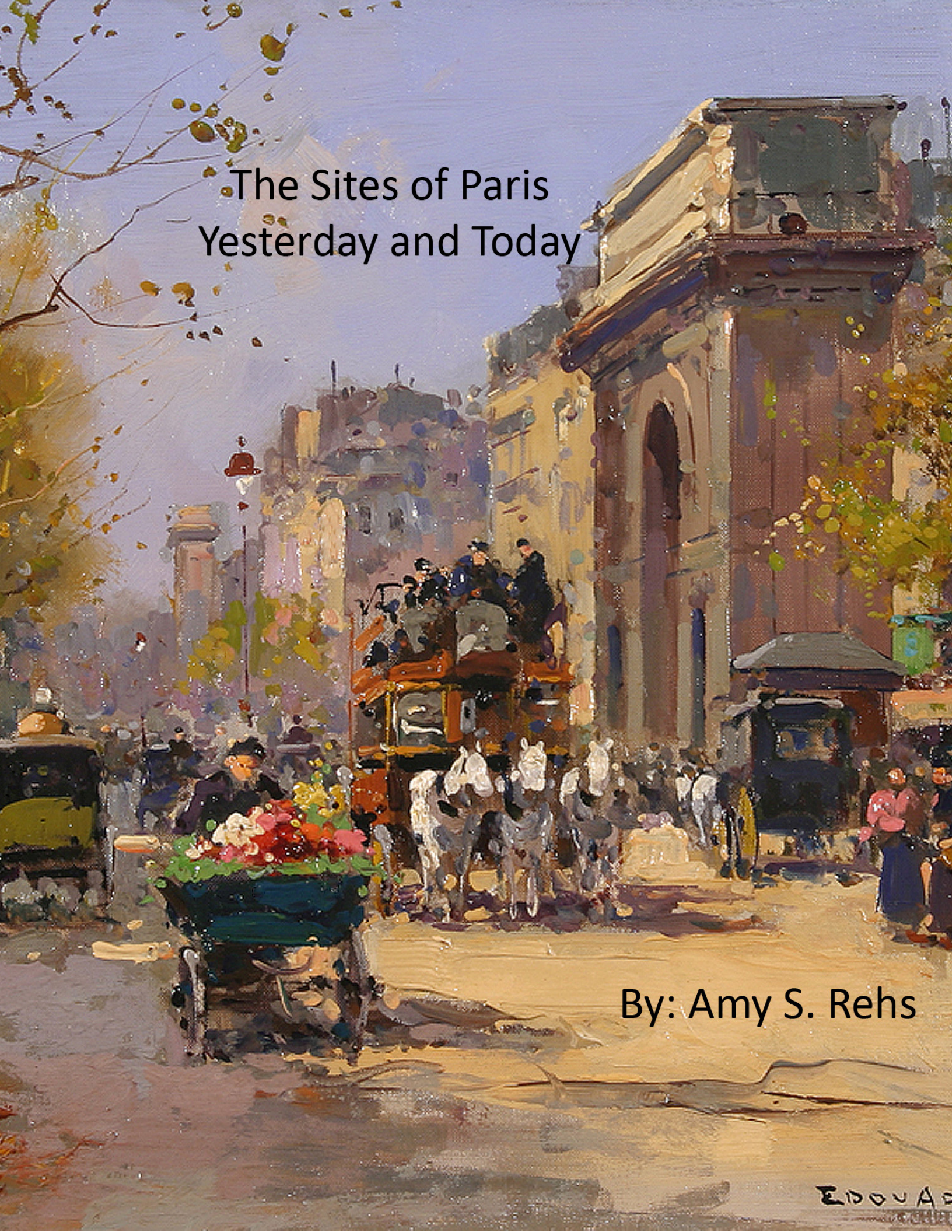

The Sites of Paris
Yesterday and Today
By: Amy S. Rehs

The Sites of Paris - Yesterday and Today

A history of select monuments in Paris

Text by Amy S. Rehs

Contemporary photographs supplied by Lynsi Spaulding

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The Sites of Paris - Yesterday and Today

Featuring Paintings by

EDOUARD LÉON CORTÈS (1882-1969)

Paris has been a cultural center for hundreds of years, as well as a world capital for fashion, food, art, and literature. The many monuments built throughout the centuries have documented its illustrious history. Countless artists have celebrated Paris by illustrating its history through their paintings; one such artist was EDOUARD-LÉON CORTÈS (1882-1969). It was at the turn of the century, c.1900, that he began painting scenes that he would become most famous for – Paris' streets and monuments. One of the more prolific artists of his time, Cortès found his niche and stayed with it. His views of Paris are among the most telling and beautiful of this genre; capturing the city during all its seasons for almost 70 years.

The attention and great interest surrounding Cortès' paintings and the city of Paris, has inspired us to create an 'historical' virtual tour and exhibition of the streets and monuments once painted by him. Included are paintings by Cortès that depict the Paris of old and photographs taken by Lynsi Spaulding* during the summer of 2005. We trust you find this exhibition not only enjoyable, but educational.

**Lynsi Spaulding completed her MA degree in art history in 2006. Her review of "Currents of Change, Art and Life Along the Mississippi River, 1850- 1861," an exhibition at The Minneapolis Institute of Arts (2004) appeared in the Fall, 2004 issue of Nineteenth Century Art Worldwide, an on-line peer-reviewed electronic publication. She coordinated, in remarkable fashion, the Global Studies Course (University of Minnesota) in Amsterdam in conjunction with the "Art Nouveau, Bing Empire" exhibition at the Van Gogh Museum in January, 2005. (Written by Dr. Gabriel Weisberg, Art Historian, University of Minnesota)*

Les Champs-Élysées



Champs Élysées

The Champs-Élysées is known around the world as *La plus belle avenue du monde* (the most beautiful avenue in the world) and is one of the most famous and fashionable avenues ever constructed. The street is located in the heart of Paris, and it is symbolic of the spirit, beauty and outstanding achievements of the city.

The thoroughfare unintentionally originated in 1616 when Marie de Medicis decided to have the Palais de Tuileries garden's axis extended with a tree-lined street. In 1667, Louis XIV had ambitious plans to 'modernize' Paris and had his gardener, André Le Nôtre (1613-1700), redesign the avenue, from fields and marshes, into a promenade lined with elm trees, further enhancing the view from the Tuileries Gardens. The newly fashioned majestic avenue was named Champs-Élysées (Elysian Fields); a name originating in Greek mythology… from 'Elusia,' a land of perfect peace and happiness.

During the 18th century the boulevard was extended stretching from the Place de la Concorde to Chaillot Hill, now the location of the Arc de Triomphe at Place Charles de Gaulle-Étoile (formerly called the Place de l'Étoile). More improvements were made in the early 1800s when the avenue was widened and sidewalks, along with an outer roadway and gas street lights, were added. The Champs-Élysées is divided by the traffic circle known as the 'Rond-Point des Champs-Élysées. Gardens, museums, theaters, cafés and restaurants line the avenue going toward Place de la Concorde. In the opposite direction, toward the Arc de Triomphe, is a commercial area featuring designer boutiques. Today, the Champs-Élysées has become the center for festivities and official parades (i.e. military parade on Bastille Day), as well as an attraction for tourists.

Les Grands Boulevards



Les Grands Boulevards



Les Grands Boulevards

There are a series of eight streets that form one long, wide thoroughfare that stretch across Paris from La Madeleine to the Place de la Bastille; together they are referred to as Les Grands Boulevards and include Boulevard de la Madeleine, Boulevard des Capucines, Boulevard des Italians, Boulevard Montmartre, Boulevard Poissoniere, Boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle, Boulevard St. Denis, and Boulevard St. Martin. *(The French word boulevard originally referred to the flat summit of the defensive walls built around Paris; several Parisian boulevards replaced these old city walls; more generally, boulevards encircle a city center, in contrast to avenues that radiate from the center.)*

The boulevards were created in the 17th century with the removal of the heavy fortifications around the city, which became unnecessary with the offensive foreign policy of Louis XIV (1638-1715). The walls were pulled down and the ditches filled in, leaving a wide promenade, thus creating a modernized look for the city of Paris. During the 18th century, the boulevards became the place to see and be seen in one's ornate carriage. The 19th century brought intellectuals and artisans to the boulevards; they congregated in the cafés that lined the streets.

Many of Paris's main attractions, shops, and department stores line the boulevards or are close by; these include La Madeleine, The Opera(Opera Garnier), Café de la Paix, the Musée Grévin, the Palais de la Bourse, Porte St. Denis and Porte St. Martin.

L'Arc de Triomphe



L'Arc de Triomphe



Arc de Triomphe

The Arc de Triomphe, the most illustrious symbol of French national history, stands in the center of the Place Charles de Gaulle-Étoile, located at the top of the Champs-Élysées; twelve avenues radiate from the Place Charles de Gaulle-Étoile, giving it the appearance of a giant star (hence its original name, Place de l'Étoile). The layout is the masterpiece of 19th-century urban planner Baron Haussmann.

It is the second largest triumphal arch in the world, standing over 51 meters (165 feet) in height and 45 meters (148 feet) in width and was built to commemorate Napoléon Bonaparte's many victories. At the top, you can watch Parisian life and gaze at the world famous views created by Parisian architects.

The Arc de Triomphe was commissioned in 1806 by Napoléon Bonaparte (1769-1821) to honor the French Grand army and was designed by Jean-François-Thérèse Chalgrin (1739-1811). After his death the project was taken over by L. Goust, Jean-Nicolas Huyot, and Guillaume-Abel Blouet successively, who brought the arch to completion in 1836 during the reign of Louis-Phillipe. An inscription by Blouet on the monument translates to, "This monument which was begun in 1806 to honor the great army, was left unfinished for many years, was continued in 1823 with a new purpose, and was completed in 1836 in the reign of King Louis-Philippe I who dedicated it to the glory of France's armed forces. G. A. Blouet, architect."

There are four enormous relief sculptures at the base of each of the four pillars that combine the commemorative with the symbolic. The sculptures are entitled *The Triumph of 1810* (by Jean-Pierre Cortot), *Resistance* and *Peace* (both by Antoine Étex) and *The Departure of the Volunteers*, commonly known as La Marseilles (by François Rude).

In the attic above the ornately sculptured frieze of soldiers are 30 shields engraved with the names of major Revolutionary and Napoleonic military victories. The inside walls of the monument list the names of 558 French generals, with those who died in battle underlined, and a listing of lesser important victories.

Underneath the arch lies the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. At 6:30 every evening, the eternal flame is rekindled to commemorate the dead of both World War I and World War II.

Le Lido



Champs Élysées, Lido



The Champs-Élysées

Paris, a city that has always been known for its celebrations and entertainment, is home to the Lido. Situated on the infamous Champs-Élysées, (about two and a half blocks from the Arc de Triomphe), the Lido has glistened in the city lights since 1946, and is still considered one of the world's most prominent Cabarets. Today, the Lido still offers burlesque shows, combining music, comedy, and scantily clad women performing as they have since its beginning.

In 1946, Joseph and Louis Clerico purchased a venue which had been very fashionable in the 1920's. It was not just their Italian heritage that inspired them, but their love of Venice and its celebrated Lido Beach, that influenced the décor of the club. The Lido invented the dinner show format that has become the standard for nightclubs all over the world. (www.lido.com)

In 1977 the Lido moved to a larger location and still remains under the ownership of the Clerico family.

The Paris Métro

(The underground rapid transit system)The Métro opened on July 19, 1900 and its first line ran from Porte de Vincennes to Porte Maillot (now known as the Number 1 line). Fulgence Bienvenüe (1852 – 1936) was the engineer in charge of construction; the architect, Hector Guimard (1867 - 1942) was responsible for creating the *Art Nouveau* entrances.

Further development of the Paris Métro took place in three main stages. During the first phase, from the early 1900s to the 1920s, the core of the network was exclusively in Paris proper. During the second phase, from the 1930s to the 1950s, the network was extended to nearby suburbs. And finally, from the 1960s to the 1980s, the extension focused on the development of the RER (Réseau Express Régional) network. The system now has 221.6 km (138 miles) of track and 16 lines. There are 380 stations (not including RER stations), 87 of these being interchanges between lines, and every building

is within 500 meters (approximately 1/3 mile) of a métro station. Over 1.3 billion people use the Paris Métro system each year.

Champs-Élysées – Clémenceau



Champs-Élysées, Clemenceau



Champs-Élysées, Clemenceau

The Champs-Élysées, Clémenceau is a station on the 1 and 13 lines of the Paris Métro. It is located at the corner of Avenue des Champs-Élysées and Avenue W. Churchill. The station was opened in 1900 and named after Georges Clémenceau (1841- 1929) a French statesman, doctor and journalist. Clémenceau was a major contributor to the Allied victory in World War I, as well as one of the framers of the Treaty of Versailles.

Located to the north of the station is the Élysées Palace, the official residence of the President of France. The Grand Palais and the Petite Palace are situated to the south and along the outside of Georges Clémenceau Place are statues of Georges Clémenceau, Charles de Gaulle and Winston Churchill, world leaders during World War I and World War II.

Métro Georges V



Métro George V, Champs Élysées



Métro George V, Champs Élysées

The Metro Georges V is a station of the Paris Metro on the number 1 line that runs under the Champs-Élysées. It was originally called the Alma Station, but was renamed on May 27, 1920, as a tribute to King George V of the United Kingdom. The station is at the intersection of the Champs- Élysées and Avenue Georges V, named after the British King as well.

Café de la Paix



Place de L'Opera, Paris



Café de la Paix

The Café de la Paix is located in the Grand Hotel (today known as the Intercontinental Paris Le Grand Hotel). The Café de la Paix is one of Paris' most famous cafés and its patrons can rub shoulders with rich and famous celebrities who are often guests of the hotel. Designed by Charles Garnier (1825-1898), it sits at the busy intersection of Boulevard des Capucines and Avenue de l'Opera, across from the Opéra Garnier. The décor of the café has been beautifully restored to its original Empire style.

Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte (Napoléon III), Napoléon s nephew, became President of the Empire in 1848. After a visit to London he decided it was time to modernize Paris. Additionally, Napoléon III wanted: better control of the traffic flow, to encourage economic growth, and most importantly, make the city "revolution proof." He hired Baron Haussmann (1809-1892) to accomplish these goals. Haussmann's modernization of Paris, changing its narrow, dark, yet picturesque alleyways to wide streets and open spaces, took place between 1852 and 1870.

Haussmann's ultimate project in the urban renovation of Paris was the Grand Hotel. He enlisted the help of the Pereire brothers (rivals of the Rothschilds) to finance the hotel. Since its creation, the hotel has been part of the marvel that transformed Paris and gave the French capital the look it has today.

Place de l' Opéra



Place de l'Opera



Avenue de l'Opera

Place de l'Opéra is often referred to as the *Hub of the Universe*. Baron Haussmann first envisioned the

Place de l'Opéra in 1857. Originally, the location was intended for a new theater, but before the project actually got under way, it was decided to build a new opera house.

Place de l'Opéra is in the heart of Paris, making this square extremely important in Parisian life. One reason is the fact that The Grands Boulevards (Les Grands Boulevards) cross the square from east to west, creating a great deal of activity in the area, and in Paris, were there is activity, there are many cafés. Secondly, three branches of the Paris Metro have stations there, making it easily accessible. And lastly, it is in one of the most important business centers of Paris. Since most tourist agencies, branch offices of both local and foreign railroads, as well as offices of air and shipping lines are located within easy walking distance of this square, this area is also known as the heart of the tourist trade. (oldandsold.com)

Paris Opera


Place de l'Opéra


Avenue de l'Opera

The Paris Opera house, better known today as the Palais Garnier, is a majestic and luxurious landmark at the northern end of the Avenue de l'Opéra. It is one of the most beautiful buildings in the world, an architectural masterpiece of its time and an outstanding example of Belle Époque architecture. La Belle Époque, or "beautiful era", was a period in France's history that began during the late 19th century and lasted until World War I; considered a golden time of beauty, innovation, and peace between France and its European neighbor.

The current Opera House is actually the thirteenth theater to house the Paris Opera since its inception by Louis XIV in 1669; previous locations were either temporary or destroyed by fires.

Historical Note: Louis XIV, nicknamed Roi Soleil, (meaning the Sun King), not only created the first official ballet and opera company in 1661 (they performed at the royal court in Versaille); he was an accomplished dancer himself. He opened the Académie Royale de la Danse in 1669 to establish dance as an official profession, and today the Ballet de l'Opéra is considered to be the best in the world, whose dancers train almost exclusively at the (renamed) Ecole de Danse de l'Opéra. (Heather Stimmler-Hall)

In 1858, Napoléon III decided to build a new Opera House in the middle of the business quarter that Baron Haussmann designed. In 1875, when the opera house was inaugurated, it was named the Académie Nationale de Musique - Théâtre de l'Opéra. The opera house was renamed in 1978 the Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris and renamed once more in 1989 as Palais Garnier, when the opera company chose the Opéra Bastille as their principle theater. Today, the Palais Garnier is mainly used for ballet performances.

On December 29, 1860 an open competition ensued to find the right architect for this project. Charles Garnier (1825-1898), a relatively unknown architect, was chosen from among 171 contestants. According to a legend, when Garnier was asked by the Empress Eugénie what style the opera house would be built in, Greek or Roman, he replied ``It is in the Napoléon III style Madame!''

Construction started in 1861 and lasted 14 years. Incidents such as the Franco-Prussian War, the fall of the Empire, and the Paris Commune all contributed to delays in construction. The entire project was almost abandoned when it was discovered that there was a high underground water table, the land was extremely marshy and swampy. Not only did the water have to be drained before the concrete foundation could be laid, but an underground well was constructed to balance the water pressure, hence the legend of the "lake" that inspired *The Phantom of the Opéra's* lair.

The Opera house opened in 1875 and "somehow" Charles Garnier did not receive an invitation to the opening celebration. The powers that be claimed it was an oversight, but many believe it was because they were upset by Garnier going well over budget. Garnier ended up buying his own ticket to the event and received a standing ovation for his magnificent accomplishment. (Caine 24)

The ornate façade and décor are symbolic of the Imperial regime. The building is opulently decorated with columns, friezes, and a variety of statues. The building is crowned by statue of Apollo, the god of art and music, holding a golden lyre. Inside the magnificence continues with velvet, gold leaf, and figures of nymphs and cherubs. The chandelier in the auditorium weighs over six tons and the ceiling, which was originally painted by Jules-Eugène Lenepveu, was repainted almost a century later (1964) by Marc Chagall.

The building has seventeen stories and a total area of 11,000 square meters (118,404 square feet.) The huge stage can accommodate 450 performers and the opera house seats approximately 2,000. Seven of the levels are below ground, and two contain pieces of the "lake". Also located on these seven levels are cellars, fountains, abandoned prop rooms and tunnels.

Rue Royale



Rue Royale, Madeleine



Rue Royale, Madeleine

The rue Royale is a short street in Paris that runs between the Place de la Concorde and the Place de la Madeleine.

One of the most famous addresses on this street is that of Maxim's restaurant. Founded on the rue Royale in 1893 by Maxime Gaillard, Maxim's has been representative of the distinctive 'art of living' in Paris; a blend of distinction, lightheartedness, and innovation. It has become a favorite among the elite in the fields of finance, arts and politics. Designer Pierre Cardin bought the restaurant in 1981, giving its reputation an additional boost.

La Madeleine



La Madeleine

La Madeleine, a church dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, is an impressive building in Paris' financial district. It is located at the Place de la Madeleine, close to Palais Garnier and Place de la Concorde.

In 1764, during the reign of Louis XV, La Madeleine's construction began. The initial design was formulated by Pierre Constant d'Ivry (1698-1777), who was inspired by Jules Hardovin-Mansart, (Louis XIV's architect) design of the St. Louis des Invalide Church, built from 1676-1691. When Constant d'Ivry died in 1777, the plans were dismissed by d'Ivry's successor, Guillome-Martin Carnavalet, who preferred modeling it after the Panthéon.

In 1790 everything, except the foundation, was destroyed. All further construction stopped during the French Revolution and it wasn't until 1806 when Napoléon decided that a Temple of Glory to his Grand Army should be built that the project was revisited. Pierre-Alexandre Vignon (1763-1828) was commissioned to draw up plans. The new structure was to be based on the Maison Carree, an ancient Roman temple in Nimes. However, upon completion of the basic structure of the Arc de Triomphe in 1808 (which commemorated the French Army), the "Temple of Glory" needed a new purpose. Following the Restoration, the period in France when there was a strong conservative reaction and the Catholic Church was re-established as a strong force, Louis XVIII decided that the Madeleine should be a church. It was briefly suggested, in 1837, that La Madeleine become the first railway station in Paris, but in 1842 it was finally and officially consecrated as a church.

There are fifty-two Corinthian columns around the church, each 20 meters high, which support a sculpted frieze. On the bronze doors is a bas-relief by Henri de Triqueti that represents the Ten Commandments.

Flower Market



Flower Market, Madeleine



Flower Market, Madeleine

The flower markets of Paris were abundant, the oldest of which was established in 1808, and held every Wednesday and Saturday in an open area on the Quai Dessaix. The wives or daughters of the growers typically staffed the stands. The location of each person was marked; and each paid the town of Paris the equivalent of 25 cents a day. Everything connected with the stands was portable; the pots and plants are set on the ground, seeds and cut flowers were displayed on small benches. (Loudon, Sec.290)

In addition, there were markets located at the Place de la Madeleine (held on Tuesdays and Fridays), the Place Royale (held every Monday and Friday), on the Esplanade of the Chateau d'Eau (also held on Monday and Friday), and at the Place de Sulpice (held on Tuesday and Friday). (Loudon)

Today, there are still several flower markets in Paris. They are located at Place Louis Lepine, between Notre-Dame and Sainte-Chapelle, which is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Place de la Madeleine, open every day except Monday from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., and Place des Terne also open every day from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. except Monday. (Intransit International Ltd.)

Place de la Concorde



Fountain on Place de la Concorde, Paris



Place de la Concorde

Situated beside the Seine, and separating the beginning of the Champs-Élysées from the Tuileries Gardens, lays the Place de la Concorde (Square of Harmony); the largest square in Paris.

Place de la Concorde was designed by Jacques Anges Gabriel (1698-1782), Louis XV's (1710-1774) architect,

and originally constructed to hold an equestrian statue of Louis XV that the city of Paris commissioned in 1748. Construction began in 1754 and was completed in 1763. Initially, it was called Place Louis XV.

Place de la Concorde is often linked with some of the dark, and often bloody, events that took place on its pavement. In 1770, 133 spectators were trampled to death at a huge fireworks display on the occasion of Marie-Antoinette's wedding to Louis XVI.

Years later, the revolutionaries, intent on eliminating all royalist monuments from the face of the earth, removed Louis XV's statue, renamed the square Place de la Revolution, and set up their guillotine on it. Among those executed were Louis XVI, Marie-Antoinette, Charlotte Corday (the murderess of Marat), Danton, Philippe Égalité, Robespierre, and 2800 others between the years 1793 and 1795. The square went through many name changes: Place de la Concorde, Place Louis XV again, Place Louis XVI, Place de la Chartre and finally back to Place de la Concorde, which symbolized the end of a troubled era and hope for a better future.

There are eight statues, one in each corner of the octagon, representing the eight major cities of France: Brest, Rouen, Lille, Strasbourg, Lyon, Marseille, Bordeaux, and Nantes.

In the center of the plaza is the Obelisk of Luxor, a pink granite monolith 23 meters (73 ft) high and weighing an amazing 220 tons. It is over 3,300 years old and decorated with hieroglyphics exalting the reign of the Pharaoh Ramses II. The Egyptian viceroy Muhammad Ali Pasha presented the obelisk as a gift to Charles X in 1829 and King Louis Philippe installed it in its current location in 1836. Louis Philippe, bearing in mind the death and destruction witnessed by Place de la Concorde, was pleased to have found a non-political monument to replace the unpopular Louis XV statue.

Notre-Dame



Notre Dame

The Cathedrale Notre-Dame (*Our Lady*) de Paris, as it is officially called, is not only France's most famous church, but also a glorious achievement of early Gothic architecture. The church is located on l'île de la Cité, a small island in the Seine. Originally the Romans built a temple to Jupiter on the spot; this was followed by a Christian basilica and then a Romanesque church, (the Cathedral of St. Etienne) founded by Childebert (Frankish King c.498- 558) in 528.

Maurice de Sully (1100(?)-1196) became bishop of Paris in 1160 and decided to build a new cathedral for the growing population, which would be dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Construction started in 1163, and it was not completed until roughly 180 years later (c. 1345). Built in an age of illiteracy, the cathedral retells the stories of the Bible in its portals, paintings, and stained glass.

Pope Alexander III laid the cornerstone in 1163 and the high altar was consecrated 20 years later. The nave, except for the roofing, was completed in 1196; however, in 1230 the nave was reconstructed and the present flying buttresses were added. Soon after, chapels were installed between the buttresses, which radically altered not only the plan but also the entire aesthetics of the building. The towers were finished c.1245, and the building was finally completed about c. 1345. Among the master builders were Jehan de Chelles, Pierre de Montreal, Pierre de Chelles, and Jehan Rave.

Since its completion there have been many alterations to the church, as well as acts of vandalism and destruction. The Huguenots (French Protestants during the Reformation) damaged the cathedral in 1548 after the Council of Trent. During the reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV, the cathedral had undergone many alterations in an attempt to modernize it. 'Gothic' architecture was perceived as crude and barbaric at best; an effort to adapt the cathedral to “modern” Baroque standard was undertaken. Among these alterations was the destruction of tombs and the stained glass windows; along with the construction of a new high altar. After fifteen years of reconstruction, the interior of the cathedral was completely whitewashed; thankfully the North and South Rose Windows were spared. Today, the North and West are still virtually original, though the South window has been replicated. During the French Revolution rioters converted the cathedral into a “Temple of Reason” and many treasures and sculptures were either destroyed or stolen, and Lady Liberty replaced the Virgin Mary on the alters. In 1845, Viollet-le-Duc began skillful restorations that lasted 23 years. The civil uprising of the Paris Commune in 1871 nearly set the cathedral on fire and during World War II, the stained glass windows were removed for safe keeping; they were reinstalled at the end of the war.

Some of the major events that have taken place at Notre-Dame: Henry VI of England was crowned King of France in 1431; The marriage of Mary I of Scotland to Dauphin Francois on April 24, 1558; The marriage of Henry IV to Marguerite de Valois on August 18, 1572; Napoléon Bonaparte was crowned Emperor on December 2, 1804; Joan of Arc was beautified in 1909; The Te Deum Mass took place on August 26, 1944 to celebrate the liberation of Paris; and finally The Requiem Mass of General Charles De Gaulle on November 12, 1970.

Booksellers of Notre Dame- Les Bouquinistes



Les Bouquinistes de Notre-Dame



Bookseller, Notre Dame

Opposite Notre Dame, along the Quai (waterfront) de Montebello, are the bookseller’s stalls. Since the 1500s,

these stalls have lined most of the bridges in Paris. The word *Bouquinistes* most likely comes from the Dutch word *boeckin*, which means small book. Initially, the booksellers used a wheelbarrow to carry and sell their goods, strapping trays to the parapets of the bridges. After the Revolution, business was thriving as whole libraries were seized from Noblemen, as well as Clergymen, and then sold. In 1891, the booksellers affixed permanent boxes to the walls of the quai which were locked shut with metal bars and padlocks to keep everything safe.

Today, the booksellers must be open at least four days a week and you can find all sorts of things there: old prints and engravings, old issues of Paris Match (a magazine, founded in 1949, about celebrities and European royal families), maps, books, comic books, and other odds and ends. While the goods on display are typically for tourists, the serious collector should not overlook them. Many a gem can be found there since the city legislates that there can be only one box of souvenirs to every three boxes of books.

Place St. Michel



Place St. Michel, Notre Dame



Place St. Michel, Notre Dame

The entrance point of the Latin Quarter is Place St. Michel, where the tree-lined boulevard St. Michel begins. Place St. Michel has always been the perfect meeting place for students; and was a gathering spot for artists, intellectuals and bohemians.

The construction of Place Saint-Michel resulted from the idea of forming a grand intersection in the center of Paris. The notion of an intersection of two grand boulevards that ran on a north/south axis and an east/west axis was Haussmann's solution to two perceived problems. The first was to maintain the center of Paris near the historic center of l'Île de la Cité rather than have the center of Paris move, due to market forces, to the west of the present location of the Opera. The second was to alleviate the growing traffic problems of Paris. Haussmann's renovation program served other purposes as well, including military, economic stimulation, and sanitary concerns (which included providing needed ventilation and sewer lines for the city). Furthermore, the businesses and property owners within the older quarters of Paris demanded construction of broad, handsome streets in order to stay competitive with the newer quarters to the north and west.

In 1860 Jean-Antoine-Gabriel Davioud (1824 - 1881), a noted French architect, and a colleague of Baron Haussmann, designed a number of buildings, monuments, and fountains in Paris. One such fountain that he created is the fountain in the center of the square of Place St. Michel which represents Saint Michel, protector of France, slaying a dragon.

In 1871, Place St. Michel was the center of political unrest when it became the nucleus of the Paris Commune, and again in 1968, when it was the site of a student uprising.

Sacré-Coeur



Sacré Coeur



Sacré Coeur

The Sacré-Coeur Basilica (Basilica of the Sacred Heart) is a majestic building located at the top of the Montmartre Hill and is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Paris. The idea for the building was initiated by a group of prominent people (French Catholics) who wanted to build a monument as moral condemnation of the sins of Paris. They were convinced that "the Sins of the Parisians" caused the French army's defeat during the Franco-Prussian war in 1870.

While this building may look ancient, the construction only began 130 years ago. The National Assembly approved the project and a competition ensued. The goal was to build a basilica loyal to Christian traditions. The winner of the competition was Paul Abadie (1812-1884), who designed an enormous basilica with five domes in a Roman-Byzantine style. The project took 44 years to build (1875-1919) and the basilica stands on a foundation of 83 pillars that are buried 130 feet into the ground (the earth below was honeycombed with gypsum mines).

Sacré Cœur is built of Château-Landon (Seine-et-Marne) stone; a frost-resistant travertine that constantly weathers out its calcite so that it bleaches with age to a chalky whiteness. The stone of Château-Landon was used to build several other monuments in Paris, such as the Cathedral Notre-Dame, the Panthéon and the National Library. These quarries are still active in the neighboring city of Souppes-sur-Loing.

While exploring Sacré-Coeur you will see two bronze equestrian statues of France's national saints rise above the triple-arched portico, Joan of Arc (1412-1431) and King Saint Louis IX (1215-1270). Louis IX became King of France in 1226, at the age of 11, and is the only French monarch to become a saint. Golden mosaics glow in the dim, echoing, interior of the Sacré-Coeur and if you climb to the top of the dome you have a great view of Paris.

Since 1885, the Blessed Sacrament has been continually on display in a monstrance (the ceremonial vessel used during the Roman Catholic Mass to display the consecrated communion host) above the high altar. The crypt contains a relic that some believe to be Christ's Sacred Heart, which gives the basilica its name. The apse features a large mosaic of Christ in Majesty and a striking mural of Christ's Passion is at the back of the altar.

Place du Tertre



Place du Tertre, Sacré Coeur



Place du Tertre, *Sacré Coeur*

Place du Tertre, located just a few streets away from Sacré Coeur, is crowded with artists all vying to paint your portrait. It was Baron Haussmann who inadvertently created the Place du Tertre. After razing many working-class neighborhoods in central Paris, he unwittingly encouraged the development of Montmartre (which had been annexed to Paris in 1860). The metamorphosis of Montmartre from a country village into the home for hordes of artists and others who no longer had a place in Haussmann's grandiose central Paris began around 1880. At the base of Montmartre, cabarets thrived and on the Place du Tertre intense artistic activity took place. Place du Tertre saw the artistic movements of Impressionism, Cubism, Fauvism, and Surrealism come and go. It is a reminder of the time when Montmartre was the center of modern art: many great painters including Picasso, Renoir, Braque, Dufy, Cézanne, and Toulouse-Lautrec painted here and often kept studios and living quarters in the adjacent streets. These days, despite the crush of constant tourists on the square, one can still discover that old-time Paris feeling here. (Monuments in Paris)

Panthéon



Rue d'Ulm, Panthéon



Rue d'Ulm, Panthéon

The Panthéon, built in the 18th century, is a magnificent building initially designed as a church and later turned into a secular mausoleum. Located at the top of Saint Geneviéve mount, overlooking the Latin Quarter and surrounded by a cluster of schools and universities, the Panthéon is among the more dominant structures in Paris. For most of the nineteenth century, before the Eiffel Tower, the Montparnasse Tower and Sacré-Coeur de Montparnasse were built, the Panthéon was the first building visitors would see; and from it, they could see all of Paris.

The Marquis Marigny, at the request of King Louis XV, commissioned the Panthéon after the King recovered from a serious illness in 1744. King Louis XV credited his cure to Saint Geneviéve (the city's patron saint) and vowed to rebuild the ruined basilica where her body was laid to rest in 512. The architect, Jacques-Germain Soufflot (1713- 1780), commissioned in 1755, wanted to combine "the lightness of Gothic architecture and the magnificence of the Greek architecture," in this way, he fulfilled King Louis XV's wish of "glorifying with dignity" the monarchy through Saint Geneviéve.

The first stone was laid in 1757 and, due to financial problems, was not completed until 1791 -some 34 years later and 10 years after Soufflot's death. The final 10 years were supervised by his student, Jean-Baptiste Rondelet (1743-1829).

This basilica would be a proper homage to any number of great people from French history and during the Third Republic it was turned into an edifice devoted to the memory of famous men. The Panthéon became the place to honor the "Champions of French Liberty" - men such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Descartes. The church windows were covered so that grand patriotic frescoes could be displayed, and the inscription, "To the great men of the Fatherland," was carved over the front door.

The mausoleum, the central space beneath the dome, is dominated by Foucault's pendulum, which swings back and forth (in 1851, Jean Bernard Leon Foucault, an astronomer, held his first famous experiment demonstrating the Earth rotates on its axis). Today, displays on either side of the pendulum offer headsets with information in both French and English.

In 1874, the inside walls were decorated with paintings depicting the stories of Saint Geneviéve, as well as, the Christian and monarchic origins of France. The crypt is a dimly lit space filled with vaults containing the remains of many great public figures, including Victor Hugo, Jean Monnet, Marie and Pierre Curie and Émile Zola. If you view the basilica from the back you will see, to one side, a circular chapel that contains a model of the Panthéon created by Rondelet.

Pont Neuf



Pont-Neuf



Pont-Neuf

The Pont Neuf, (*neuf* meaning new, not nine) is Paris' oldest remaining bridge that spans the Seine River.

The first stone was laid by Henri III in 1578, in the presence of the Queen Mother, Catherine de Médicis, under the direction of Baptiste Androuet du Cerceau (c.1545-1590). Shortly after construction began, there was a delay partially due to the Wars of Religion (a series of conflicts fought between Catholics and Huguenots

(Protestants) during the sixteenth century), beginning around 1578. The bridge was finally finished in 1606 under the rule of Henry IV. In many respects, it is the first of the modern bridges in Paris and the most famous. Its design marks the end of the Middle Ages and linked the Louvre, the Abbaye de Saint Germain and the Left Bank in royal times.

The Pont Neuf was a phenomenal success and the enthusiasm for the bridge lasted two centuries. Not only was it wide, but it was the first stone bridge with no houses - allowing an unobstructed view of the Seine. It was recognized as a rallying point for all the sophisticated and vulgar pleasures of the capital; saying has it that one was sure to meet "a monk, a white horse and a street walker" there. The number of people seeking amorous encounters was certainly large; the number of shady characters, thieves, conmen and bandits of all kinds matched it. Additionally, small businesses flourished and public exhibitions by painters from the Académie Saint Luc were held on the bridge on the day of the Fête Dieu (Corpus Christi– the Feast of the Body of Christ). (Gaillard, 106-109)

The bridge, among the widest and most heavily trafficked bridges in Paris, has a total length of 278 meters and is 28 meters wide. There are 12 arches that span the widest part of the river, each featuring small head-shaped sculpted decorations known as *mascarons. P*avements were added to protect pedestrians from the mud and horses, and originally the turrets were constructed for vendors and street entertainers; today the turrets are used by pedestrians to rest and view the river.

The equestrian statue of Henri IV, constructed in 1614 at the request of Marie de Medici, sits where the bridge crosses over l'île de la Cité. The statue was destroyed during the French Revolution in 1792 and rebuilt in 1818 after the Monarchy was restored. Two statues of Napoléon were melted down to create the new statue of Henri IV, designed by the sculptor François-Frédéric Lemot (1772 – 1827). Lamot placed four boxes inside the statue, each contains a bit of history about Henri IV.

More recently, in September 1985, the modern artist Christo wrapped the bridge for two weeks leaving only the roadway uncovered.

Pont Alexandre III



Pont Alexandre III



Pont Alexandre III

Pont Alexandre III, an excellent example of Belle Époque architecture, was built to celebrate the treaty between France and Russia at end of the 19th century and is considered, by many, to be the most beautiful bridge in Paris.

The bridge was designed by architects Cassien-Bernard and Gaston Cousin, and constructed by engineers Jean Résal and Amédée d'Alby. In 1896, the first stone was laid by the Russian Tsar Nicolas II, son of Tsar Alexander III, whom the bridge was named for. Construction officially began in 1897 and was completed in time for the Universal Exposition of 1900. The bridge is low, wide, and does not obstruct the view of the Invalides and the Champs-Élysées. It is lavishly decorated with lamp posts and sculptures of cherubs and nymphs. The granite pillars, on either end of the bridge, feature large gilded statues, which represent Pegasus held by Fame.

On the right bank, the Renommée des Sciences and the Renommée des Arts by E. Frémiet with, at their base, La France Contemporaine by G. Michel and the France de Charlemagne by A. Lenoir. On the Left Bank, the Renommée du Commerce by P. Granet and the Renommée de l'Industrie by C. Steiner with, at their base, the France Rennaissante by J. Coutan and La France de Louis XIV by L. Marqueste. The lions are by J. Dalou and de Gardet.

The keystones are decorated with two compositions in beaten copper representing, upstream, the Nymphes de la Seine bearing the arms of Paris, and, downstream, the Nymphes de la Néva bearing the arms of Russia by G. Récipon. On the bridge parapet, at the foot of the pillars, are four superb groups of water spirits with fish and seashells sculpted in beaten copper by L. Morice and A. Massoule, while the four monumental candelabra surrounded by cupids and sea monsters are by the sculptor, H. Gauquic. This bridge is as grand as it is elegant and is listed as a historical monument. (Jellesen)

Châtelet



Châtelet



Châtelet

Place du Châtelet is located at the edge of the Seine and derives its name from the Grand Châtelet; a fortress built to defend the Pont au Change Bridge, which it overlooked, that was destroyed by Napoléon I in 1802.

In the center is the Colonne du Palmier; erected in 1808 to commemorate Napoléon's victory in Egypt. The column is surrounded by a fountain, decorated with sphinxes and statues, designed by Gabriel Davioud (1823 – 1881) in the late 1850s. Alongside the quay of the Place du Châtelet are two theaters, the Théâtre du Châtelet and the Théâtre de la Ville, both designed by Davioud.

Théâtre du Châtelet



Théâtre du Châtelet



Théâtre du Châtelet

Théâtre du Châtelet is one of the theaters designed by Gabriel Davioud at the request of Baron Haussmann, built between 1860 and 1862. Originally used for drama performances, it later became a place for operettas, ballets, music concerts, and for a short time it was also a cinema. Since 1906, regular seasons of opera and ballet have been offered by a variety of impresarios, as well as by visiting international companies as diverse as Diaghilev's (1872-1929) Ballets Russes (formed in 1909) and the present-day Kirov Opera. Igor Stravinsky's (1882-1971) *Petrouchka* received its first performance in the theater on June 3, 1911, as did Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau and Pablo Picasso's *Parade* on May 18, 1917. In addition, many foreign composers and conductors made appearances in the theater, including Tchaikovsky, Gustav Mahler and Richard Strauss.

Since 1979 it has been operated by the City of Paris and, after undergoing a major restoration in 1980, re-opened under the name of the Théâtre Musical de Paris. In 1989 it was acoustically re-modeled and the name was changed back to the Théâtre du Châtelet. Today it is mainly used for opera performances and concerts.

Théâtre du Vaudeville



Théâtre du Vaudeville



Théâtre du Vaudeville

Construction of the Théâtre du Vaudeville began in 1868 and was completed in 1869. It was built to house the Théâtre du Vaudeville Company which was originally founded in 1792. The word 'vaudeville' (originally defined as "a country ballad or song") evolved in Paris to mean the show itself, rather than the songs in the show.

The theater is located where Boulevard des Capucines and Boulevard Italiens meet and intersect with rue de la Chaussée-d'Antin. It opened in 1869 and closed in 1927; at which time it was converted to a Paramount cinema.

Théâtre des Variétés



Les Grands Boulevards, Théâtre des Variétés



Les Grands Boulevards, Théâtre des Variétés

Marguerite Brunet (1730-1820), better known as Montansier, created and directed the theater, which was built in only five months and opened on June 24, 1807 with the show *A Panorama of Momus*, a light comedy by Marc-Antoine Désaugiers. Montansier died on July 13, 1820, at the age of 90, and the comic actor Joseph Mira-Brunet (1766 –1861) took over as director. Mira-Brunert remaind there until July 1830; at which time François-Victor-Armand Dartois took the reins. This began a period of instability at the theater until Hippolyte Cogniard took over in 1855. She directed the theater towards shows and revues that were spectacular, filled with light comedy intersected with dances and verses.

Today, the Théâtre des Variétés, located at 7, Montmartre Boulevard remains one of largest Parisian theaters and was declared an historic building in 1975.

The Comédie-Française



Comédie-Française



Comédie-Française

The Comédie-Française is the only state theater in France and is also one of the few to have its own troupe of actors.

The Comédie-Française was established on August 24, 1680, by declaration of Louis XIV and merged the only two Parisian acting troupes of the time, the troupe of the Hôtel Guénégaud and that of the Hôtel de Bourgogne. The following year, the royal treasury gave them a grant to build a new theater.

On September 3rd 1793, during the French Revolution, the Comédie-Française was closed by order of the Committee of Public Safety, and the actors were imprisoned. In May of 1799, the new government made the Salle Richelieu (a dilapidated building on the rue Richelieu) available and allowed the actors to renovate the building and reconstitute the troupe.

Today the Comédie-Française has a repertoire of 3,000 works and three theaters in Paris (Salle Richelieu, next to the Palais Royal; Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier; and Studio-Théâtre). The Comédie-Française has had many well-known actors, including Sarah Bernhardt and Jean-Louis Barrault, and is known for productions of the French classics; though it also performs contemporary plays.

Interestingly, the Comédie-Française is the current resting-place of the heart of Francois-Marie Arouet, more commonly known as Voltaire. In 1814, his bones were removed from the Panthéon and destroyed; his heart is all that remains preserved.

Rue de Rivoli



Rue de Rivoli



Rue de Rivoli

One of the most famous streets in Paris is Rue de Rivoli, its name derived from Napoléon's victory over the Austrian army, at the Battle of Rivoli in January of 1797. This long, busy street, lined with imposing buildings runs through the center of Paris. Along the south side are the Louvre and Tuileries Gardens and across the street is an arcade that is over a mile long.

This street features a number of personalities; one section is rather stylish, with fancy old hotels and tea rooms opposite the Tuileries, another is bursting with cheap souvenir shops, and the last is a massive arcade, now a mall, where global chain stores, such as the Gap, Body Shop, H & M, Zara, and Foot Locker have taken over.

Quai du Louvre



Quai du Louvre



Quai du Louvre

Quai du Louvre is the riverbank on the Seine by the Louvre Museum.

The Louvre Museum (Musée du Louvre), located on the Right Bank of the Seine, between the Tuileries Gardens and the church of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, is among the most visited, oldest, largest and famous museums in the world. The building, originally a royal palace, is famous for displaying many of the world's most important works of art; including Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, *The Virgin and Child with St. Anne, Madonna of the Rocks,* and Alexandros of Antioch's *Venus de Milo.*

According to the French historian Henri Sauval (1623-1676) the word 'Louvre' is from the Frankish word leovar or *leower,* signifying a fortified place. The Louvre became the royal residence and the official seat of power in France until Louis XIV moved to Versailles in 1682, bringing the government with him.

The construction of the Louvre began in the thirteenth century when Phillip II Augustus built a fortress to defend the Seine and l'île de la Cité against the Normans and the English. Then, in the fourteenth century, Charles V remodeled and enlarged the building. In the sixteenth century, François I and Henri II demolished most of the structure to build a Renaissance Palace, designed by Pierre Lescot and decorated with sculptures by Jean Goujon. The original foundation of the fortress tower is under the 'Room of the Carytids.'

In 1564 Catherine de Médici built Palais de Tuileries, just to the west of the Louvre. Subsequently, Henri IV decided to have the two connected with a series of buildings, the most important being the Grande Galerie. The building was 100 feet wide and more than a quarter mile long, making it the longest building in the world at that time. Henri IV, a great patron and supporter of the arts, invited hundreds of artists and craftsmen to live and work in this building's lower floors, a tradition that lasted for two hundred years until Napoléon III ended it.

The Denon Wing, as it known today, was started by Catherine de Médici in 1560 and completed by Louis XIII in the seventeenth century. He also extended the west wing by adding the pavilion de l'Horoge, a doomed clock pavilion. When Louis XIV came into power, he had a great square constructed, the Cour Carée by Louis Le Vau. He then commissioned Le Vau and Claude Perrault to design the East Wing; its classical edifice has been the model for many great European and American buildings, one being the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. (In 1682, Louis XIV moved the royal residence to Versailles.)

Following the Revolution of 1789, Napoléon I moved the royal residence back to the Palais de Tuileries and used the Louvre for both government offices and the first state museum, which housed the royal collections of

painting and sculptures. Napoléon I began a new west wing along the rue de Rivoli and Napoléon III completed it; thus closing the quadrilateral.

Today, the Louvre departments include Oriental (ancient Mesopotamian) antiquities, Egyptian antiquities, Greek and Roman antiquities, sculpture from the Middle Ages to modern times, furniture and object d'art, and paintings representing all of the European schools.

Tuileries Gardens



Tuileries Garden



Tuileries Garden

The Tuileries Garden, Paris' grandest park, was once the private property of kings and queens. Today it links the museums of the Musée du Louvre, Musée de l'Orangerie, Galerie National du Jue de Paume and the Musée d'Orsay.

After the death of Henry II in 1559 his widow, Catherine de Medicis (1519-1589), began construction of a new palace that was independent of the Louvre (the official royal residence), but still close by. She commissioned her architect, Philibert de l'Orme(1510-1570), to design the Palace of the Tuileries, which got its name from the fact that area it was built on a former clay quarry for tiles (tuillerie, in French). The Palace featured a large Italian style garden to remind her of her home in Tuscany.

Later, while Versailles was being built, King Louis XIV lived in the Palais de Tuileries. He had the gardens redesigned in the French formal style by landscape architect Andre Le Notre. Le Notre also constructed a terrace along the riverbank that opened up a central axis. The terrace was extended three years later when the Champs-Élysées was created.

The Tuileries Gardens was, and is, the most centrally located park in Paris and one of the first parks to be open to the public. It quickly became a fashionable resort of Parisians and was the place to see and be seen. As far back as the 1700s the park featured amenities such as cafes, kiosks, deck chairs, and public toilets. Today, you can still grab a chair, for free, and sit wherever you like.

The Garden is surrounded by the Louvre (to the east), the Seine (to the south), the Place de la Concorde (to the west) and rue de Rivoli (to the north). It covers about 63 acres and still closely follows the design laid out by Andre le Notre. During its most recent renovation, in 1990, many modern sculptures, several fountains, and two large basins were added; a footbridge across the Seine was also opened between the Tuileries and the

Musée d'Orsay. The Galerie National du Jeu de Paume and the Musée de l'Orangeris are the only two remaining buildings from the original Palais du Tuileries.

Porte St. Denis



Porte St. Denis



Porte St. Denis

St. Denis was an early Christian bishop sentenced to death by the Romans for spreading Christianity in Paris. He was beheaded by Roman soldiers but Denis got right up, picked up his head, washed off the blood at a fountain, and walked until he found the "right" place to meet his maker. Parisians believed in this miracle and Christianity gained ground. (Steves, 75)

Porte (door) Saint-Denis is a Parisian monument commissioned by Louis XIV to commemorate his military victories over the Rhine and into Frank-comté. It symbolically marked the entrances into 17th-century Paris at the sites of the old tollgates; the arch served only an ornamental function. Porte Saint-Denis was constructed in 1672, designed by the architect Nicolas François Blondel and the sculptor Michel Anguier. It is a triumphal arch (inspired by the Arc of Titus) which replaced a medieval door in the wall.

A bas-relief on the southern façade represents King Louis XIV's military victory of the Rhine with the symbolic figures of the vanquished regions of the Rhine and Holland beneath the features of a grieving woman. On the northern façade, the King is shown placing the town of Maastricht under his yoke.

It was through this gate, and along the rue St-Denis, that the kings of France would return to Paris from religious services at the Basilica of Saint-Denis. Napoléon's troops passed through the arch in 1816 after a victorious campaign and on the occasion of her visit to the Universal Exposition in 1855, Queen Victoria passed under the arch becoming the last sovereign to complete this ritual dating back nearly a thousand years.

The arch of the Porte Saint-Denis served as the inspiration for the more famous Arc de Triomphe (completed in 1836), as well as for the Manhattan Bridge Arch in New York (designed by Carrere and Hastings, completed in 1909).

Porte St. Martin



Porte St. Martin



Porte St. Martin

The son of pagans, St. Martin was born c.316 in Pannonia (now Hungary) and is said to have followed his father's profession as a soldier until he split his cloak to share it with a beggar and learned, in a dream, that he had given it to Christ. From then on, Martin saw himself as Christ's soldier and requested resignation. Charged with cowardice, Martin was imprisoned until 339. After his release, he traveled to Italy but was banished when he upset the local Arians, who had quite a bit of power. C. 360 he joined the exiled Hilary of Poitiers, who gave Martin the land on which he established the first monastery in France at Ligugé. About ten years later, Martin became a highly praised bishop of Tours and continued to live as a monk; establishing a monastery at Marmoutier as a retreat. He gained a reputation as a miracle-worker. After his death (c.396/397), he became one of the most beloved of saints. The story of the saint and the beggar is a popular subject in art. (Karen Rae Keck)

Like Porte Saint-Denis, Porte Saint Martin, symbolically marked the entrance into Paris during the 17th century, as well as commemorating King Louis XIV's many military victories.

Porte Saint Martin was constructed immediately following the completion of Porte Saint-Denis in 1674. It is a triple triumphal arch designed by Pierre Bullet. There is an inscription on the southern façade that proclaims in Latin, "To Louis the Great, for having vanquished the Germans, Spanish and Dutch armies: The Dean of the Guild and the Aldermen of Paris," as well as two bas-reliefs that symbolize the taking of Besançon and Louis XIV in the act of devastating the Triple Alliance. The northern façade represents the defeat of the Germans and the taking of Limbourg.

Rue de Lyon, Bastille



Rue de Lyon, Bastille



Rue de Lyon, Bastille

Part of Baron Haussmann's modernization of Paris included an attempt to connect major railway terminals with rail links. Unable to do this, he had to settle for the stations to be linked by major avenues. One such roadway was the Rue de Lyon, which provides access between the Gare de Lyon and Gare de l'Est.

The Gare de Lyon services many long distance trains from Paris to the south and east in France. The Gare de l'Est is one of six major stations of the SNCF (Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français -the French National Railway Company). The first departure of the Orient Express to Istanbul left from this station in 1883; which also provides service to Luxembourg, Germany, and Central Europe. Beginning in mid 2007 the station will provide service to Northeast France, Southern Germany, and Switzerland. The new trains are projected to run at the speed of up to 200-mph, cutting travel time by 2 hours to these destinations.

Place de la Bastille



Place de la Bastille



Place de la Bastille

Place de la Bastille, once the site of the Bastille (a royal fortress that was turned into a prison), is a square well known for its role in the French revolution of 1789. Originally, the Bastille was built under Kings Charles V and Charles VI, between the years 1370-1383, for the city's protection during the Hundred Years War with England.

For centuries, the Bastille was used to defend the city and in the first half of the 17th century was converted into a prison for people who committed crimes against the King or State (essentially the same thing). During the reign of Louis XV it was converted into a prison for more common criminals. On July 14, 1789 the people of Paris stormed the Bastille, released seven prisoners, and began to tear down the structure; marking the beginning of the French Revolution. The only thing left of the structure is an outline of the brick turrets under rue St. Antoine. On July 14th the French celebrate their independence, known as Bastille Day.

On the square is the Colonne de Juillet (the July Column) which commemorates the Revolution of 1830 and symbolizes France's long struggle for democracy. In 1814 King Louis XVIII ascended to the thrown after the abdication of Napoléon. Knowing that democracy and nationalism were important to the people, he left many reforms in place. After Louis XVIII died, in 1824, his brother King Charles X ascended to the throne. King Charles believed in an absolute monarchy and erased all traces of a democracy. As a result, the Revolution of 1830 ensued. The revolt created a constitutional monarchy and King Charles X chose to abdicate. Louis-Phillipe, from the house of Orléans, was placed on the throne and agreed to rule as a constitutional monarchy.

The column itself is engraved in gold with the names of Parisians who died during the revolution. The gold-covered statue at the top, called the Génie de la Liberté (the Spirit of Freedom), was sculpted by Augustin Dumont.

Place de la Republique



Place de la Republique



Place de la Republique

In 1878, the town council of Paris proposed the building of a monument in the center of the city to celebrate the power and glory of the French Republic. Haussmann designed a large square whose center would feature a monument with the statue of the Republic (1883), approximately 10 meters high. The statue, created by the French sculptor Jules Dalou (1839-1902), depicts the events from the history of the Republic; its right hand holds an olive branch, while its left holds the Tables of the Law. Around the center pillar are three stone pillars that symbolize Freedom, Equality, and Fraternity. The stone pedestal has twelve bronze low-reliefs, which are joined by rosettes. Each bronze represents a major event in the birth of the Republic between 1789 and 1880. At the foot of the monument lies a green bronze lion in front of a ballot box symbolizing the "vote for all."

Place Vendôme



Rue de la Paix, Place Vendôme



Rue de la Paix, Place Vendôme

Place Vendôme is a square located to the north of the Tuilleries Gardens and east of La Madeleine. It was originally created in the late 17th century by Jules Hardovin-Mansart at the request of King Louis XIV. King Louis bought the Hotel Vendôme, the residence of the Duke of Vendôme, and ordered its destruction in order to have a square, which would be called Place des Conquètes, built. On three sides of the square a façade was constructed. Initially, houses were to be built behind the façade for the royal academies (Louis XIV was very much interested in culture and set up academies for all the arts and sciences of the time): the Mint, a Royal Library and a hotel for foreign dignitaries. In 1699 a cast-bronze statue of King Louis XIV in Roman attire was erected in the center of the square. Money became an issue and King Louis XIV had to sell the square to the city of Paris, which in turn sold it to nobles and wealthy Parisians who constructed grand mansions.

In the 19th century, Napoléon tore down the statue of King Louis XIV and commissioned the Colonne de Vendôme, a monument to celebrate his victory at Austerlitz, to replace it. Construction began in 1806 and took four years to complete. The column has a stone core which is covered by the bronze of 1250 cannons captured by Napoléon during the battle. Denon, Gondouin, and Lepère designed Colonne de Vendôme, modeling it after the Trajan's Column (*a monument in Rome raised by Damascus, in 113 A.D., at the order of the Senate, to commemorate Trajan's victory in his military campaigns to conquer Dacia).* Atop the column was a statue of Napoléon dressed as Caesar.

After the Bourbon restoration (the period in France when Napoléon was forced to abdicate and the Bourbon Monarchy was restored to the throne), the statue of Napoléon was taken down from the top of the column and refinished as a statue of Henri IV (which can now be seen on the Pont Neuf.) Later, King Louis-Phillipe replaced the statue of Henri IV with a nobler statue of Napoléon dressed in his military uniform.

During the Paris Commune in 1871, a group of Communards led by the Realist artist Gustave Courbet tore down the column. Refusing to pay for its reconstruction, Courbet was self-exiled to Switzerland where he died in 1877. From 1873 - 1874, the column was rebuilt at the center of Place Vendôme with a copy of the original statue on top.

Today, Place Vendôme is home not only to the very elegant Ritz Hotel, but many exclusive jewelry stores such as Van Cleef & Arpels, and Cartier, as well as the most elite designers including Chanel and Dior. Sounds like the perfect place to spend your afternoon! ☺

Pigalle



Place Pigalle in Winter



Place Pigalle

Pigalle is an area in Paris stretching from Barbes-Rochechouart to the Place de Clichy, and bordering the south side of Butte-Montmartre. At the corner of Boulevard de Clichy and La Place Blanche is the world's most famous cabaret, Moulin Rouge.

Pigalle, named after the sculptor Jean-Baptiste Pigalle (1714-1785), is the old red light district in Paris and during World War II the GIs nick named it "Pig Alley."

To the south of Place Pigalle is an area devoted to retail trade, and not to the sex trade…. surprise, surprise☺!! This area, along a section of rue de Douai, features stores that are mainly devoted to selling musical instruments and equipment. The Grand Guignol Théâtre, considered the original House of Horrors, is located here as well. It is the smallest theater in Paris and only seats about 275. The shows produced here were constantly being censored and/or shut down. A show was not considered a success unless a number of theatergoers fainted or regurgitated; the director of the theater had to hire a house doctor to take care of the fainthearted. The theater closed in 1962, but the building still stands.

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