

PRESS INFORMATION

GENERATION 1700. DRAWING AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY IN PARIS

17.4. – 30.8.2026, in the Graphic Cabinet

The exhibition “Generation 1700” is dedicated to drawing lessons at the Royal Academy in Paris. With works mostly on display for the first time, it illustrates how the most important artists of the French Enlightenment combined their study of anatomy with artistic expression. On the occasion of the anniversary “75 years of the Institut français Stuttgart”, the exhibition takes a look at an era of profound social upheaval in which drawing itself became a medium of enlightened, revolutionary freedom.

How does one learn to draw the human body? This question is at the heart of the exhibition “Generation 1700” which focuses on drawing instruction at the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, France’s prestigious art academy in the 18th century— a time of profound social upheaval: While the bourgeoisie emancipated itself from the absolutist court under the banner of the Enlightenment, drawing itself also became a medium of liberation. At that time, young artists not only depicted the human body, but also studied anatomy with rational insight and understood it as an expression of individual ideas.

On the occasion of the anniversary “75 years of the Institut français Stuttgart”, which will be celebrated in 2026, the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart is highlighting drawing from live models between discipline, science, and artistic development.

The exhibition in the Graphic Cabinet focuses on Michel-François Dandré-Bardon (1700–1783), one of the most important artists of the French Enlightenment. With his understanding of anatomy and a keen sense of movement and materiality, he staged the human body in dramatically composed studies: literally from foot to head to the entire figure. His works impressively demonstrate how the strict principles of the Academy provide fertile ground for artistic experimentation.

The Staatsgalerie possesses one of the most extensive collections of Dandré-Bardon’s graphic works in Europe. Works by contemporaries such as Carle van Loo, Jean François de Troy, Charles Joseph Natoire, and Nicolas Guibal complement the presentation. With around 80 drawings, graphic prints, and paintings, most of which are being shown for the first time, the exhibition “Generation 1700” offers a glimpse into everyday life at the Academy.

Contact

Diana Maier
Press officer
T +49 711 470 40-275

Charlotte Kreuter,
Head of PR
T +49 711 470 40-227

Liliana Reinöhl
Media relations manager
T +49 711 470 40-457

presse@staatsgalerie.bwl.de
www.staatsgalerie.de

Opening hours:
10 am – 5 pm
Thursdays 10 am – 8 pm
Mondays closed

Stuttgart, 24.2.2026



Staatsgalerie Stuttgart
Konrad-Adenauer-Str. 30–32
70173 Stuttgart
Germany

T +49 711 470 40-0
F +49 711 235 99 83
info@staatsgalerie.de
staatsgalerie.de

Sponsored by:

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To arrange an interview with those involved in the exhibition, please contact the press contacts listed above.

Press material (press releases and images) can be downloaded via staatsgalerie.de/en/press.