Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial events scheduled throughout 2003

Louisiana will celebrate the Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial throughout 2003. Residents of the state and people from around the world are invited to participate in the numerous events planned yearlong.

Cultural highlights will be world class blockbuster art exhibits, special museum displays, the debut of operas, musicals and scholastic conferences. Communities, from the piney woods in the northern reaches of the state, to wetlands along the Gulf of Mexico, are creating events and festivals to celebrate the landmark land deal in 1803 that added 828,000 square miles of North America to the United States, making the young country a world economic power.

The list below includes some of the major events that are confirmed for 2003 and early 2004. More activities, festivals and events will be organized and scheduled as the celebration gets underway.


HIGHLIGHT EVENTS FOR 2003

■ Lewis and Clark: The Great Journey West, an IMAX film, will be shown at the So-Port Discovery Center in Shreveport until August 2003, and at the Entergy IMAX Theatre in New Orleans from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2003.


■ Henri Matisse's Jazz Exhibit will be presented by the Louisiana State Museum's Old U.S. Mint Museum in New Orleans until Jan. 12.

The exhibit is based on documentation used as proofs for the publication of Henri Matisse's Jazz. Materials in the exhibit are on loan from the Musee Matisse in Nice, France.

Call 504-568-6968 or visit http://www.lsm.crt.state.ia.us.

■ The Original Louisiana Purchase Documents will be on display at the Louisiana Old State Capitol in Baton Rouge until May 15.

The documents, on loan from the National Archives in Washington D.C., are integrated into a permanent exhibit on the Louisiana Purchase housed at the museum. The exhibit includes historical interpretation of events before, during and after the purchase, plus maps and profiles on people involved in the purchase. Admission is $4, adults; $3, seniors; and free for student groups and children under 6. Call 600-488-2668 or visit http://www.osc.state.la.us.

■ A Fusion of Nations, A Fusion of Cultures: Spain, France, the United States and the Louisiana Purchase will run at the Historic New Orleans Collection from January to May.

The exhibit will focus on domestic and international issues in the early 1800s, it brings together documents, paintings and other historical materials from archives in Spain, France, the Netherlands and the United States.

The exhibit will open in conjunction with a three-day symposium Jan. 22-25, at the Omni Royal Orleans Hotel that will be co-sponsored by the Historic New Orleans Collection and the Louisiana Historical Association. Admission is for charge.

Call 504-523-4662 or visit http://www.hinol.org.

■ Louisiana Purchase: A Magnificent Investment will be presented by Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra in eight Louisiana cities including New Orleans and Baton Rouge between Jan. 1 and June 30, 2003.

This newly commissioned piece is the culmination of several statewide visits by composer and conductor Robert Kaplows. The work will reflect the historical and contemporary character of Louisiana.

Call 504-533-5330 or visit http://www.pomusic.com.


The exhibit showcases paintings, sculptures, prints and drawings, historical documents, furniture and decorative arts that highlight both Napoleon and Jefferson and each nation's character.

The exhibit also focuses on the cultural exchange between the two countries, an exchange that began in French colonial Louisiana, blossomed with the Louisiana Purchase, and continues into present times. Admission will be $12 for adults, $11 for senior citizens and $6 for children, and group and student discounts will be available.

Call 504-488-6265 or visit http://www.noma.org.

■ Monticello and Malmaison: An Exhibit Celebrating the Bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase will run at New Orleans City Park Botanical Gardens from April 12 to Aug. 31, 2003.

It will feature gardens and landscapes of Monticello (the state of Thomas Jefferson) and of Malmaison (the estate of Napoleon and Empress Josephine). Visual displays will show the design and history of the gardens, plant specimens, garden furniture and tools, and illustrations.

Call 504-483-9366 or visit http://www.neworleanscitypark.com.

■ The Louisiana Commissioned Purchase Musical will be presented in Lake Charles April 4-5, in the Rosa Hart Theatre, Lake Charles Civic Center. The team of Jamie Wax and Paul Taranto, creators of Evangeline: The Musical, are creating a new historical musical theater work based on the Louisiana Purchase, and continues into present times.

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