



EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS BEHIND THE SCENES

Welcome and thank you, on these 36th annual European Heritage Days, for being so many to come see and breathe life into these buildings and collections, our monuments and museums. **For your presence is proof of your interest in our Heritage, just as we who work here strive daily to protect it.**

Our Heritage is not only the buildings, the grounds or the collections, but also our crews' workmanship and knowhow, as we strive all year long as well as for this event to insure your visit.

This year's theme -Art and Entertainment - belies a much less pleasant and festive reality.

The governments withdrawal, with budget cuts and staff reductions, **has reached levels that have a direct impact on the quality of your visit.**

- **Ticket prices has expolded and hinders access for the less affluent** : 81% at the Louvre, 75% at the Musée d'Orsay, 55% at The Saint-Germain en Laye Chateau, 50% at Fontainebleau over the last ten years (the list goes on...)

- **Free access on the 1st Sunday of the month is seriously called into question** in many museums. Done away with at the Louvre, only five of the twelve Sundays stand at Versailles. Other museums (such as The Picasso Museum) have asked for its removal, as it is seen as a loss of earnings...

- **Rooms are increasingly being closed due to reductions in permanent staff.**

- **The continuous drawback of financial means and manpower as well as the general tendencies towards mass tourism have a deleterious effect on access to the collections** (lengthy waits and overcrowding, resulting in unpleasant visits).

- **Mandatory reservations** for the Louvre et now the Pompidou Center as well **underscores digital disparity and thus undermines cultural equality.**

- Works are rented out at a hefty price, rooms are closed for private corporate use (such as shoots for Dior commercial or even Carlos Ghosn's wedding at Versailles or the closing off of rooms for private use at Fontainebleau during the Night of Museums, and so on...).

STOP !

Now is the time to rebuild a cultural public service sector with the means to properly greet visitors, to protect the sites and the collections and preserve know-how.

Now is the time for a truly democratic cultural policy, insuring access for all to our culture and our heritage.

Now is the time for government to accept its responsibilities and adopt a truly progressive cultural policy.

Help insure our Culture, our Heritage and these days of Celebration !