

# VIRTUALLY VERSAILLES OPENS IN HONG KONG ON 19 APRIL 2023

For the French May Arts Festival's 30th anniversary

Versailles, 17 April 2023  
Press release

The *Virtually Versailles* exhibition runs from 19 April to 9 July 2023 at Hong Kong's Heritage Museum for the 30th anniversary of the French May Arts Festival, one of Asia's biggest cultural highlights. Designed as an exploratory taster of the Palace, the *Virtually Versailles* immersive experience sets out to lead audiences deep into the heart of Versailles through ground-breaking technology: augmented and virtual reality, connected bikes and 360-degree projections.



Following on from Singapore in 2018 and Shanghai in 2021, the Heritage Museum in Hong Kong welcomes the next *Virtually Versailles* immersive exhibition from 19 April 2023 to mark the 30th anniversary of the French May Arts Festival.

Designed as an interactive, smell- and sound-filled whirlwind tour of the Palace and its grounds, visitors wander through 360-degree digital projections of some of Versailles' most iconic spaces: the Hall of Mirrors, the Royal Opera, the Gallery of Great Battles, and the Mercury and Venus Rooms. Members of the public can also hop on a connected bike for a fun tour of Versailles' gardens, or get close with masterpieces from the Versailles art collections thanks to the "Versailles VR" virtual reality experience developed in partnership with Google Arts and Culture.

The Palace of Versailles aims to continue bringing the *Virtually Versailles* exhibition to new regions around the world, inspiring as many as possible to come and explore Versailles, its history and collections. From 28 July 2023, an adapted version of the experience will land in Macao to get local audiences dreaming of a trip to Versailles itself.

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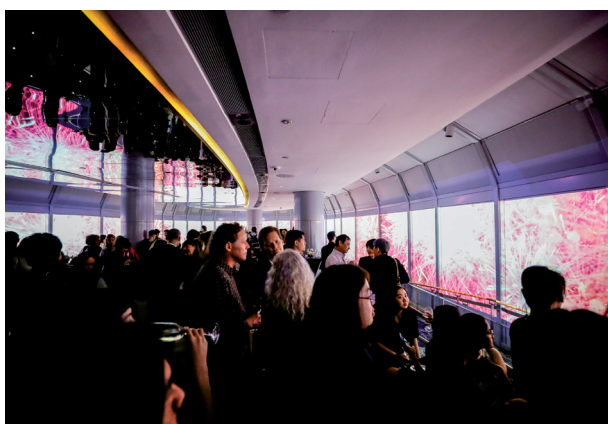
## THE VIRTUALLY VERSAILLES EXPERIENCE IN HONG KONG

### INTRODUCTION



Visitors are plunged into the beating heart of Versailles from the moment they step into the exhibition, passing through the Palace's virtual metal gates as if they were greeted by **the voice of Louis XIV himself**. Commissioned by the BETC agency for CANAL+'s upcoming *Versailles* series and recreated by Voxygen scientists and Palace of Versailles historians, the Sun King's voice rings out for the first time, 300 years after his death.

A unique fragrance is released into the air to deepen the immersive experience: the orange blossom-infused *Royal Delight*, inspired by Louis XIV's favourite flower and created by **master perfumer Francis Kurkdjian** exclusively for the Palace of Versailles.



### TIME TRAVEL

**3D reconstructions** unfold, illustrating how the Palace of Versailles was built, from Louis XIII's 17th-century hunting lodge to the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, bringing to life the sheer complexity of the site and its spaces in a matter of minutes.

### SPLENDOURS

This section takes a closer look at Versailles' most symbolic spaces, offering up a **spectacular, fully immersive 360-degree overview** via LED screens. Visitors are free to wander through the Hall of Mirrors, the Royal Opera, the Gallery of Great Battles, and the Mercury and Venus Rooms as if they were there.



## STYLE

Gathering over 60,000 paintings, sculptures and works of art, the Palace of Versailles is home to one of France's most extensive collections, and has reigned supreme as a shining embodiment of French art since the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

In this section, an **interactive gallery** gives visitors the opportunity to interact with the artwork through 3D replicas and virtual puzzles, offering up an historical and iconographical snapshot of the leading figures and events that shaped the history of France from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## NATURE AT VERSAILLES

This leg of the experience takes a closer look at Versailles' sweeping grounds, home to one of the largest outdoor sculpture museums. **Thanks to the connected bikes and expansive curved screens**, visitors are plunged into an astonishing new way of exploring the spaces in an interactive tour of the gardens' most iconic spots — from the grounds at the Queen's Hamlet to the Grand Trianon's French gardens.



## VERSAILLES VR

Visitors are treated to the “**Versailles VR: The Palace Is Yours**” **virtual reality experience** developed in partnership with Google Arts and Culture. Headsets in place, members of the public are left to stroll around the State Apartments and Hall of Mirrors, soaking up new and exclusive cultural content while manipulating paintings, sculptures and furniture to view them all in a whole new light.



## A DAY AT VERSAILLES

Make yourself right at home at Versailles. **The final space serves up a 360-degree screening** that captures the magic of a single day at the estate. Sweeping views and intimate interiors, performances, fountains and fireworks are brought to life in ultra-high definition for this last panoramic screening.

For more information, visit [chateauversailles.fr](http://chateauversailles.fr)



## VIRTUALLY VERSAILLES, THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE FRENCH MAY ARTS FESTIVAL

Launched in 1993, the French May Arts Festival is one of Asia’s biggest cultural events, featuring a two-month line-up of over 100 things to see and do. Now iconic on Hong Kong’s arts scene, the festival draws in over 200,000 visitors every year. The French May Arts Festival sets out to cover everything, everywhere, for the benefit of all. Each year, the event platforms a broad range of different art forms, from heritage, contemporary art, painting and design to classical music, hip hop dance, film and circus arts. Shows and performances take place in different venues and districts across town, including the unlikeliest and most unexpected of spaces.

The French May Arts Festival aims to provide a little something for everyone in the community by rolling out educational schemes, talks, guided tours, workshops and masterclasses for young people and disadvantaged groups.

International in scale yet firmly local in spirit, this festival is a key part of what makes this Asian city so unique and special.

In 2023, the French May Arts Festival is celebrating 30 years of transformative action at the heart of Hong Kong’s arts scene. With this year’s “PULSARTE 2023, East meets West” theme, Hong Kong and France join forces, inviting visitors to transcend borders with the epic *Virtually Versailles* exhibition at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum.

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