MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE
Liberté Égalité Fraternité

BICENTENAIRE de la PHOTOGRAPHIE 2026.2027 1826.1827

CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES

"IN PRAISE OF SHADOWS - CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES - YASUMICHI MORITA"

Exhibition from 8 December 2026 to 11 April 2027
Madame de Maintenon's Apartment

Versailles, 18 November 2026
Press release

On the occasion of the Bicentenary of Photography, the Palace of Versailles presents the exhibition *In Praise of Shadows - Château de Versailles - Yasumichi Morita*. A series of photographs by Japanese artist Yasumichi Morita, who explored the Palace and its estate throughout the four seasons between 2022 and 2023. Through a meditative black-and-white perspective, he reveals a Versailles shaped by silence and textures, where the interplay of light and shadow becomes a subtle witness to the centuries gone by.



Hall of Mirrors ©Yasumichi Morita

In 2022, photographer Yasumichi Morita expressed his wish to visit the Palace of Versailles to create a series of images focusing on the chandeliers in its salons. As he wandered through the Palace, however, the artist decided to broaden the scope of his project.

Over the course of some twenty photographic sessions, spread across all four seasons and conducted both by day and by night, without the use of artificial lighting, Morita photographed primarily the Palace's interiors. Certain spaces had a profound aesthetic impact on him and inspired more extensive photographic series, notably the Royal Chapel, the Hall of Mirrors and the Royal Opera House.

Despite its characteristic abundance of ornamentation, textures and shimmering colours, the Palace of Versailles is revealed here in an entirely different light. Morita captures what he describes as "the narrow space between light and darkness", where the palace's emotional memory comes to the surface. His photographs draw inspiration from the human history of Versailles: from the gestures, traces and presences that have shaped the place and that the photographer senses as he works.

Since the invention of photography, the Palace of Versailles has inspired artists and been the subject of countless documentary, artistic and journalistic images, as well as souvenir photographs. Every professional and amateur photographer presents "their own Versailles". Through his sensitive approach, Yasumichi Morita reveals his personal vision of Versailles, stripped of its colours to uncover its full depth.



Petit Trianon ©Yasumichi Morita

"Just as the fountains, sparkling in the sunlight, rely on complex mechanisms hidden beneath the ground, I felt that the splendour of Versailles was likewise sustained by everything that remains unseen, in the darkness. It was precisely this dialogue between light and shadow that drew me to the Palace." **Yasumichi Morita**

EXHIBITION HELD UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE EMBASSY OF JAPAN IN FRANCE

Ambassade du Japon en France
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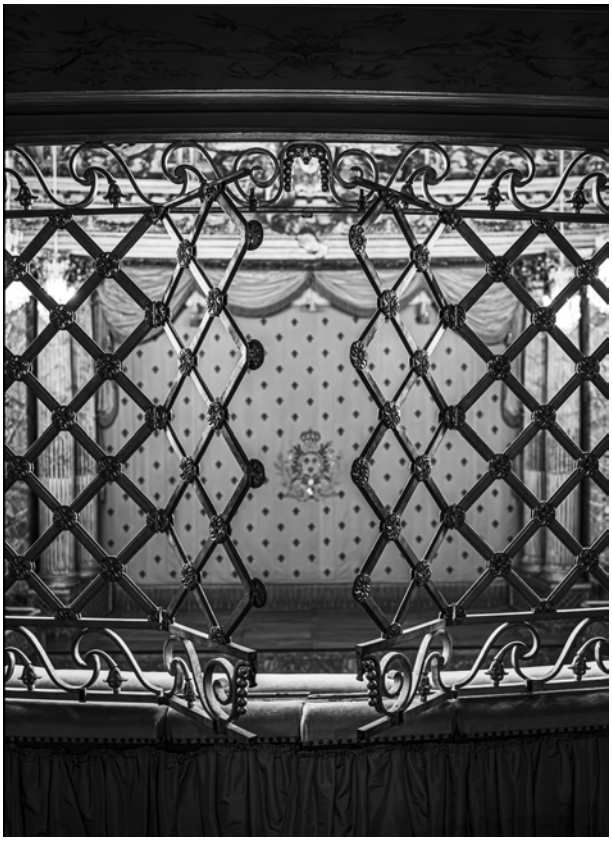


© Emma Amber

THE ARTIST

Yasumichi Morita was born in Osaka, Japan, in 1967. An interior architect, he has also explored the fields of graphic design and product design through his own company, GLAMOROUS co.,ltd. Since 2015, he has developed a photographic artistic practice and has presented a solo exhibition in Paris every year. He is one of the official photographers accredited by Ise Jingu Shrine, which was named one of TIME magazine's World's Greatest Places of 2026.

A first selection of his photographs of the Palace of Versailles was exhibited in 2023 at Chanel Nexus Hall in Tokyo, under the title *In Praise of Shadows*.
This title is an explicit tribute to the celebrated essay by Jun'ichirō Tanizaki, published in 1933, a poetic and philosophical meditation on traditional Japanese aesthetics. In this essay, the author develops his vision of beauty against the backdrop of Japan's modernisation and Westernisation. In particular, he champions an aesthetic of half-light and shadow, in contrast to the brightly illuminated aesthetic of the Western world.



Royal Opera House ©Yasumichi Morita



Royal Chapel ©Yasumichi Morita

EXHIBITION CURATOR
Laurent Salomé, Director of the National Museum of the Palaces of Versailles and Trianon.

EXHIBITION DESIGN: Torahiko Suga

The exhibition is organised in collaboration with Yasumichi Morita and GLAMOROUS co.,ltd.

PRINCIPAL PATRON: GMO INTERNET GROUP

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