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PRESS RELEASE

VINCI AND THE WORLD MONUMENTS FUND BECOME PARTNERS WITH THE CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES FOR THE RESTORATION OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE'S BELVEDERE.

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FOR THE FIRST TIME, TWO MAJOR SPONSORS OF THE CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES have come together for a shared project: the restoration of the Belvedere and its Grotto in Marie-Antoinette's estate.

LOCATED IN THE PETIT TRIANON ESTATE, the Belvedere is an octagonal shaped pavilion overlooking the lake of the English Garden. Built by Richard Mique in 1777, this building is a perfect illustration of the 18th century's taste for picturesque compositions combining decorative gardens and architecture. Used by the Queen as a music room, the Belvedere is built in the classical style matching that of the Temple of Love. The balance of its proportions, the refinement of its sculpture and the richness of its stucco decor on a white background highlighted by arabesque and floral patterns are rounded off by polychrome marble tiles. The Grotto, located downhill from it, is a totally artificial rock feature, designed and sketched by the painter Hubert Robert, in the form of a pendant in a contrasting aesthetic style.

THE RESTORATION WORK ON THE EXTERIORS OF THE BELVEDERE principally involve the façade stonework, the balustrade of the building, the figures of sphinxes framing each of the flights of steps and the lead covering of the dome. The restoration of the interiors of the Belvedere will concern, at first, all the interior decor including the painted decorations on stucco-marble, the painted decorative work on plaster and the wood panelling, as well as the woodwork, locks, bronze and marble features. Work to consolidate and restore the Grotto is also programmed.

THE COST OF THE WORK IS ESTIMATED AT 1 MILLION EUROS.

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VINCI CARRIED OUT THE FIRST COMPLETE RESTORATION OF THE HALL OF MIRRORS from 2004 to 2007 in the framework of a sponsorship providing skills amounting to 12 million euros, the largest cultural sponsorship investment ever made in this period. For this contribution, VINCI was given the title of Grand Sponsor (grand Mécène) by the Ministry of Culture and Communication. In 2008, VINCI renewed its commitment to the Château by building in a record time of three months the temporary reception pavilion in the Cour d'Honneur, likewise in the framework of a sponsorship providing skills.

THE WORLD'S LEADING GROUP IN CONCESSIONS AND CONSTRUCTION, VINCI employs a workforce of 162,000 in a hundred countries. Its business is to finance, design, construct and manage facilities that improve everyone's quality of life: transport infrastructures, public and private buildings, as well as urban amenities, water, energy and communication networks. VINCI brings its performance as a private group to the service of urban development and regional and local development.

THE WORLD MONUMENTS FUND, THE LEADING PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION working to save the world's architectural and cultural heritage, and already a sponsor of the restoration of the King's Vegetable Garden (Potager du Roi) and the Queen's Theatre in Versailles, took the initiative (in the framework of the "Robert W. Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage") for this new restoration in favour of the Château de Versailles and is pleased to be a partner alongside VINCI.
