

RICE UNIVERSITY

# Global Paris Center

The Hôtel de La Faye,  
5 rue Sainte-Croix de la Bretonnerie,

Opening  
Ceremony

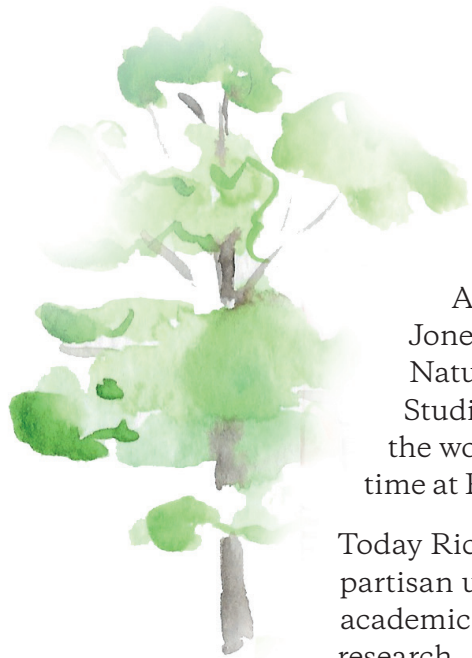
June 29<sup>th</sup>



## A WORLD-CLASS RESEARCH UNIVERSITY THAT ADVANCES GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE

**L**ocated in the heart of Houston, Texas, Rice University has a distinctive history. It was originally chartered in 1891 as the Rice Institute for the Advancement of Literature, Science, and Art with resources bequeathed by William Marsh Rice. An East Coast entrepreneur who made his fortune in Houston and intended for an educational institute to be built after his death, the Rice Institute would formally open its doors in 1912 and has consistently deepened and broadened its research, education, and service missions ever since. Though built in Houston with a Houston fortune, Rice Institute's inaugural President, Edgar Odell Lovett, established a vision for international excellence as a guiding principle for the new institution.

Nominated by Woodrow Wilson for the presidency at Rice, the young mathematician from Princeton University began his presidency by spending a year (1908) touring the world's finest colleges and universities, examining best practices at leading institutions around the world, and developing a bold and innovative vision for the Institute. In the Houston community at the turn of the 20th century there was nothing like Lovett's vision. Lovett planned an institute which would provide research, scholarship, and teaching of international quality. To accomplish this he attracted faculty from the best universities, gifted students, and supervised the building of a campus notable for its beauty.



Lovett's vision for research, scholarship, and teaching is embodied today in Rice University's mission of path-breaking research, innovative pedagogy, and contributions to the betterment of the world. It seeks to fulfill this mission by cultivating a diverse community of learning and discovery that produces leaders across the spectrum of human endeavor. The University's eight schools—Architecture, the George R. Brown School of Engineering, Humanities, the Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Business, the Shepherd School of Music, the Wiess School of Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and the Susanne M. Glasscock School of Continuing Studies—attract a diverse group of highly talented students from around the country and the world. More than half of all undergraduate students participate in research during their time at Rice, concomitant with Rice's dedication both to research and pedagogical excellence.

Today Rice is home to the illustrious Baker Institute for Public Policy, the world's leading non-partisan university think tank, as well as a host of world-class research centers, institutes, and academic departments. From the Welch Institute, which is focused on advanced materials research, to the Rice360 Institute for Global Health Technologies, which implements new technologies to solve real global health challenges, to Openstax, which improves learning by publishing openly licensed books and improving research-based courseware, the University drives research and education innovation across a broad array of disciplines. As a result, Rice ranks within the very top tier of research universities in the U.S. and is one of the 50 most competitive schools for undergraduate admissions globally.

# BUILDING A BREATHTAKING CAMPUS IN THE HEART OF THE MOST DIVERSE CITY IN AMERICA

**E**dgar Odell Lovett returned to Houston with more than the makings of an international curriculum and research program—he also had the beginning of a blue-print for a campus plan that benefited from the architectural traditions he encountered in the halls of learning abroad. Influenced by the campuses of southern Europe, many of Rice’s buildings are Mediterranean Revival in style, making Rice’s campus uniquely cohesive. The first building to be erected (which is pictured above) was named after Lovett, and was designed by the world-renowned architect Ralph Adams Cram. Lovett Hall stands as the cornerstone in a residential campus that boasts some of the most beautiful and innovative buildings to ever be co-located in the country. World-renowned architects from Michael Graves to Sir David Adjaye to Sir Michael Hopkins and Robert Stern to name a few have designed the university’s residential colleges, academic buildings, and centers for arts, athletics, and student life. The result is a campus both distinctive and

cohesive, with buildings positioned carefully within green spaces of live oak trees and native Texan prairie, with a strict attention paid to scale, rhythm and the relationship between buildings.

Rice’s tree-shaded campus, which occupies nearly 300 hundred acres, is only a few miles from the heart of the nation’s most diverse city and adjacent to the most culturally rich section of Houston. The thriving international community of Houston, the fourth largest city in the United States, is supported by the third largest concentration of consular offices in the United States, representing 94 nations. More than 190 languages are regularly spoken in the Houston area, and the University is located adjacent to the city’s world-class museum district and the largest medical city in the world. At the forefront of advancing life sciences and home to the brightest minds in medicine, the Texas Medical Center is a powerful partner for the University, nurturing cross-institutional collaboration, innovation, and research creativity.

Rice’s commitment to engaging with this diverse and international city has generated a wealth of teaching and research opportunities.

The University adds to this rich and dynamic urban community by attracting top talent from around the world. Of the 8,200 undergraduate and graduate students, over 2,077 come from outside the United States, an international student population that is growing each year, and almost 40% of the university’s 930 faculty are non U.S. natives. In addition to these permanent members of our community, Rice University hosts around 600 visiting international scholars a year, and has student exchange agreements with over 35 international institutions, welcoming hundreds of visiting international students and scholars annually.





# RICE GLOBAL PARIS: THE UNIVERSITY'S FIRST CAMPUS IN EUROPE



**I**t is especially fitting that Rice University's first international campus be located in the center of Paris, one of the cities visited on Edgar Lovett's international tour. Just as Hotel de la Faye is a storied property located in the heart of a most illustrious part of a most illustrious city, so too is Rice a jewel in the crown of a bustling international urban center. And engaging meaningfully with the cultures and communities in both cities is an integral part of our mission.

The Rice Global Paris Center serves as Rice University's hub in Europe, expanding the University mission on an international scale. The Center facilitates exchange and collaboration with international partners, furthers high priority research, and provides a unique and inspiring space for undergraduate and graduate immersions in France and beyond. It will be home to short and long-term student programs, independent researchers, international conferences, and strategic partnerships.

**Thank you for joining us in celebrating  
the occasion of the Center's launch!**



## A BUILDING THAT BEARS WITNESS TO AN ERA

**S**ince 1541, the *hôtel particulier* (grand townhouse) known as the Hôtel de La Faye has borne the name of its first owner, who was probably also the person who had it built: Sieur Raoul de La Faye, notary to the king, treasurer-payer of the guard and Lord of Mandegrès-en-Brie (an estate located some 25 miles from Paris). All the available evidence suggests that the building was constructed in the early sixteenth century, under the reign of Louis XII, at the same time as the neighboring Hôtel de Sens, for the two noble residences share many architectural and decorative features. However, while the Hôtel de Sens was an ecclesiastic residence, the Hôtel de La Faye had a private owner, a major figure of civil society as it happened, and as such is an important example of civil architecture in Paris in this period. This specific character is evident in particular by the organization of the spaces and the relative sizes of the interior volumes as they related to professional, family and reception activities.



The inventory established after the death of the Sieur de La Faye in 1544 - found in the National Archives - contains valuable information about the layout of the rooms, the furniture, the decoration and the objects of everyday life within the residence. According to this document, the Hôtel de La Faye was the embodiment of a new art of living simultaneously expressing a range of social, private, professional and domestic functions. The cultivation of pomp and circumstance and a keen sense of propriety seem to have resulted in a hierarchical conception of the spaces: large and small rooms on the ground floor placed between the courtyard and the garden, reception rooms or sleeping quarters surrounded by annexes, large fireplaces, and a gallery overlooking the garden.

In the mid-sixteenth century, a garden of this kind became the prerogative of an elite, as well as the expression of an increasingly refined culture. Both a decorative and utilitarian extension of the domestic space, the garden of the Hôtel de La Faye originally stretched as far as the adjacent street of the Rue du Bourg-Tibourg. The orchard has long since disappeared, while the remaining garden corresponds to the “secret” medieval garden, enclosed by walls.

In the densely packed heart of a city that was passing from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, the Hôtel de La Faye presents an ingenious organization of space that responds to a great practical sense, as well as to an undeniable concern for aristocratic ostentation.

A certain number of the immutable principles that would characterize the world of *hôtels particuliers* built in Paris were beginning to emerge: the succession of courtyard-building-garden along the main axis of the plot, orthogonal constructions, a front courtyard flanked by low wings often of a simple, even rural design, and dominated by an elevated, more aristocratic-looking main building.



The successive owners of the Hôtel de La Faye modified its architectural appearance over time. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, a pavilion housing a study on the upper floor and a second gallery was built in the garden, in symmetry with the sixteenth-century gallery. Then, towards the end of the seventeenth century, the freestanding tower that contained a spiral staircase was destroyed in favor of a large staircase built into the wing and redesigned in keeping with contemporary tastes (similarly, the façades of the main building were also modified). Throughout this period, the occupants were primarily nobles holding financial and stewardship positions at the court. In 1730, the hôtel passed into the hands of the prosperous Monsieur Geoffrin, director of the Manufacture des Glaces, the royal mirror manufactory, and his wife, Madame Geoffrin, a woman of letters of European reputation, who held a salon that was very popular with the philosophers of the Enlightenment and the Encyclopedists, notably Helvétius and d'Alembert.

In 1792, the hôtel, considered the property of an emigrant, was seized by the Revolution and rented out. Three years later, it was sold, by auction, to the citizen Jean Moneret. However, the most significant alterations did not take place until later. In 1852, Jean Eberhardt Riecke had the wing fronting the street demolished and in its place a six-story building constructed, partially cutting off the main body of the hôtel. At the end of the nineteenth century, the garden was entirely covered by a glass roof. And even more recently, the grocery company Dagommer et Baroche installed its offices there in 1927, undertaking work that completely distorted the original spaces.

**The Hôtel Raoul de La Faye was listed as a Historic Monument in 1966, marking the beginning of a long and complex process of rescue, rediscovery and restoration of the property that continued up to the 1990s. By restoring the original appearance of these walls, which are so full of history, and by allowing the decorative treasures to be exposed to the light of day again, a new life was given to this unique piece of Parisian architectural heritage.**



## IN THE HEART OF THE PROTECTED SECTOR OF THE MARAIS

**T**he Marais takes its name from the vast swamp that once stretched across the former bed of a northern branch of the Seine, resting at the foot of the hills formed by the modern-day Parisian neighborhoods of Charonne, Belleville, Montmartre and Chaillot. Mounds of solid ground emerged from this marsh in various locations and for a long time, these were the only inhabited places on the right bank: crossing points of the Roman roads, or the sites of the first convents and monasteries.

At the time of Philippe II (late twelfth to early thirteenth century), large monastic settlements occupied these fractions of land, which they began to cultivate, attracting a large population of craftsmen and farmers. This northern part of the Marais was still only a suburb of the city when, under the impetus of the Knights Templar, it began to urbanize, favoring the emergence of craftsmanship and commercial activity, which became so deeply rooted in the district that, seven centuries later, it remains real and alive.



## 16<sup>th</sup> century

It was in the sixteenth century, during the reign of Henri II (the last French king to live in the Marais), that the district began to flourish architecturally. Great personalities acquired old houses, embellishing them and enlarging them, giving rise to a dominant aristocratic style. The urbanization of the Marais was completed after the Wars of Religion, under the reign of Henri IV (early sixteenth century).

The age of classicism marked the moment of maturity for the Marais. The beautiful residences of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were transformed and new aristocratic mansions were built, thanks to talented architects such as François Mansart and Le Vau (of Versailles fame) as well as Bullet, Le Pautre and Le Muet.

## 17<sup>th</sup> century

In the seventeenth century, the suburbs of Saint Germain and Saint Honoré gradually supplanted the Marais as the place to be. The vogue for comfortable homes and large English-style gardens saw the wealthy move to the west of Paris, mainly to the left bank. The decline of the Marais began; a perfect image of seventeenth-century French society, a harmonious blend of “aristocratic grandeur and working class virtues”, the Marais became the district of the petty nobility, the bourgeoisie, or the great families whose fall from grace prevented them from making the exodus to the west of Paris.

## 18<sup>th</sup> century

The French Revolution of 1789 had considerable effects on both the social composition of the district and the organization of its land and buildings: convents, large mansions and private residences became national property, with potential buyers immediately seeking to take advantage.

The Restoration, then the regimes that succeeded it during the nineteenth century, did not bring back the social classes that had emigrated from the Marais; the rue Saint Antoine, running through the heart of the district, kept its revolutionary reputation for a long time. A relative emptiness developed around the Marais during this time, as the effects of the industrial revolution began to be felt. Many provincials were attracted to the area, setting up makeshift housing in poorly adapted buildings and installing numerous workshops in the place of the gardens of yesteryear.

As the population increased, building alignment decrees were applied, but taking no account of the historical value of the buildings in question. The elites indeed cared very little about the fate of the old towns and cities and their artistic heritage. Medievalist theories, which were very fashionable at that time, also led specialists to neglect the architecture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Legislation for the protection of ancient monuments was in an embryonic stage, since it would not really take effect until after World War Two.



19<sup>th</sup>  
century

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Marais was truly in danger, however a few far-sighted people began to take an interest in it. Practically without any legal basis, in 1898 the Commission du Vieux Paris demanded that the vestiges of the Minimes convent be listed as a protected building, but there was no legislation in place to allow for the automatic protection of other historical monuments. In addition, the practice of building alignment continued, continuing their degradation. The deterioration of the built heritage of the Marais peaked during World War One, in particular with the bombing of Saint Gervais in 1918.

20<sup>th</sup>  
century

In the post-war period, efforts to restore the Marais gathered momentum and multiple studies were conducted. The restoration of the Hôtel de Sully ushered in a new era of operations to save the architectural heritage of the Marais. The French Ministry of Culture undertook an exhaustive inventory of the monuments and buildings in the district and, finally, the city initiated a campaign to buy old *hôtels particuliers*.

From its long history, the Marais has inherited an incomparable architectural heritage but also an identifiable set of characteristics (high population density, social diversity, mix of activities, a scarcity of open spaces, frequent deterioration...) which greatly explain the changes that have occurred over the last thirty years.

On August 4, 1962 the French parliament voted in favor of legislation “for the protection of the historical and aesthetic heritage of France” that gave the Marais that status of a protected sector. This law, championed by the Minister of Culture André Malraux, created a legal arsenal allowing to safeguard and develop sites “presenting a historical or aesthetic character or being of a nature that justifies conservation”.

With the protection of the law, the Marais can now, once again, become a witness to the rich history and the artistic and social qualities that once made its reputation, notably through its architecture. The Hôtel de La Faye remains a major proponent and a unique example of this great heritage.





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future home of the



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