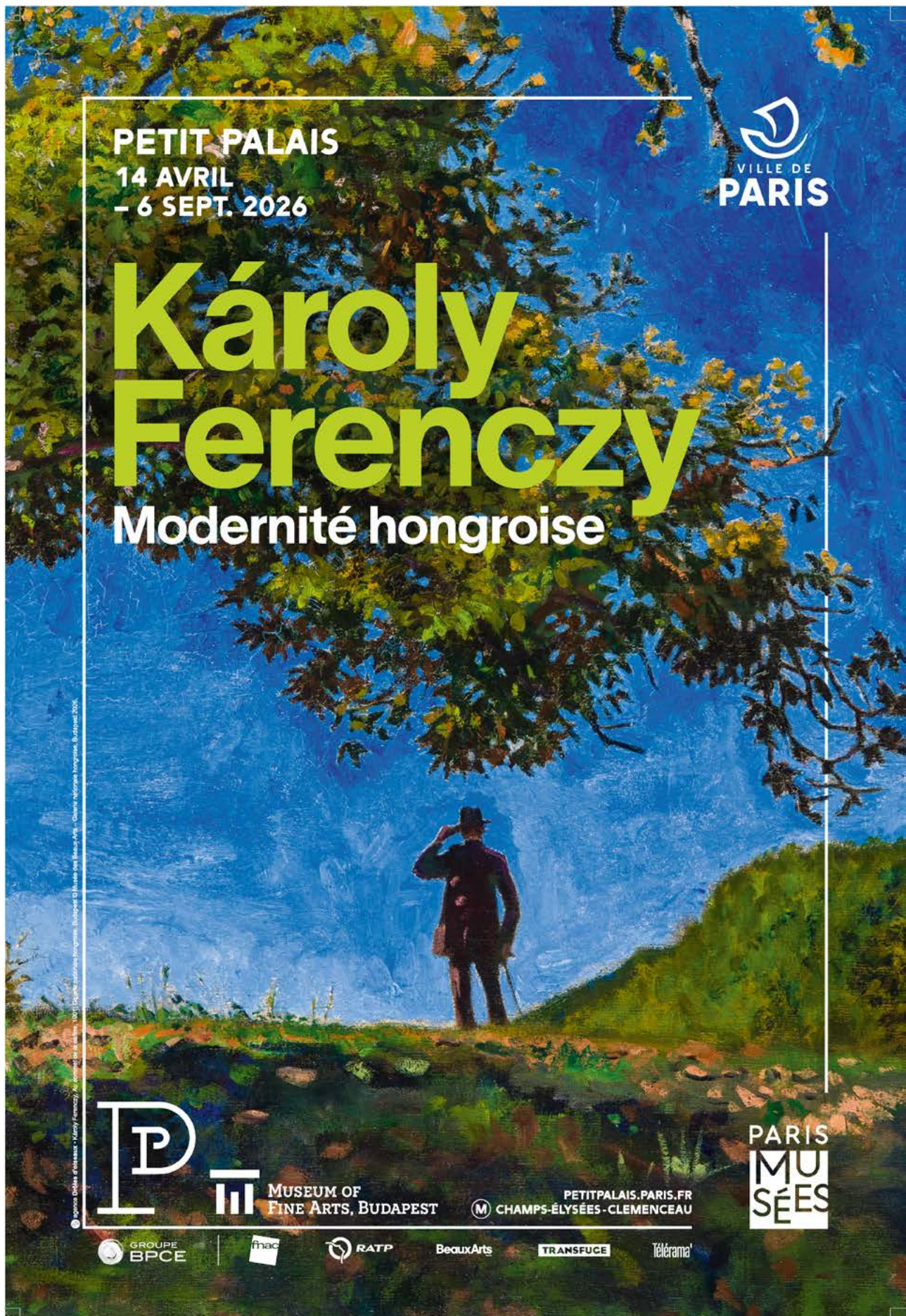


Press kit



April 2026

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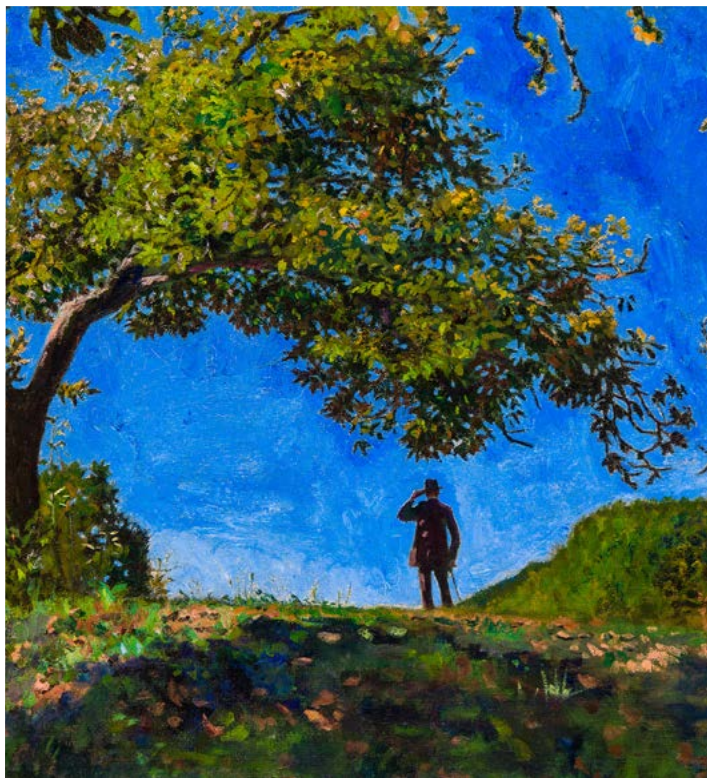
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Press release

Károly Ferenczy *Hungarian Modernity*

April 14 - September 6, 2026



Károly Ferenczy, *On the Hilltop*, Oil on canvas, 110 x 141.5 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest – Hungarian National Gallery © Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest – Hungarian National Gallery, 2026.

Cropped photo

CURATOR:

Annick Lemoine, President of the Musée d'Orsay and Musée de l'Orangerie

SPECIALIST CURATORS:

Ferenc Gosztonyi, Head Curator, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest – Central European Research Institute for Art History (KEMKI)

Réka Krasznai, Head Curator, Head of Painting, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest – Hungarian National Gallery

Edit Plesznivy, Head Curator, Head of 19th and 20th Hungarian Painting, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest – Hungarian National Gallery

Baptiste Roelly, Heritage Curator, Head of Drawings, Prints, Manuscripts, and Ancient Books at the Petit Palais

As famous in his native Hungary as he is little known in France, Károly Ferenczy (1862-1917) is a major figure of Modernity in Central Europe. His truly unique work makes him one of the great painters of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For this retrospective in France, the Petit Palais aims to showcase his profound originality. Neither a Naturalist, a Symbolist, an Impressionist, a Nabi, but a little of all these at once, he epitomizes late-century cosmopolitanism through the breath of his cultural knowledge. A founding member of an artists' colony working in the heart of the Hungarian countryside, Ferenczy made plein-air painting one of his best-known practices. He sought in nature the expression of a syncretic spirituality. Under his brush, the sun frequently became the leading protagonist in landscapes bearing his own distinctive hallmark.

Featuring almost one hundred and forty pieces, this exhibition reveals the multiple facets of his approach: landscapes, portraits, family scenes, biblical subjects, nudes, and caricatures, while highlighting his fundamental role in the emergence of a Hungarian Modernist art school. This exhibition was designed in collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest and the Hungarian National Gallery.

Structured chronologically, the exhibition is punctuated with thematic sections exploring Ferenczy's stylistic evolution, from his early works marked by his travels through France and Italy up until his last period.

The exhibition opens with a self-portrait of Károly Ferenczy flanked by two works depicting the artist directing his model's pose. This introduction immediately establishes the two main poles of his work that would permeate his entire career: pleinair painting and studio work. The first rooms present his early works, produced following his formative travels, particularly in Italy, as well as his beginnings in Szentendre, Hungary. These paintings bear witness to the visual culture Ferenczy acquired through his contact with the great European masters and the lasting impact of his studies in Paris at the Académie Julian.

The exhibition continues with a thematic section presenting the portraits of his loved ones—his wife, father, and children—revealing an intimate and attentive gaze. This personal dimension resonates with a key period in his artistic development: his time in Munich. There, Ferenczy's work evolved towards a more Symbolist language, closely linked to nature, where the forest became the central motif. Several major paintings, such as *Birdsong* (1893) and *Orpheus* (1894), demonstrate this transformation, pointing at a new narrative and spiritual depth.

Ferenczy's move in 1896 to the Nagybánya artists' colony was another seminal moment in his career. There, he reached a full and lasting artistic maturity. Several iconic works from this period attest to his originality: religious subjects transposed into contemporary landscapes, the coexistence of multiple time frames, and the inscription of a pervasive spirituality at the heart of daily life. Biblical themes, which recur throughout his career, find a unique expression here, through the fusion of sacred iconography, observations of nature, and references to the modern world.

The exhibition also shines a light on the close dialogue between painting and literature amongst the Nagybánya artists, particularly through Ferenczy's illustrations for the poetry of József Kiss. The connection underscores the artist's profoundly intellectual nature, his love of reading, and his thorough knowledge of European literature. This openness to the world may be seen in the attention to scenes from daily life and the figures he observed in Nagybánya and its surroundings: peasants, woodcutters, Romani, horsemen, and various trades people. Presented alongside works by other contemporary Hungarian artists, these paintings illustrate his unique vision and pivotal role in the emergence of a Hungarian Modernity.

After 1900, Ferenczy's painting was marked by a highly luminous period. Landscapes, swimming scenes, rivers, and cottages convey a new serenity and an accomplished mastery of colour and composition. At the same time, Ferenczy continued his work as a portraitist, broadening his focus to depict members of the intellectual and artistic circles he frequented, while also developing a freer, more satirical approach in caricatures that reveal a more intimate and humorous facet of his work.

From 1906, the final years of his career were marked by a renewed exploration of the representation of the body. Female nudes, rendered in a classical studio style, are juxtaposed with male figures shown in dynamic contexts like the circus or athletics, where movement is central. This reflection was also explored in Ferenczy's ambitious project for *La Pietà*, to which he devoted himself extensively between 1913 and 1916. This work, situated at the crossroads of religious and history painting, was the ultimate and unusual masterpiece of a painter who would die before the end of the First World War.

The exhibition concludes with a series of late, intensely chromatic landscapes. In these works, nature is made vibrant and almost meditative, testifying to Ferenczy's consummate pictorial mastery. The exhibition ends with *The Red Wall IV* (1910), an emblematic painting both for the strength of its colour and the contemplative atmosphere it evokes, leaving the visitor with a lasting souvenir of the art of this major Central European painter of Modernism.

This exhibition has been organized in collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest and the Hungarian National Gallery.

The exhibition

INTRODUCTION

As famous in his native Hungary as he is little known in France, Károly Ferenczy is one of the most unique painters of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Neither a Naturalist, a Symbolist, Nabi, nor an Impressionist, but rather a little of all of these at once, he imposed his deep originality on the Hungarian School and developed a reputation as a leading figure of its Modernity. Born into a wealthy family, he travelled to Italy, France, and Germany, forging a solid knowledge of European culture. Too cosmopolitan to focus solely on Hungarian folklore and picturesque imagery in his works, Ferenczy was also too independent to simply follow the Modern movements developing across the art capitals of the world. While remaining solitary in his artistic approach, he nevertheless made a decisive contribution to the creation, in Nagybánya, of an artists' colony that placed nature at the heart of its philosophy, and where daily life was punctuated by excursions to paint outdoors or "en plein air". Antiquity and the Old Masters, which he had discovered in Italy, remained seminal references throughout the painter's career, just as he kept something of the Naturalism he had cultivated at the Académie Julian in Paris, and of the Symbolism—characteristic of Central Europe's fin-de-siècle—that he had learnt in Munich. While his style evolved and his production became increasingly refined over the years, certain themes may be said to recur—family, the sacred, and nature. Sophisticated and demanding, Ferenczy knew how to focus on the purely pictorial dimensions of his art and was the author of some of the most eye-catching paintings of his day.

MAKING ONE'S IMAGE A MANIFESTO



Károly Ferenczy, *Self-Portrait (in the Studio)*, 1903.
Oil on canvas, 106.3 x 116.7 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



Károly Ferenczy, *The Painter and his Model (in the Woods)*, 1904.
Huile sur toile, 120 x 135 cm. © Collection Barbara Czapolai

Hung on either side of a self-portrait, two works depict Károly Ferenczy adjusting the pose of his model in different settings. The painter stages himself in a gesture of creative intimacy and reveals a key part of his artistic process. His traits are thus visible in two of his masterpieces, which respond to each other like counterparts, evoking the two main facets of his activity. A tireless walker who made plein-air landscape painting one of his preferred practices, Ferenczy also made a name for himself as a painter of intimate family scenes, interior views, and studio work. In both cases, the artist carefully studied his compositions, making sure that no pose was left to chance. The painting showing Ferenczy's studio was the source of one of his greatest international successes: it won him a gold medal at the sixth Venice Biennale in 1905.

SECTION 1

AN ARTIST IN THE MAKING (1884-1896)

European roots



Károly Ferenczy, *Girls Tending the Plants*, 1889.
Oil on canvas, 110 x 110 cm. Private collection. Photo Tibor Master.

Born into a family originally from Vienna but who moved to Budapest, the young Károly Ferenczy was immersed in the cosmopolitanism typical of the Central European elite in the nineteenth century. In addition to Hungarian, he was fluent in German, French, and English, as well as Italian. His travels to Vienna, Rome, Naples, Paris, Munich, and Budapest, undertaken to further his artistic development in the major art capitals of Europe, enabled him to develop a strong European perspective and a broad cultural understanding in terms of literature, visual art, philosophy, and history. Ferenczy studied landscapes, ancient ruins, and the Old Masters in Italy, immersed himself in Symbolism in Munich, and was fascinated by the quasi-photographic Naturalism of painter Jules Bastien-Lepage in Paris. These various experiences and influences may be seen in the works he created in Szentendre, a town on the outskirts of Budapest, on the banks of the Danube, where he settled after his European voyages.



Károly Ferenczy, *Boys Throwing Pebbles*, 1890.
Oil on canvas, 119.5 x 149 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026

Familiar faces



Károly Ferenczy, *Portrait of Béni Ferenczy, Son of the Artist*, 1906.
Oil on canvas, 104 x 84 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.

The family unit played an essential role in the life and work of Károly Ferenczy, who painted various members of his family throughout his career. His father, an art collector, was one of the founding members of the Hungarian National Society of the Fine Arts (OMKT). His older brother, Ferenc, made a name for himself as a playwright, and his wife, Olga Fialka, was an artist before giving up her career to raise their three children and run the household. Their eldest son, Valér, was destined by his father to become a painter. Their other son, Béni, trained in sculpture, and his twin sister, Noémi, devoted herself to the textile arts. All three would achieve recognition and are considered first-class artists. Travel, visits to museums, and discussions about art were all part of family life. The children pursued their studies in Munich, Paris, Vienna, and Florence. In 1916, a “family” exhibition was organized, jointly dedicated to the works of the father and his three children at the Ernst Museum in Budapest.

Munich: A Symbolist awakening



Károly Ferenczy, *Birdsong*, 1893.
Oil on canvas, 106 x 78 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026

Károly Ferenczy left Szentendre in 1893 for Munich, where he lived with his family until 1896. This stay would mark a turning point in the painter's career, as he embraced biblical and mythological inspiration. He modified his technique and moved away from the meticulous detail of his earlier works. The unified light of his Naturalistic canvases gave way to the shadows and uncertainties of twilight. The landscape took on increasing importance: Ferenczy made the forest his new field of experimentation. Larger than life, a representation of Adam is striking in its frontality. Surrounded by wild animals, the first man, according to the biblical tradition, becomes aware of the consciousness and beauty of Creation. In his monograph on his father, Valér Ferenczy describes this work as an image akin to the painter's own awakening to nature. This communion with the landscape forms the heart of his *Self-Portrait* and *Birdsong*. At once mysterious and sensual, these works appeal to both hearing and sight. Ferenczy's new perspective on the world was characterized by a captivating and enigmatic Symbolism.

SECTION 2

AN ACCOMPLISHED ARTIST (1896-1900)

Nagybánya, the early years (1896-1900): an open-air studio

In the 1890s, many Central European artists broke away from the official circuits of academies and salons to move to the countryside where they could practice their art more freely. Inspired by this trend, Károly Ferenczy settled in Nagybánya with his friends Simon Hollósy, István Réti, Béla Iványi, and János Thorma. In this small mining town, now in Romania, they founded an artists' colony, renowned for its plein-air practice, communal living, and a break from tradition. The movement grew and eventually counted some fifty members. Drawing a parallel with the French School, a Hungarian newspaper wrote in 1896: "And if Millet, Corot, and Manet, world-renowned French painters, have spread a sumptuous light over all of the great France from the small town of Barbizon thanks to their art, what could a beautiful, strong, healthy, and entirely Hungarian painting (but always of European quality) accomplish in Nagybánya?"



Károly Ferenczy, *The Sermon on the Mount I*, 1896.
Oil on canvas, 135 x 201 cm.

Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026

The sacred

Present in Károly Ferenczy's production from his Munich period onwards, sacred iconography became increasingly important after the artist settled in Nagybánya. According to accounts from his contemporaries, Ferenczy was not religious. His interest in biblical subjects may undoubtedly be explained by his unique approach to art, situated at the crossroads of Naturalism and Symbolism. In his work, the sun and the landscape are imbued with sacred connotations for the narratives they tell, and the synthesis of these different registers inevitably evokes a pantheistic conception of nature, widespread in Central Europe in the late nineteenth century. The sacred was believed to be omnipresent in nature, which made it quite conceivable to depict the Magi walking through the forests of Nagybánya or Jesus preaching on the side of a valley. The intensity of the human dramas recounted in the Bible seems to have particularly interested Ferenczy. In several of his works, he explores family relationships, most often father-son relationships or the complexity of brotherly bonds.

József Kiss, Nagybánya poet



Károly Ferenczy, *Souvenir from Naples*, 1896.
Paper, coal, 63,5 x 41 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National
Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of
Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026

Little known today, József Kiss (1843-1921) was a Hungarian poet whose work explored the themes of love, travel, Hungarian history, and Jewish identity. In 1896, Kiss visited Nagybánya to invite the artists there to participate in the illustration of a particularly luxurious edition of his poems. Károly Ferenczy, Simon Hollósy, Béla Iványi Grünwald, János Thorma, and István Réti agreed to contribute. Ferenczy chose twelve poems, for which he realized fourteen drawings and paintings. In these illustrations, highly graphic in their aesthetic, the naturalistic tonal expression of scenes from everyday life is combined with decorative accents that are characteristic of Art Nouveau (plant forms, curves, etc.). Iványi Grünwald did twenty-two illustrations for the collection, Hollósy five, Réti sixteen, and Thorma four. The presentation of the poetry collection in November 1897 led to the first public exhibition of the Nagybánya collective of painters in Budapest.

The people of Nagybánya



Károly Ferenczy, *Gypsies*, 1901.
Oil on canvas, 122 x 122 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National
Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of
Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026

Károly Ferenczy did several paintings presenting the inhabitants of Nagybánya and their folk traditions but never reduced these to anecdotal depictions of Hungarian folklore. He painted peasants, woodcutters, and the Romani community going about their daily activities within the setting of the natural landscape. Fellow Nagybánya artists, Béla Iványi Grünwald, Oszkár Glatz, and János Thorma, did the same. When they settled in the town, mining was the primary activity for Nagybánya's inhabitants. The artists used their own family members as models for their larger compositions and shared models with each other. The artists who visited Nagybánya and even settled there nevertheless maintained their main residences in Budapest and would always be seen as "foreign city folks" in the eyes of the locals.

Painting in the sun



Károly Ferenczy, *The Woman Painter*, 1903.
Oil on canvas, 136 x 129,6 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National
Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of
Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026

In contrast to the Naturalist and Symbolist elements that characterized his early period, Károly Ferenczy evolved towards a powerful use of colour and simplified brushstrokes, culminating in his plein-air paintings in Nagybánya. This phase of his career is referred to as his “full-sunlight” period. In the paintings created during this time, sunlight holds a central role. The best way to capture the effect of the sun on the landscape became the primary theme of his artwork and he focused on outdoor subjects like bathers, untouched natural landscapes, and outdoor leisure activities. He experimented extensively with this, alternating the format of his canvases to find the ideal proportions, and he used both oil and tempera to explore different textural effects. It is in such experiments that Ferenczy produced some of his finest masterpieces: *On the Hilltop* (1901) and *The Woman Painter* (1903), both of which may be seen in this room.



Károly Ferenczy, *Summer Evening*, 1904-1905.
Oil on canvas, 102,5 x 135,5 cm.
Private collection / Courtesy Judit Virág Gallery, Budapest. Photo Tobor Master.

SECTION 3

THE SYNTHESIS OF HIS EXPERIMENTATION (1906-1917)

Staging the body



Károly Ferenczy, *Female nude against green background I*, 1911.
Oil on canvas, 117, 5 x 145 cm. Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026

From 1906 onwards, after obtaining a professorship at the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts, Károly Ferenczy returned to studio work to paint nudes and urban subjects, such as his paintings depicting the world of the circus (acrobats, wrestlers, etc.). His series of nudes and circus scenes focus on the same age-old artistic problem: how best to represent the body. While this facet of his work is often overlooked in favour of his landscapes, beauty and the human body as the subjects of his work nonetheless played a significant role in Ferenczy's production. As he grew older, he increasingly concentrated on interpreting and renewing pictorial traditions dating back to the Renaissance. Therefore, his nudes may be said to engage in a dialogue with Titian, Velázquez, and Courbet. Familiar with the world of the theatre, circus, music hall, and sport, Ferenczy paid great attention to the bodies and movements of athletes after 1910.

The *Pietà*, his last sacred painting

The *Pietà* is Károly Ferenczy's last religious painting. The artist exhibited it at the eleventh Venice Biennale in 1914, and again in Budapest at the Exhibitions Palace in 1915. He considered it to be one of his most important works before he decided to cut it up for an unknown reason. Only two fragments remain, as well as an archival photograph and some preparatory studies. The extreme naturalism of Christ's body and the dark, homogeneous background, characteristic of the artist's later period, form a striking contrast. In 1915–1916, Ferenczy battled illness and planned a second *Pietà*, which remained unfinished. The drawings done by the artist for this other painting show that it differed from the first version mainly by the presence of an angel holding a type of palm branch.

Ferenczy, the portraitist



Károly Ferenczy, *Double portrait (Noémi and Beni Ferenczy)*, 1908.
Oil on canvas, 142 x 155 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026

Portraiture occupies a prominent place in Károly Ferenczy's production, accounting for over a fifth of his work and comprising some four hundred paintings in total. As well as his famous self-portraits, Ferenczy's best-known portraits are those of his family and friends. These intimate paintings bear witness to a profound interest in the subtleties of human nature. The artist's circle of friends is represented here by the dual portrait of Spanish-born Nagybánya painter Cézár Herrér and his wife. Ferenczy also accepted commissions from numerous prominent Hungarian figures—writers, journalists, and collectors—and therefore, practically most of the figures in his milieu are represented in the gallery of portraits he executed. His drawings and caricatures are amongst some of the most skilled and humorous portraits he ever created.

Last landscapes



Károly Ferenczy, *Archers*, 1911.
Oil on canvas, 64 x 77, 5 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National
Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of
Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026

Although he lived mainly in Budapest from 1906 onwards, Károly Ferenczy kept his house and studio in Nagybánya and continued to stay there regularly. A keen sportsman, Ferenczy shared his love of horse riding with his family and painted his children on horseback on several occasions. Based on his letters, archery seems to have been another sporting activity practiced from 1905 onwards. The landscapes he painted in the last period of his career differ from his earlier works due to a new palette and a softening of the sunlight. He continued to take long excursions and family rides but now focused on capturing the delicate colours of the changing atmosphere, sometimes overcast, sometimes sunny. This new subtlety, reminiscent of the experimentation of the Nabis, contrasts sharply with his earlier works and makes use of more muted chromatic vibrations to better render the more vibrant colours.

AROUND THE EXHIBITION

Activity trail for 6–10-year-olds

Bimbi, the son of the painter Károly Ferenczy, invites children to open their eyes wide and sharpen their powers of observation. Following a series of clues, young visitors explore the exhibition by playing a game of spotting pairs in the paintings.

Open-access drawing workshop in the exhibition for young people and adults

A visual artist welcomes visitors to the exhibition and invites them to discover the artist by sketching his works.

Wednesdays between 10am and 1pm

Scenography

We wanted this exhibition to be an invitation for the public to encounter an artist still relatively unknown in France. The scenography guides visitors on a gentle stroll through his work, akin to a contemplative experience.

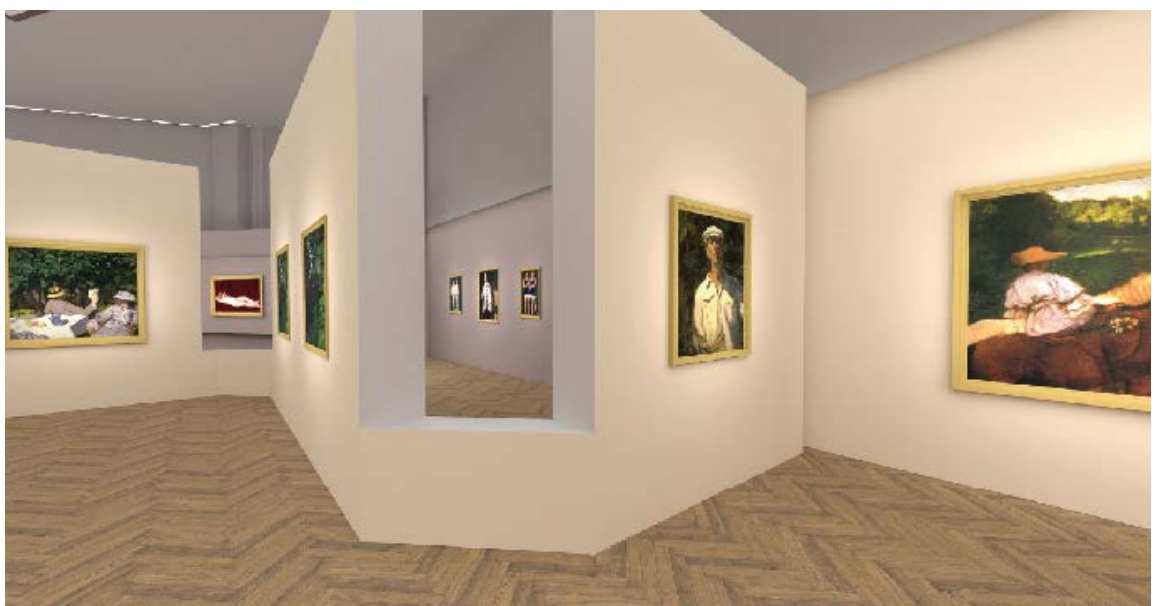
The three main sections are clearly identifiable and flow seamlessly into each another, thanks to the clever spatial arrangement. Some sections boast more open spaces to allow visitors to pause and reflect, thereby enhancing the contemplative dimension. The aim is that visitors progress through the exhibition, guided by an intuitive route.

The exhibition design incorporates large visual openings from one section to the next. These openings are particularly suited to the imposing religious compositions or key moments from Ferenczy's Nagybánya period, creating effects of surprise and tension. The visitor's gaze is gently brought from one work to the next, in a smooth continuity.

The overall atmosphere is understated in terms of its colour palette, both warm and contemporary. The materials, hues, textures, and furnishings have all been selected to create a calm environment, conducive to reflection and immersion in the works on display. The colours used are inspired by a desaturated palette, better allowing the intense hues of the artist's paintings to shine through.

The works on paper require special treatment, both for technical reasons (lighting, preservation) and aesthetic ones. Therefore, three spaces have been designed, each corresponding to one of Ferenczy's three phases. The exhibition rooms are conceived as a studio-like space: lowered ceilings draped with vellum, an intimate atmosphere, subdued lighting, and walls in warm, nuanced shades.

Maciej Fiszer



Press visuals



1. Károly Ferenczy, *Self-Portrait (in the Studio)*, 1903.
Oil on canvas, 106,3 x 116,7 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



2. Károly Ferenczy, *The Painter and his Model (in the Woods)*, 1904.
Oil on canvas, 120 x 135 cm.
© Collection de Barbara Czapolai.

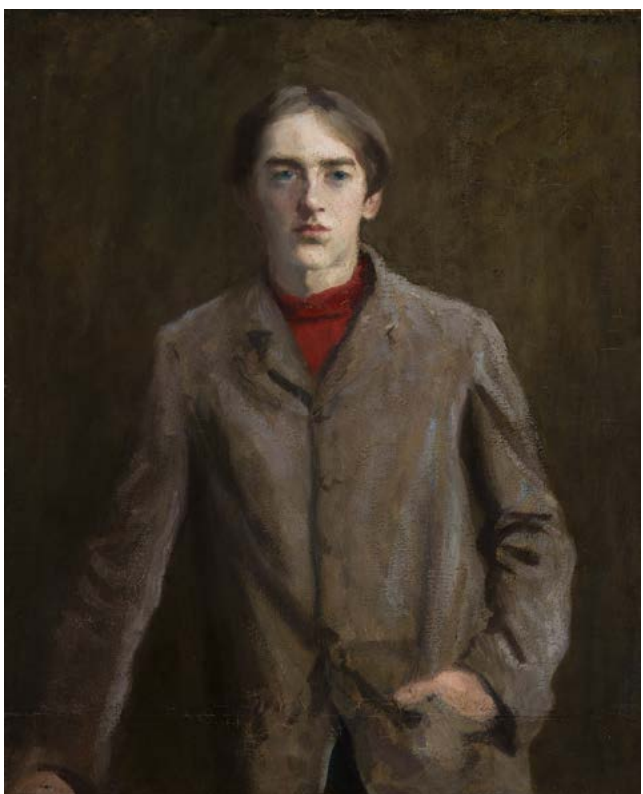


3. Károly Ferenczy, *Girls Tending the Plants*, 1889.
Oil on canvas, 110 x 110 cm.
Private collection. Photo Tibor Master.



4. Károly Ferenczy, *Boys Throwing Pebbles*, 1890.
Oil on canvas, 119.5 × 149 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.

With its stark composition and a sober, almost entirely grey palette, this canvas is one of the most radical from Károly Ferenczy's Naturalist period. The static nature and subtle melancholy of the scene are accentuated by the inexpressive faces, gazing into the distance. A photograph shows that on an unknown date, probably unhappy with the result, Ferenczy repainted and covered over the boy picking up a pebble. However, he has since been uncovered by restorers, thereby bringing a greater sense of balance to the lower left corner of the painting.



5. Károly Ferenczy, *Portrait of Béni Ferenczy, Son of the Artist*, 1906.
Oil on canvas, 104 × 84 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



6. Károly Ferenczy, *Noémi Ferenczy with her Hair Let Down*, 1903.
Oil on canvas, 102 × 64 cm.
Private collection / Courtesy Nemes Galéria, Budapest.

In 1903, Károly Ferenczy exhibited a large three-figure composition presenting himself in the company of his two youngest children. For an unknown reason, he later cut the painting into several parts, and the only surviving segment is this canvas depicting Naomi at the age of twelve or thirteen. It was very important to Ferenczy: he not only kept it close to him in his studio, but he exhibited it at the National Salon in Budapest in 1903, the World Fair in St. Louis (USA) in 1904, and even sent it to San Francisco for an exhibition in 1915.



7. Károly Ferenczy, *Birdsong*, 1893.
Oil on canvas, 106 x 78 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



8. Károly Ferenczy, *Orpheus*, 1894.
Oil on canvas, 98,2 x 117,5 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



9. Károly Ferenczy, *The Sermon on the Mount I*, 1896.
Oil on canvas, 135 x 201 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.

Oscillating between the sacred and the secular, this painting is a true manifesto of the Nagybánya painters' artistic principles. Károly Ferenczy transposes an episode from the life of Christ into the Nagybánya landscape and depicts members of his family and/or artists amongst the crowd of onlookers, a sign of the strong sense of community that defined the colony and its close connection to nature. From medieval armour to contemporary clothing, fashions from all eras are invoked to suggest a timeless moment. Above the head of Jesus, a golden halo is just about visible.



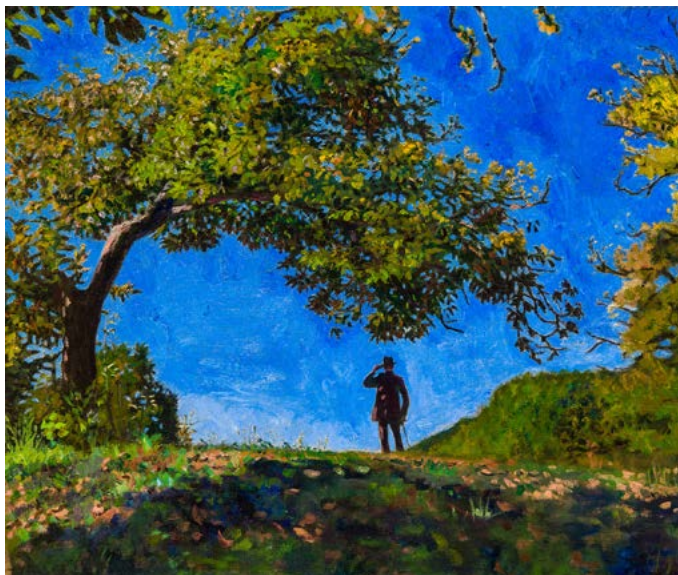
10. Károly Ferenczy, *Souvenir of Naples*, 1896.
Paper, coal, 63,5 x 41 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery.
© Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts,
Budapest, 2026.



11. Károly Ferenczy, *Horses in the Water*, 1896.
Oil on canvas, 116 x 97 m.
Private collection / Courtesy Ernst Gallery, Budapest.
Photo Tibor Mester.



12. Károly Ferenczy, *Gypsies I*, 1901.
Oil on canvas, 122 x 122 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery.
© Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts,
Budapest, 2026.



13. Károly Ferenczy, *On the Hilltop*, 1901.
Oil on canvas, 110 × 141,5 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National
Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of
Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



14. Károly Ferenczy, *The Woman painter*, 1903.
Oil on canvas, 136 × 129,6 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National
Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of
Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



15. Károly Ferenczy, *Summer Evening*, 1904-
1905.
Oil on canvas, 102,5 x 135,5 cm.
Private collection / Courtesy Judit Virág Gallery,
Budapest. Photo Tobor Master.



16. Károly Ferenczy, *Evening Bath*, 1906.
Oil on canvas, 110 x 94 cm.
© Antal-Lusztig Collection, Debrecen / Courtesy Deri Museum. Photo Tihamér Lukács.



17. Károly Ferenczy, *Double portrait (Noémi and Beni Ferenczy)*, 1908.
Oil on canvas, 142 x 155 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.

This painting, executed in Nagybánya in 1908, shows the twins born to Olga Fialka and Károly Ferenczy, in 1890: Noémi, who would later become a renowned textile artist, and Béni, who would become one of Hungary's most celebrated sculptors. The silhouette and relief effects produced by the closed, dark, and quasi-homogeneous background are characteristic of Ferenczy's later period. Béni, who looks very modern, wears a knitted sweater. His left arm is in the same rounded pose as certain antique sculptures that Ferenczy frequently referenced in his work.



18. Károly Ferenczy, *Female Nude against Red Background*, 1912.
Oil on canvas, 91 x 150 cm.
Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



19. Károly Ferenczy, *Female Nude against Green Background I*, 1911.

Oil on canvas, 117, 5 x 145 cm. Musée des Beaux-Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



20. Károly Ferenczy, *Archers*, 1911.

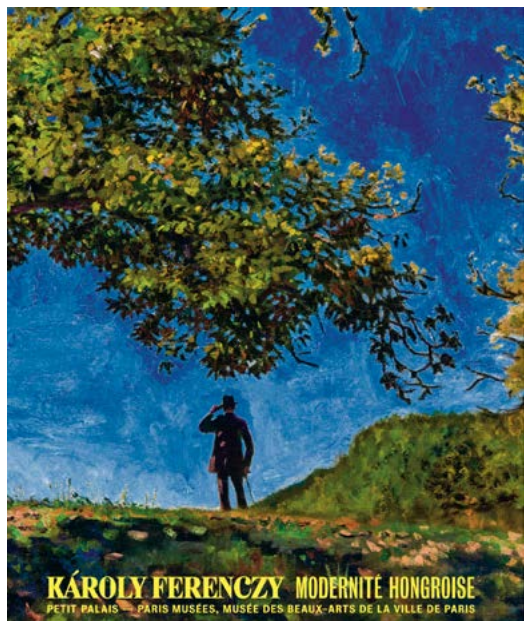
Oil on canvas, 64 x 77, 5 cm. Budapest Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery. © Hungarian National Gallery – Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, 2026.



21. Károly Ferenczy, *The Red Wall IV*, 1910.

Oil on canvas, 31 x 31 cm. Private collection / Photo Tibor Mester.

Catalog of the exhibition



Károly Ferenczy. Hungarian Modernity

Károly Ferenczy (1862-1917) is perhaps less well-known in France than his contemporary and rival, Nabi artist József Rippl-Rónai. However, his art is just as remarkable. This first exhibition devoted to him in France showcases an artist who combines an atypical naturalism with a fin-de-siècle aesthetic. It also highlights the importance and unique characteristics of his painting within the European context of the time. Ferenczy was a highly cultured and profoundly intellectual artist. He was a passionate reader with a deep knowledge of world literature. A frequent visitor to the art history library of the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest, he travelled extensively and admired the collections of many major European museums. From 1887 to 1889, Ferenczy studied at the Académie Julian in Paris. It was during this period that he discovered contemporary French literature. He disliked Zola's overly "materialistic" novels but was fond of Baudelaire and Huysmans.

This catalogue retraces Ferenczy's career, while examining the stylistic diversity of his work, as well as exploring the role he played in the emergence of a Hungarian Modernity.

Annick Lemoine, President of the Musée d'Orsay and Musée de l'Orangerie

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Format: 22 x 28 cm

Pages: 240

Hardcover book

Illustrations: approx. 100

€39

Public programming around the exhibition

CONCERTS

Sunday 19 April, 4pm

Hungarian Modernity in music

Toma Bervetsky, violin; Cyprien Lengagne, cello; Taek Gi Lee, piano (Members of the Elite Programme of the Ecole Normale de musique de Paris)

Works by J. Brahms, F. Liszt, Z. Kodaly, B. Bartok

Sunday 31 May, 4pm

Musical dialogue between France and the Hungary of Károly Ferenczy

Piano recital, Ariela Bohrod

Works by F. Liszt, E. Dohnányi, B. Bartok, C. Debussy, M. Ravel

Sunday 21 June, 4pm

Dances and rhapsodies of Hungarian popular and folkloric inspiration

Camille Llorens, Jasmine Ogiste, piano; Toma Bervetsky, violin; Esteban Jimenez, cello

Works by J. Brahms, F. Liszt, B. Bartok, D. Popper



In partnership with the Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris - Alfred Cortot

Free concerts, open to the public, limited number of seats available.

The Petit Palais

Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris



© Paris Musées / Petit Palais / Benoit Fougeirol

Built for the Exposition Universelle of 1900, the Petit Palais building is a masterpiece by architect Charles Girault. In 1902, it became the City of Paris Museum of Fine Arts and presents a very beautiful collection of paintings, sculptures, furnishings and art objects dating from Antiquity to 1914.

Among the museum treasures are an exceptional collection of Greek vases and a very large group of Flemish and Dutch paintings from the seventeenth century, displayed around the famous Self-Portrait with Dog by Rembrandt. A magnificent collection of French paintings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries includes major works by Fragonard, Greuze, David, Géricault, Delacroix, Courbet, Pissarro, Monet, Sisley, Cézanne and Vuillard. The museum is also very proud of a very beautiful collection of sculptures by Carpeaux, Carriès and Dalou. The collection of decorative art is especially noted for objects from the Renaissance and the 1900s, including glasswork by Gallé, jewellery by Fouquet and Lalique and a dining room designed by Guimard for his private mansion. Finally, the museum has an outstanding graphic arts room featuring complete series of engravings by Dürer, Rembrandt and Callot and a rare collection of Nordic drawings.

The programme of temporary exhibitions at the Petit Palais alternates ambitious major themes such as *Paris Romantique*, *Paris 1900*, *Les Bas-fonds du Baroque*, *Modern Paris* with monographs that allow us to rediscover forgotten painters such as Theodore Rousseau, Jusepe de Ribera, Walter Sickert. Each autumn, contemporary artists such as Yan Pei-Ming (2019), Laurence Aëgerter (2020), Jean-Michel Othoniel (2021), Ugo Rondinone (2022), Loris Gréaud (2023) and Bilal Hamdad (2025), as well as the Street Art in 2024 have been invited to exhibit in the Petit Palais' permanent collections to create a dialogue with these paintings and reveal the links between their works and those of the museum.

Paris Musées

A museums network



Administratively grouped together as Paris Musées, the fourteen museums and heritage sites of the City of Paris possess collections that are as exceptional for their diversity as for their quality.

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It entitles the holder to reductions in the bookshop-boutiques and the cafe-restaurants, and to receive prior information about events in the museums.

In 2014, the card was bought by 9000 people.

Information is available at the Museum ticket offices or on [petitpalais.paris.en](https://petitpalais.paris/en)

*Except the archaeological Crypt under the forecourt of l'île de la Cité and the Catacombs.

General information

Károly Ferenczy *Hungarian Modernity*

Petit Palais

Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris.

Avenue Winston-Churchill, 75008 Paris.

Tel : +33 (0)1 53 43 40 00

petitpalais.paris.en

Accessible to people with disabilities.

Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday from 10:00 a.m to 6:00 p.m

Late opening on Friday and Saturday until 8:00pm

Closed on May 1 and July 14

Admission

Full rate: 17 €

Reduced rate: 15 €

Reservation of a recommended visit time on petitpalais.paris.en

Access

Metro

Lines 1 and 13: Champs-Élysées Clemenceau

Line 9: Franklin D. Roosevelt

RER

Line C: Invalides

Bus

Lines: 28, 42, 72, 73, 83, 93.

Vélib'

Station 8001 (Petit Palais)

Auditorium

Information on petitpalais.paris.en

Café-restaurant *Le 1902*

Open from 10:00 a.m to 6:00 p.m

Late opening on Friday and Saturday until 8 p.m

Bookshop

Open from 10:00 am to 5:45 pm,

Late closing at 8 pm.