



CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES



GRAND MÉCÈNE

DU MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE ET DE LA COMMUNICATION

MAJOR PARTNER OF THE FRENCH MINISTRY OF CULTURE

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Hall of Mirrors at the Château de Versailles: unanimous approval from the International Scientific Council

The International Scientific Council met on 15 January 2007 at the restoration worksite in the Hall of Mirrors and unanimously approved the way the restoration of the painted and sculpted décor had been completed. Meeting for the last time on the scaffolding at the site, the Council members congratulated the leaders of the Paintings, Sculpture and Gilding teams on the work done on the décor of the southern end of the hall.

The restorers will now be tackling the last stage of the restoration process, varnishing, applying a final protective layer to the Le Brun paintings following their pictorial reintegration.

Restoration of the 1,100 sq. metres of marble, too, is almost complete. A microcrystalline wax is currently being applied and polished up, in order to restore the hall's range of different marbles to their original lustre. Once the scaffolding has been removed, mirror expert Vincent Guerre and the bronze specialists from Socra (a VINCI Group company) will be able to make the final adjustments to the mirror supports it had previously rendered inaccessible.

The last two months of the restoration project will be devoted to installing the lighting. SDEL ARTEC (a VINCI Energies subsidiary) has devised a special lighting strategy for the Hall of Mirrors, aimed at displaying its artistic features to best advantage. New light sources will set off the paintings on the vaulted ceiling, in places gently smoothing over the inevitable effects of time.

Once these final operations have been completed, and three years after VINCI first launched this sponsorship project, visitors will once again be able to admire in its entirety a 1,000 sq. metre surface area covered by paintings by Le Brun, and pace the entire 73 m length of a once-again resplendent Hall of Mirrors.

This first comprehensive restoration of the Hall of Mirrors began in July 2004, within the innovative framework of a skills-based sponsorship operation. VINCI, a Major Partner of the French Ministry of Culture, has undertaken to finance the works – valued at 12 million euros – and has made available to the project the expertise of its companies specialising in the restoration of historic buildings.

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