

Exhibition from 4 May to 4 August 2019

CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES

Versailles

The
1 000

projects

of the kings'
architects



1660-1815



Palace of
Versailles
Exhibition
«Versailles.
Dreams of
architecture.
1660-1815 »

Welcome to the Versailles of Louis XIV!

Versailles, a "permanent building site"!

The Palace of Versailles was built by Louis XIII – originally as a **country house**, from which to go hunting in the neighbouring forests! Back then, the roofs were slate and the walls were made from brick and stone. **Louis XIV adored it and moved his Court here in**

1682. He carried out major works to extend and improve the residence. Architects wanted to adapt and modernise the Palace, but many of their projects were never built. **Discover Versailles as it never was – but could have been!**

Jules Hardouin-Mansart's "Grand Design"

CHIMNEY'S PROJECT

I'm Louis XIV... the "Sun King"!



Louis XIV, also known as the Sun King!

PROJECT FOR AN EXTRA FLOOR AND PROPOSED DOME

PAVILION ROOF

HERE IS A SIMPLER VERSION...

LANTERN

DOME

... AND A MORE IMPRESSIVE VERSION, WITH THE DOME, THE VIEW FROM THE COURTYARD WOULD HAVE BEEN MAGNIFICENT! I ADDED MORE ORNATE DECORATION... MORE REGAL, I WOULD SAY!

THE VARIOUS CHIMNEYS WERE TO BE INSTALLED ON THE EXTENSIVE ROOFS

Architect Jules Hardouin-Mansart. He designed the Chapel of Les Invalides in Paris.

I considered several proposals. I would have liked to add a floor, to make the façade majestic-looking.

Jules Hardouin-Mansart's projects never saw the light of day... Because of a lack of funds, but also because Louis XIV was tired of living in a permanent building site and did not wish to embark on yet more major works.

Delightful dream gardens

The gardens at Versailles have been redesigned many times. The painter **Charles Le Brun** drew a plan for fountains around Latona's Fountain. Latona is a character from Roman mythology, who was the mother of Apollo and Diana and was forced to flee by Juno... **Le Brun imagined 17 alcoves**, each containing statues representing gods and rivers... None of this was ever built, undoubtedly because of money problems and disagreements between the building specialists at Versailles.

LE BRUN PROJECT FOR HORSESHOE FOUNTAINS AROUND LATONA'S FOUNTAIN



SCULPTURES

FOUNTAINS

THE "HORSESHOE" AROUND THE FOUNTAIN, MARKING THE TRANSITION BETWEEN THE UPPER PART AND THE LOWER PART OF THE GARDENS.

NEPTUNE

ONE OF THE SCULPTURE PROPOSED BY LE BRUN



THE TRIDENT, NEPTUNE'S FAVORITE ACCESSORY!

NEPTUNE, THE GOD OF THE SEA, WAS ONE OF LATONA'S PROTECTORS: THANKS TO HIM, SHE WAS ABLE TO FIND REFUGE ON THE ISLANDS OF DELOS AND GIVE BIRTH TO APOLLO AND DIANA.

Charles Le Brun

A royal style of architecture

In Louis XIV's time, stone was commonly used to lend prestige. "Classical" architecture was preferred: columns, pilasters (like a column, but rectangular and attached to a wall), finials (a stone ornamentation resembling a flame-topped urn), etc.

How do you propose a project to the king?

The architects submitted their best designs, and often models in wood, to the king and the superintendent. It was all very formal! The king really liked to present these projects to his entourage...

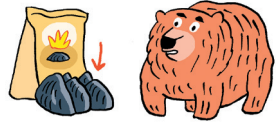


GAME

REBUS

Which character, close to Louis XIV, played an important role during the works? To find out, solve this rebus...

Solution page 8



Louis XV'S "Grand Project"

From despair to hope

Work came to a halt following the death of Louis XIV in 1715. Later, in the middle of the 18th century, architect Ange-Jacques Gabriel presented his "Grand Project" to Louis XV...

PROJECT TO REBUILD THE FAÇADES OVERLOOKING THE COURTYARD OF THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES IN 1759

"GIANT ORDER": THE COLUMNS ROSE SEVERAL STOREYS HIGH

THE ROOF IS HIDDEN BY A BALUSTRADE

CHECK OUT THIS IMPRESSIVE RECTANGULAR COURTYARD... THIS IS WHAT PEOPLE WERE ABLE TO SEE FROM OUTSIDE!

DOME

DO YOU REMEMBER? JULES HARDOWN-MANSART HAD SUGGESTED AN IDENTICAL DOME TO LOUIS XIV. NO DOUBT THAT'S WHERE GABRIEL GOT THE IDEA...

King Louis XV, known as "the Beloved". He was passionate about science!

I would like to rebuild the town-facing side of the Palace.

click!

Architect Ange-Jacques Gabriel. Among other projects, he built Place de la Concorde, in Paris, and the Petit Trianon and Opera House at Versailles!

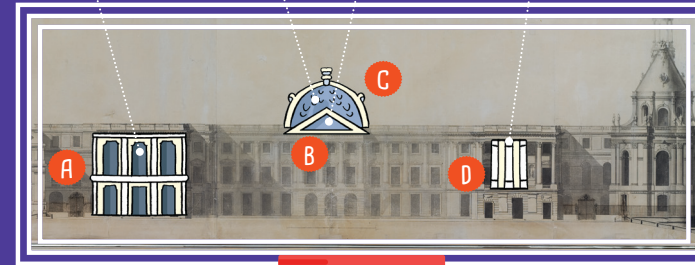
GAME

IN THE ARCHITECT'S SHOES!

Put these architecture terms in the right place to correctly describe Ange-Jacques Gabriel's project...

- Colonnade
- Dome
- Pediment
- Pavilion

Solution page 8



GARDEN SIDE

A little more privacy

Louis XV wanted things to be a bit simpler. But also a bit quieter! To achieve this, he had the chambers and other small rooms redesigned... He felt more at ease there than in the grand apartments of his great-grandfather Louis XIV, where Court life was conducted!

I'm a part of the "Grand Project" that did get build.



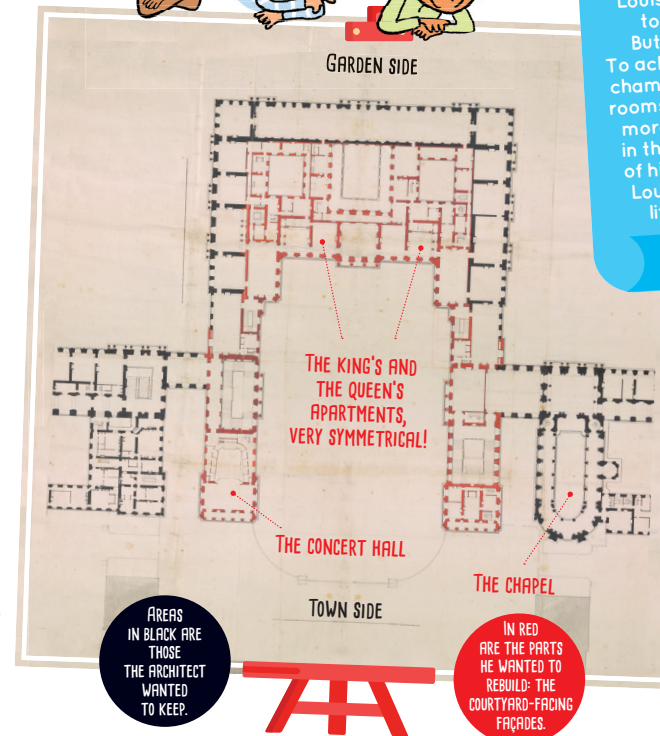
GAME

PUZZLE

I replaced the Government Wing...

I feature a large staircase, whose construction was completed in 1985... Who am I?

Solution page 8



AREAS IN BLACK ARE THOSE THE ARCHITECT WANTED TO KEEP.

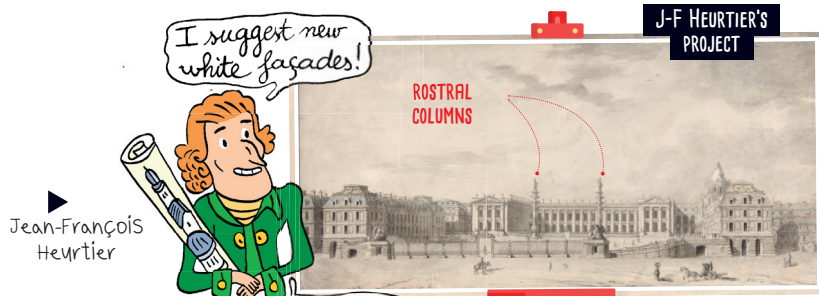
IN RED ARE THE PARTS HE WANTED TO REBUILD: THE COURTYARD-FACING FAÇADES.

This "Grand Project" effectively began with the construction of the New Wing beside the chapel... But it was interrupted by the death of Louis XV in 1774.

Louis XVI launches his architecture competition

Motivated architects

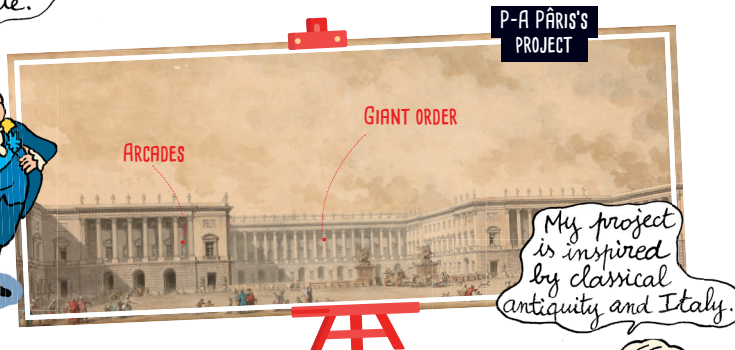
By the time Louis XVI became king, the Palace was in need of modernisation and harmonisation. So, together with his Director-General of Buildings, the Comte d'Angiviller, he launched a grand competition! The architects came up with very different projects in response to this call for ideas...



And two huge rostral columns around the gate.

The columns create a wonderful play of light and shadow!

LOUIS XVI.
Born and married in Versailles, he spent almost all of his time there!



Crazy plans... cut short!

Some of the projects were completely unrealistic, such as Boullée's! The architect suggested a utopian monument – a fanciful construction... And then, in 1789, the French Revolution happened, whereupon all the works taking place at Versailles were interrupted.

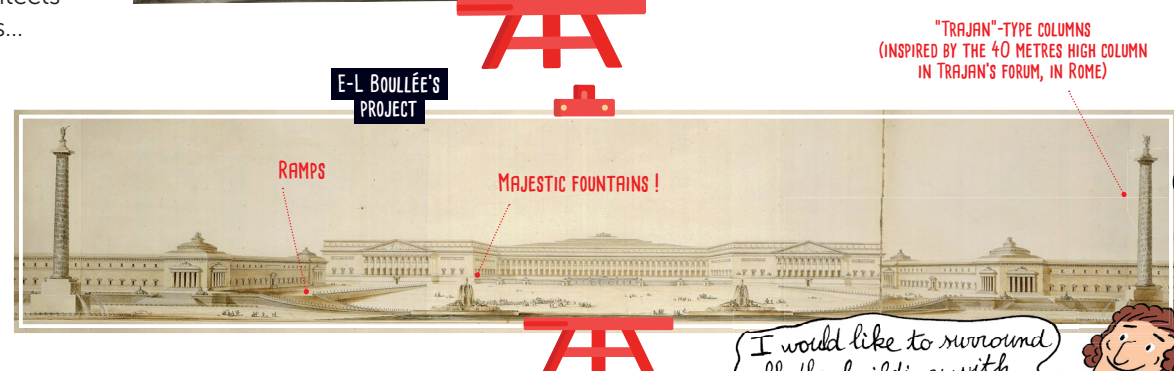
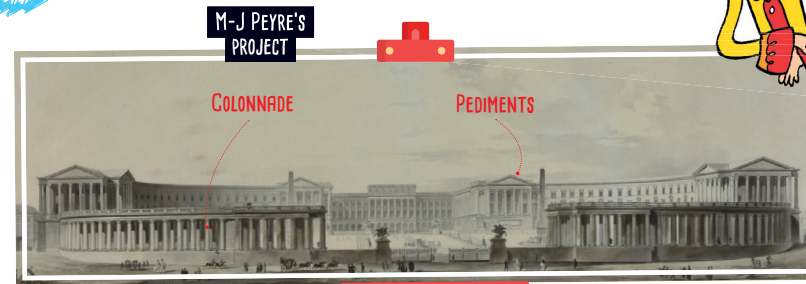
I was inspired by Bernini's Colonnade around St. Peter's Square in Rome, Italy.



Marie-Joseph Peyre

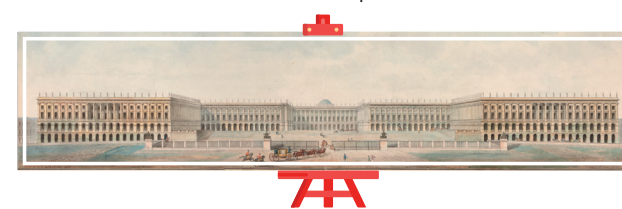
Long live the Greeks and Romans

Here, too, it's clear the architects drew inspiration from classical antiquity: columns, monumental staircases like you'd find in a Greek temple, imposing architecture, the desire for symmetry and straight lines, etc.



What happened next?

In the early 19th century, the Emperor Napoleon planned to restore Versailles so that he could move in there. As a result, there were lots of projects, such as those proposed by Alexandre Dufour and Pierre Fontaine. But then Napoleon went off to war in 1812...



And so the work was abandoned. In 1814, the "old wing" was demolished by Louis XVIII. The Dufour Pavilion was built in its place, but it wasn't actually finished until ... 2016!

KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED!

From the exhibition documents, find which projects feature the following:

GAME

Solution page 8



1. The python Snake



2. The Emperor's Carriage



3. Statues of horses

QUIZ

GAME

You'll find the answers to this quiz in the exhibition and in this booklet...
Off you go!

1 Why did Louis XIII build the first residence at Versailles?

- To go hunting in the local forests.
- To be able to see his Versailles cousins more often.
- To get some fresh air: he was asthmatic.

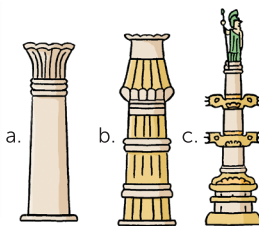
2 Who was Le Vau?

- Louis XIV's favourite sculptor.
- One of Louis XIV's main architects.
- The painter who did the best-known portrait of Louis XIV.

3 Who was Jacques V Gabriel, the father of Ange-Jacques Gabriel?

- The Court baker.
- Louis XV's best friend.
- His son's predecessor as Versailles architect.

4 Which of these three illustrations is of a rostral column?



5 Who was the Comte d'Angivillier?

- Louis XVI's stonemason.
- The last Director-General of the King's Buildings.
- Versailles' fountains expert.

6 After the French Revolution, where were Versailles' artworks moved to?

- The Palace of Fontainebleau.
- Les Invalides.
- The Louvre.



Solutions to the games: Rebus: Colbert! (Coal/Bear) One of Louis XIV's ministers. As superintendent of the King's buildings, he often preferred to save money rather than pay for the projects of the architect Louis Le Vau... When Colbert died, Louvois became the new superintendent. His favourite architect was Jules Hardouin-Mansart. **In the architect's shoes:** A: Pavillon, B: Pediment, C: Dome, D: Colonnade. **Puzzle:** the New Wing, now called the Gabriel Wing! **Keep your eyes peeled:** 1. In the sculptures planned by Le Brun for the horseshoe fountains. 2. In a project for the façade by Alexandre Dufour and Pierre Fontaine. 3. At the entrance to the Palace, in the project by Pierre Adrien Pâris. **Quiz:** 1. a; 2. b; 3. c; 4. c; 5. b; 6. c.

Practical information

Where? The Palace of Versailles, Upper Stone Gallery, North Wing. Entry to the Palace and to exhibitions is free for European Union residents aged under 26! **When?** From 4 May to 4 August 2019. The Palace is open every day, except Mondays and 1 May, from 9 am to 6.30 pm. **To find out more, please visit:**

www.chateauversailles.fr



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Directeur : jean-jacques.benezech@bayardmedia.fr. Coordinatrice : Adélaïde Jeanson. Textes : Lucie de La Héronnière.

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