

Press release

**MADELEINE SMITH-CHAMPION, LA BIENFAITRICE¹
MAISON NATIONALE DES ARTISTES, NOGENT-SUR-MARNE
FROM SEPTEMBER 15th TO NOVEMBER 26th, 2017**

On the occasion of the European Heritage Days taking place on September 16th and 17th, the Maison Nationale des Artistes -which is home to artists in their old age- is dedicating its September exhibition to one of its benefactors: painter Madeleine Smith-Champion (1864-1940). *Madeleine Smith-Champion, la bienfaitrice* will be on view from September 15th to November 26th, 2017.

Madeleine Smith-Champion started painting in 1887. She entered in Jean-Jacques Henner's workshop, one of the rare artists training women who occasionally modeled for him. In 1889, she took part in the Salon de la Société des Artistes Français and in 1891, received the bronze medal for her work *Jeanne d'Arc*. Afterwards, Madeleine Smith-Champion regularly exhibited in this Salon. She presented several of her works during the World's Fair of 1900. After receiving the French Légion d'Honneur in 1920 for the military hospital, she ran with her sister during WWI in her house of Nogent-sur-Marne, she picked up painting again -which she had stopped during the war- and dedicated herself to portraits and female nudes exhibited every year at the Salon up until 1939. Besides, she relentlessly painted studies of her gardens that were never showcased.

The exhibition dedicated to her work this autumn will feature various emblematic pieces kept by the FNAGP in memory of the donation of her estate to the state upon her death in 1944.

In 1913, Madeleine Smith, her husband Pierre Champion (1880-1942) and her sister and photographer Jeanne Smith (1857-1943) bequeathed the major collection of their uncle Auguste Lesouëf to the Bibliothèque Nationale. Then, upon their respective death, the State received their entire estate as a donation, comprised of the gardens and two terraced houses in Nogent, to be turned into a home for impoverished artists. In compliance with their will, the Maison Nationale des Artistes was created in 1945 and painter Maurice Guy Loë became its first director.

As a female artist, Madeleine Smith-Champion also distinguished herself by her philanthropic actions which continue today through the various missions of the Fondation Nationale des Arts Graphiques et Plastiques dedicated to the artists.

On the occasion of the European Heritage Days and for the whole duration of the exhibition, guided tours will be scheduled on demand for groups and school children.

The Maison Nationale des Artistes is part of the Fondation Nationale des Arts Graphiques et Plastiques.

¹ The benefactor.



Madeleine Smith-Champion

Self-portrait, 1920s

Oil on canvas

80 x 120 cm

FNAGP collection

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Exhibition from September 15th to November 26th, 2017

Thursday, September 14th

Press visit at 2:30pm

Opening at 6pm

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<http://mna.fnagp.fr>

Open to the public everyday from 9am to 12pm and from 2pm to 6pm

Free entrance

Access

RER A: Nogent-sur-Marne then bus 114 or 210, stop at Sous-préfecture

RER E: Nogent-Le Perreux then direction Tribunal d'instance

Metro line 1: Château de Vincennes then bus 114 or 210, stop at Sous-préfecture

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Visuals available on request