



Gardens

of the

Enlightenment

1750-1800

CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES

Exhibition at the Grand Trianon 5 May – 27 September 2026



PRESS CONTACTS PALACE OF VERSAILLES

Violaine Solari, Barnabé Chalmin Doré de Nion, Rosalie Mouzard
+33 (0)1 30 83 75 21 / presse@chateauversailles.fr

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GARDENS OF ENLIGHTENMENT, 1750-1800

Exhibition from 5 May to 27 September 2026

Grand Trianon, Estate of Trianon

Versailles, 4 May 2026
Press release

In the spring of 2026, the Grand Trianon will be playing host to the exhibition *Gardens of Enlightenment, 1750-1800*, offering a unique insight into the 18th-century landscape garden. Bringing together almost 160 works, paintings, drawings, items of furniture, architectural plans and costumes, the tour showcases the birth of an art of landscape freed from the rules of the French formal garden and celebrating irregularity, fantasy and a philosophical vision of nature. With its close reference to the English garden commissioned by Marie-Antoinette at the Petit Trianon, the exhibition presents a thoughtful rereading of iconic sites that visitors will then be able to discover as they stroll there, such as the Belvedere, the Temple of Love and the Queen's Hamlet.

GARDENS OF ILLUSION

The landscape garden, or English garden, which first appeared in Britain in about 1730, introduced a new conception of nature. Moving away from the classical symmetry of the French formal garden, it favoured sinuous and picturesque compositions featuring rivers, paths, grottoes and follies.

These gardens were conceived as journeys in their own right, conjuring up faraway places and presenting a series of tableaux designed to surprise and move. In this exhibition, the works of Hubert Robert, as well as Chinese-inspired models and objects, illustrate this aesthetic of escapism.

These landscapes, which reflected Enlightenment ideas, also embodied a relationship with nature informed by the ideas of Rousseau. Gardens became a space for contemplation and reflection.

LIFE IN THE GARDEN

The second part of the exhibition explores the impact of these gardens on aristocratic lifestyles at the twilight of the Ancien Régime. Gardens as a place of refined sensibility encouraged an idealised outdoor life.

Lightweight costumes, specially designed furniture and elegant accessories reflect this development, which is particularly apparent in the portraits painted by Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun and George Romney. Follies and their decor also inspired the production of innovative objects and furniture which blurred the boundaries between nature and the decorative arts.

As a space for pleasure and entertainments, the landscape garden also transformed itself into a venue for festivities. Illuminations, nocturnal entertainments and spectacular displays created a fairytale atmosphere. Works by Claude-Louis Châtelet and Jean-Honoré Fragonard, and notably the group of three outstanding paintings by Fragonard on loan to the exhibition, bear witness to this hedonistic lifestyle.

With many prestigious loans from both French and international public and private collections, the Palace of Versailles presents an extremely rich and varied exhibition which mirrors the eclecticism of Anglo-Chinese gardens.

With its close reference to the gardens at the Petit Trianon created for Marie-Antoinette, the tour extends into the Estate of Trianon and offers visitors an immersive experience in the heart of an exceptional heritage landscape.

CURATOR

Élisabeth Maisonnier, Chief heritage curator,
National Museum of the Palaces of Versailles and
Trianon

THIS EXHIBITION HAS BEEN
MADE POSSIBLE WITH
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DIOR



“As we are well aware at Versailles, something as simple as a chair can embody the entire dream of an era”

The walker wandering along the paths, whether solitary or otherwise, is freedom personified. They can choose their destination based on a distinctive feature in the landscape that pleases the eye or an appealingly meandering path; they can be drawn to a valley cooled by cascading waterfalls, then feel the urge to climb a rock, or be emboldened to explore a more distant hidden area by crossing the ancient bridge before it collapses.

In the Age of Enlightenment, for several decades, the art of gardens and philosophy came together in a spectacular union. But the protagonists in this story told by Élisabeth Maisonnier are not all philosophers, far from it in fact. Court life, opulence and caprice also play a significant role. Anglo-Chinese gardens were proliferating at speed across Europe like an exquisite pandemic. The owners of gardens both large and small ranged from wealthy members of the bourgeoisie to the Tsarina of Russia, and included Marie-Antoinette, whose garden at the Trianon is the focal point of the exhibition and its natural extension for visitors. However, this English garden and its hamlet were neither precursors nor outstanding in terms of invention and refinement. Their great merit is that they have stood the test of time and survived virtually intact. The Queen's garden was less well known than others in her day as it was virtually inaccessible, whereas visitors could enjoy the extravagant landscapes of the Folie de Chartres, Bagatelle and many other gardens which have not survived. But now it offers an unexpected insight into this social phenomenon.

The sums spent by sovereigns and aristocrats in the pursuit of this fashion were astounding. Groundworks, digging lakes, pumping water, planting precious specimens all proceeded unchecked and the term “folly” reflects not only the unbridled imagination involved, but also this financial aspect. On his return from Naples, the Prince of Anhalt-Dessau, had his heart set on volcano at Wörlitz. And it is still operational to this day! Gustav III of Sweden helped to design his own gardens, notably those at Drottningholm Palace. In Russia, the scale of parks and entertainment facilities was staggering; in smaller gardens, the sophistication of the mechanisms compensated for the shortage of space and lent them that all-important air of unrestrained excess.

All of these aspects inevitably conjured up the theatre. Theatre means costumes, and the gardens of this period created their own distinctive fashion which was simple, comfortable and elegant. The “chemise” dress was of course paired with an assortment of elegant bucolic accessories so that there was no risk of the wearer being mistaken for a genuine peasant girl encountered on a path. Spending time in the garden entailed designing purpose-made furniture either for actual outdoor use, for small rustic buildings or for more luxurious spaces such as the Petit Trianon, where the famous “wheat ear” furniture brought the natural world into the queen's bedchamber. Anglo-Chinese gardens attempt to condense the entire world into a single landscape. As we are well aware at Versailles, something as simple as a chair can embody the entire dream of an era.

Laurent Salomé
Director of the National Museum of the Palaces of Versailles
and Trianon











PART I | THE EXHIBITION TOUR

INTRODUCTION

During the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century, philosophical ideas advocating a return to nature and the use of reason inspired the birth of a new style of garden. Moving away from the regular layout of the traditional French formal garden, these gardens with their sinuous lines sought to imitate nature and took a variety of forms, either opening out onto landscapes or creating private retreats.

They featured elegant or exotic follies and became areas for entertainment and places for reflection. They mirrored a refined and frivolous way of living, but also played a role in inventing a new decorative language. This fashion for so-called Anglo-Chinese gardens spread throughout Europe and captivated royalty and the aristocracy.

In France, the English garden created for Marie-Antoinette at the Petit Trianon is an iconic example of the genre. It has been carefully preserved and still sparks enthusiasm among visitors today. The exhibition therefore offers an immersive experience of the gardens, ideas and lifestyle of an era that was inventive and varied in equal measure.

“A garden one vast picture should
appear.

See with a painter’s eye [...]

The rocks, the streams, each various
shrub and tree,

These should your colours, canvas,
pencils be;

Nature is yours and your prolific
hand

Must, to create, her elements
command.”

Abbé Delille, *The Art of Laying Out
Grounds*: poem, 1782



THE ANGLO-CHINESE GARDEN

"The terrain, perspectives, orientation, trees, water, space, grassy lawns, flowers, vistas; to these can be added rocks, grottoes, and natural irregularities in the land." This is what Nature offers us."

Watelet, Essay on Gardens, 1774

COMPOSING LANDSCAPES

Conversation in a Park, Thomas Gainsborough, 1746/1748, oil on canvas
© Musée du Louvre



The exhibition opens with the birth of the *landscape garden*, *pleasure garden* or *picturesque garden*, a fashion which emerged in Britain, at Stowe, Stourhead and then at Kew in the 1730s, and reflected a new way of thinking about gardens.

Turning their backs on the geometric outlines of formal French gardens, gardeners and architects imagined sinuous arrangements which, while appearing natural were actually skilfully orchestrated. Their undulating terrains, watercourses, grottoes and follies created a world in miniature.

The gardens were integrated into a wider landscape. Their irregular layout provided unexpected surprises and vistas. Water, in the form of lakes, rivers, streams and waterfalls was omnipresent. Irregularities in the terrain and relief, mountains, rocks and grottoes shaped the space and aroused admiration or fear at the power of nature.

William Chambers, a major 18th-century architect and theorist, played a key role in the spread of the English garden or Anglo-Chinese garden in Europe. Informed by his travels to China, he introduced a vision of

landscape based on variety, contrasts and emotion. Through his writings, and principally his *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening* (1772), he played a role in formalising a picturesque aesthetic in which the garden became a series of scenic compositions, blending architecture, nature and the imaginary.

From 1760, this template for gardens spread to the palaces of Europe: at Schwetzingen and Wörlitz in Germany, at Laeken in the Low Countries, at Haga and Drottningholm in Sweden, and in Russia at the palaces of Tsarskoye Selo and Pavlovsk. In France, the estate of Méréville is perhaps the most accomplished example of this fashion.



Stourhead: View over the Lake, Joseph Mallord William Turner, circa 1798, watercolour and pencil
© Tate Britain - London

In 1762, the scenic garden at Stourhead, which was the monumental achievement of the banker Henry Hoare II, was considered to be among the finest in the world. Designed as a living painting on an estate in a rolling landscape, this "paradise" combined nature with monuments inspired by Antiquity or the Gothic style.

In around 1798, the painter William Turner captured this place and highlighted the principle of the English garden: a seamless fusion of the property and its natural surroundings. In this scheme, boundaries blur to create an infinite landscape in which classical serenity meets the first pangs of Romanticism.

TRAVELLING AROUND A WORLD IN MINIATURE

"To bring together in a single garden all times and all places"

Carmentelle, Jardin de Monceau, 1779

A taste for Antiquity

English gardens were designed to take the walker on a journey from ancient Rome or Greece to China, from the mountains to a farm, and to trace the history of nations or conjure up illustrious men from every era.

Many different influences were interwoven. Small buildings in different styles, known as follies, brought an air of fantasy to these landscapes and reinforced the idea of being "elsewhere". These architectural features played a part in staging the landscape, which was viewed like a painting, as is demonstrated in the works of artists such as Hubert Robert at Méréville and Ermenonville. Drawings, engravings, descriptions and models of monuments were the main sources of inspiration for architects and clients.



Roman Ruins, Louis Carrogis de Carmontelle, circa 1778, oil on canvas © Musée Carnavalet

British aristocrats discovered Antiquity on the Grand Tour, a journey which they would undertake through Europe, and notably in Italy, to round off their cultural education. This tour then influenced the follies created in Britain and in the rest of Europe. We find, therefore, a rostral column at Stowe (England), and temple ruins at Kew and Stourhead (England) and at Sanssouci (Potsdam, Germany).

This fashion also spread in France. In 1771, for example, the duc de Chartres created a unique garden at Monceau in an "irregular style", designed by Carmentelle, who was the duke's events organiser. The park was a true theatre of curiosities, with a blend of spectacular decorative features: a windmill, fake ruins, a naumachia (in Antiquity, a flooded arena for staging mock naval battles), and secret pathways conjuring up Masonic rituals. Although it was remodelled in 1781 by the landscaper Thomas Blaikie to create greater clarity, the estate remains one of the boldest examples of a picturesque garden, in which entertainment meets self-expression.



Roman Ruins, Hubert Robert, 1776, oil on canvas © Petit Palais, musée des Beaux-arts de la Ville de Paris

The Chinese influence

Follies were also influenced by styles from distant lands. The taste for Chinese elements, which had existed in the decorative arts since the 17th century, appeared in the art of garden design. Europeans discovered Chinese gardens through the dissemination of anthologies of engravings by Jan Nieuhof (1665) and Athanasius Kircher (1667), notably depicting the famous Nankin pagoda. But inspiration was also sought in the works of William Chambers. During his trips to Canton, he discovered small private gardens which contained elements of surprise, but also embraced the existing landscape. When he returned to Europe, he implemented these principles in the gardens at Kew, where he created buildings inspired by Chinese architecture, such as the famous pagoda.

These examples reveal how direct experience of travel to China informed a new conception of gardens in Europe. These true worlds in miniature now incorporated watercourses, rock features, small pavilions for resting, and decorative elements such as pagodas. This fashion was reflected in objets d'art; clocks, miniature pagodas and even instruments with dual decorative and scientific functions showcased this enthusiasm for Chinoiserie.

This taste for all things Chinese and references to Antiquity were combined in the same garden to add an element of surprise for walkers as they rounded a bend in the path. They created caprices, a term usually employed in painting to describe an imaginary composition featuring elements which are real but belong to different times or places.

The term Anglo-Chinese

The word was coined in the 18th century, mainly in France, to describe a style of garden which combined the inspiration of picturesque English landscapes and Chinese gardens characterised by irregularity, variety and the imitation of nature. The adjective Chinese does not, therefore, refer to a geographical location but to this process of imitation which, rather than copy slavishly, recreated an idealised vision of nature based on universal principles which could be applied to any place.

At the core of this aesthetic was the idea of variety, which took the form of a multitude of scenes, vistas and emotions encountered during the course of a walk. According to William Chambers: "The perfection of their gardens consists in the number and diversity of these scenes; and in the artful combination of their parts."



Barometer-thermometer in the form of a Chinese pagoda, anon., 1720/1730, wood, lacquer, gilt lacquer decoration, gilt bronze, porcelain flowers
© Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris

Barometer-thermometer in the form of a Chinese pagoda

This instrument on loan from the Musée des Arts décoratifs in Paris reflects the taste for Chinese artefacts. With its combination of lacquer and porcelain, two materials particularly prized in the West, this object also has a dual scientific function: two figures emerge alternately from the little house, drawn by a piece of catgut which expands and contracts with fluctuations in climate, and a thermometer is positioned between the two niches. This luxurious and refined object used to adorn the Parisian townhouse of the marquis de Sourches and the Chinese drawing room of the château d'Abondant.



Dragon, feature from an andiron, anon., 1720/1730, gilt bronze,
© Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris



GARDENS AS A REFLECTION OF ENLIGHTENMENT IDEAS

“It is not then as an architect or a gardener, but as a poet and painter, that landscape must be composed so as at once to please the understanding and the eye.”

Girardin, *An Essay on Landscape*, 1777

The new gardens bore the hallmarks of Enlightenment thinking which characterised the 18th century. Although they were devoted to strolling, they were also a space for political discussions, philosophical reflections and debates about art and history.

Certain architectural features assumed a symbolic dimension, such as the Chanteloup Pagoda, which celebrates friendship. The history, poetry and literature of each country was expressed in gardens, for example in the monument to British Worthies at Stowe.

Gardens also reflected the economic principles of the age, advocated by physiocrats, for whom the only truly productive activity was agriculture. Farms and hamlets therefore became a key element of gardens.

Agricultural and social interests were demonstrated on major British estates, and in France at Ermenonville and Méréville, for example. Nature offered an escape from a society deemed to be corrupt.



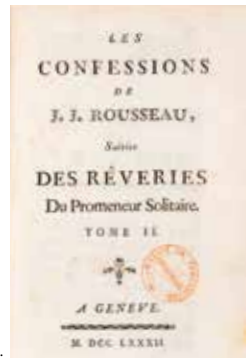
The Marlborough Tower in the Jardins de Mesdames at Bellevue, Claude-Louis Châtelet, 1784, oil on canvas © Musée du Domaine départemental de Sceaux

The influence of Rousseau

The ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) were all-pervasive in the development of these philosophical gardens. His works *Julie or the New Heloise* (1761), *Émile or On Education* (1762), *The Social Contract* (1762), and *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (1776-1778) revolutionised not only ideas about society but also perceptions of nature.

Walking, botanising, meditation, reverie and the sublime were all aspects of these gardens that reflected his thinking.

In 1778, the marquis de Girardin played host to the philosopher at his Ermenonville estate. Rousseau withdrew to a cottage to live out his last days in the forest, surrounded by trees. When he died, the marquis arranged for him to be buried on Poplar Island. Many pilgrims came to pay their respects there until his ashes were transferred to the Panthéon in Paris during the French Revolution.



1.



2.

The Reveries, which were written in Paris and at Ermenonville and left unfinished when he died on the marquis de Girardin's estate, are a blend of autobiographical memories and philosophical thoughts. Believing that he was a lone figure at odds with the world, Rousseau used his walks to develop his philosophical vision of happiness: contemplation, deliberate isolation, a peaceful life, and an intense bond with nature fostered by walking and botanising, which is reflected in the herbariums he produced at Ermenonville: “Here I am, then [...] with botany as my only occupation.”

1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions of J. J. Rousseau*, followed by *The Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, 1782 © Bibliothèque municipale de Versailles

2. Jean-Michel Moreau le Jeune, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau Botanising at Ermenonville in June 1778*, circa 1778 © Musée Carnavalet - Histoire de Paris

| LIFE IN THE GARDEN

HUBERT ROBERT AND THE DECOR AT BAGATELLE

“Thus, the garden is conceived as a place of dreams and illusion, but also as the practical implementation, the realisation of that dream.”

Augustin-Charles d'Aviler, 1755

The art of the landscape even found its way into private spaces. By reuniting at Versailles four paintings by Hubert Robert, on special loan from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the exhibition will recreate the decor of the bathroom at the château de Bagatelle and immerse visitors in the spectacular atmosphere of this room.

In 1777, following a wager with Queen Marie-Antoinette, her brother-in-law, the comte d'Artois, had the little château de Bagatelle built in the bois de Boulogne in just 64 days. For this folie, a country residence used for entertaining, he commissioned six large pictures from the painter Hubert Robert (1733-1808). The presence of water in various forms in these works reflects the function of the room for which they were intended: the bathroom. The paintings were installed in pairs on three walls of the room and the fourth wall had an alcove with a bath in it. Combined with a large window overlooking the garden and with mirrors, they created a cohesive decorative scheme inspired by fashionable picturesque gardens.

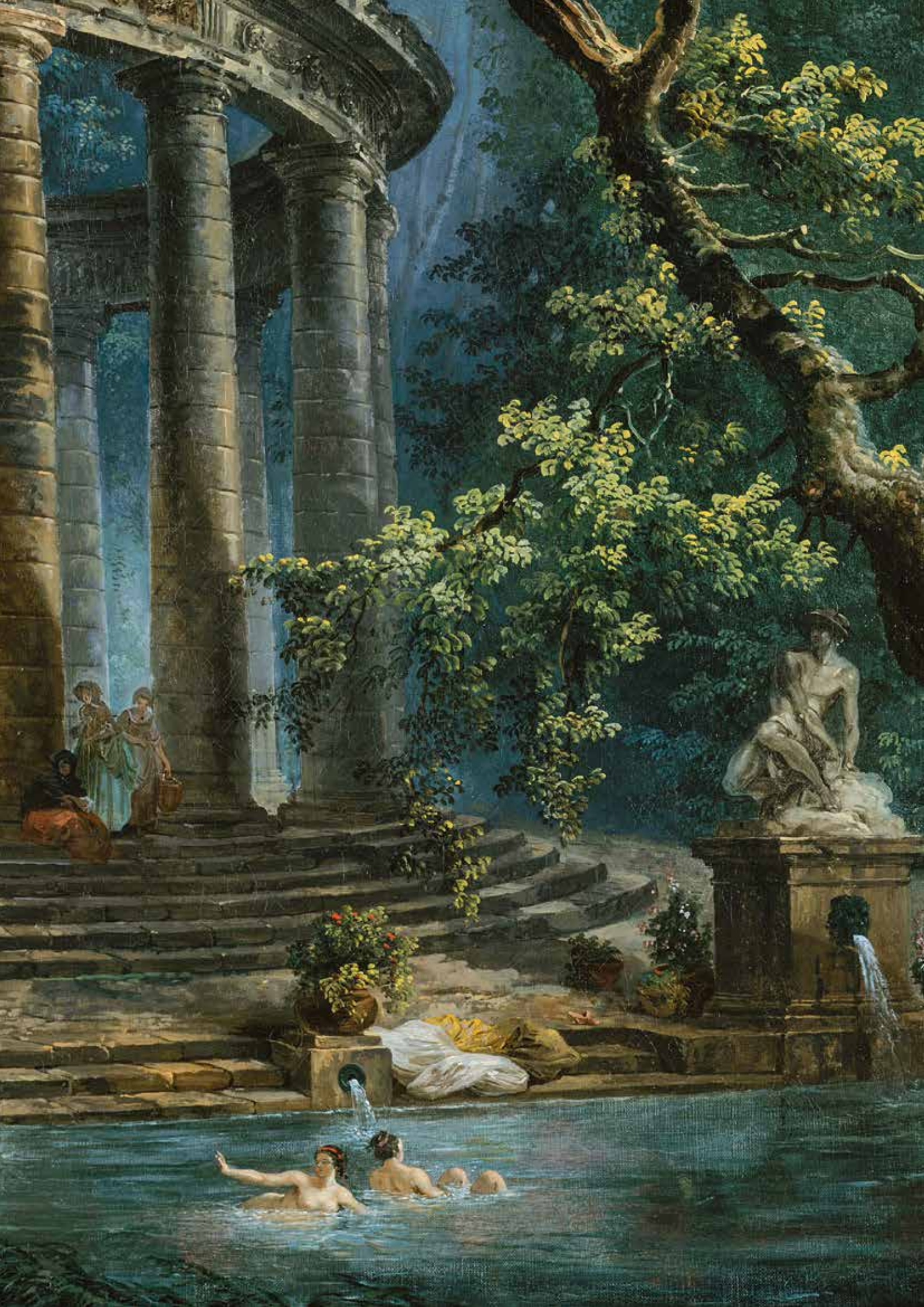
Some works, notably those by the fireplace were already very damaged by 1784 and were replaced, including *The Mouth of a Cave*, paired with *The Fountain*. Other paintings such as *The Dance*, which was hung close to the entrance to the music room, conjured up the idea of entertainment and highlighted the festive function of the building.

The two most ambitious compositions, *The Bathing Pool* and a view of the Capitol enlivened by musicians, occupied central spaces and were key pieces. *The Bathing Pool*, with its classical decor and sculptural references, directly mirrored the function of the room. By combining landscapes, the arts and pleasures, the group blended the aesthetic of gardens with discreet eroticism through the figures of the bathers.



The Fountain, The Bathing Pool, The Mouth of a Cave, The Dance, Hubert Robert, 1777-1779, oils on canvas © The Metropolitan Museum of Art - New York





THE ROYAL FAMILY'S GARDENS

This part of the exhibition showcases the royal family's taste for English gardens. As highlighted by Henriette Campan, the taste "for the beauties of nature" and English gardens was enthusiastically espoused by the royal family. In the vicinity of Versailles and in the Île-de-France region, many princes created picturesque gardens combining the imitation of nature with a variety of landscapes and sinuous paths.

From Versailles to Bagatelle

The comte d'Artois provided a spectacular example in 1777 at Bagatelle where his "taste for the trowel" manifested itself in the speedy and ambitious transformation of this estate, boasting a pavilion, rivers, waterfalls and a variety of follies. This project was overseen by the architect Thomas Blaikie. At Bellevue and l'Ermitage de Versailles, Mesdames, the daughters of Louis XV, also developed huge English gardens, abounding in planting, rustic architecture and water features, whereas the comtesse de Provence and Madame Élisabeth at Montreuil created estates combining picturesque landscapes with agricultural functions.

These gardens reflected a desire for seclusion and nature, but also a spirit of emulation and sociability; they were visited and compared, and employed the same architects, gardeners and nurserymen.

Marie-Antoinette's English garden at the Petit Trianon

"I have come from Trianon. [...] It feels as if you are one hundred leagues from Court. [...] You can breathe the air of happiness and freedom there. [...] All the forms are pleasing. The tone of everything is perfect and fitting. [...] Perhaps there is some magic there."

Prince de Ligne, *Coup d'œil sur Belœil*, 1781

In 1774, as soon as Louis XVI had presented her with the key to the Petit Trianon, which was set with 531 diamonds, Marie-Antoinette asked for an English garden to be built in keeping with the fashion of the day. The architect Richard Mique and the gardener Antoine Richard carried out extensive works to compose a new landscape of lakes, mountains, grottoes and rivers.

The garden adopted the principles of the Anglo-Chinese style: irregularity, a variety of vistas and a strong focus on water and follies, but adapted them to a more considered scale. It became a space for everyday living, conducive to strolling, relaxing, and enjoying a type of refined simplicity, where nature was showcased unostentatiously, striking a balance between artifice and spontaneity.

In 1776, the first folly was a "game of rings", a sort of colourful and exotic Chinese-style merry-go-round, followed by the Temple of Love, the Belvedere and then by the Hamlet, which looked like a rustic farm from the outside, but was as luxurious as a palace inside. This place, which was designed to resemble a theatre set, was the Queen's favourite retreat for several years. There, she gathered together a select group of friends with whom she indulged in pleasures, amusements, festivities and walks in this lush green setting.



Site of the Egyptian Obelisk, Louis-Gabriel Moreau the Elder, circa 1785, gouache on vellum
© Château de Versailles, Dist. RMN © Christophe Fouin



View of the Game of Rings, its Gallery and one of the Façades of the Palace, Claude-Louis Châtelet, 1786, aquarelle
© Château de Versailles, Dist. RMN © Christophe Fouin



Chever-loup

Antoine

Avenue de

Avenue

Cour
du
Chateau

FURNISHING AND DECORATING FOLLIES: THE INVENTION OF A NEW STYLE

As small novelty monuments and laboratories for ideas, follies afforded freedom and a greater degree of inventiveness in the design of new furniture. Tables, chairs and fire screens reflected the style of the rustic, classical or exotic buildings. Chinese-inspired furniture imitating bamboo, designed by Chambers, was used at the Chanteloup Pagoda; Hubert Robert created a unique range of armchairs in the Greco-Roman style to furnish the Laiterie – a dairy product tasting space – at Rambouillet.

Bolder still are pieces that fully evoke the landscape: the reed sofas for the Shell Cottage at Rambouillet, the “wheat ear” furniture for Marie-Antoinette’s Trianon, the armchairs made of faux branches, and even a stool imitating rocks. These seats were not merely designed for comfort: they shaped the garden experience by drawing the eye and inviting visitors to pause. As Watelet pointed out *“distances and opportune irregularities in the terrain should dictate rests”*.

All of these hybrid and extravagant pieces could only emerge from a fantastical and free world. Furniture became a key feature of gardens, not only in practical terms, but also from an aesthetic and sensory perspective.



Bamboo chair, Charles Smith & Co, circa 1760, mahogany
© Victoria and Albert Museum - London



Table with a rustic parasol, circa 1800, mahogany, amaranth, gilt bronze, iron, steel, taffeta and lacquer © Musée des Arts décoratifs - Paris



Grotto stool, 1775-1780, © The Bowes Museum, County Durham, UK



Service for the Laiterie at Rambouillet. Cup with handles, © GrandPalaisRmn (Sèvres - Manufacture et musée nationaux) Martine Beck-Coppola



Service for the Laiterie at Rambouillet. Breast bowls, © GrandPalaisRmn (Sèvres - Manufacture et musée nationaux) Martine Beck-Coppola

These gardens prompted the emergence of an elegant and largely idealised country lifestyle. Customs also evolved, as did appearances: lightweight clothing, woven straw hats, garden furniture, and accessories suited to outdoor living can be seen in portraits painted by Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun and George Romney. Gardens became a refined social space where privacy, representation and freedom intermingled.



Lady Lemon, George Romney 1747-1823 © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn image of the MMA



Robe à l'anglaise, 1770-1790
© Palais Galliera - Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris



Portrait of Marie-Antoinette in a Muslin Dress in the "creole", "en chemise" or "en gaulle" Style, Elisabeth Vigée-Le Brun, 1783, oil on canvas
© Hessische Hausstiftung, Kronberg

Portrait of Marie-Antoinette in an "en gaulle" muslin dress

This iconic portrait of Marie-Antoinette painted by Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, on special loan from Wolfsgarten Castle in Germany, caused a scandal when it was presented at the Salon of 1783. This depiction of the queen dressed simply in a light muslin gown shocked visitors. Vigée Le Brun very swiftly painted a second portrait to exhibit before the end of the Salon: *Marie-Antoinette with a Rose* is now on display in the Petit Trianon.

PLEASURES AND FESTIVITIES IN THE GARDENS

In the second half of the 18th century, these gardens, which were a place to retreat and take a contemplative stroll, were also an ideal location for lavish festivities by day and by night. Games, illuminations and theatrical performances took place there. By day, visitors could enjoy the spectacle of the Automaton Rock at the château de Lunéville, play the game of rings at the Trianon or take pleasure boats out on the water. By night, there were costume parties and strolls through recreated villages dotted with fake shops where guests could play at being shopkeepers.

The enchanting nocturnal entertainments at the Trianon between 1777 and 1787, painted by Châtelet and Lespinasse, were rivalled at Wörlitz by pyrotechnic displays, with fake eruptions of the Volcano, inspired by Vesuvius, built between 1788 and 1794. These dazzling festivities reflected the constant pursuit of ever more extravagant and refined pleasures and entertainments in these bucolic settings.

The festivities provided an opportunity for spectacular illuminations, especially at receptions for foreign sovereigns, including Joseph II (1781), the future Paul I of Russia (1782) and Gustav III of Sweden (1784). On 1 August 1781, the Emperor was given a lavish welcome at the Trianon: supper, a performance of *Iphigénie en Tauride* by Glück and an open-air concert. But it was the illuminations in the gardens, with the Rock and Belvedere glittering brightly which made a lasting impression.



Illumination of the Belvedere at the Petit Trianon in 1781, Claude-Louis Châtelet, 1781, oil on canvas © Château de Versailles, Dist. RMN © Christophe Fouin



Theatrical props: sickle, fruit picker, spade, walking stick, anon., second half of the 18th century, wood, metal, textile © Château de Versailles, Dist. RMN © Christophe Fouin

FRAGONARD AND AN IDEALISED NATURE

Three major works by Jean-Honoré Fragonard have been specially reunited for this exhibition: *The Fête at Saint-Cloud*, which belongs to the Banque de France and is not usually exhibited, and *The Swing* and *Blind Man's Buff*, on loan from the National Gallery of Art in Washington. They depict scenes of entertainment in idealised gardens, where people are enjoying games, shows and social pleasures in a frivolous and theatrical ambiance.

These compositions bear witness to a world of aristocratic sociability in which nature becomes a fantasy setting, conducive to amusements and providing a backdrop for pleasure. They are embedded in the tradition of the *fêtes galantes*, popularised in the early 18th century by Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), and perpetuate this refined and melancholic spirit.

Jean Honoré Fragonard (1732-1806) painted numerous poetic compositions in the same vein. He designed several groups of this type, including one for Madame Du Barry's château at Louveciennes, which was never installed. In the 1770s, he created a group of five paintings for the hôtel de Saincy in Paris, which conjure up these moments of pleasure steeped in an unreal and enchanted atmosphere.



The Fête at Saint-Cloud, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, 1775/1780, oil on canvas © Banque de France





PART II

CONTINUING THE VISIT IN THE TRIANON GARDENS

REDISCOVERING MARIE-ANTOINETTE'S ENGLISH GARDEN

Visitors can linger a little longer at the exhibition and discover the Petit Trianon estate, where they too can lose themselves in the secluded corners of an English garden.

Rivers, rolling landscapes, groves and follies blend harmoniously in a subtle layout conceived by the architect Richard Mique. He designed the first phase of the English garden in 1777, which featured a number of deliberately discreet follies, including the **Temple of Love**, the **Belvedere** and the **Grotto**. Then in 1783, Marie-Antoinette asked him to extend the garden to the north by building a **Hamlet** around a lake, and work continued on this project until 1786.



© J.-F. Péneau

1

THE TEMPLE OF LOVE

In 1777, Richard Mique drew up the plans for this little building and presented Marie-Antoinette with a model produced by the sculptor Joseph Deschamps. The queen immediately approved the project. The building was erected on an island and sits on a platform accessed by seven steps. It is surrounded by twelve Corinthian columns supporting a stone dome decorated with sculpted coffers and a central motif. The entablature and ornaments created by Deschamps feature rosettes and arabesques. The floor is paved with marble from different locations.

The temple was built between 1777 and 1778, and boasts at its centre a copy of *Cupid Fashioning his Bow from Hercules Club* by Edme Bouchardon, created by Louis-Philippe Mouchy at the queen's request.



The Temple of Love © château de Versailles / M. Toumi

2

THE BELVEDERE

The Belvedere, designed by Richard Mique and completed in 1781, is situated on top of a mound overlooking a small lake. This octagonal structure is topped with a discreet dome, partially concealed by a balustrade. The windows are decorated with bas-reliefs depicting the four seasons, and the patio doors open out fully onto the exterior.

The interior features a remarkable decorative scheme painted by Sébastien-François Le Riche, and a blue-sky ceiling adorned with cupids by Louis-Jean-François Lagrenée. The floor is paved with a marble mosaic. Used by the Queen as a summer reception room, the Belvedere, with its abundance of natural light, is a space which creates the impression of immersion in the natural world.



© château de Versailles / T. Garnier

3

THE GROTTO

The Grotto, which was created in 1782, is located in the bottom of a little valley through which a stream flows. A path along the water's edge leads to a hidden entrance in a mound of rocks.

The dim interior space is lit by a few openings. A bench imitating rock provides seating, and a little waterfall feeds the stream. Steps lead up to a second access through which a discreet exit can be made.



© château de Versailles / T. Garnier

4

THE QUEEN'S HAMLET

This little Normandy village, which was built between 1783 and 1786, is laid out in three areas around the lake. To the south are the social spaces: the mill, the Queen's house, the billiard room and the warming room. Their rustic external appearance conceals elegant interiors as they were designed as spaces for entertaining.

On the other side of the lake, there are the agricultural buildings: a barn, two dairies, a fishery and a guard house, as well as a farm. The Marlborough Tower dominates the lake. The working farm, which completes the complex of buildings and continued to expand its activities until the eve of the French Revolution, comprises a stable, piggery, sheepfold and henhouse.

Contrary to popular belief, Marie-Antoinette did not "play" at being a farmer there. The Hamlet was essentially a place for strolling and entertaining and for farming activities designed to educate the royal children.



The Queen's Hamlet © château de Versailles / T. Garnier

| A REVIVED GARDEN

To mark the exhibition *Gardens of Enlightenment, 1750-1800*, several restoration projects have taken place in the Trianon gardens to continue to showcase this secluded estate.

THE JASMINE PERGOLA

The pergola in the Petit Trianon was built in the late 18th century, when the English garden was created by Richard Mique. It was originally a covered wooden arcade which allowed people to move under shelter between different areas such as the game of rings, the Queen's Theatre and the chapel. It was modified several times, then eventually destroyed during the French Revolution. The current pergola is a reconstruction created in 1995, based on original period plans.

The wooden structure of the arbour had deteriorated over time. The restoration involved retaining the general layout, but replacing the damaged elements. The structure was also refurbished and repainted.

The Estate of Trianon Gardening Department was responsible for ensuring that the pergola would bloom again. Jasmine plants, roses and climbers were replanted to recreate the subtle poetry of the structure.

The restoration of the pergola was made possible by patronage from Parfums Christian Dior



Restored pergola © château de Versailles / T. Garnier



The Belvedere Rock © château de Versailles / T. Garnier

THE BELVEDERE ROCK FOOTBRIDGE

The Belvedere and its Rock are some of the most unique areas of the Estate of Trianon. At the heart of these features is the Rock footbridge, which was designed to overlook the waterfall; it has evolved with each new restoration, adopting a series of different styles. Today, it has been weakened by the elements and by wear and tear and is showing signs of significant damage, compromising both its aesthetic appearance and safety. The restoration project will reinstate its original design, a natural shape with St Andrew's cross railings in keeping with the spirit of the English garden, and secure its long-term future. The structure has been fully consolidated and the materials replaced with due respect for the spirit of the place, and the surrounding area has been redeveloped to restore the harmony and quality of the walk.

The restoration of the Belvedere Rock footbridge was made possible by patronage from the Fondation du patrimoine

THE MARLBOROUGH TOWER

The Marlborough Tower, which was built between 1783 and 1787 by the architect Richard Mique for Marie-Antoinette, is one of the most iconic features of the Queen's Hamlet. Inspired by Italian coastal towers, it used to serve as an observation point boasting outstanding views over the entire estate.

Today, its external staircase, which has been damaged by the passage of time and by inclement weather, is no longer fit for use and requires full restoration. The project will protect it for the future and make it safe with more hardwearing materials, while respecting its original appearance.

The wrought-iron railings will be cleaned, restored and repainted in a shade of black similar to the original colour. Repairs will be carried out as required on the masonry, such as the stone steps and supports, to ensure that they are stable and blend into the overall structure.

This work, which aims to preserve the authenticity and durability of the tower, will be completed in the late summer.

The restoration of the Marlborough Tower is being made possible by patronage from the Société des Amis de Versailles



The Marlborough Tower © château de Versailles / T. Garnier

TRIANON PATRONS

The Marie-Antoinette patronage token

To mark the exhibition *Gardens of Enlightenment, 1750-1800*, the Palace is celebrating the legacy and modernity of Queen Marie-Antoinette. In keeping with this spirit, Versailles is launching a new patronage token dedicated to her to celebrate her lasting influence on the aesthetic and spirit of the Estate of Trianon. Inspired by their use under the Ancien Régime, when the queen would distribute them to grant courtiers access to her inner circle, these tokens now celebrate major figures associated with the Estate.

Proceeds from the sale of the tokens will be used for the promotion and restoration of the Palace of Versailles.

Adopt a bench in the Estate of Trianon

Whether tucked away along the paths, in the shade or by the water's edge, these benches offer walkers a place to enjoy the views and take a secluded rest. Adopting a bench in the Trianon gardens is a way of commemorating an attachment to this iconic location, contributing to the preservation of the garden, and making memories there.

Information: www.chateauversailles.fr/soutenir-versailles



Patronage token © château de Versailles / D. Saulnier



© château de Versailles / D. Saulnier

AN ENLIGHTENMENT PARTERRE AT THE GRAND TRIANON

Every year, the Grand Trianon parterres are adorned with species carefully selected by the gardeners to create an original design. In 2026, to reflect the exhibition *Gardens of Enlightenment, 1750-1800*, the characteristics of English gardens, with their interest in botany and more natural forms, have inspired this temporary parterre.

For the duration of the summer, the upper parterre will shed the symmetrical outlines of the French formal garden and embrace a more fluid vision of nature. Straight lines will be replaced by dense but structured vegetation: perennials (yarrow, pale purple coneflower), grasses and annuals (cosmos, vervain, amaranth) will be planted together. In the background, shrubs will provide overall structure. In keeping with the spirit of the English garden, chance plays no part in this diversity, which involves layering to create depth, a variety of shapes, and the introduction of continuous motion. In this way, the garden creates a sensitive natural environment, where this apparent freedom already reflects the 18th-century's interest in botany and the natural world.

By contrast, the landscape of the lower parterre is more open and the composition favours nature in an almost wild state. It features a meadow with a blend of flowers such as cornflowers, scabious, purple viper's bugloss and California poppies, as well as grasses. Maintenance is kept to a minimum to respect the plants' natural cycles.

The overall layout creates a gradual transition from a garden shaped by human hands to a more spontaneous space. This approach reflects the 18th-century's interest in the natural world. Exotic plants (pineapples, coffee plants, mimosas) placed in pots along the edges of the parterres, will recall the appeal of species from other lands, which were a status symbol.

Lastly, orange tree planters will be decorated with Chinese-inspired motifs to conjure up Marie-Antoinette's taste for exoticism and also the influence of Anglo-Chinese gardens which were fashionable at the time. The *Enlightenment Parterre* therefore reflects an era in which a garden became a landscape, laboratory and sensory artefact.



Cosmos "Sonata White"



Foxtail barley



Purple viper's bugloss



Sweet scabious







PART III | EXHIBITION
TIE-INS

A PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR ALL VISITORS

AUDIOGUIDE

A special audioguide tour with eleven commentaries takes visitors through the exhibition and the masterpieces on display.

Available in French and English and on the Palace of Versailles visitor app.

AN EXHIBITION TAILORED TO YOUNG VISITORS

On the exhibition tour, there are **sixteen exhibit labels for young visitors** to help them understand the exhibition in an entertaining and interactive way. They present the exhibition and suggest activities to help them learn about the masterpieces.

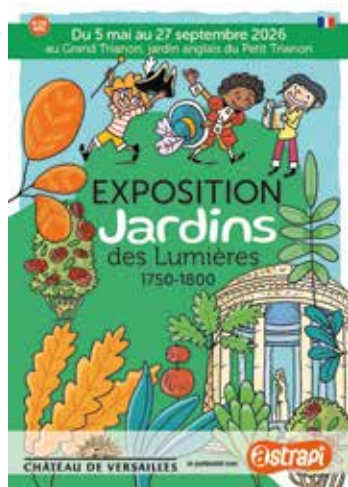
The Palace of Versailles, **in partnership with Astrapi**, has designed **an illustrated games booklet** for children aged 6 to 12.

This booklet takes children around the exhibition, guiding them through the key points to help them understand the works on display and the tour, while stimulating their curiosity and powers of observation.

Available in French and English.

It is handed out free of charge at the entrance to the exhibition or can be downloaded on the Palace of Versailles website.

A special audioguide for young visitors is also available. It features nine commentaries to explore the exhibition in the form of a walk through an Anglo-Chinese garden. **Available in French and English and on the Palace of Versailles visitor app.**



FLASH MEDIATIONS

At the exit from the exhibition, mediators will accompany visitors to the Petit Trianon garden so that they can pursue their visit in an English garden.

Every weekend from May to June and from mid-August to September, daily from mid-July to mid-August. Regular departures from 12.30 pm to 4.30 pm. Duration 30 minutes. Available in French and English. Free, no booking required.

GUIDED TOURS

- Guided tour of the exhibition, based on a selection of key works .
Duration 90 minutes. In French and English.
- Guided tours tying in with the exhibition to offer a deeper insight into Anglo-Chinese gardens:
Marie-Antoinette's gardens
Festivities and entertainments at the Trianon
The parc de Balbi

Full details of the programme of events each month are available on the Palace of Versailles website.

RENDEZ-VOUS IN THE GARDENS

Weekend of 6 and 7 June

To mark the Rendez-vous in the Gardens 2026 event, there will be a programme of activities relating to the exhibition *Gardens of Enlightenment, 1750-1800* over the course of the weekend.

The Versailles Regional Conservatoire will present a programme of dance and music: dance performances under the peristyle of the Grand Trianon and impromptu musical performances in the gardens. Students from the Ecole du Louvre will provide mediation in the exhibition spaces.

Two workshops suitable for all visitors will take place: one focusing on the composition of an Anglo-Chinese garden and the other on watercolour landscape painting.

"1 YEAR IN VERSAILLES" subscribers

"The Spirit of a place" evening event

Saturday 30 May 2026 from 6.30 pm

A poetic and dreamlike tour around the Trianon gardens playing on the different meanings of the word "enlightenment".

Late-night exhibition opening, Friday 3 July from 7 pm

Series of scheduled events (lectures, gatherings, visits, offsite events):

May: presentation of the exhibition with a focus on the art of 18th-century gardens, with Élisabeth Maisonnier;

June: "Enlightenment society", a new way of living.

July: "Garden entertainments", customs and practices.

September: gardens as a source of artistic inspiration.

Full details of the programme of events each month are available on the Palace of Versailles website.

FOR FAMILIES

"Royal Holidays", family activities at the Petit Trianon on the theme of the English garden. **Afternoons, from 18 July to 23 August.**

FOR SPECIFIC VISITOR GROUPS AND SCHOOL PARTIES

Sensory visits focusing on scents and botanical species in the English garden at the Petit Trianon.

From 2 to 5 June: Gardens week in the context of the *Rendez-vous in the Gardens 2026* event, with free tours in the Estate of Trianon for priority audiences in the form of story-telling walks, scavenger hunts and immersive and sensory tours.

From 8 to 12 June: Round-up sessions for participants in the "Spotlight on an English garden" educational project. Since January, twenty classes have been taking part in educational activities designed to help them explore the historic garden in a fun way, with a focus on Marie-Antoinette's English garden. The final round-up activity will involve a guided tour led by two people, during which pupils will act as budding tour guides alongside a professional guide.

Monday 15 June: a day for schoolchildren devoted entirely to the Estate of Trianon and the exhibition *Gardens of Enlightenment, 1750-1800*.

For young adults:

- The "Sensory Journey" tour: discover the Perfumer's Garden in the heart of the Estate of Trianon through an olfactory experience followed by a hands-on workshop.
- Watercolour workshop: introduction to outdoor watercolour painting in the gardens of the Petit Trianon and the Queen's Hamlet, led by an artist-painter.

SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM

From 18 to 20 June

This symposium, introduced by Monique Mosser, reviews recent research into the history of gardens and expands on themes from the exhibition. Several areas will be explored:

The place of the history of gardens in art history

Gardens are featured in other arts such as painting, but also in architecture in the form of follies. But does their study constitute a field within art history?

A sensory approach to Anglo-Chinese gardens

The particularly powerful engagement of the senses in these gardens, both olfactory and visual, will be explored.

Enlightenment ideas at the heart of 18th-century gardens

The intellectual approach to gardens as a setting for the development of Enlightenment ideas such as Freemasonry and also physiocracy will be explored.

Gardens of Europe

A look at the travels undertaken by clients, architects and gardeners and the sharing of ideas in 18th-century Europe, which promoted the spread of this style across the continent.

Restoration issues

Presentation on the thinking behind the restoration of these gardens, notably in the 20th century, and their redevelopment in recent decades.

SPECIAL OPENING OF THE PERFUMER'S GARDEN

**Every weekend from 9 May to 27 September 2026
(except Saturday 13 June).**

**Opening times: 12 pm – 6.30 pm
(last admission 5.45 pm)**

Two gardeners and a mediator will be on hand in the Perfumer's Garden to answer visitors' questions.

The Perfumer's Garden, located in the heart of the Estate of Trianon, was created in 2023 with the generous patronage of Maison Francis Kurkdjian. Hundreds of fragrant plants, cultivated in the spirit of the 17th-century Trianon gardens, help to shed light on the history of perfume at the court of Versailles.



The Perfumer's Garden © Château de Versailles / D. Saulnier

AN EVOCATION OF A CHINESE PAVILION AT THE PETIT TRIANON

This garden pavilion designed for the exhibition is heavily influenced by the Chinese House at Stowe Gardens in England. Built in 1738 at Stowe for Sir Richard Temple by William Kent, this small wooden structure was inspired by Chinese fashions. It features bright colours, decorative motifs, Buddha figures and gilt dragons. The decoration harks back to the models disseminated in the 18th century, notably by William Chambers, and conjures up the Chinese landscapes popularised by Pillement.

This pavilion serves snacks (galettes, pancakes, sorbets). Its location in the garden of the Petit Trianon reflects the way in which follies were used in English gardens.

Open daily except Mondays from 12 pm to 6.30 pm.



© EMC & Fustenberg

TIE-IN PRODUCT



Earrings, pendants and brooches inspired by the golden dragons adorning the Chinese pagoda at Kew Gardens will be on sale in the shop at the end of the exhibition.

© Château de Versailles, Dist. RMN

SHOWS

CONCERTS AT THE TRIANON

***Les Saisons* - Joseph Bodin de Boismortier (1689-1755)**

Lili Aymonino, soprano, Igor Bouin, baritone
Orchestre de l'Opéra Royal
Chloé de Guillebon, conductor and harpsichord

Although it is not known to which mysterious figures they were dedicated, the cantatas of Joseph de Boismortier's *Four Seasons*, published in 1724, resonate with the splendour of court festivities and the eloquence of conversational salons. Written by an anonymous but undoubtedly imaginative hand, the libretto expresses its poetry as the seasons unfold, and the composer seems to have enjoyed capturing all their subtleties in his music.

Following her first recording as a conductor of this programme, Chloé de Guillebon is joined here by young vocal talents accompanied by the skilled musicians of the Orchestre de l'Opéra Royal du Château de Versailles in this concert at the Grand Trianon.

Monday 8 June, 8 pm

Grand Trianon

Duration: 75 minutes without an interval

***The Four Seasons* - Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)**

Orchestre de l'Opéra Royal
Théotime Langlois de Swarte Violin and conductor

The famous *Four Seasons* by Vivaldi, published in Amsterdam in 1725, were so popular that they overshadowed almost all of the composer's other concertos. They owe their popularity to a particularly expressive and virtuosic form of 'programme music', but Vivaldi was already a sought-after master throughout Europe. The popularity of his operas placed him at the forefront of Italian composers, to the extent that he was particularly admired and performed in France, and was commissioned by the French ambassador in Venice to write works in honour of Louis XV.

They will be performed here with lively energy by the Orchestre de l'Opéra Royal, conducted from the first violin by principal conductor Théotime Langlois de Swarte, a true virtuoso performer on the instrument.

Monday 13 July, 8 pm

Peristyle of the Grand Trianon

Duration: 70 minutes without an interval

A PARTY AT THE TRIANON

Marie-Antoinette at the Trianon

The new costume party at the Palace of Versailles

To mark and complement the tenth edition of the Fêtes Galantes, Château de Versailles Spectacles is offering a new immersive experience: a unique costume party in the heart of the Trianon Estate, providing a chance to enjoy a timeless weekend in the intimate setting of Marie-Antoinette's Versailles.

Designed around the theme of France's most famous queen and French lifestyle icon, this party will transport its guests far from the official pomp of the court.

Against the backdrop of the neoclassical refinement of the Petit Trianon and the splendour of the Grand Trianon, guests will be treated to light entertainments, musical interludes and exclusive tours, conjuring up the sophisticated pleasures and free-spiritedness so dear to Marie-Antoinette and her inner circle.

In this enchanting bucolic setting, Versailles becomes more intimate, dreamlike and gallant, embodying a moment of elegance and frivolity before the dazzling splendour of the Fêtes Galantes.

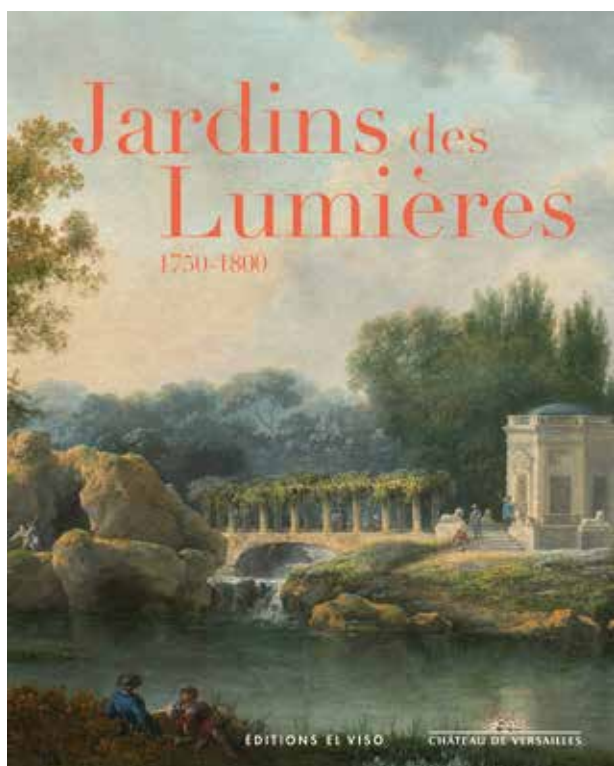
Sunday 24 May 2026

Estate of Trianon

From 7 pm to midnight

SOLD OUT

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE



Jardins des Lumières, 1750-1800

Edited by Élisabeth Maisonnier

A Château de Versailles - Éditions El Viso joint publication 368 p. €39

Available in bookshops: 21 May 2026

Created for Marie-Antoinette, the English garden at the Petit Trianon, with its blend of refinement and exoticism, offered a striking contrast to the French formal gardens of Versailles: a perfect illustration of the veritable craze for gardens that swept across Europe from 1750 onwards.

Some of the finest gardens were Kew Gardens and Stowe in England; the gardens of Schwetzingen Palace, home of the Elector Palatine; Laeken in the Low countries, home to the Saxe-Coburgs; the projects and creations of Gustav III, the "gardening lord", at his residences at Haga and Drottningholm in Sweden; the English gardens at Tsarskoye Selo and Pavlovsk designed for Catherine the Great and then Tsar Paul I; and lastly in France, the parc Monceau, the désert de Retz, Ermenonville where Jean-Jacques Rousseau took refuge, and Méréville where the painter Hubert Robert worked.

Through 250 illustrations of paintings, drawings, furniture, garden architecture, costumes, rare books and photographs, this art and history book showcases the variety of these gardens with their irregular layouts and often excentric follies, where the philosophical or masonic element rubs shoulders with the most fanciful exoticism. These microcosmic and encyclopaedic gardens, whose scope borders on the universal, reflect the world and ideas of the Age of Enlightenment.

With their blend of nature and artifice, they mark the emergence of a new decorative style, revealing a reinvented way of life that combines elements of nature, travel, festivities and pleasure.







PART IV | **MEDIA
PARTNERS**

LE FIGARO

Le Figaro was founded in 1826 and is the oldest general-interest daily newspaper in France with the largest editorial team. Named after a character created by Beaumarchais, it has embodied the spirit of France for two centuries and will celebrate its two-hundredth anniversary in 2026.

Comprising three sections (News, Business and Lifestyle), the daily newspaper delivers a comprehensive range of content to its readers via its themed supplements (Culture, Literature, Health, Entrepreneurs) and also its weekend magazines (*Le Figaro Magazine*, *Madame Figaro* and *TV Magazine*). *Le Figaro* is also a major digital news player with its industry-leading news website and mobile app. In 2023, *Le Figaro* consolidated its multichannel strategy with the launch of its radio and television channels.

An interest in the French language is a hallmark of the Figaro Group: the daily newspaper *Le Figaro*, *Le Figaro Magazine* and *Le Figaro littéraire* passionately champion the distinctive features and usages of the French language among their readers. The history of the French language and topical news relating to it are regularly given prominent coverage.

marie claire Maison

Marie Claire Maison has always prided itself on predicting, perceiving and interpreting the zeitgeist. Through dialogue with designers and interior design enthusiasts, *Marie Claire Maison* continues to explore the latest trends shaping our living spaces. Working closely with its readers, the magazine shares its favourite picks and features tours of inspirational homes.

MON JARDIN & ma maison

Gardens have become a living space in their own right, and a source of inspiration. The issue is no longer how to tame nature. It is how to live with it. Listening to it, protecting it and being nourished by it both literally and metaphorically. Mon jardin & Ma maison, which has the highest readership in France in the gardening and exterior design magazine category, supports this trend and offers thoughtful, practical and accessible insights into gardens as an extra room in the home.

BeauxArts

Magazine

Built around *Beaux-Arts Magazine*{2}, *Beaux-Arts & Cie* is the leading group in the art publishing and cultural services sector. Structured around two divisions – *Media & Publishing* and *Services & Consultancy* – the group comprises four major cultural publications: *Beaux-Arts Magazine*, *Le Quotidien de l'Art*, *Grande Galerie* and *Geste/s*, as well as a renowned publishing division, led by *Beaux-Arts Editions*, which produces over 80 publications each year.

Through its *Services & Consultancy* division, *Beaux-Arts & Cie* supports public institutions, museums, local authorities and businesses with their cultural projects, from strategy through to implementation, and designs bespoke creative and cultural mediation experiences. The group also organises several leading trade fairs, including *SITEM*, *Museva* and *The Art Business Conference*.



France Télévisions is France's leading broadcasting group, offering a rich, high-quality and inclusive range of programming for all audiences. The group's content is available on the France.tv and franceinfo digital platforms, across five national channels (France 2, France 3, France 4, France 5 and franceinfo), 24 regional channels and nine TV, radio and web outlets in French overseas territories. Okoo, Slash and Lumni further enrich this diverse range with programmes aimed at young audiences, school pupils and teachers.

Eight out of ten French people watch the group's programmes every week, making France Télévisions a true force for bringing people together.

The public broadcaster is also the only media organisation in the French audiovisual landscape to offer a showcase of cultural programmes and expressions across a variety of formats. A wealth of content features culture in daily and weekly programmes as well as coverage of major events.

In addition to these investments, France Télévisions plays a central role in supporting cultural events to promote all genres and all the arts, as demonstrated by this partnership with the Palace of Versailles.







PART V | THE EXHIBITION PATRONS

DIOR

Christian Dior is the couturier of the dream. Ever since the foundation of his couture house in 1946, which cemented its reputation with the New Look revolution, his visionary spirit has brought a special lustre to the notion of elegance. He wrote that *“Fashion, in short, stems from a dream, and a dream is an escape”*. Season after season, the brand’s outstanding legacy is reimagined by its different Creative Directors – from haute couture to fragrances, from jewellery to lifestyle – who showcase this passion for excellence on the international stage. This vibrant energy, is currently being taken to ever greater heights by Jonathan Anderson’s bold vision.

Staying true to this commitment to creativity, Dior undertakes a wide range of patronage initiatives to support the arts and promote cultural heritage around the world. In France, this commitment is reflected in several major initiatives to preserve and showcase iconic sites.

Among these are the bonds forged between the Palace of Versailles and Maison Dior which go back to the very origins of the couture house. In 1947, Monsieur Dior drew inspiration from the architectural splendour of the 17th and 18th centuries for new designs named *Trianon* and *Versailles*.

Continuing this historic alliance, Dior partners and supports large-scale restoration projects at this prestigious monument. These include the ceiling of the Diana Room, the Queen’s House and also the renovation of the Royal Chapel. These crucial projects bring together virtuoso artisans and embody the incomparable wealth of French know-how.

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www.littlegreene.fr

Little Greene has supported the exhibition by providing paint for the exhibition display areas.





Illumination of the Abbeys at the Gulf of Troarn in 1793, Claude-Louis Chénier, 1793, oil on canvas, in Chénier's Collection de Versailles, Paris. Photo by Christopher Smith



PART IV | PRACTICAL INFORMATION

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

ACCESS FROM PARIS

RER line C, to Versailles Château - Rive Gauche.

SNCF trains from Gare Montparnasse station to Versailles - Chantiers.

SNCF trains from Gare Saint-Lazare station to Versailles - Rive Droite.

Bus line 171 RATP bus from pont de Sèvres to Versailles - Place d'Armes.

Motorway A13 (to Rouen), Versailles - Château exit.

Car park on the Place d'Armes. A fee-paying car park; free for visitors with disabilities, and in the evening from 7.30 pm.

OPENING TIMES

The exhibition is open to the public daily except Mondays at the Grand Trianon:

Opening times: 12 pm – 6.30 pm

Last admission: 5.45 pm

Special opening on Monday 25 May

TICKET PRICES

The exhibition can be accessed with Passport tickets, a "1 year in Versailles" subscription card and by visitors entitled to free admission (visitors under 18, EU residents under 26, visitors with disabilities, jobseekers in France, etc.)

Passport (1 day) providing access to the palace, gardens, Estate of Trianon and temporary exhibitions:
€35 (full rate), €32 (reduced rate for European Economic Area residents or nationals)

Estate of Trianon ticket (from 12 pm):
€15 (full rate) €12 (reduced rate for European Economic Area residents or nationals)

VERSAILLES FOR ALL

Free admission to temporary exhibitions:

- for visitors with disabilities and their carers on presentation of supporting evidence.

- for visitors receiving minimum income welfare benefits on presentation of supporting evidence from the last six months.

Information and bookings: + 33 (0)1 30 83 75 05
and at versaillespourtous@chateauversailles.fr

AUDIOGUIDES

Tour of the Estate of Trianon: audioguides in 5 languages, and a French Sign Language version

THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES APP

The official Palace of Versailles app offers audio tours, an interactive map of the whole domain and full access to all the Palace of Versailles podcasts.











Avec la participation exceptionnelle de

BnF Bibliothèque nationale de France

Avec le mécénat de

DIOR

Avec le concours de

Little Greene

En partenariat média avec

LE FIGARO

marie claire

MON JARDIN

BeauxArts

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