

## *Loaning Today: New Challenges in the Circulation of Collections*

**Tuesday 14 October 2025 – 6 pm / 8.30 pm**

Amphitheatre Cézanne de l'École du Louvre & platform Zoom

### Topic of the event

The recent and lively debate surrounding the loan of the Bayeux Tapestry, following the French President's announcement on July 8 proposing it be exhibited in London in 2026, reminds us, if we needed reminding, of the symbolic importance of the circulation of artworks. Encouraging knowledge of collections and connecting audiences who.

The 2017 symposium *The History of Loans: Memories and Issues of Museum Lending*, co-organized by the École du Louvre, the Institut d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine, the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), and the École Normale Supérieure, aimed to review the evolution of lending principles and practices. Requesting or granting a loan or a deposit not only contributes to updating and enriching knowledge but also formalizes a partnership, responds to political imperatives, and constitutes an act of diplomacy. Eight years after that symposium, it seems interesting to reflect on what has changed since then: why and how should we "lend" today? What new challenges do museums face when taking collections out of their usual places of conservation?

Lenders and borrowers are becoming more diverse (public and private museums, collectors, gallery owners...). The workload generated by the organization of collection movements, borne by teams that are often small and have diverse objectives, has become a subject of debate. The financial pressure weighing on museums also affects the issue of collection movements: what costs should be borne by borrowers? Can loans become a source of revenue or, at least, avoid creating "costs" for the lending institution? How can crating, transport, and insurance costs be reduced? What is the role of public collections in dissemination today? The ecological impact of loans is also increasingly questioned, even measured, and lending to or borrowing from distant museums now raises questions that we ignored only a few years ago. Established professional practices are being re-examined in light of the sustainable transition undertaken by our institutions: consideration of new standards, extension of loan durations, revision of courier procedures, pooling of projects...

Working groups are being set up to re-examine professional practices and define new guidelines. Are we in the process of establishing a new code of ethics for collection circulation? This debate evening aims to review the challenges faced by museum professionals—both lenders and borrowers—and provide an opportunity to exchange ideas on the reflections currently underway.

Émilie Girard, *president*, September 2025