

PRESS RELEASE

Napoleon: Antiquity to Empire

18 June – 1 September 2015

ROBILANT+VOENA STAIR SAINTY GALLERY

38 Dover Street, London W1S 4NL

Opening hours: Monday - Friday 10am to 6pm / Admission: Free



ROBILANT+VOENA and **STAIR SAINTY GALLERIES** announce the opening of an exhibition, *Napoleon: Antiquity to Empire*, on the 18 June, the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. The final allied defeat of Napoleon in 1815 will also be commemorated by *Bonaparte and the British* at the British Museum (until 16 August); *Waterloo at Windsor* at Windsor Castle (until January 2016); a newly reorganised Wellington Museum at Apsley House, and a special Waterloo exhibition in the Wellington Arch. The exhibition will continue in a modified form at the **SPERONE WESTWATER GALLERY** in New York.

Napoleon: Antiquity to Empire will include approximately fifty paintings, sculptures, furniture, works of art and objects that reference classical models and produced a highly personal imperial iconography inspired by the military and diplomatic achievements of Alexander the Great, Julius Cesar and Justinian. By fusing these with his own extensive study of classical history, Napoleon defined the art and fashion of his Empire through the work of artists, architects and designers chosen to bring his vision of power, permanence and majesty to fruition. The Napoleonic era has a special place in French cultural history, inspiring both his contemporaries and later generations to preserve objects associated with his person with a reverence more commonly associated with religious relics.

Notable among the works exhibited are a regal life-size portrait of Napoleon in coronation robes from the studio of Baron Gerard, as well as portraits of Napoleon and Josephine by Appiani, a laurel-crowned marble bust by Denis Chaudet; a relief by Chinard, and sculptures by Bartolini and Righetti - each depicting Napoleon with the classical references that epitomised his public persona. Jacob's *Portrait of Prince Camillo Borghese*, terracotta busts by Chinard of his step-son Eugène de Beauharnais and brother-in-law Félix Baciocchi, marbles busts of the Emperor's brother Lucien Bonaparte and his wife Alexandrine, Blondel's *Portrait of the Maréchale de Beurnonville*, wife of one of Napoleon's strongest critics, and an expansive portrait of the Mosselman family by Charles de Boisfremont are among the fine examples of neo-classical portraiture included in the exhibition. The narrative concludes with an investigation into how Napoleon's expropriation of the neo-classical style permeated his court and wider European society through the inclusion of works of art and objects directly associated with his rule and legacy.

The idea for this exhibition originated with **Marco Voena**, who has had a long-term interest in Napoleonic imagery and several of the works on display come from his personal collection. For further information please contact Paolo Bonacina at Paolo@robilantvoena.com or Tom Smith at thomas@europeanpaintings.com