

SHARED SACRED SITES

Journeys between religions

Exhibition from October 9, 2025 to January 19, 2026

Curators: Dionigi Albera, Raphaël Bories, Manoël Pénicaud

Exhibition conceived and co-produced by the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici, the Mucem (Museum of Civilisations of Europe and the Mediterranean – Marseille), and the French Embassy to the Holy See – Pious Establishments of France in Rome and Loreto, based on an original exhibition by the Mucem.

For its fall exhibition, the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici presents a journey along the routes of the sacred from Gentile da Fabriano and Le Corbusier to Chagall, with special loans from the Vatican Museums, the Museo ebraico di Roma, the Louvre and the Mucem.



Rayan Yasmineh, *Ur Salim*, 2022, oil on canvas, 150 x 150 cm, Dollo – Paulin Collection, Paris

VILLA MEDICI

How can a place be both sacred and shared? In common understanding, a sanctuary is usually associated with a single faith. Yet it is not uncommon for worshippers to cross doctrinal boundaries and pray in the holy place of another religion, in veneration of a shared sacred figure.

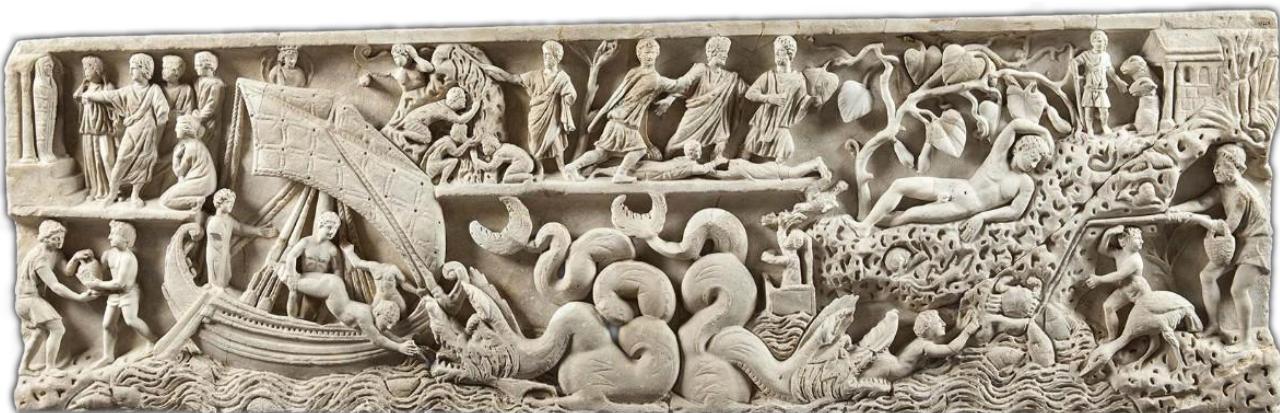
To mark the 2025 Jubilee in Rome, the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici presents the exhibition *Shared Sacred Sites* from **October 9, 2025 to January 19, 2026**. The show brings together major works from French, Italian, and Vatican collections placed in dialogue with contemporary creations. From Gentile da Fabriano to Marc Chagall, via Le Corbusier, it seeks to shed light—through works of art—on a sometimes little-known yet very present religious phenomenon in the Mediterranean: sanctuaries shared by worshippers of different religions.

Each to their own God, scriptures, saints. However, since their origins, ritual practices, founding narratives, tutelary figures, and sacred spaces have intertwined among the three great monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The exhibition *Shared Sacred Sites* explores unique cases where different religious practices and communities intersect and coexist. Often overlooked in the West, this phenomenon reveals the historical, cultural, spiritual, and artistic interactions that have shaped these religions as well as the societies of the Mediterranean basin.

Ten years after it was first presented at **Mucem** in Marseille (29 April – 31 August 2015) and an international tour, the exhibition *Shared Sacred Sites* comes to Villa Medici in a new form, with special loans from the **Vatican Museums**, the **Louvre**, **Mucem – the Museum of the Civilizations of Europe and the Mediterranean**, the **MAXXI** and the **Museo ebraico di Roma**. The exhibition invites visitors on a journey through various landscapes—cities, seas, gardens, caves, and mountains—conducive to the sharing of the sacred. It highlights intertwined histories and shared heritages, mapping out a spiritual geography where traditions, dialogue, and artistic creation converge.

The exhibition *Shared Sacred Sites* was designed and co-produced by the **French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici**, the **Mucem** and the **French Embassy to the Holy See - Pious Establishments of France in Rome and Loreto**, based on an original exhibition by **Mucem**. The exhibition has benefited from the expert advice of the **Vatican Museums** and the **Museo ebraico di Roma**.

The exhibition benefits of the sustain of BNL BNP Paribas.



Anonymous, *Sarcophagus Front with Stories of Jonah*, late 3rd – early 4th century, Vatican Museums. Photo © Governorate of Vatican City State – Directorate of the Vatican Museums. All rights reserved.

The catalogue

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalog co-published by Silvana Editoriale and Villa Medici, featuring texts by the curators and previously unpublished contributions from authors and experts invited to elucidate the themes of the exhibition.

Authors of the catalogue

Dionigi Albera, Raphaël Bories, Alberta Campitelli, Eleonora D'Alessandro, Paolo La Spisa, Vincent Lemire, Adnane Mokrani, Manoël Pénicaud

240 pages

Dual edition (French and Italian)

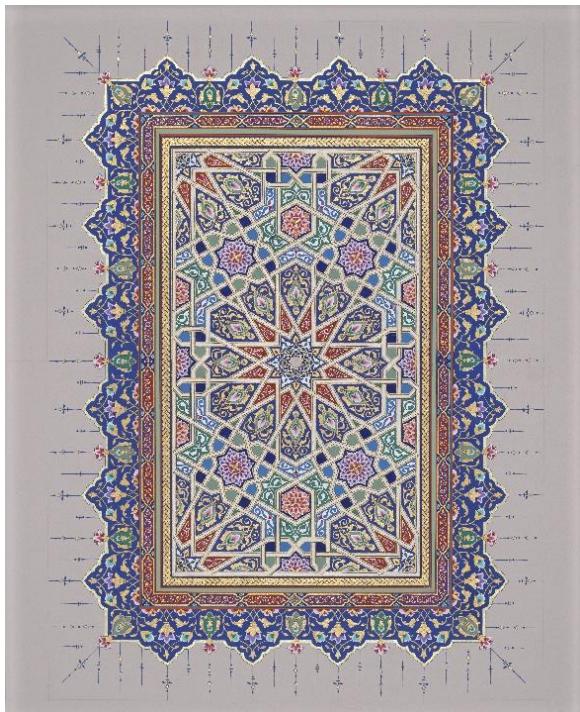
Format: 24.5 x 30 cm

The curators

Dionigi Albera is an anthropologist and director of research at the CNRS, specializing in Europe and the Mediterranean. He has published some twenty books on migrations, the family, pilgrimages, and forms of inter-religious mixing. His theoretical work has contributed to renewing comparative approaches to monotheistic religions.

Raphaël Bories has been curator at the Museum of the Civilizations of Europe and the Mediterranean (MuCEM) since 2020 and is responsible for the “Beliefs and Religions” section. At MuCEM, he works particularly on the history of Italian ethnology, the links between the Middle Ages and popular art, and the relationship of artistic creation and photography to anthropology.

Manoël Pénicaud is an anthropologist at the CNRS and a member of the Centre Jacques Berque in Rabat. His work lies within the field of the anthropology of religiosity, pilgrimages, and interreligious relations in the Euro-Mediterranean area. He is also a photographer, documentary filmmaker, and exhibition curator, notably of *Shared Sacred Sites* since 2015.



Dana Awartani, *He Who Created The Heavens and the Earth in Six Days*

© 2013, Dana Awartani

Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi,
Zayed National Museum Collection
ZNM.2013.00019.00006

The exhibition: 7 chapters, over 100 works, 3 continents, nearly 2,000 years of history

Chapter 1: Sacred Cities

Benji Boyadgian (b. 1983, Jerusalem)
Collection Stefano Borgia
(1731, Velletri, IT - 1804, Lyon, FR)
David Brognon (b. 1978, Messancy, BE)
& Stéphanie Rollin (b. 1980, Luxembourg, LU)
Ludovico Carracci (b. Bologna, IT, 1555 - 1619)
Louis De Clerq
(1837, Paris, FR - 1901, Oignies, FR)
Bernard Dumas
Christophe Gaultier
(b. 1969, Châteauroux, FR)
Jimmy Glasberg
(1940, Nîmes, FR - 2023, Tulette, FR)
Eva Fisher
(1920, Daruvar, HR - 2015, Rome, IT)
Vincent Lemire (b. 1973, Paris, FR)
Antonio Lorenzoni
Nira Pereg (b. 1969, Tel-Aviv, ISR)

Chapter 3: The garden

Dana Awartani (b. 1987, SAU)
Adam Broomberg
(b. 1970, Johannesburg, ZA)
Marc Chagall (1887, Liozna, Bielorussia, BY
- 1985, St-Paul-de-Vence, FR)
Raphaël Gonzalez
Ayşe Raziye Özalp (b. 1977, Istanbul, TU)
Ellefi Nasser (b. 1956, Tripoli, LY)
Rayan Yasmineh (b. 1996, Paris, FR)

Chapter 2: The sea

Gentile di Niccolò dit Gentile da Fabriano
(1370, Fabriano, IT - 1427, Rome, IT)
Rachid Koraïchi (b. 1947, Aïn Beïda, DZ)
Francesco Tuccio (b. 1966, Lampedusa, IT)

Chapter 4: The mountain

Hamed Abdalla
(1917, Le Caire, EG - 1985, Paris, FR)
Gianni Berengo Gardin
(1930, Santa Margherita Ligure, IT - 2025,
Genova, IT)
Marc Chagall (1887, Liozna, Bielorussia, BY
- 1985, St-Paul-de-Vence, FR)
Adrien Dauzats
(1804, Bordeaux, FR - 1868, Paris, FR)
Elliott Erwitt
(1928, Paris, FR - 2023, New-York, US)
Stella Perugia
Ivo Saglietti
(1948, Toulon, FR - 2023, Gênes, IT, 2023)
David Sauveur (b. 1974, Dinard, FR)



Gentile di Niccolò, known as Gentile da Fabriano,
Predella panel with Stories of Saint Nicholas:
The Saint Saves a Ship from Shipwreck, 1425,
tempera and gold on wood, 39.5 × 62.5 × 3.8 cm
Photo © Governorate of Vatican City State –
Directorate of the Vatican Museums. All rights
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Chapter 5: The cave

Hamed Abdalla

(1917, Cairo, EG - 1985, Paris, FR)

Abdallah Akar (b. 1952, TN)

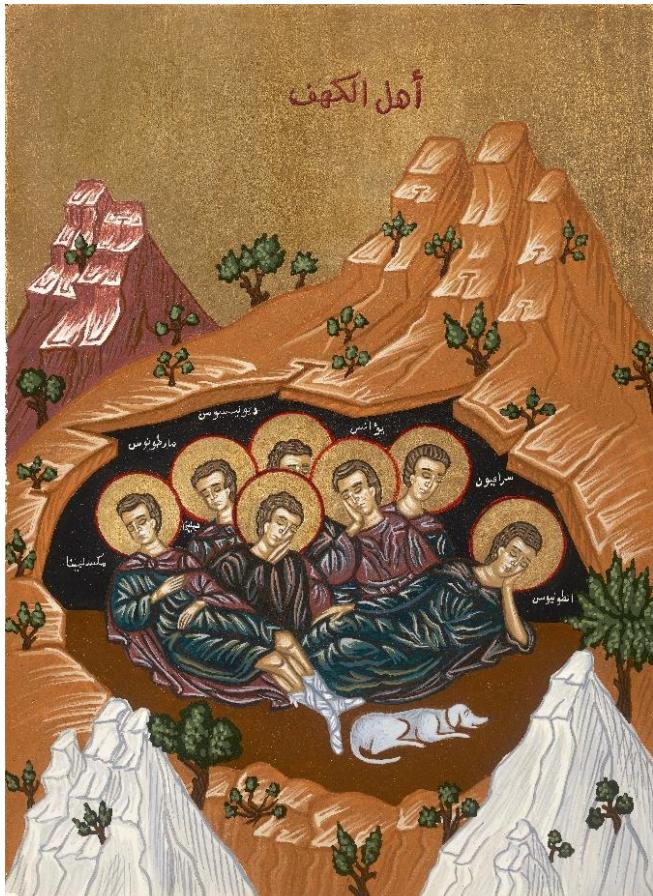
Ayşe Raziye Özalp (b. 1977, Istanbul, TU)

Giovanni di Paolo (1403 - 1482, Sienne, IT)

Pietro di Giovanni dit Lorenzo Monaco

(env. 1370, Sienne, IT - env. 1423, Florence, IT)

Osama Msleh (b. 1970, Damas, SY)



Chapter 6: Itinerant objects

Alix Boillot (b. 1992, Paris, FR)

Matilde Cassani (b. 1980, Domodossola, IT)

Musa Ibn Istifan (b. XVII century)

Abdul Wahab Mohmand (b. 1982, Kaboul, AF)

Chapter 7: Architectures

Adjaye Associates

Félix Bonfils

(1831, Saint-Hippolyte-du-Fort, FR - 1885, Alès, FR)

Le Corbusier

(1887, La Chaux-de-Fonds, CH - 1965, Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, FR)

Camille Enlart

(1862, Boulogne-sur-Mer, FR - 1927, Paris, FR)

Louis Haghe

(1806, Tournai, BE - 1885, Londres, GB)

Armin Linke (b. 1966, Milan, IT)

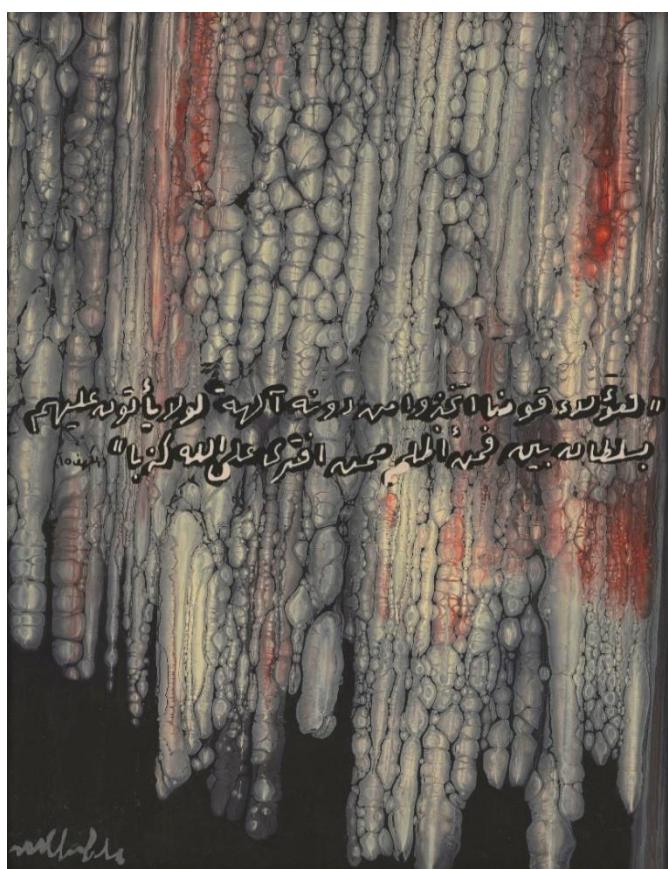
Kuehn Malvezzi

André Martin

(1928, Saint-Laurent-en-Caux, FR - 1999,

Douentza, ML)

Israël Silvestre (1621, Nancy, FR - 1961, Paris, FR)



Osama Msleh, *The Seven Sleepers*, Damascus, Syria, 2000s.
Icon, paint and gold leaf on wood,
34 x 25 x 1.6 cm. Private collection

Hamed Abdalla, *Ah/ El-Kahf* Series, Qur'an, Surah 18, The Cave, verse 15, S15, 1975, Acrylic on paper, hardboard, 48 x 27 cm. Private collection © Abdalla Family Collection

The program

In connection with the exhibition, a **series of lectures** organized by the Institut français Centre Saint-Louis will take place at various locations in Rome. More information to come on villamedici.it

October 2025

“Religious Sharing in the Mediterranean: Historical Perspectives”

Thursday, October 9 – Inaugural Conference

Library of Trinità dei Monti

Moderator: Oscar Iarussi

Speakers to be announced.

Friday, October 10 – Study Day

École française de Rome

Moderators: Dionigi Albera, Albane Cogné,

Manoël Pénicaud

With: Maureen Attali, Karen Barkey, Giovanna Fiume, Sara Kuehn, Elsa Laurenzi, Giuseppe Mandalà, Camille Rouxpetel, Cinzia Vismara.

Full list to be announced.

November 2025

“Religious Pluralism and Migrations in Italy”

Wednesday, November 12 – Study Day

Organized by Nicolas Sarzeaud and Clovis Maillet, 2024–2025 fellows of the French Academy in Rome French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici

With: Patrick Boucheron

Thursday, November 13 – Round Table

In partnership with Sant'Egidio and the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

Institut Français – Centre Saint-Louis

Speakers to be announced.

Friday, November 14 – Study Day

Sapienza University of Rome

Moderators: Dionigi Albera, Alessandro Saggioro,

Carmelo Russo

Speakers to be announced.

December 2025

“Concrete Experiences of Interfaith Dialogue in the Mediterranean World”

Thursday, December 11 – Round Table

French Embassy to the Holy See,

Villa Bonaparte

Speakers to be announced.

Friday, December 12 – Study Day

Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI)

Moderators: Dominique Avon, Manoël Pénicaud

Speakers: Carol Cooke, Adnane Mokrani,

Claudio Monge, Abdallah Ouzitane, Mohammed Sghir

Janjar.

Full list to be announced.

January 2026

“Art, Architecture, Urban Planning: The Conversion of Places of Worship – Historical Approach and Contemporary Valorization”

Thursday, January 8 – Round Table

French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici

Moderator: Eleonora d'Alessandro

Speakers to be announced.

Friday, January 9 – Study Day

MAXXI

Moderator: Raphaël Bories

Speakers to be announced.

The co-producers and specialist consultants

The exhibition *Shared Sacred Sites* was designed and co-produced by the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici, the Mucem and the Pious Establishments of France in Rome and Loreto, based on an original exhibition at Mucem. The exhibition was supported by the Embassy of France to the Holy See and has benefited from the specialist advice of the Vatican Museums and the Museo Ebraico in Rome.

Mucem

Mucem

The Mucem is a national museum which opened in Marseille in 2013. Originating from the National Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions, it is devoted to European and Mediterranean Cultures. It is a museum of society at the intersection of humanities and the arts, offering exhibitions, lectures, and cultural events, and holds over a million objects and documents. Its activities are spread over three sites: the J4 and Fort Saint-Jean, near the Old Port, and the Conservation and Resources Center, in Belle de Mai.



The Pious Establishments of France in Rome and Loreto

With a centuries-old tradition, the Pious Establishments pursue three missions: welcoming pilgrims to Rome and Loreto, supporting solidarity and educational projects, and promoting the French presence through the restoration of its heritage and the organization of artistic and cultural events.



The French Embassy to the Holy See

The French Embassy to the Holy See is the oldest in the French diplomatic network, dating back to 1467 with M. de Montreuil as the first permanent ambassador. Since 1950, it has been located at Villa Bonaparte in Rome's Porta Pia district. It serves as the interface between the Holy See and the French Republic, which share a common commitment to certain values, a focus on global challenges, and the protection of religious freedom worldwide.



Vatican Museums

The Vatican Museums have a set of collections formed over the course of more than five centuries. They range from Egyptian to contemporary art and include the Renaissance and the Baroque, but also ethnographic items and decorative arts, with the mission of conserving, restoring, and enhancing the works of art that the Popes have collected and preserved over time, and making them known to the million of visitors who pour in every year.



MUSEO EBRAICO
DI ROMA

Museo ebraico in Rome

Il Museo ebraico di Roma, founded in 1960, tells the story of more than two thousand years of uninterrupted history of one of the oldest communities of the Diaspora. Located in the heart of the capital, within the monumental complex of the Great Synagogue, the museum is a cultural and dialogical hub—a bridge between tradition and innovation—that showcases the richness of Roman Jewish life through the centuries.

Villa Medici warmly thanks for their scholarly support

MARIA ADALGISA OTTAVIANI (BIBLIOTECA APOSTOLICA VATICANA),
ALBERTA CAMPITELLI, ANDREA CARIGNANI (PINACOTECA VATICANA),
BARBARA JATTA (MUSEI VATICANI), GOLO MAURER (BIBLIOTHECA HERTZIANA –
MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE FOR ART HISTORY), OLGA MELASECCHI (MUSEO EBRAICO DI
ROMA), ILARIA MIARELLI MARIANI (MUSEI IN COMUNE ROMA).

With the support of



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