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Americans Helping to Preserve Art and Architecture in France

Posted By *Phil Tremo* On February 20, 2016 @ 9:00 pm In Architecture, Art & Design, France In America, Parks & Gardens | [No Comments](#)

No wonder France is such a beloved travel destination — we relish the world-famous cuisine and marvelous wines, the delights of bustling cities and bucolic countryside, and of course, magnificent art and architecture spread throughout every corner of the country. In fact, most of our trips to *l'Hexagone* include visits to some of the countless museums, galleries, chateaux, and gardens. Yet while on holiday, we might not realize that these treasures require a substantial level of financial support to maintain important works of art, as well as historic (and often immense) castles and churches. Unfortunately, the entry fee we pay at each establishment barely supports their preservation efforts.

Presented below are a four American fundraising organizations that help preserve French art and architecture for us all to enjoy into the future. In addition, these “Friends Of” groups offer wonderful lectures, art-focused trips, and special cultural events.



[1]

a private Louvre tour the group took in summer of 2015

photo: courtesy of American Friends of the Louvre

American Friends of the Louvre [2]

The Louvre is the largest museum in the world, and — with over 380,000 pieces of art — the resources needed to maintain the collection are substantial. American Friends of the Louvre (AFL) was founded in 2002 and has supported a variety of worthy projects, including gallery restorations, conservation of works of art, educational tools for English-speaking visitors, and acquisitions and contemporary art programs. Through its partnership with the Louvre, AFL raises awareness of the museum's collections and scholarly expertise and helps make its vast resources more accessible in the U.S. and around the world.

Recent projects:

AFL has recently provided major support for the restoration of the Louvre's Decorative Arts Galleries, which re-opened to the public in 2014, and for the upcoming restoration of the Etruscan and Roman Galleries. In 2015, grants have supported the major fall exhibition at the Louvre: *A Brief History of the Future*, the staging of renowned American choreographer Yvonne Rainer's most recent work in the Louvre Auditorium.



[3]

a private Louvre tour the group took in summer of 2015

photo: courtesy of American Friends of the Louvre

Upcoming events in 2016:

New York – A fundraising reception in partnership with the Ritz, Paris (April).

Washington, D.C. – A dinner to celebrate a major Louvre exhibition at the National Gallery of Art (June).

Upcoming art trips include Cincinnati, London and Peru.

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American Friends Musée d'Orsay (AFMO) ^[6]

The Musée d'Orsay is one of the most cherished museums in Paris, and the American Friends Musée d'Orsay was founded in 2009 to increase awareness and foster support for the Orsay Museum in Paris, and its sister institution, the Orangerie.

Recent projects:

Lighting refurbishment in Monet's celebrated *Water Lilies* oval galleries in the Orangerie

Restoration of Gustave Courbet's masterpiece *The Painter's Studio*

Purchase of Herter Brothers furniture to enhance the Orsay's Decorative Arts collections



[7]

staff from the Orsay and the Orangerie

photo: courtesy of American Friends of the Orsay

Upcoming events in 2016:

Chicago – An exhibition on American Painters of the 1930s at the Art Institute of Chicago, a collaboration with the Orangerie exhibit (June)

Paris – AFMO’s celebration of the Orsay’s 30th Anniversary: Gala Dinner in Orsay Ballroom, visits to private homes/collections and museums; featuring main exhibitions at the Orsay and Orangerie (October 20-23)

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Friends of the Domaine de Chantilly ^[10]

The Friends of the Domaine de Chantilly (FODC) is building awareness and philanthropic support for the Domaine de Chantilly. The Domaine is a landmark site and offers a variety of attractions: the historic Château de Chantilly, which houses the Musée Condé, one of the finest art museums in France; its remarkable park and gardens; and the *Grandes Ecuries* (Great Stables).



[11]

Chateau de Chantilly

photo: courtesy of the Friends of the Domaine de Chantilly

Recent projects:

The new Museum of the Horse opened its doors in 2013, and many rooms in the Château and several areas in the gardens were revitalized.

The Drawings and Prints Galleries were created, featuring an exquisite collection of Old Master drawings and prints ranging from the French and Italian Renaissance to the 19th century as well as an important holding of photographs.

Restoration of the Duke and Duchess d'Aumale's Private Apartments, housing a rare example of French decorative arts dating from the July Monarchy.



[12]

The interior of the chateau

photo: courtesy of the Friends of the Domaine de Chantilly

Upcoming events in 2016:

The Domaine de Chantilly will stage an unprecedented show on Prince Louis II de Bourbon-Condé, known as the "Grand Condé." (Autumn)

The Domaine de Chantilly offers a wide range of art, floral and equestrian events, and at the Chatilly Racetracks, there will be both horse racing and show jumping events – please consult the web site for more details.

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[15]

equestrian show at Chantilly
photo: courtesy of the Friends of the
Domaine de Chantilly

French Heritage Society ^[16]

French Heritage Society (FHS) has a unique place in the realm of non-profit organizations that support the French heritage — its scope of work is especially broad as it is not tied to a single building, site or region, and supports projects throughout France and the U.S., for both private and public monuments.

Headquartered in New York with an office in Paris, FHS has a three-part mission:

Preservation: of French heritage in France and the French-inspired heritage in the US, by awarding grants for restoration (over 500 to date).

Education: perpetuate the skills, knowledge and passion for heritage through architectural and student exchanges between the two countries.

Franco-American friendship: fostered by promoting a better understanding of both cultures, organizing cultural trips in the US and France, and dazzling Gala dinners, lectures and other activities.



[17]

New York Gala

photo: courtesy of the French Heritage Society

Recent projects:

In 2015, the village church of Sainte-Marie-aux-Anglais, in Normandy, received a donation of \$86,110 with support from the William T. Kemper Foundation.

The Chapel of the Hôtel-Dieu Lyon recently received nearly \$240,000 with the support from the Florence Gould Foundation.

In the United States, a donation of \$10,000 was awarded to the city of St. Louis for the restoration of the statue of the same name.



[18]

Roof restoration of a 15th century chateau
photo: courtesy of the French Heritage Society
Events for 2016:

California – Member’s Trip to Napa and Sonoma Valleys & San Francisco, including exclusive private receptions and touring the wine country (April)

Alsace – Chairman’s Circle Trip includes the château du Haut-Koenigsbourg, the city of Colmar and the striking cathedral of Strasbourg, with wonderful wine and food of the region (October)

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- [10] **Friends of the Domaine de Chantilly:** <http://www.domainedechantilly.com/en>
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- [16] **French Heritage Society:** <http://www.frenchheritagesociety.org/>
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