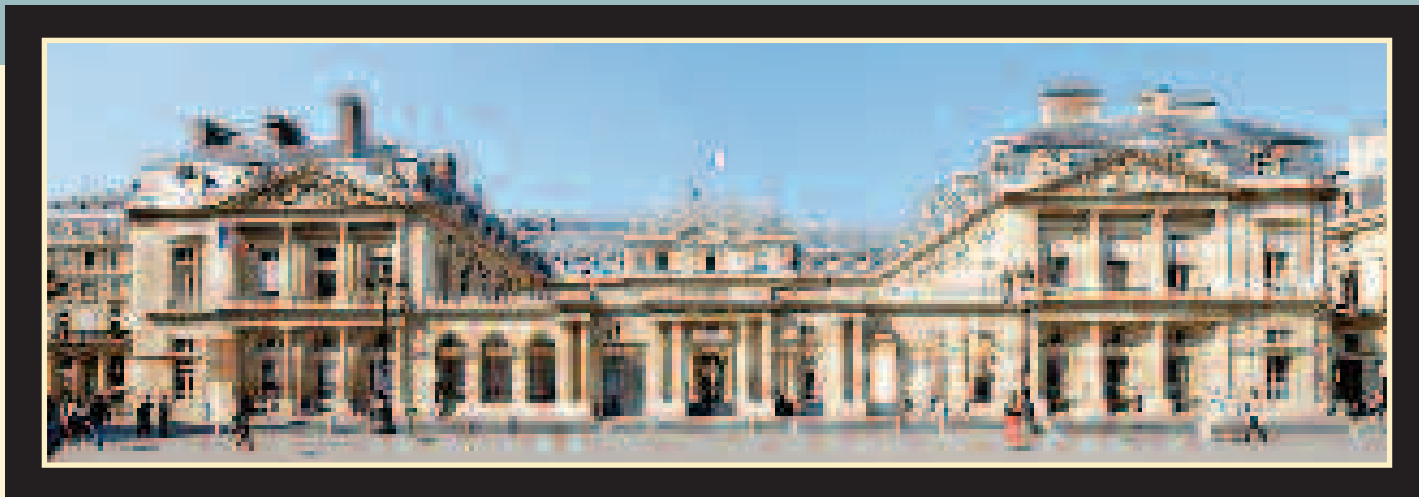


Tafelmusik Salutes: Domaine national du Palais-Royal



Tafelmusik is deeply honoured that *House of Dreams* is presented with the kind patronage of the Domaine national du Palais-Royal.

Standing opposite the north wing of the Louvre, the Palais-Royal is one of the most important buildings in Paris.

Originally the residence of the prelate and statesman Cardinal Richelieu, it was the childhood home of Louis XIV. In 1661 it became the property of the king's brother and nephew, the dukes of Orléans.

During the reign of Philippe II, who became duke in 1701, two features of the palace made it a vital cultural centre. The west wing housed the Orléans Collection, the most important private collection of paintings in Europe, and the east wing housed the Paris Opera. Both the galleries and the theatre were accessible to the public, as were the beautiful gardens, which still attract Parisians seeking a place of quiet beauty in the middle of the city.



Today only the gardens, shops and cafés at the Palais-Royal are open to the public. The palace itself is home to several august government institutions, including the Constitutional Council and the French Ministry of Culture.

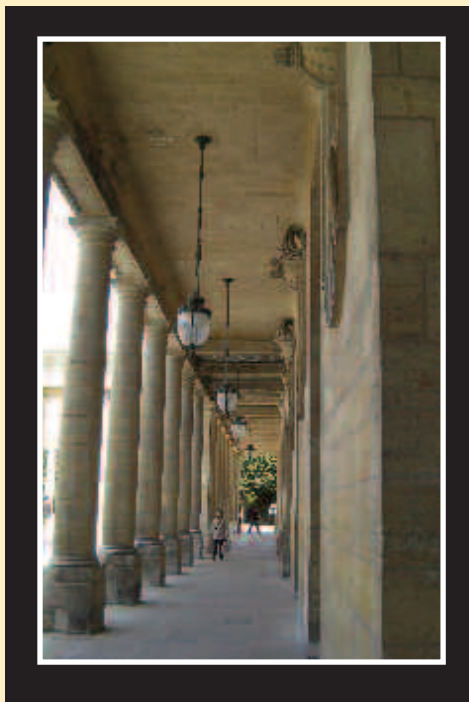
The Constitutional Council is the highest constitutional authority in France. Acting as a supreme court, it rules on legislation, safeguards citizen rights such as freedom of speech, and supervises elections.

The Ministry of Culture promotes and protects the arts of France within the nation and around the world. It administers national monuments and museums and works to preserve the French identity, particularly with regard to the protection of the French language.



Philippe II, Duke of Orléans

The duke, after whom the city of New Orleans is named, was a cultured intellectual and a gifted visual artist, actor and musician. He played the viola da gamba and wrote operas under the guidance of his composition teacher, Marc-Antoine Charpentier. As regent to the young Louis XV, he promoted public education, abolishing tuition fees at the Sorbonne. Philippe was a notorious womanizer who loved assignations in his private box at the Opéra.



The Opera

The private theatre in the east wing of the building became a public facility in 1661 when Molière took it over for his company of actors. Jean-Baptiste Lully remodeled the theatre for opera performances after Molière's death. Architectural drawings portray a long narrow room holding about 1200 spectators – 600 seated in boxes and on benches, and 600 standing. There was space for an orchestra of 48 musicians. A very deep stage allowed for ten sets of scenic flats, producing an illusion of dramatic perspective.

The great French painter Jean-Antoine Watteau is thought to have started his career as a set painter at the opera.



The Orléans Collection

The 500 paintings of the Orléans Collection, acquired between 1700 and 1723, were housed in galleries on the west side of the Palais-Royal. In 1727 a printed catalogue was published for art lovers and visitors to the galleries. The paintings were often displayed, not by genre or painter, but in whimsical combinations designed to create dramatic effects through juxtaposition. Some visitors to the collection were shocked by the mixing of religious and erotic subjects.

Sculpture at the Palais-Royal

Most of the present-day building at the Palais-Royal dates from the 19th century. One of the features left from the time of Cardinal Richelieu is the Galerie des Proues with its matched series of sculptures of ships' prows, in honour of Cardinal Richelieu's position as Minister of the Navy.



Today there are two famous installations of outdoor sculpture in the courtyards:

The *Colonnes de Buren*, a series of striped columns created by the French conceptual artist Daniel Buren.



The *mirror-ball fountain* by the Belgian artist Pol Bury.



(Left) Patrick Monod, (administrator of the Domaine du Palais-Royal) Alison Mackay, Martine Tridde-Mazloun and Jean-Jacques Goron (La Fondation BNP Paribas) on the roof of the Palais-Royal, Paris