



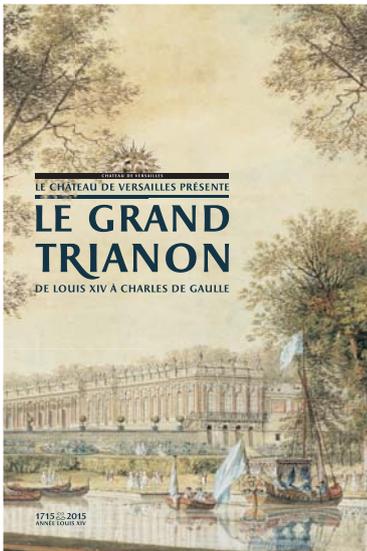
CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES

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ANNÉE LOUIS XIV

PRESS RELEASE

THE GRAND TRIANON FROM LOUIS XIV TO CHARLES DE GAULLE 18TH JUNE - 8TH NOVEMBER 2015

GRAND TRIANON



IN PARALLEL WITH THE RESTORATION WORK ON THE GRAND TRIANON, STARTED IN JANUARY 2015, THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES IS HOLDING AN EXHIBITION THAT WILL TRACE THE HISTORY OF THE PALACE FROM ITS CONSTRUCTION UP TO 1960. PLANS, ENGRAVINGS AND DRAWINGS EVOKE THE HISTORY OF THE MODIFICATIONS AND CHANGES MADE TO THE BUILDING, WHILE BUSTS AND PORTRAITS DEPICT THOSE WHO LIVED IN IT.

THE GRAND TRIANON: A PRIVATE PALACE FOR THE SEAT OF POWER

SITUATED IN THE NORTH-WEST CORNER OF THE PARK OF THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES, on land that once belonged to a village purchased by Louis XIV, the current Grand Trianon sits on the site of an initial palace built in 1670 by Louis Le Vau: the Porcelain Trianon. This small palace was designed mainly to house the love relations between Louis XIV and the Marquise de Montespan, and got its name from the 'Chinese-style' blue and white porcelain that covered it. It was destroyed in 1687 and replaced by the Marble Trianon, later called the Grand Trianon, which remains today. The building was the work of Jules Hardouin-Mansart and was given the name 'Marble' because of the Rance marble columns on the portico and the red Languedoc marble pilasters decorated with white Carrara marble capitals. The Grand Trianon was Louis XIV's private estate and a palace for leisure, where he entertained the ladies of the court with shows and parties. It has retained its 17th-century decoration, wood panelling and paintings depicting the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, in perfect harmony with the light ambience of this country house.

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All the images of the exhibition available at
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THE GRAND TRIANON WAS RELATIVELY LITTLE USED BY LOUIS XV, who nevertheless spent a while living there with the Marquise de Pompadour. During the French Revolution its collections were dispersed. In 1804 it became the Imperial Palace, when Napoleon restored its lustre and fully refurbished it for his marriage with the Empress Marie-Louise. The palace was inhabited for the last time by King Louis-Philippe, who housed his entire family there and somewhat modified the building to make it more comfortable. It was turned into a museum at the end of the 19th century and filled with various motley objects, and it was only in the 20th century that the Grand Trianon regained its splendour and historical furnishings. Most recently, the birth of the French 5th Republic constituted a turning point for this estate, transforming it into a presidential residence destined to host foreign Heads of State.

CURATOR

Jérémie Benoît, Head
Curator at the Palace of
Trianon

EXHIBITION DESIGN

Jérôme Dumoux

THE EXHIBITION

A COLLECTION OF PLANS, ENGRAVINGS AND DRAWINGS reveal the modifications and changes made to the Grand Trianon over the course of history. Painted masterpieces from Trianon, commissioned in 1688 by Louis XIV or in 1811 by Napoleon, and portraits of those who lived in the Palace recreate the atmosphere of smaller rooms centred around furniture designed for intimacy, like for example the Emperor's pedestal surrounded by the chairs from the Hall of Mirrors, or the chair belonging to Princess Clémentine d'Orléans, the daughter of Louis-Philippe. Fascinating objects such as the recently restored ivory kiosk by Barrau and the vase of the Imperial Hunt by Swebach embellish the exhibition. Three desk chairs very similar in form are spread throughout the exhibition: two were used by Napoleon and the third belonged to General De Gaulle. They are symbolic of the permanent presence of power in the palace of Trianon and forerun the second part of the exhibition that will be held in 2016, and will be devoted to the history of the Grand Trianon from 1960 to today.

DURING THE 1960S and thanks to André Malraux, Minister for Culture at the time, General de Gaulle decided to launch an extensive programme to renovate the palace in terms of its historical furnishings, aiming to transform it into a presidential residence for the needs of the French 5th Republic. The future exhibition will use various items and memories from the first President of the 5th Republic to review the major role played by Trianon in international relations. From the 1960s to the 1990s the palace, which at the time hosted visitors to France in one wing, and housed the French President in Trianon-sous-Bois, was the location of grand and sumptuous receptions. After many years, in 2014, the tradition was renewed when the President of the Republic François Hollande received the President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping, for a private dinner.

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