

"A unique place, a carrier of emotion"  
**Bernard Arnault**

## Daring, emotion and creation

**Culture, heritage, contemporary creation:** with its many commitments, LVMH will have allowed millions of visitors to become familiar with great masters of art history and their works. Between 1991 and 2006, twenty six domestic exhibitions (from the golden age of Decorative Arts, 1814-1848, Grand Palais, to Yves Klein at the Centre Georges Pompidou), renovation projects ("bibliothèque musée de l'Opéra de Paris"; the throne hall, the Correr museum in Venice), and productions ("Woyzeck", "Poetry" by Bob Wilson, at the Odéon in Paris), have come to represent the unshakable bond between culture and the number one luxury goods group in the world. The group's very identity has grown stronger through art patronage based on efforts that combine know-how, quality, creativity and innovation, and through initiatives intended for the younger public, focusing on knowledge and discovery. The group's success is rooted in this constant interaction between artisanship and art and in a commitment to culture that aligns our 60,000 employees around a common goal: to defend excellence in the name of progressing history, of which each Company represents the living memory, incarnated by exceptional products.

**October 2006 marks a new era for us,** signalled by the realization in the next few years of a centre designed by Frank Gehry in Paris, i.e. the Louis Vuitton Foundation. The mission of this centre resembling a magical vessel is clear: to introduce the art patronage policy in a geographically identifiable universe by building multiple bridges between heritage, classicism, youth, creation and innovation. It is intended to defend a vision of the world that encompasses the past, present and future.

**And to attempt to define through these pieces,** these questions, which open a way to understanding the world, an esthetics of time undergoing full transformation. To accompany this extraordinary acceleration in contemporary creation, this Foundation offers a unique space of experience and talent, permanence in change. The notion of "trace" has always been fundamental for Louis Vuitton, because it combines creative performance with meaning and reference. A place of theme-based exhibits as much as a place for debate, with conference programs, meetings between artists, scientists and musicians, the Foundation will be driven by what has always been our motivation: classicism and a break with the past, tradition and innovation. This vision of creation is rooted in heritage: the presence of memory, without which the future cannot unfold. It is through the force of their ideas that artists transform the world with the force of their presence, shrinking the frontiers of time and space. This intuition of the future will blossom in the unique space that will be the Louis Vuitton Foundation, encouraging the best that the future has to offer, the essence of beauty and all its transformations.

### **Bernard Arnault**

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer of LVMH

## A centre of excellence and exchanges

I am proud that Louis Vuitton is today lending its name to this Foundation. Through its history as well as through the values that it personifies, our Company has always cultivated a close connection with its time.

Our success was built on new ideas and technical innovation, skillfully combining creation with know-how, modernity with tradition. With the passing centuries, our Company has reinvented itself to become the number one luxury brand in the world, a symbol of the French way of life and elegance. Creation has always been one of the driving forces behind our success.

In phase with its time, Louis Vuitton created luggage that revolutionized the art of traveling. Always open to the world, our Company absorbed contemporary influences. Our recent collaboration with Takashi Murakami shows this fruitful interplay of ideas between art and fashion. As for our Champs-Élysées store it has introduced art and culture into our visible universe, in close proximity with our visitors.

With this Foundation in Paris, Louis Vuitton is happy and proud to share its passion for creation. We hope to encourage creative expression in its most diverse forms. The public will be invited to travel to the very heart of creation in the general sense of the term and we hope that as many of these travelers as possible will identify themselves with it. Because creation crosses borders and opens minds, the Louis Vuitton Foundation takes up the challenge of daring and emotion.

### **Yves Carcelle**

Chairman of Louis Vuitton

### **A place for discovery**

The project of the Louis Vuitton Foundation revolves around a high ambition. The goal is to introduce the widest possible audience to 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century art and to the great masters of the past through exhibits featuring their significant works. This approach will be completed by other efforts (research and documentation center, innovative teaching programs) and an original policy for commissioning artists will further contribute to shape the singularity of this endeavor.

### **Open to all the arts and all eyes**

In a world tempted by withdrawal, art has to be shared. It forges deep ties between men, artists and the world. It brings commitment, confidence and optimism. Open to everyone, the Louis Vuitton Foundation is intended to break down barriers between the general public, especially the younger public, and art. By promoting meetings with those who make art alive today, by making new means of information and discovering art and culture generally available, the Foundation places creation at the heart of its project, as a vector of learning, education and social and cultural dialogue. Its presence in a legendary location that has been a long-time favorite for visitors of all ages – the Jardin d'Acclimatation – will contribute to this new dimension. The Foundation is intended to be open to many artistic and intellectual disciplines. With the ambition of breaking down barriers by bringing together different forms of creation, it will also further exchanges with the cultures and citizens of the world.

### **LOUIS VUITTON, THE PASSION OF CREATION**

The Louis Vuitton Foundation exemplifies the ties that the Company has had with creation since its inception. As early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the famous Parisian trunk maker participated in the major World Fairs while his innovations garnered many prizes for excellence.

Always in phase with his times, Louis Vuitton took inspiration from his contemporaries' way of life. The Company continued through the years establishing trends, carrying on tradition and inventing the future. More than 150 years after its inception, the small family business is today the number one luxury brand in the world. Nothing would have been possible without the creative daring of its founders, pioneers and visionaries. Parallel to this activity, the Company has always forged close ties with the artists of its times. Louis and Georges Vuitton spent time with impressionist painters. Gaston Vuitton, a scholar and enlightened collector, was fascinated with decorative arts. In the Company's history, art has always nourished the activity and innovations of the trunk maker. This influence was reflected in the design of window displays, new model sketches and artistic collaborations. Today more than ever, the impact of art – from Stephen Sprouse to Takashi Murakami, from Ugo Rondinone to Olafur Eliason – is still present in Louis Vuitton's creations.

## Creative architecture

### Frank Gehry, chronology

**1929:** born in Toronto.

**1962:** founded Gehry Partners in Los Angeles.

**1989:** Frank Gehry awarded the Pritzker Architecture Prize.

**2000:** new distinction with the Golden Medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 2000.

**Some of his most recent projects:** In the past forty years, Frank Gehry has designed many major buildings, both public and private, throughout Europe, Asia and the United States. Among his most recent accomplishments are the Guggenheim museum of Bilbao; DZ Bank Building in Berlin, the Walt Disney Concert hall of Los Angeles and the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum of university of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

### He has been teaching architecture at Yale university for many years.

According to the architecture critic Paul Goldberger from the *New York Times*, "from an esthetic point of view, [his buildings] are some of the most profound and most brilliant works of architecture of our times".

### One of the most imaginative buildings by Frank Gehry

Like a vessel among the trees, open to nature, the building imagined by Frank Gehry expresses the spirit of the perpetually evolving Foundation and marks a new phase in the architect's style. It is designed to be permanently reinvented, in step with its exhibits and special events. In osmosis with the environment, it embodies respiration between inner and outer space. These dynamics will carry into the very garden that surround the building thanks to educational activities and the participation of artists.

## **“Transparent, playful and serious” The building seen by Frank Ghery**

### **What has inspired the design of the Foundation building? Could you comment on the relationship between the building and its natural surroundings?**

The building was very much inspired by the setting. Since the site is located between the bois de Boulogne and the Jardin d’Acclimatation, it became obvious to us that a glass conservatory would make the most sense. Inside this glass structure would be the enclosed galleries, but moving from one gallery to another, the visitor could enjoy the views of the parks as well. On top of the galleries are a number of glass-covered roof terraces that further integrate the garden and the children’s park as part of the experience. Being part of nature, the Jardin d’Acclimatation is also very playful and colorful. We want to incorporate that character into the building. That’s why we have joined the galleries inside the glass structure like an assemblage of sculptural building blocks. They have a white finish to serve as a backdrop for artists’ screenings and site-specific installations. As a result, when viewed behind the exterior glass structure, they appear mysterious, magical, and always changing.

### **If you were to define this particular project in 3 words, what would they be?**

Transparent, playful, in that it is part of a children’s park, and engaging as playful, and serious at the same time - playful but serious. But it is also magical and ephemeral. It should also inspire a large audience to the arts and creativity.

### **The Foundation will build bridges between the general public and the world of creation, from classical art to contemporary art. How does your project express this ambition?**

#### **The Foundation has a particular focus on the younger public. Is this something that accounts for the energy and “playfulness” of the project?**

The project’s location next to a popular children’s park is a key element that helps us understand our client’s ambition to engage the general public, and especially a younger public, in the experience of art. Which is something museums all around the world have always tried to do, but this particular site makes it easier. In addition to experiencing the galleries, the public program of the building also includes a documentation center, a café, a bookstore, and most importantly an “arts forum” where we imagine that on-going dialogues and exchanges between the artists and the public will take place. So those were the experiences. The museum has to invite young people playing in the park to come inside. So I think that has been a most important aspect of the design as it evolved –to become intriguing to a large audience, and more specifically young people, and to stimulate their curiosity and willingness to enter and say “Hey! I wanna go there.”

## LVMH, art and patronage

**For about fifteen years, LVMH has been a major arts patron in France.** For the group, art patronage is a genuinely strategic choice. Because it ties the corporate world to its cultural environment, art patronage helps communicate the values that bring together the different LVMH Companies, particularly Louis Vuitton, and build their image and identity through practical undertakings.

**In order to develop its policy of supporting art and culture,** LVMH takes inspiration from its "cultural values", which represent the group's best assets: heritage, artistic craft, innovation, a sense of excellence and estheticism, a French and a European taste, symbols of a genuine *art de vivre*. The Group is committed to promoting the cultural influence of France, at the same time acquiring international visibility.

**Throughout these past years, it has conducted efforts to rehabilitate,** enrich and increase the influence of French heritage, from the "château de Versailles" to the Correr museum in Venice, the renovation of the Granville villa where Christian Dior was born to the "jardins du Palais Royal" in Paris, not forgetting donations of works of art to the Louvre museum and the "musée Guimet". Finally, LVMH has sponsored some of the leading national exhibits in Paris - 26 since 1990 – devoted to such key artists in the history of painting as Van Gogh, de La Tour, Cézanne, Gauguin, Dubuffet, Picasso, Matisse and Yves Klein, as well as recent exhibits in Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong featuring the masters of impressionism.

**Because art now is the inheritance of the future,** LVMH is dedicated to supporting contemporary creation, for example, in the last few years, the works "Poetry" and "Woyzek" by Robert Wilson, Lou Reed et Tom Waits at the 'Théâtre de l'Odéon' in Paris, "Casino" by Annette Messager for the french pavilion at the Venice Biennale and also the commissions for video pieces by Doug Aitken, Gary Hill, Ange Leccia and Nan Goldin. Finally, LVMH, is committed to bringing the youngest to the best culture has to offer and to help children, students and promising talents to get to know the arts and develop an artistic awareness, through classes of "Discovery and Education", a LVMH prize for Young Artists as well as waiting to lend a Stradivarius to the next young virtuosos.

# Louis Vuitton, the freedom to create

**Since 1854, creation and innovation have always marked the history of Louis Vuitton.**

At a time when travel was still synonymous with adventure, the young trunk maker dreamt of transforming it into a genuine way of life. He created the first modern trunks and combined beauty with utility. All of Europe, and, soon after, the world, traveled with Louis Vuitton luggage, whether by train, ship, automobile or plane.

**As fond of the arts as he was of technology, Louis Vuitton took part in the great events of his times.**

The Company presented its creations at the World Fairs in Paris, Brussels, London and Vienna. In 1925, it participated in the famous International Decorative Arts Exhibition in Paris. Consistently, Louis Vuitton designed his products as an integral part of the contemporary world, taking inspiration from the arts and techniques of his times. The Company fearlessly asserted its daring and taste for modernity.

**In 1997, Marc Jacobs as the new artistic director revived Louis Vuitton's collaboration with artists.**

The gamble on daring was clearly paying off. The freedom to create was without limits. Invited by Marc Jacobs, the "underground" artist Stephen Sprouse tagged the Monogram canvas with his graffiti. Two years later, it is up to the Japanese artist Takashi Murakami to reinvent the famous canvas in its multi-colored version.

**In 2006, Louis Vuitton inaugurated a place of artistic and cultural expression on the Company's seventh floor at 101, avenue des Champs-Élysées.**

Opening with a presentation of previously unseen photographs and videos by Vanessa Beecroft, the new Louis Vuitton Espace will show- until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006- the works of nine contemporary designers, invited to rethink the Company's icons, including the Keepall bag and the Wardrobe trunk. Shigeru Ban, Andrée Putman, James Turrell and Robert Wilson, among others, have accepted the invitation and its license for unbridled creation. Daring, curiosity, and freedom are the characteristic notions that define Louis Vuitton and its Foundation.