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# Making Furniture That's Fit for a (KING)



## Where to Look

Start on the Plaza Level of the South Pavilion.

## Things to Explore

In the 1600s and 1700s, France was the richest country in Europe, and people who lived in Paris, the capital of France, liked to show off their great wealth. The king and his family surrounded themselves with an assortment of expensive furnishings, which they frequently exchanged for new ones. To meet the demand, furniture makers constantly created new designs made with a wide range of increasingly fancy and unusual materials.

## Things to Look for and Questions to Answer

1. André-Charles Boulle was the head of a famous workshop or group of highly skilled craftsmen who made furniture for the grandest of all the French kings, Louis XIV. Look for pieces by Boulle. They are mostly made of oak, but the surface is covered with a thin layer (called a *veneer*) of decoration. Can you guess what the materials are? (Read the labels on the wall to check your answer.)
2. Veneers made of different materials and put together like a puzzle, or mosaic, are called *marquetry*. The design may be of flowers or other curving shapes. If the pattern is geometrical, it is called *parquetry*. Find the gallery that has one patterned floor surrounded by another. Which one is marquetry, and which is parquetry?
3. Throughout the 1700s, some of the most inventive (and costly!) methods of decorating furniture involved adding colored stones or pieces of painted china. Try to find at least one example of each.
4. Many of the works you see in the South Pavilion use gold. How many different uses of gold can you find in the furnishings here in the Museum?



### Things to Draw and Write

1. Draw a small detail of an object in these galleries that catches your eye.

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Artist's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Medium and Year \_\_\_\_\_



2. Pretend you are a French merchant living in the 1700s and selling fancy furnishings like those you see in these galleries. Write a paragraph advertising the unique qualities of your merchandise. Remember, this is a time and place where the opinion of others meant everything —so be sure to say what a great impression your furnishings will make.