



**WORLD
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FUND**

OPENING OF WORLD MONUMENTS FUND FRANCE

World Monuments Fund (WMF) announces the reopening of a branch in France and unveils its new affiliate during the European Heritage Days planned for September 16 and 17, 2023.

New York and Paris, France, June 30, 2023 - WMF, which has its headquarters in New York with offices and affiliates in Cambodia, India, Peru, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom, is implementing a global expansion strategy and hopes to further its activities by increasing its proximity with its French partners and international cultural organizations based in France.

European Heritage Days

To celebrate its launch, World Monuments Fund has created a tour route to let the public discover various WMF projects in the Paris Region during the European Heritage Days, a great occasion to spotlight the hard work of its conservation and restoration teams.

- The Chapel of Saint-Joseph in the Church of Saint-Eustache, a Parisian treasure restored over the past several months with the support of WMF, will be unveiled on Saturday, September 16, at 6:00 pm by Aurélie Filippetti, Director of Cultural Affairs of the City of Paris, and Bénédicte de Montlaur, President and CEO of WMF, and will be the highpoint of the weekend. Bénédicte de Montlaur will present WMF's global strategy and French projects. In particular, she will present the project at Saint-Eustache, undertaken in partnership with the parish and the City, and the development of an innovative project to improve engagement with an array of audiences, as well as the spotlighting of the various memories and layered histories that give this place its exceptional character.
- Various activities at partnering sites in Paris will allow participants to discover WMF's sites in Paris and abroad over the course of the weekend.

The New French Affiliate

Bénédicte de Montlaur, President and CEO: *"France plays a crucial role in the world of heritage and has always been a close partner in our work. World Monuments Fund has undertaken more than 30 projects in the country and collaborates with numerous French organizations and experts based in the course of our work around the world. We are currently working on 51 projects in 34 countries, and our new office in Paris will allow us to strengthen these collaborative efforts.*

Many members of the community surrounding World Monuments Fund have close ties to France, whether they be heritage professionals trained in France, international institutions based in France—such as UNESCO, ICOMOS, or the Louvre—or institutions with strong ties to France, such as ALIPH. A number of collaborators and/or supporters of WMF are French and/or Francophiles—I myself became the head of the organization in the autumn of 2019, just a few months before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are currently leading two large-scale projects in France: we have just completed the restoration of the Chapel of Saint-Joseph at Saint-Eustache and are starting a new phase of support for the church revolving around welcoming the public into the church, in collaboration with the church's priest, Father Trocheris, and the City of Paris. We are also participating in the so-called "project of the century," led by the École nationale supérieure de paysage (ENSP) to reflect on the restoration of the Potager du Roi, which faces enormous challenges with visitors and the need for historic gardens to adapt to climate change. New projects will be explored in the months to come.

As our projects around the world lead us to explore the link between heritage and some of the greatest challenges of our times—climate change, sustainable tourism, social cohesion, and post-conflict reconstruction—we believe it is important to deepen our dialogue with French partners on such important questions.

The opening of an affiliate in France is the logical next step in our development, and World Monuments Fund will devote important financial resources to it. In particular, we are fortunate enough to have the support of a generous donation of \$1,500,000 from the Florence Gould Foundation towards the creation of this new affiliate. In total, approximately \$7 million have been mobilized towards our work in France."

World Monuments Fund France can rely on the support of distinguished individuals who will be joining the board, led by Prince Ayn Khan, president of the board, and Juan Pablo Molyneux, vice-president.

The members are as follows: Prince Ayn Khan; Andrea d'Avack; Stéphane Bern; Frédérique Cassereau; Alice Goldet; Lorna B. Goodman; Dena Kaye; Alexis Kugel; Thomas Lambert; Renaud de Lesquen, President and CEO of Givenchy; Corinne Mentzelopoulos; Frédéric Mion; Juan Pablo Molyneux; Bénédicte de Montlaur; Elvira Grimaldi di Nixima Oetker; and Maryvonne Pinault. A scientific committee will also be created in the course of the next few months in order to support WMF France with its projects.

Prince Ayn Khan: *"We are glad to be able to mobilize a group of diverse individuals from various backgrounds, both new supporters of WMF and supporters of longstanding, who are all united by a common passion for the mission of WMF. We are happy to be able to combine our efforts to multiply our impact in the service of heritage."*

WMF France will be led by Mathilde Augé, who is currently WMF's representative in France. An art historian, Mathilde Augé previously managed cultural programming at the French Institute Alliance Française (FI AF) in New York. In this role, she created and implemented a digital strategy for cultural programming and developed an important series of conferences, the FIAF Talks. She also created partnerships with institutions in New York to organize cultural event off site, invited numerous Francophone artists to the FIAF's Florence Gould Hall Theatre, organized exhibitions of visual art in the gallery space, and was co-commissioner of the performing arts festival *Crossing the Line*. Previously, she worked in publishing for different Parisian presses (Presses Universitaires de France, Gallimard, Autrement). An alumna of the École normale supérieure, she holds a master's degree in art history from the University of Paris 1 and another master's in management from HEC Paris with a specialization in media, art, and creation.

WMF France is currently housed in the Fondation pour la sauvegarde de l'art français at 22 Rue de Douai, in the ninth arrondissement of Paris.

History of WMF in France

World Monuments Fund first established itself in France in 1989 and since then has undertaken over 30 projects at 21 sites, directly or via the intermediary World Monuments Fund France, which closed in 2017 during a global strategic reorganization. Since 1989, WMF has invested more than \$19 million in heritage projects in France. To this may be added the \$2 million contributed to French sites abroad, including the restoration of the home of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in New York and the Palazzo Farnese, seat of the French embassy in Italy.

Unveiling of the Chapel of Saint-Joseph, Church of Saint-Eustache

Auréli Filippetti, Director of Cultural Affairs of the City of Paris, and Bénédicte de Montlaur will reopen the restored the Chapel of Saint-Joseph on Saturday, September 16, at 6:00 pm. The conservation and restoration teams will present their work.

- Saint-Eustache

Situated in the heart of Paris, Saint-Eustache is one of the most visited churches in the city. In the historic Halles neighborhood, Saint-Eustache continues to bear the memory of the merchants and trade unions who surrounded it and who made the imposing size of the building necessary in the first place. Construction began in 1532 at the request of King François I; the building combined the gothic flamboyant style with Renaissance

elements and was completed a century later. Modifications to the facade would continue until the eighteenth century.

In the nineteenth century, damaged by a fire and events that took place during the Paris Commune, Saint-Eustache was completely restored by Victor Baltard, who supervised both the restoration of the earlier interiors and the conception of an art-nouveau iconographic program for the mural painting throughout the space. Today, the church houses masterpieces of both foreign and French painting (Vouet, Tintoretto, Rubens), as well as sculptures by Pigalle and Keith Haring.

- A Major Restoration Project

The conservation and restoration of the Chapel of Saint-Joseph, undertaken between September 2022 and summer 2023 thanks to the patronage of WMF, is part of a larger effort to restore the church on the part of the City of Paris.

- The Restoration of the Chapel of Saint-Joseph

This chapel, situated along the northern aisle of the church, had suffered severe damage to the painted decorations on its upper and lower parts as well as its vaults. The figurative paintings on its upper section were covered by a large number of Japanese paper appliqué pieces to protect the paint flakes that were at risk of following. The team of conservator-restorers, led by Ariel Bertrand, consolidated the paint surface before cleaning and retouching areas of loss.

The vault paintings had greatly suffered from humidity, and the pattern was no longer visible. Decorative motifs dating from the nineteenth century and attributed to the painter Charles Sechan were reproduced in areas of paint loss, and gold leaf was added to revitalize the gilding.



The Rediscovery of Seventeenth-Century Frescoes

The project has allowed for the rediscovery of previously hidden figurative paintings, revealing scenes from the life of Christ: a scene of Christ walking with the pilgrims of Emmaus and a landscape showing two figures of the resurrected Christ. On the upper register, one can see the Assumption of the Virgin before the 12 apostles, who appear stunned by the act. Analysis of the binder has revealed that these mural paintings date to the seventeenth century and were subsequently covered by three layers of overpainting, likely dating to the nineteenth century, at the time of restoration work supervised by Victor Baltard, through to the middle of the twentieth century.



WMF Tour Route through Paris and Its Environs

World Monuments Fund-France invites you to explore the heritage treasures of the Paris Region and discover the urgent restoration works being undertaken there. Every site highlights the expert restorations and the conservators who worked on them, permitting visitors to discover the vast array of skills pressed into service in order to protect cultural heritage.

Le Potager du Roi

Created by Jean-Baptiste de la Quintinie under the orders of Louis XIV to supply the kitchens of Versailles with fruits and vegetables, the Potager du Roi continues to pursue its triple mission: food production, experimentation, and knowledge transmission.

An essential component of the royal estate of Versailles, the Potager du Roi is today home to the École nationale supérieure de paysage. Open to visitors, the Potager du Roi is also a place of learning for the future landscape architects who study at the heart of the site.

WMF became involved at the Potager du Roi at the beginning of the 1990s, collaborating with ENSP on the creation of a conservation plan and supporting the restoration of the Potager's gate and the Grand Carré fountain.

In 2008, WMF included the Potager du Roi on the Watch, making the project one of its priorities. A new phase of work was begun in order to restore the walls of the Potager, which had fallen into disrepair. Education and communication materials were also created in order to improve the visitor experience, particularly for school groups.

WMF is currently supporting the restoration of the historic forge building, which since it ceased playing host to a blacksmith's workshop has remained unoccupied. It will be refurbished in order to welcome visitors to the heart of the Potager.



Le Potager du Roi. © DR

La Chancellerie d'Orléans

Built at the beginning of the eighteenth century by the architect German Boffrand before being redecorated in the 1760s by Charles De Wailly, the townhouse known as the Chancellerie d'Orléans stood on the edge of the gardens of the Palais-Royal in Paris and was demolished in 1923. The Bank of France committed itself to reconstructing the interiors, which had been taken apart piece by piece.

After several setbacks and more than 25 years of work, WMF took the initiative, at the beginning of the 2000s, of proposing to the Bank of France and the Minister of Culture to reconstruct the interiors in the Hôtel de Rohan inside the French National Archives.

After ten years of restoration work and reassembly, the interiors of the Chancellerie d'Orléans were shown to the public in October of 2021. The four reconstructed rooms (the anteroom, the bedroom, the dining room, and the grand salon), partly furnished by the Mobilier National, offer a wonderful sense of the splendor of Parisian decorative art at the transition between the styles of Louis XV and Louis XVI.



The interiors of the Chancellerie d'Orléans. Credit : Archives Nationales France DIS photographie Nicolas Cantin and Nicolas Dion

Churches of Saint Merri and Notre-Dame-de-Lorette

Built in the first half of the sixteenth century and in the 1820s respectively, these buildings were included on the Watch in 2014 to bring attention to the need to protect the two churches, which play an essential role in Paris's urban landscape.

On the occasion of their inclusion on the Watch, WMF partnered with the City of Paris and the Association for the Safeguarding of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette on preliminary studies and the restoration of the Baptistry Chapel between 2015 and 2017.



Vault of the Baptistry Chapel, Church of Notre-dame-de-Lorette, France © DR

Hôtel de Talleyrand

An eighteenth-century townhouse, the Hôtel de Talleyrand was bought by the American government in 1950 for the purposes of administering the Marshall Plan. The U.S. government began major restoration work in 1999, an effort that World Monuments Fund joined for the final phase of the project from 2003 to 2010. Studies and analyses were undertaken prior to cleaning the decorative elements, restoring the woodwork, and recovering the original painted and gilded details. The space, whose layout had been modified at the beginning of the twentieth century, was rearranged to bring it back in line with the original plans.

Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal

Situated in the Bastille neighborhood, the Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal is the former residence of the grand-masters of the artillery. In the second half of the eighteenth century, it housed the library of the Marquis de Paulmy before being opened to the public after the French Revolution.

In partnership with the Bibliothèque nationale de France, World Monuments Fund worked on the restoration of the Music Room. The teams led by WMF removed the wooden paneling, discovering preparatory drawings on the walls in the process. Studies have allowed for a better understanding of the décor and original colors, allowing for a renovation that has returned the superb 1740s interior to its original brilliance.



Music Room at the Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal, France © DR

L'Opéra-Comique

Founded in 1714, the Opéra Comique is one of the oldest musical and theatrical institutions in France and hosted the premieres of internationally recognized works such as Bizet's *Carmen* and Massenet's *Manon*.

In 2007, the French state launched a major campaign to restore the building. World Monuments Fund supported these efforts, concentrating on the interior of the foyer. The parquet floors, mosaics, frescoes, and other decorative elements have regained the splendor they once had at the end of the nineteenth century.



Foyer of the Opéra-Comique, France © DR

The American Cathedral in Paris

In the heart of Paris, just steps from the Place de la Concorde, sits the largest Episcopalian church in Europe. Constructed between 1881 and 1889 in the Gothic Revival style characteristic of the Anglican church at the end of the nineteenth century in order to welcome American parishioners in Paris, the cathedral boasts magnificent stained glass in its choir.

Since 2001, World Monuments has supported major restoration work on the stained glass pieces, which were removed and cleaned before being reinstalled in their original locations, eliminating deformations caused by heavy leadwork. A restorer specializing in stained glass was invited to share feedback related to similar work at churches in Brooklyn in the United States.

Saint-Sulpice Church

Famous for the magnificent works by Delacroix in the Chapel of Angels, Saint-Sulpice is home to a number of artistic masterpieces. The magnificent woodwork, gilding, and vaults of the sacristy were in poor condition before World Monuments Fund undertook restoration work there between 2002 and 2005 in partnership with the City of Paris. The woodwork, the stone vault, and the balconies were cleaned and restored, and new gold leaf was added when necessary. The work in the sacristy was part of a larger effort to restore the church led by the City of Paris.

Hôtel des Invalides

The dome of the Hôtel des Invalides, which dominates the Paris skyline, was restored with the support of World Monuments Fund in 1988. The cupola's frescoes, dating to the construction of the building in the seventeenth century, had been damaged during the French Revolution, as well as by poor repainting in the nineteenth century and the passage of time. The frescoes were cleaned, consolidated, and restored. In 1989, after celebrations for the anniversary of the French Revolution, the dome was opened to the public once more, allowing visitors to rediscover its original beauty.



Cupola of the dome of the Hôtel national des Invalides. Credit : Paris, musée de l'Armée/Anne-Sylvaine Marre-Noël

Château de Chantilly

A gem of French heritage, the Château de Chantilly is home to grand ceremonial décor from the eighteenth century, as well as the Duke of Aumale's incomparable collection of art, which is of extraordinary richness and diversity (paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, books, art objects, and more).

World Monuments Fund has given significant support to the restoration of the Château de Chantilly, placing it on the World Monuments Watch in 1998 and 2002. In 1998, WMF supported the restoration of the painting *The Crossing of the Rhine* in 1672 by Sauveur Le Conte, in the magnificent Gallery of the Battles of Monsieur le Prince, the first step in the restoration of the collection of paintings that adorn that room. In 2002, the Château as a whole was placed on the Watch, allowing for the execution of various repair works. The support of WMF has continued since then, with the 2007 restoration of the 1737 painted interiors of the celebrated Grande Singerie by Christophe Huet.

More information about sites taking part in the events will be made available at www.wmf.org

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About World Monuments Fund

World Monuments Fund (WMF) is the leading independent organization devoted to safeguarding the world's most treasured places to enrich people's lives and build mutual understanding across cultures and communities. The organization is headquartered in New York City with offices and affiliates in Cambodia, India, Peru, Portugal, Spain and the UK. Since 1965, our global team of experts has preserved the world's diverse cultural heritage using the highest international standards at more than 700 sites in 112 countries. Partnering with local communities, funders, and governments, WMF draws on heritage to address some of today's most pressing challenges: climate change, underrepresentation, imbalanced tourism, and post-crisis recovery. With a commitment to the people who bring places to life, WMF embraces the potential of the past to create a more resilient and inclusive society.

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