Luna*, which takes a regional perspective on this period of enormous change through the eyes of two prominent Southeast Asian artists who lived and worked in Europe. Both exhibitions will be held at the Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery from 16 November 2017 to 11 March 2018.

Ms Chua Sock Koong, Group CEO of Singtel, the Lead Sponsor for *Colours of Impressionism* said, "We are pleased to present this extraordinary Impressionist exhibition at the Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery in a first for the region. Housing an exhibition of this scale speaks volumes about the growing recognition of National Gallery Singapore in the international museum circle. Singtel has a long history of supporting the arts and through our sponsorship, we hope this showcase of stunning masterpieces from the leading figures of Impressionism will reach as many people as possible."

Entry to the exhibition costs \$15 for Singaporeans and Permanent Residents, and \$25 for Non-Singaporeans. Concessions rates are also available at \$10 and \$20 respectively.

*Century of Light* is supported by Lead Sponsor Singtel, Major Sponsor Changi Airport Group, Official Radio Stations 88.3Jia FM & Power 98FM and Supporters Air France, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and the Tote Board Group which comprises the Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.

For more information about the exhibition, please visit [www.nationalgallery.sg/centuryoflight](http://www.nationalgallery.sg/centuryoflight).

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## **About National Gallery Singapore**

National Gallery Singapore is a visual arts institution which oversees the largest public collection of modern art in Singapore and Southeast Asia. Situated in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in two national monuments—City Hall and former Supreme Court—that have been beautifully restored and transformed into this exciting venue. Reflecting Singapore's unique heritage and geographical location, the Gallery features Singapore and Southeast Asian art from Singapore's National Collection in its long-term and special exhibitions. The Gallery also works with international museums to jointly present Southeast Asian art in the global context, positioning Singapore as a regional and international hub for the visual arts.

In 2016, the Gallery won the awards for “Best Attraction Experience”, “Breakthrough Contribution to Tourism” and “Best Customer Service (Attractions)” at the prestigious Singapore Tourism Awards for its role in adding to the vibrancy of Singapore's tourism landscape. [www.nationalgallery.sg](http://www.nationalgallery.sg)