

NAPOLÉON THE STRATEGIST

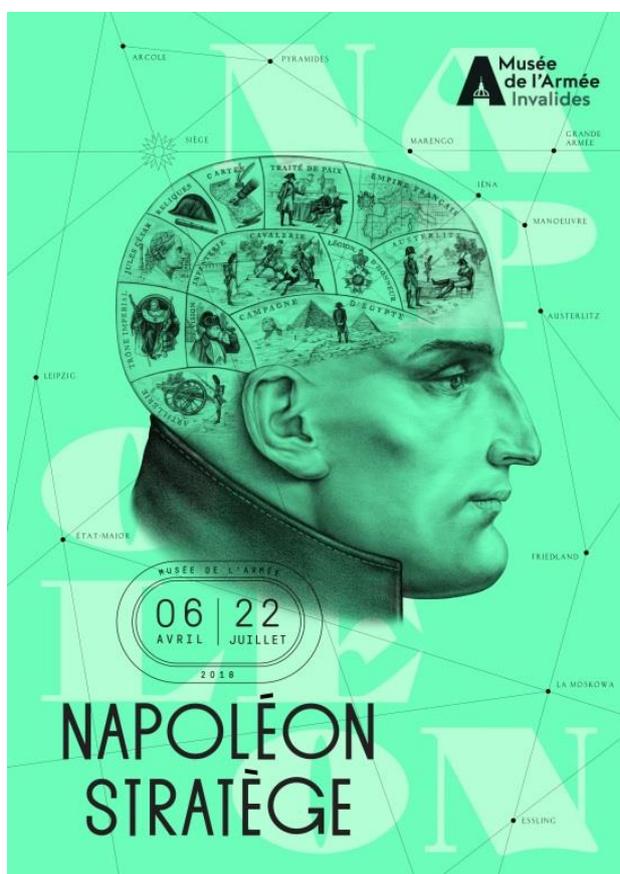
6 APRIL TO 22 JULY 2018

In Spring 2018, following on from the presentation of Napoleon's political vision with the 2013 exhibition *Napoleon and Europe*, and an exploration of his fall and his legend with *Napoleon in Saint Helena. His Fight for His Story* in 2016, in spring 2018 the Musée de l'Armée will be tackling another aspect of the history of Napoleon, whose skills as a "military genius" are universally recognised.

Any examination of Napoleon the strategist has to start by defining the notion of strategy and how it evolved. For it was in Napoleon's time that the notion became inextricably linked to power and the abilities of the person wields it. The word "strategy" emerged in the military world, gradually taking on the meaning and form that are now applied more broadly to politics, the economy, finance and communications.

The idea behind the exhibition is therefore to train the spotlight on strategy, the intangible expression of Napoleonic thinking where the skill lies in mastering a vast range of parameters and their interactions. The exhibition will draw on maps, documents illustrating the master strategist's deliberations, and objects – vestiges, symbols and representations of historical facts – which embody the tangible reality that strategic thinking seeks to control.

To ensure that the theme is as widely accessible as possible, Napoleon's role will be illustrated in the context of his era, including a description of his education, abilities, and the means available to him and to his enemies. The exhibition sets out to show the strategist at work, explain the issues at stakes and how campaigns progressed, and get to the heart of the action to analyse his most famous battles, defeats as well as victories.



Although the new event is separate from the permanent collection galleries devoted to the Revolution and the Empire, it contributes to them with a complementary viewpoint. Specially designed multimedia tools will offer an immersive experience to help visitors grasp what is an abstract and complex notion. The permanent galleries will feature brand new digital installations providing a more narrative and explanatory approach to Napoleon's strategic ideas. Visitors will be able to move freely between these two approaches.

The visit continues on the Invalides site with an exploration of the Dome church, home to Napoleon's tomb.

DID YOU KNOW?

Napoleon had an extremely busy daily schedule. He woke up at 6 o'clock in the morning. He spent three or four hours studying reports and correspondence. From 10 am onwards, he reconnoitred the terrain, reviewed his troops and checked if his instructions had been executed. At 4 pm he rested before reviewing more troops or working on documents. At 6 pm, he dined with Major General Berthier then retired to bed until a fresh batch of reports arrived. Around midnight, he read the reports and dictated his orders. At 4 o'clock in the morning, he went back to bed for two hours.

The Napoleonic Wars raged continuously for almost 23 years. This was one of the longest periods of war in the history of France. The theatre of operations stretched west to east, from Portugal to Russia, and north to south, from Poland to Egypt. Over 1.5 million men fought under the orders of General Bonaparte and Emperor Napoleon I.

THE EXHIBITION IN FIGURES

201 works, objects and documents

35 lenders from 5 different European countries

18 multimedia installations

8 panels designed for young visitors

Partners

The exhibition is organized with the support of the Fondation Napoléon and CIC, a key partner to the Musée de l'Armée. It benefits from the special contribution of the Service Historique de la Défense and kind assistance of the Château de Versailles.



Exhibition curators, Musée de l'Armée

Émilie Robbe, curator-in-chief, head of the modern department

Grégory Spourdos, senior documentary research fellow at the modern department

Hélène Boudou-Reuzé, conservation assistant at the painting and sculpture department, drawings, prints and photographs room, and library

Assisted by:

Julia Bovet, assistant curator

Léa Charliquant, assistant curator at the modern department, in charge of pictures and rights

Publication

Catalogue co-published with Liénart Éditions.

Multimedia

Are you for or against Napoleon? Visitors can use the multimedia installations they will find throughout the exhibition to determine their war strategy: fighting at the Emperor's side or, conversely, against the Napoleonic army.

Young visitors

- **Family visits**

Special panels combined with a games booklet for young visitors provide an informative and fun way of finding out all about the exhibition's objects, artworks and archives. The youngest visitors are invited to meet the challenge of using a visual detail to find a specific object or artwork. The winners are rewarded with a small gift.

- **Fun exhibition visits**

A fun guided tour to find out how Napoleon became a master strategist as well as the mistakes he made. Various challenges await the participants. The guided tour is suitable for families and school groups.

The tour lasts from 1.5 to 2 hrs – bookings: jeunes@musee-armee.fr

Around the exhibition

- **Music and the Voice of the Emperor concert cycle**

5 April – 18 June 2018

To mark the *Napoleon the Strategist* exhibition, this cycle of 14 concerts brings to life the epic thunder of battles and other sounds of war from the Napoleonic campaigns. Over the course of the cycle, the concerts delve freely into the different music composed during the Napoleonic period as well as later pieces that refer to it. From the violence of the battlefield to the luxurious privacy of a salon, from the Opera stage to the rigour of the Conservatoire, music is undeniably a vehicle of Napoleonic strategy. Since Napoleon was best placed to talk about it, the voice of the Emperor is given pride of place – along with the voice of those who have echoed him.

Information and bookings: saisonnement.musee-armee.fr – +33(0)1 44 42 54 66

- **Conference cycle**

29 May – 14 June 2018

Napoleon had a profound impact on the history of strategy. He did not act alone, and his influence was not confined to the military sphere. The conference cycle shines a light on the people Napoleon the Strategist turned to for help, and on the way in which he combined military, diplomatic and economic action.

The conference cycle is organised in partnership with the Université Permanente de la Ville de Paris. Admission free subject to seat availability – bookings: histoire@musee-armee.fr

- **The Emperor Strikes Back film cycle**

14 – 18 May 2018

Since the dawn of cinema, numerous filmmakers from France and the rest of the world have been fascinated by Napoleon Bonaparte. The big and small screen have thus perpetuated Napoleon's legacy, to an extent he could not have imagined, by highlighting his military brilliance and his role as a master strategist at the heart of a vast array of military and political matters. The film cycle is programmed to reflect the *Napoleon the Strategist* exhibition and aims to illustrate the way in which this aspect of his life has been depicted on the screen.

Admission free subject to seat availability – bookings on line at musee-armee.fr

Practical information

Full programme on musee-armee.fr

Opening hours: the exhibition is open every day, except 1st May 2018; 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday, open Tuesday evenings until 9pm, 10am to 7pm Saturday and Sunday

Prices (exhibition and permanent collections): €12, reduced price €10, free for children under 18.

Guided tours: adults (benedicte@cultural.fr – +33 (0) 825 05 44 05); families, school groups and students (jeunes@musee-armee.fr)

Musée de l'Armée

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musee-armee.fr

#ExpoNapoléonStratège



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