



**WORLD MONUMENTS FUND EUROPE ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP
WITH FRENCH GOVERNMENT AND BANQUE DE FRANCE
TO RESTORE AND RECONSTRUCT FAMOUS INTERIORS OF
THE CHANCELLERIE D'ORLEANS IN PARIS**

For Immediate Release—Paris, July 12, 2010. . . World Monuments Fund (WMF) Europe announced today a project to restore and reconstruct the interiors of the Chancellerie d'Orleans, which have been in storage for nearly ninety years. One of the most important Parisian *hôtel particuliers* of the eighteenth century, the Chancellerie d'Orleans was demolished in the early twentieth century but its interiors were saved and stored for later reinstatement elsewhere. Now that a preliminary study by a French *Architecte en chef des Monuments historiques* has been completed, the interiors will be installed in the former Hôtel de Rohan-Strasbourg, a structure contemporary to the Chancellerie and now the Archives nationales.

Bertrand du Vignaud, President of WMF Europe, stated “WMF is pleased to be in a partnership with the Banque de France and the French Government to complete this project. 15 years have passed since the idea was first proposed to bring the interiors of the Chancellerie d'Orleans back to public view. The installation of these extraordinary decorative elements at the hotel de Rohan-Strasbourg guarantees renewed appreciation for the craftsmanship and artistry that was emblematic of the original commission.

Chancellerie d'Orleans

The Chancellerie d'Orleans, also known as the “Hôtel de Voyer d'Argenson”, was designed around 1707 by Germain Boffrand and decorated by Antoine Coytel. The building originally belonged to the Orleans branch of the Bourbon dynasty, and later passed to the d'Argenson family, under whose ownership the building underwent a substantial redecoration between 1762 and 1770 led by architect Charles de Wailly. Some of the leading French artists of the period contributed to this effort, including Augustin Pajou, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Pierre Gouthière, Louis-Jacques Durameau, and Jean-Jacques Lagrenée. The Chancellerie's interiors, notable for their transitional style between Rococo and Neoclassical, were among the most celebrated in late-eighteenth-century Paris.

In the early twentieth century, the Banque de France purchased the building, and in 1923 obtained permission to remove the interiors so that the structure could be razed to accommodate an expanded bank headquarters. The original plan was for the bank to finance the reconstruction of the interiors in another location, but this never occurred. Thus the decorative elements of the Chancellerie have remained in storage to this day.

(more)

Scope of Work

World Monuments Fund Europe has been advocating for the reconstruction of the Chancellerie interiors since 1997. In 2000, WMF led the effort to identify and catalogue the stored remains and began negotiating a permanent location for the reassembled interiors with the French government. In 2005 the Ministry of Culture agreed to WMF's suggestion that the rooms be reconstructed in the Hôtel de Rohan-Strasbourg, part of the French Archives nationales, a building of the same period with room dimensions similar to those of the destroyed Chancellerie. The recent completion of the first phase of work—a planning study of the “Hôtel de Rohan-Strasbourg” to determine how to incorporate the interiors.

Significant preparatory work will be undertaken in Fall 2011. In 2012, conservation work on the interiors will be completed in the conservation studio dedicated for this purpose. After this work is completed, the conserved elements will be integrated into the Hôtel de Rohan-Strasbourg in a second phase of work.

World Monuments Fund

World Monuments Fund is the leading independent organization devoted to saving the world's most treasured places. For over 45 years, working in more than 90 countries, its highly skilled experts have applied proven and effective techniques to preserve important architectural and cultural heritage sites around the globe. Through partnerships with local communities, funders, and governments, WMF inspires an enduring commitment to stewardship for future generations. Headquartered in New York, WMF has offices and affiliates worldwide, including WMF Europe, based in Paris and headed by Bertrand du Vignaud. www.wmf.org, www.twitter.com/worldmonuments, and www.facebook.com/worldmonuments.

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