



1613



2013

CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES

ANNÉE LE NÔTRE

A green and white map of the formal gardens of the Palace of Versailles, showing the symmetrical layout of paths, lawns, and circular features.

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INTRODUCTION

TO MARK THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF ANDRÉ LE NÔTRE, throughout 2013, the Palace of Versailles will be paying tribute to the gardener to Louis XIV, architect, outstanding landscape designer, but also a well-informed art collector, friend and confidant of the King whose artistry continues to provide inspiration to designers throughout the world.

RESTORATIONS, EXHIBITIONS AND SHOWS WILL HONOUR LE NÔTRE'S GENIUS AND HIS MASTERPIECE, THE GARDENS OF VERSAILLES.

PART I

ANDRÉ LE NÔTRE (1613-1700)

Part I — André Le Nôtre (1613-1700)

A MAJOR FIGURE OF VERSAILLES



Carlo Maratta
Portrait of André Le Nôtre
1680

ANDRÉ LE NÔTRE WAS BORN AT THE TUILERIES IN PARIS on 12 March 1613 into a family of royal gardeners and garden designers. After studies in history, geometry, agronomy and hydrology, Le Nôtre joined the workshop of Simon Vouet, painter for Louis XIII. There, he learned the arts of painting and architecture, and improved his knowledge of optics and perspective. He also met Jacques Sarrazin, Louis Lerambert, Pierre Mignard and Charles Le Brun.

LE NÔTRE STARTED HIS CAREER IN 1635 AS GARDENER TO GASTON D'ORLÉANS, Louis XIV's uncle. Having worked in the monarchy's service since 1637, he became the King's designer in 1643 and was appointed Controller-General of the royal buildings, gardens, arts and manufactures in 1657. His work for Fouquet, revealed at the grand event of Vaux-Le-Vicomte (in 1661), and engravings disseminated at the same time, earned him an international reputation. In 1662, he began the preliminary work for Versailles at the same time as the work on the Chantilly gardens for the Grand Condé.

AT VERSAILLES, THE TOWN, PARK, AVENUES AND PATHS then formed a single entity at the centre of which was the Palace. From the terraces of the Palace to the far ends of the Grand Park, Le Nôtre refashioned the space by giving it a dual axis (east-west and north-south) and turning the Grand Canal into the park's main hub with an open-ended perspective. Le Nôtre redesigned and refashioned the terraces, parterres and groves, transforming them into a masterpiece of symmetry and fantasy. The secondary walks lead to the groves which they delimit and which have many surprises in store for visitors! The parterres, main walks and intersections are dotted with statues and yew trees pruned into astonishing shapes, making Versailles a focal point for topiary art.

THIS CLEVER BALANCE IS REPRODUCED WITH UNENDING IMAGINATION IN THE GARDENER'S OTHER WORKS: Saint-Cloud for the Duc d'Orléans, Sceaux for Colbert, Clagny for Madame de Montespan... In addition to Versailles, Le Nôtre did other work for the King: the gardens of Fontainebleau (starting in 1642), the Tuileries gardens, the grand terrace of Saint-Germain, the major avenues to leave Paris (Champs-Élysées) or go to Versailles, as well as the Trianon gardens.

ENNOBLED BY THE KING, LE NÔTRE HELD HIS FAVOUR UNTIL THE VERY END AND – SOMETHING WHICH IS EXTREMELY RARE – HIS FRIENDSHIP. In 1693, upon Le Nôtre's retirement at the age of 80, the artist – who was a great art lover and collector, gave the King the most prestigious works of art he had. He died in his Tuileries home in Paris on 15 September 1700 at the age of 87, leaving behind him a world-unique heritage which has left its mark on theoreticians, garden designers and town planners all the way to the present day.

PART II

PROGRAMME FOR 2013

Part II — Programme for 2013

THE LATONA FOUNTAIN AND PARTERRE JANUARY 2013 – APRIL 2014

IN 2013, A MAJOR RESTORATION OPERATION WILL TAKE PLACE ALONG VERSAILLES' MAIN GARDEN PATHWAY: the Latona fountain and parterre will be restored **through the support of Fondation Philanthropia**. At the heart of the park's Grand Perspective, this unique and innovative project will highlight the craftsmanship involved in this restoration work. For the first time, the millions of visitors who walk along the paths of the park each year will be able to see the progress of the work throughout the restoration of this architectural masterpiece of Le Nôtre's gardens.

THE LATONA FOUNTAIN



WITH ITS MARBLE TIERS, ITS RICH SCULPTED MARBLE AND LEAD DECORATIONS AND ITS INTRICATE WATER FEATURES, the Latona Fountain is probably the most famous work in the gardens of Versailles. Located in the centre of the Grand Perspective, it marks the start of the Royal Walk leading to the Apollo fountain. It is the lynch pin of the hydraulic system of the park of Versailles: the water collected in its underground galleries supplies the other fountains of the park, including the central jet of the Apollo fountain.

TODAY, MORE THAN THREE CENTURIES AFTER ITS CREATION, its restoration has become indispensable. Urgent work is required on the fountain's infrastructure, piping system and sculpted decorations. The alterations have affected the general stability of the installation and the overall water-tightness of the basin. The sculpted decorations and marble features have also become very fragile. The fountain's internal and external piping networks are also damaged in numerous places – one of the reasons for the current malfunctions of the hydraulic system.

THE RESTORATION WILL START AT THE BEGINNING OF 2013. It will be done according to traditional methods and will last sixteen months. Numerous craftsmen, art masters and engineers will take part in the operation. A visitor lookout will be built around the restoration site. It will make it possible to see the progress of the work and promote exchanges with visitors.

THIS INITIATIVE WILL ALSO PROMOTE THE VALUING AND HAND-DOWN of specific know-how, now rare and fragile, and support the young craftsmen's endeavours and spirit of excellence. The work fits into Fondation Philanthropia's goal of promoting fine craftsmanship (gilding, cabinetmaking, embroidery, marble work and metal work) in today's and tomorrow's world. The perpetuation of these practices depends on their apprenticeship by young generations and is important for the future. Fondation Philanthropia wishes to support a pool of talents capable of perpetuating these skills, which form an integral part of our intangible heritage, and, by the same token, help young craftsmen to find work.

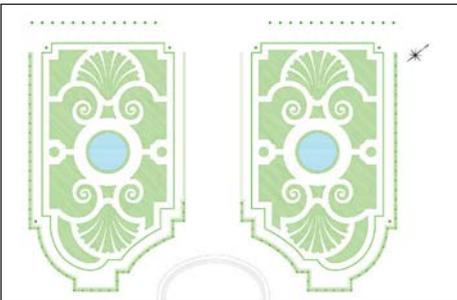


LATONA PARTERRES

THROUGH THE RESTORATION OF THE LATONA PARTERRES, WHICH IS COMPLEMENTARY TO THAT OF THE FOUNTAIN, the heart of the garden will retrieve its original aspect, as designed by André Le Nôtre. Fondation Philanthropia wishes to take part in the endeavour to restore the beauty of the gardens as designed by the King's gardener.

THE LATONA PARTERRES ARE LOCATED ON THE ESTATE'S MAJOR COMPOSITION AXIS (east-west), which starts at the palace and extends to the Grand Canal. This axis governed the creation of the small park as a whole.

CREATED IN 1665, THESE PATTERNED LAWN PARTERRES, with scrolls and shell designs, retained their original aspect until the beginning of the 19th century. Their transformation into simple lawn compartments lined with flower beds started in 1818 and is still visible today. These vast parterres cover an area of 1.35 hectares.



THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE OF THE WORK BEING CARRIED OUT ON THE PARTERRES OF VERSAILLES complies with the general garden restoration project initiated in 1989, which plans to restore the parts closest to the Palace, or in the same field of vision, to their original Louis XIV aspect. The period's abundant and highly precious iconographic documentation makes it possible to precisely define, in particular for the Latona parterres, the entire layouts and their positions on the ground, as well as the composition details as they appear on the particular reference plans. Moreover, iconographic sources (engravings and paintings), as well as written sources and descriptions from the period, make it possible to understand the plant layout and overall volumes.

Part II — Programme for 2013

THE WATER THEATRE GROVE JANUARY 2013 – APRIL 2014

IN THE GARDEN OF THE WATER THEATRE GROVE, CONTEMPORARY DESIGN WILL BE GIVEN PRIDE OF PLACE. The central area of this former outdoor theatre will be reinterpreted by landscape designer Louis Benech and artist Jean-Michel Othoniel.

THE WATER THEATRE GROVE



THE WATER THEATRE GROVE, NOW THE GREEN ROUND GROVE, is located at the centre of the north fringe of the garden of Versailles, between the Star Grove and the Grove of the Three Fountains. It was created by Le Nôtre between 1671 and 1674 with the help of hydraulic engineers Francine and Denis. The fountains are the work of Le Brun. Originally designed as a somewhat concealed grove, the Water Theatre used to come into view progressively, playing on the charm of gradual discovery. Modified in 1704, then becoming seriously run down, the Water Theatre was destroyed in 1775 and replaced with a pattern of paths and lawns, which earned it the name of Green Round Grove. Square-shaped like most Versailles groves, it comprises a central part of 1.5 hectares which is currently empty and used for logistical purposes.

THE INNER AREA of the Water Theatre, which forms a 120 m x 120 m square inscribed in a 180 m x 180 m square, will be redesigned by Louis Benech and Jean-Michel Othoniel.

The project, which will conform with the spirit of the gardens designed by Le Nôtre, will also take account of the ecology of the site, sustainable development issues, accessibility, maintenance costs, safety and the inclusion of water features.

INDEED, THE LANDSCAPE DESIGNER'S AIM is to create a welcoming grove which remains permanently open, unlike the other historical groves which are often closed due to their fragility. This redesigned area will enable visitors to enjoy the intimacy of these salons built on the King's orders, but in a contemporary way: they will be ample, more spontaneous and easily accessible. Visitors will be drawn into a rhythmic walk punctuated with pauses in the shade of evergreen oaks before reaching a large clearing of light and water. The idea is the same as that of the original grove of 1671, but with a new layout. The grove will be divided into a larger central area and an upper stage with two pools. Nevertheless, in order to give an account of what once was, without mythology, mimetism, or diversions, the work of Le Nôtre will be evoked through curious perspectives and recurring rhythms. In addition, the plant beds will mark out and set the dimensions of the disappeared grove.

LOUIS BENECH HAS CHOSEN TO WORK WITH JEAN-MICHEL OTHONIEL for the creation of the sculptures. On the water mirrors of the grove, the artist will place four gilded sculptural fountains. These abstract works composed of interlaced glass arabesques evoke the moving body. They were inspired by the ballets held by Louis XIV and Raoul-Auger Feuillet's 1701 publication *L'Art de décrire la danse*. The gracefulness of their powerful jets gives rise to minuets and rigaudons like filigree in space. These works are dynamic calligraphies which echo the embroidered parterres of Versailles. The garden, the body and sculpture are thus closely linked.



LOUIS BENECH'S PROJECT manifests a real desire for discretion, in order to blend into this exceptional site. Invisible from the Palace and the park, the trees chosen will not exceed a height of 17 metres, as stipulated by Le Nôtre, and will be in perfect harmony with the rings of yews in the neighbouring grove, that of Apollo's Baths. Likewise, from a visual point of view, the diagonals will be closed like those of the other groves.

THE NEED FOR TOTAL REVERSIBILITY was also a main requirement in the project. It was absolutely essential to preserve the remnants of the masonry and hydraulic works still present on the site. The layout of the new networks takes this into account. The rest of the works are also totally designed to be installed "on top" of the vestiges. The entire steel basin will be dismountable and even recyclable; its self-supporting base avoids the need for any foundations.

REVIVED HERITAGE

THE GILDED CHILDREN FOUNTAIN JANUARY 2013 – APRIL 2014



THE GILDED CHILDREN FOUNTAIN (or Children's Island Fountain) is set on the western rim of the Water Theatre Grove; it was created by Jules Hardouin-Mansart in 1709, during the work campaign conducted in the gardens. At that time, a certain number of secondary paths were created on the edges of the groves, opening up the rather concealed secretive green areas which Le Nôtre had designed.

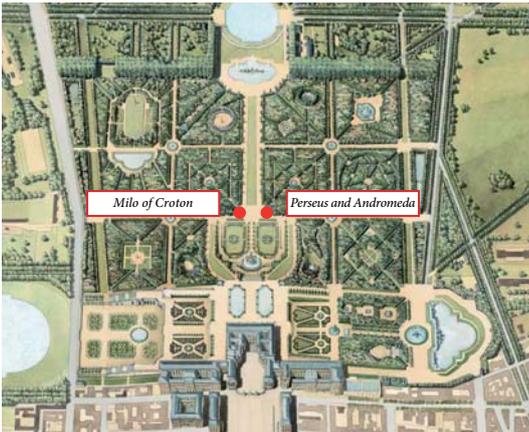
THE CENTRE OF THIS SMALL ELLIPTICAL FOUNTAIN is decorated with a group of eight cherubs. These lead figures sculpted by Jean Hardy had originally been created for the fountains of the park of Marly, from which they were removed and transported to Versailles. For three centuries, the fountain preserved its original solid brick structure laid on a clay base and covered with sheets of lead.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS STRUCTURAL MASONRY, combined with insufficient ground support, have given rise to recurring leaks. The deformation of the brick work has caused cracks and openings in the sheets of lead, despite the expansion joints inserted in the structure. The sculpted lead figures, their supporting and presentation bases (lead rocks), as well as the various piping elements have also undergone alterations.

THE RESTORATION OF THE FOUNTAIN will add the final touch to the restoration of the Water Theatre Grove, which will once again become an integral part of the gardens of Versailles.

RETURN OF TWO MONUMENTAL SCULPTURES

THE GARDENS COMPRISE SCULPTURES, IN ADDITION TO THE TREES, paths and groves. Thus, in the year dedicated to Le Nôtre, it was natural to undertake a project focused on the sculptural heritage by reproducing, according to the originals, two sculpture groups produced by one of the greatest artists under the reign of Louis XIV, Pierre Puget.



"MILO OF CROTON" AND "PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA" were removed from the Château gardens in the 19th century and placed at the Louvre, where visitors can still admire them today in the Cour Puget. The production of casts and their installation on the site of the two original works will revive the baroque spirit of the gardens of Le Nôtre and contribute to restoring the place of honour which Puget held at Versailles under Louis XIV.

THE SCULPTURE GROUPS WILL BE PUT BACK IN PLACE AT THE START OF THE GREEN CARPET, an element of Le Nôtre's Grand Perspective. This perspective is of major importance: spanning 3,200 metres, it constitutes the backbone of the landscape architecture embodied by the gardens of Versailles.

Milo of Croton

AMONG THE ATHLETES OF ANTIQUITY WHOSE NAMES WERE ENGRAVED IN MARBLE at Olympia, Milo of Croton is the most famous. He won five men's wrestling titles. In addition to his victories at Olympia, he won 7 titles at the Pythian Games, 9 at the Nemean Games and 10 at the Isthmian Games. He gathered numerous crowns throughout his athletic career.

PUGET'S SCULPTURE REPRESENT THE BEWILDERING DEATH OF MILO OF CROTON. Having come across a felled oak tree on a roadside, he found himself trapped when he tried to split it with his hand. Unable to free his hand, the old man who had wanted to prove his strength was unable to escape when he was attacked by wolves which, in Puget's sculpture, were replaced with a lion, deemed more noble by the sculptor.

Being the sculptor's major work, started in 1671 and completed in 1683, *Milo* expresses all of the artist's dramatic intensity, unlike the academic figures commonly found at Versailles. There is something of Michelangelo and Bernini in this emblematic figure of French baroque sculpture! The twisted body, the natural aspect of the trunk, and the figure's expression of intense pain are fascinating.

Perseus and Andromeda



FOR THE SCULPTURAL GROUP HE PRODUCED BETWEEN 1678 AND 1684 FOR KING LOUIS XIV, Puget chose to illustrate the theme of Perseus freeing Andromeda. According to the legend, sung by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, then by Apollodorus in his *Bibliotheca*, Andromeda's mother had dared compare her beauty with that of the Nereids, Neptune's sea-nymphs and attendants. The god ordered that the young woman be chained to a rock and abandoned to a sea monster which was terrorising the region, in retribution for her mother's crime. This is when Perseus, son of Jupiter and Danae appeared. On his return home, after having killed the Gorgon Medusa, he saw the young woman tied to a rock and immediately fell in love with her. The young woman's father agreed to give him his daughter in marriage if he managed to free her. Puget's sculpture represents the outcome of the fight: The victorious Perseus holds the princess in his arms. At their feet, we can see the head of Medusa, mentioned in Ovid's text.

By playing with imbalances – the gigantic Perseus and small Andromeda – and inverted movements, Puget brings together in this work all the energy he is known for. It exudes both strength and sensuality. This group expresses the same audaciousness and the same twisted movement as the Milo of Croton. Indeed, Andromeda was the only nude woman's figure he sculpted. In the features of the powerful Perseus, we can see the King himself liberating France, symbolised by Andromeda. The sculpture of *Perseus and Andromeda* appears to be an allegory of strength and the salutary role of the absolute monarch. This extolling of royal power was sure to please Louis XIV. Indeed, Louvois wrote the following to the artist: "The King has seen your Andromeda, which highly pleased his majesty".

Pierre Puget, France's Michelangelo (1620-1694)



A FAMOUS SCULPTOR, ARCHITECT AND BAROQUE PAINTER FROM MARSEILLE, Puget produced his two most famous works in response to Colbert's commission of 1670: *Milo of Croton* (1671-1683) and *Perseus and Andromeda* (1679-1684). Enchanted by their fiery spirit, the King gave them pride of place: the two groups were placed face to face at the start of the Green Carpet on the Grand Perspective.

The artist's independent temperament and his tormented nature, as well as his audacious style and sense of tragedy lead a large number of 18th and 19th century authors to hail him as "France's Michelangelo". His tormented genius is expressed in works such as the Hôtel de Ville's *Atlantes* and *Hercules Fighting the Lernaean Hydra* (1659).

PUGET'S ART, which was closer to Bernini's Italian baroque style than to French classicism, nevertheless pleased the King. With the support of the King's ministers – Colbert, then Louvois – Puget produced numerous other works for Versailles.

ROYAL PERSPECTIVES AND PARTERRES



IN 2013, THE GARDENERS OF VERSAILLES will continue their work of reconstituting the spaces designed by Le Nôtre in the 17th century, focusing their efforts on restoring the splendour of Versailles' parterres.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY OF VERSAILLES, the Mortemets royal paths will be restored to their historic configuration, offering a new walking circuit.

THE REPLANTING OF THE MARLY ROYAL PATH, initiated in November 2012, will continue.

THE GARDEN IN WORDS AND PICTURES

THE "LE NÔTRE" PRIZE FOR GARDEN BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

DURING THE "RENDEZ-VOUS AUX JARDINS", THE 3RD "LIRE AU JARDIN, FÊTE DU LIVRE ET DE LA PRESSE JARDIN" garden book & magazine event will take place in the Petit Trianon, providing a new opportunity to meet key personalities and authors in the gardening world.

THE LE NÔTRE PRIZE, CHAIRED BY DIDIER DECOIN, will reward the best work in various categories: "Esprit de Jardin" (reflections on gardens or garden presentation works), "Graine de Jardin" (children's publications) and "Jardin Pratique" (gardening advice). The public will thus get an idea of the diversity of garden publications and be able to go through gardening guides, children's books, beautifully illustrated books, as well as essays on gardening, old treatises, books on botany and horticulture, books of photographs and numerous magazines.

THE GARDENS OF VERSAILLES, A MOBILE APP

TO ACCOMPANY VISITORS IN THE DISCOVERY OF ANDRÉ LE NÔTRE'S MAJOR WORK, the "Gardens of Versailles" mobile app will be released in spring 2013. This application will reveal the gardens of Versailles from the viewpoint of those who inspired them or keep them alive: gardeners, historians, fountain engineers, writers, designers. It will serve as a companion for a unique visit, combining a customized tour, the sharing of one's best moments of the visit and a 3D map. Visitors will have a choice between a guided tour led by the Palace curators and gardeners, a fun tour specially designed for children, and a tour revealing a personality's viewpoint on the masterpiece of André Le Nôtre. Visitors will be prompted to choose their tour and customise it through additional modules, selected out of a catalogue which will be enhanced throughout the year dedicated to Le Nôtre. Visitors will thus be able to do a "customised" tour, in keeping with their main interests and walking pace. They will also be able to share their impressions and memories of their visit, which their family and friends will be able to integrate in their own tour of the gardens.

THIS APPLICATION WILL BE CREATED WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE PARTNERSHIP between Orange and the Palace of Versailles dating back to 2009: VersaillesLab. When the first version was designed, tour guide app technologies such as geolocation and augmented reality were still in their experimental phase. This second version will be further enhanced with innovative technology, offering customised tours and wider possibilities of sharing the tour experience. It will be available in spring 2013 for visitors equipped with iPhone and Android smartphones. A high-definition version for tablets will also be offered to visitors during the year dedicated to Le Nôtre.

Part II — Programme for 2013

THE VERSAILLES GARDENS: A SETTING FOR CELEBRATIONS SPRING – SUMMER 2013



FESTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCES ARE MORE THAN JUST AN ORNAMENT TO THE GARDENS; they have been its soul and purpose since the days of Louis XIV.

IN 2013, THE GARDENS OF VERSAILLES will resonate with the music of the 17th century or "Grand Siècle", the detonations of fireworks and water shows in the pools and fountains.

CONCERTS, BALLET, THEATRE AND OPERAS will crown Le Nôtre's anniversary at Versailles in June and July.

THE "GRANDES EAUX" WATER DISPLAYS



The Musical Fountains Show

DISCOVER THE FOUNTAINS AND GROVES AND THEIR WATER JETS to the sound of music. Several tours enable visitors to discover the garden's more secretive sites and masterpieces. In keeping with the spirit of Versailles' creators, the masterpieces created for the gardens over a period of 200 years are being revived.

Every Saturday and Sunday from 30 March to 27 October 2013. Exceptional dates: 29 March, 8 & 9 May, 15 August. Every Tuesday from 21 May to 25 June 2013, from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The Musical Gardens

DURING THE SUMMER, TO ENHANCE YOUR TOUR OF THE GARDENS, the groves and preserved areas of the park around the palace are accessible every Tuesday, from April to May, for a musical tour: a time to discover, with the gardeners of Versailles, the numerous statues which adorn the paths, in the shade of preserved areas of the park, at the heart of the French formal gardens designed by Le Nôtre.

Every Tuesday from 2 April to 14 May 2013 and from 2 July to 29 October 2013, 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The Fountains Night Show

When night falls, the royal garden of Louis XIV is transformed into a visual and musical tour where fountains and groves come alive with lights, water sprouts, and colours. Again this year, light artists and set designers present surprising installations.

From 14 June to 14 September, on Friday 14 June and 12 July, and on Saturdays from 22 June to 14 September (except 13 July), 9 p.m. to 11:20 p.m.

Part II — Programme for 2013

GIUSEPPE PENONE AT VERSAILLES 11 JUNE – 31 OCTOBER 2013



IN 2013, FOR ITS ANNUAL CONTEMPORARY ART EVENT, the Palace of Versailles will welcome Giuseppe Penone. The artist – a leader in the Arte Povera movement – will punctuate Le Nôtre's gardens with his sculptures of trees in which plants and minerals come together to reveal their essence.

"BEING GIVEN THE POSSIBILITY OF LETTING MY WORK DIALOGUE WITH THAT OF LE NÔTRE at Versailles is a great privilege.

The garden is an emblematic place which sums up Western thought on the relationship between man and nature.

Laid out to exalt the power of man, instead it underlines the force and power of nature which minimises the action of man who needs to perform unceasing maintenance work to preserve it.

The complexity of the garden design suggests the multiple ways of seeing it, and its extension and grandiose aspect contrast with the tiny dimensions of the person walking around it. The individual disappears in the garden to be subsumed by the collective human spirit which generated such an organisation of nature.

My work provokes a similar thought in me: the objective mimicry of the artworks cancels out my action as a sculptor and focuses attention on the extraordinary intelligence of plant growth and on nature's perfect aesthetic expression." **GIUSEPPE PENONE**

EXHIBITION

CURATOR:

Alfred Pacquement
Director of the
National Museum of Modern Art,
Centre Georges Pompidou

GIUSEPPE PENONE

BORN IN 1947 IN GARESSIO, ITALY, Giuseppe Penone taught at the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris from 1997 to 2012.

THE EXHIBITION CURATOR ALFRED PACQUEMENT WROTE THE FOLLOWING ON THE ARTIST: "A major figure on the Italian [art] scene of the 1970s, he is a tireless experimenter who exposes the surface of the elements and delves into the skin of things. The mystery of the tree's growth is laid bare, while all sorts of traces and imprints are created by the artist on the materials he explores.

"Touching, understanding a shape or an object, is as if one had covered it with imprints", he writes. At the heart of his approach, is the impact of the touch or gaze (the eye, the hand and the finger are recurring themes), or the effects of the breath coming from the lungs, which will give rise to a curious form. Man forms part of nature like in the myth of Daphne, where the nymph is transformed into a laurel tree. Penone combines elements drawn from nature with fragments of the human body in a novel and vibrant synthesis. A hugely magnified eyelid or the imprint of a finger become pretexts for graphic formulas which invade the space. A fingernail is reproduced in gigantic

proportions, and his repeated fingerprints fill the wall. Marble, just like the tree trunk, reveals its anatomy of sinuous veins, while elsewhere the brain reveals its landscape. All of the works presented keep their mystery, which is revealed by the artist”.

IN 2000, GIUSEPPE PENONE PUBLISHED *Respirer l'ombre* at the École des Beaux-Arts, re-printed in 2004 and 2009. In 2004, he exhibited at the Drawing Center in New York, and Centre Pompidou in Paris; in 2006, he exhibited at the Museum Kurhaus Kleve and Fundacion La Caixa in Barcelona; in 2007, he represented Italy in the Italian pavilion at the Biennale di Venezia. In 2008, an exhibition was dedicated to his work at the Villa Medici in Rome; another more recent one took place at the MAC's Grand-Hornu (2010). In 2012, he was invited to take part in the Documenta 13 exhibition in Kassel (Germany), and to exhibit a new work at the Whitechapel Gallery in London for a period of one year, within the scope of the Bloomberg Commission.

Part II — Programme for 2013

THE KING'S HERB GARDEN AT THE GRAND TRIANON 2 JULY – 29 SEPTEMBER 2013

EXHIBITION



THE FLAMBOYANCE AND DIVERSITY OF THE SPECIES IN THE TRIANON GARDENS are attributable to an ongoing passion for botany that held sway at court as from the 17th century. This summer, an exhibition will unveil the jewels of the Paris Natural History Museum. Initiated by Nicolas Robert for Gaston d'Orléans, who bequeathed it to his nephew Louis XIV, it was subsequently continued by *the painters of plants in the King's Garden*, Jean Joubert, Claude Aubriet and Madeleine Basseporte. Until Louis XVI's reign, these artists came to Versailles to paint its rarest flowers.

AS THE TRIANON IS THE PALACE OF FLORA, a few portraits of women holding flowers and a few paintings of flowers will be included in the exhibition, which will be held in the Cotelle Gallery, as well as in the Salon des Jardins, located in the former Perfume room of the Porcelain Trianon. At the time, the flower beds were planted with blue, white and red flowers, the colours of the King and Virgin Mary.

EXHIBITION CURATORS:

Jérémie Benoit
Curator at the Château of Versailles,
Gabriela Lami
doctoral student at the University of
Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, engaged
in artistic gardening within the
Trianon garden service of the
Château of Versailles

HAVING BEEN A GARDEN OF FRAGRANCES IN THE 17TH CENTURY, with tuberous plants, lilies and jasmines, the 18th century gardens, at the time when Louis XV started the construction of the Petit Trianon around the French Garden planted with China asters, became a place for botanical studies, where one could find plants from all over the world, including aloes and prickly pear cactuses.

EXHIBITION HELD THANKS TO THE EXCEPTIONAL PARTICIPATION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.



HISTORIC FLOWER DISPLAY

TO ACCOMPANY THIS PRESENTATION, the Trianon gardeners will put on a historic flower display in the parterres: dark blue hyacinths, daffodils from Provence, narcissi from Constantinople, etc.

Part II — Programme for 2013

THE LABYRINTH GROVE

EXHIBITION AT THE MUNICIPAL LIBRARY OF VERSAILLES

**EXHIBITION
CURATOR:**

Élisabeth Maisonnier
Curator at the National Library of
Versailles

**ASSOCIATE
CURATORS:**

Raphaël Masson
Heritage curator, Assistant Director
of the Versailles Research Centre

Alexandre Maral,
Curator in charge of the sculptures of
the Château of Versailles

Timothée Chevalier
Ecole Normale graduate



DESIGNED BY ANDRÉ LE NÔTRE AND CHARLES PERRAULT TO educate the Dauphin, the Grove of the Labyrinth was one of Versailles' most imposing groves. Almost forty fountains decorated with 333 painted lead animals depicted Aesop's fables in the heart of a maze of trellises and rockeries. The grove was destroyed when the gardens were replanted in 1775-1776, and replaced with the current Queen's Grove.

THE FORMER GROVE WILL BE BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE IN AN EXHIBITION at the Versailles municipal library, which once housed Louis XV's Foreign Ministry, located near the Palace of Versailles.

THIS EXHIBITION WILL ALSO FOCUS ON THE TOPIC OF THE LABYRINTH in a variety of contexts – mythological (the myth of Daedalus), spiritual, literary (La Fontaine's *Fables*, Racine's *Phèdre*) and pictorial contexts – as well as in garden art.

Part II — Programme for 2013

ANDRÉ LE NÔTRE IN PERSPECTIVE. 1613-2013 22 OCTOBER 2013 – 24 FEBRUARY 2014

AS THE YEAR'S "GRAND FINALE", this exhibition dispels false myths and offers a surprising new image of the man, his art and his influence.

Did Fouquet really discover Le Nôtre? No. Did Le Nôtre really earn his fame at the age of 45? No. Was his know-how limited to "gardening"? No.

Gardener, designer, architect, engineer and hydraulics specialist, landscaper and town planner, collector, spatial magician, André Le Nôtre, a close friend of the King, transformed the dreams of princes into reality. The exhibition also explores his fascinating modernity in today's world.

AS CONTROLLER-GENERAL OF THE ROYAL BUILDINGS, Le Nôtre had major responsibilities under Colbert. His closeness to Louis XIV and his competence in this key position enabled him to bring to perfection the French formal garden style. His creations were imitated, but never equalled. Their boldness and magnitude – stemming from the coming together of a site, a patron, and a visionary with unrivalled imagination and know-how – toppled the conceptions of the period and fascinated his contemporaries. In the name of Versailles – his masterpiece – artists from all disciplines and all periods, all the way to the present day, have been viewing him as their spiritual father.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE ART OF LE NÔTRE, HIS "GENIUS" AND HIS "SECRET" WILL BE REVEALED. His projects, as well as his field work, backed by superb documents produced by him and his team, will be analysed and explained in a precise, entertaining and original way.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, his way of working will be revealed: the problems he had to deal with, the solutions he found, the scientific, technical and human resources he had to call upon to meet the challenges and transform each project into a unique creation.

For the first time, it will be possible to grasp the multiple aspects of an art which, rather than being that of the gardens of a period, is that of a model whose influence goes far beyond what we can imagine in terms of time and space – from his immediate colleagues to contemporary urbanists, from the United States to the outermost bounds of Asia.

COMBINING SERIOUS SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE WITH THE PLEASURE OF DISCOVERY, and demonstrating while entertaining, such are the principles behind the setting of this exhibition. The masterpieces of the Le Nôtre collection will arouse admiration, while his original drawings will arouse excitement, followed by surprise upon discovering unexpected works.

EXHIBITION CURATORS:

Béatrix Saule
Director of the Musée National des
Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon

Patricia Bouchenot-Déchin
Researcher, Centre de Recherche du
Château de Versailles & Laboratoire
de l'École d'Architecture de Versailles

Georges Farhat
Associate Professor, University of
Toronto & Laboratoire de l'École
d'Architecture de Versailles

PART III

THE PARK OF VERSAILLES

A COLOSSAL UNDERTAKING

FROM THE CENTRAL WINDOW OF THE HALL OF MIRRORS, visitors look out onto the Grand Perspective which leads the eye from the Water Parterre to the horizon. This original perspective, which pre-dates the reign of Louis XIV, was modified and prolonged by the gardener André Le Nôtre, as he widened the Royal Walk and had the Grand Canal built. This vast perspective runs from the front of the Palace of Versailles to the park gate.



THE PARK OF VERSAILLES IS THE ARCHETYPE OF THE FORMAL GARDEN built according to a stringent geometric architectural plan. Designed to set off the buildings' architecture, the Versailles and Trianon estate is composed of three separate parts:

- The gardens and their flower beds, for enjoyment purposes.
- The groves, which are transitional structures between the parterres and the tall trees which delimit the view. The groves, which are enuine outdoor salons concealed at the heart of wooded spaces in the small park, are designed for strolling and entertainment.
- The forest, cut by wide straight paths and star-shaped intersections, designed for hunting.

LOUIS XIV LOVED THE GARDENS. Until his death, he personally directed their laying-out; he often walked through them, showing them to distinguished guests and foreign ambassadors... Sumptuous celebrations took place in the gardens and the King drew up a preserved itinerary on which he indicated the *Way of showing the Gardens of Versailles*.

IN 1661, LOUIS XIV COMMISSIONED ANDRÉ LE NÔTRE WITH THE DESIGN AND LAYING OUT OF THE GARDENS OF VERSAILLES which, in his view, were just as important as the Château. The work started at the same time as the building of the palace and lasted some forty years. But André Le Nôtre did not work alone. Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Superintendent of the King's Buildings, directed the project from 1664 to 1683; Charles Le Brun, appointed First Painter to the King in January 1664, produced the drawings for a large number of statues and fountains; and, a little later, the architect Jules Hardouin-Mansart drew up increasingly sober scenic plans and built the Orangerie. Lastly, the King had all the projects submitted to him and wanted the "details of everything".

THE CREATION OF THE GARDENS REQUIRED ENORMOUS WORK. Vast amounts of earth had to be shifted to lay out the flower beds, the Orangerie, the fountains and the Canal, where previously only woods, grasslands and marshes were. The earth was transported in wheelbarrows, the trees were conveyed by cart from all the provinces of France and thousands of men, sometimes whole regiments, took part in this vast enterprise.

THE GARDENS ARE LAID OUT AROUND TWO MAJOR AXES which intersect at right angles at the terrace, offering visitors vast perspectives:

- the north-south axis from the Neptune Fountain to the Swiss ornamental lake.
 - the east-west axis from the façade of the Hall of Mirrors to the end of the Grand Canal.
- This is Versailles' major perspective, which Le Nôtre opened up towards infinity. It leads the eye to the horizon and stretches out 3,200 metres, from the façade of the Château to the Park gate.

SINCE 1992, THE GARDENS HAVE BEEN GRADUALLY REPLANTED, and after the devastating storm of December 1999, the work speeded up to such an extent that quite a few sections have already been restored to their original appearance.

THE WATER PARTERRES



THESE TWO LARGE RECTANGULAR POOLS REFLECT THE SUNLIGHT and light up the façade of the Hall of Mirrors. Le Nôtre regarded light as an element of the decor, in the same way as the greenery; in his compositions, he balanced out areas of light and shade.

THE TWO WATER PARTERRES appear to be a prolongation of the façade of the Château. Modified several times, the two ornamental pools found their definitive form only in 1685. The sculptures were designed and directed by Charles Le Brun: each pool is decorated with four reclining statues symbolising the rivers of France: the Loire and the Loiret, the Rhône and the Saône, the Seine and the Marne, the Garonne and the Dordogne; to which are added four nymphs and four groups of children. From 1687 to 1694, the Keller brothers, ironmasters, cast in bronze the models supplied by the sculptors, from Tuby to Coysevox, at the Arsenal of Paris.

THE WATER PARTERRES CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM THE TWO FOUNTAINS, known as the Animal Combats Fountains, completed in 1687, which flank the large flight of steps leading down to the Latona Fountain. Six allegorical statues form the decor: Air, Evening, Noon, Daybreak, Spring and Water. They were part of Colbert's "great commission" of marble statues ordered in 1674.

THE GROVES

THE QUEEN'S GROVE

This grove replaced the famous Labyrinth that illustrated at its crossroads thirty-nine fables of Aesop with lead animals in fountains painted in natural colours. Built in 1669 after an idea of fairy-tale writer Charles Perrault, it was destroyed during the replanting of the gardens in 1775-1776, and replaced with the Queen's Grove. The present sculpted decor was installed in the late 19th century.

THE BALLROOM

Laid out by André Le Nôtre between 1680 and 1683, the open-air Ballroom is also called the Rocaille Grove, because of the millstones and the sea shells brought back from the coasts of Africa and Madagascar over which the water pours down in a cascade. The easily accessible marble "island" in the centre was used for dancing, an art in which Louis XIV excelled. The musicians played above the cascade and, facing them, an amphitheatre with grassy rows of seats enabled the spectators to sit down.

THE GIRANDOLE GROVE

The Girandole Grove, a pendant to the Dauphin's Grove, replaced old quincunxes in the south planted in the reign of Louis XVI. It has changed very little since it was installed, and is decorated with sculptures on tapering plinths commissioned by the Superintendent of Finance, Nicolas Fouquet, for his château of Vaux-le-Vicomte and executed in Rome based on models by Poussin.

**THE KING'S GARDEN**

The Mirror Fountain was located at the extremity of a large ornamental lake called Cupid's Island or the Royal Island (1674) on which were tested scale models of warships. Completely neglected during the Revolutionary years, it was redesigned on the order of Louis XVIII in 1817, when the architect Dufour laid out the King's Garden, an enclosed garden laid out in the English style, planted with superb tree species most of which, unfortunately, were blown down in the great storm of 1999. All that remains today is the original layout of the Mirror Fountain.

THE CHESTNUTS ROOM

Laid out between 1680 and 1683, this grove was then called the Gallery of Antiques or Water Gallery, and had a central path lined with orange trees, yews, ponds and water jets. Along this path stood a line of twenty-four antique statues. Entirely redesigned in 1704, the grove became the Chestnuts Room, adorned with eight antique busts and two statues.

THE COLONNADE

Built from 1685 on by Jules Hardouin-Mansart, the Colonnade replaced a grove designed by Le Nôtre in 1679: the Springs grove. A peristyle accompanies the 32 marble columns. The triangular tympani between the arcades are decorated with low relief carvings depicting children. The arch stones are adorned with heads of nymphs and naiads. The famous group in the centre on a circular marble base was executed between 1678 and 1699 by Girardon: *Proserpine Ravished by Pluto*.

THE GROVE OF DOMES

Very frequently redesigned, this grove changed names with each new modification of its decor. Designed by Le Nôtre in 1675, it was known as the Grove of Fame in 1677-1678, owing to the statue of Fame in the centre of the fountain which spouted a jet of water from its trumpet. Between 1684 and 1704, the groups from Apollo's Baths were placed here, giving it its new name in this period: the Grove of Apollo's Baths. But in 1677, Jules Hardouin-Mansart built two pavilions of white marble surmounted by domes, giving the grove its present name, although the two buildings were destroyed in 1820.

**THE ENCELADE GROVE**

The Encelade Fountain was sculpted in lead by Gaspard Marsy between 1675 and 1677. The subject stems from the myth of the fall of the Titans who were buried under the rocks of Mount Olympus, which they tried to climb despite Jupiter's prohibition. The sculptor has depicted a giant half buried under the rocks and in the throes of death.

THE OBELISK GROVE

The Obelisk fountain was built by Jules Hardouin-Mansart in 1704, on the site of the old Festive Room or Council Room, laid out by Le Nôtre in 1671. Decorative features in moulded lead were used at the time to adorn the fountains of the garden of the Grand Trianon.

THE DAUPHIN'S GROVE

Along with the Girandole, the Dauphin's Grove, also known as "The Two Groves", is one of the very first designed by André Le Nôtre, around 1660. At the end of the 17th century, the sculptor Théodon completed the series of sculptures dedicated to the seasons and mythological gods.

THE STAR GROVE

This grove was one of the first to be laid out by André Le Nôtre in the northern part of the Garden, in 1666. The star-shaped pattern of the principal paths, the labyrinth of internal paths, with the centre laid out as a 'greenery room' enlivened by the jets of the fountain and enclosed by trellises, make it a genuine open-air salon.

**THE GROVE OF APOLLO'S BATHS**

This grove, formerly called the Marsh, was laid out during the reign of Louis XIV, between 1670 and 1673, at the request of Madame de Montespan, it is said. In 1704, Jules Hardouin-Mansart designed a new grove for this site, to host the sculptural group of the Sun Horses and that of Apollo served by the Nymphs. These groups were sculpted between 1664 and 1672 to adorn the famous Grotto of Tethys, and when the latter was destroyed to build the north wing of the Château, they were transferred to the Grove of the Domes. Hardouin-Mansart then designed this site to highlight these particularly remarkable works. In 1776, one year after the order given by Louis XVI to replant the park, the

painter Hubert Robert was commissioned to produce a new layout. The grove which he designed, completed in 1778, was laid out in the then fashionable style of English-Chinese gardens. This is the grove which has survived to our day.

THE GREEN ROUND GROVE

To the north of the gardens, between the Green Round (the former Water Theatre Grove) and the Star (the former Water Mountain Grove), hidden away from the most frequented walks, there is a circular pool with a rock in its centre. The Children's Island, a light-hearted masterpiece, was sculpted by Hardy in 1710. Six nude children play with flowers on the rock, while two others splash about in the water.

**THE GROVE OF THE THREE FOUNTAINS**

Designed by Le Nôtre in 1677, this grove is the only one mentioned on an old plan as being "from the King's thoughts". It consists of three terraces each with a different fountain. Restored in 2005, it has recovered its magnificent composition and the water features requested by the King: in the lower fountain, the jets form a fleur-de-lys; in the centre, they form vertical spouts and a vault of water; above, a column of water is formed by 140 jets. This imposing water column supplies the lower fountains. Well hidden by the trellises, this grove was laid out so that the King, aged 39, then suffering from gout, could reach it seated in a chair with castors and get up the grassy access ramps.

THE GROVE OF THE ARC DE TRIOMPHE

Completed between 1679 and 1683, this grove has only one fountain, La France Triomphante, the work of sculptor Jean-Baptiste Tuby. However, during the reign of Louis XIV, a large triumphal arch was built here, giving its name to this 'green salon'. Two nearby fountains – La Gloire and La Victoire – have not survived and were probably melted down in the 19th century.

THE FOUNTAINS: THE REIGN OF WATER

EVEN MORE SO THAN THE PLANTED ARCHITECTURAL PATTERNS AND THE GROVES, water in all its forms is the favoured ornament of 'French-style' gardens: water cascading in some groves, water spouting from fountains, the vast expanses of calm water reflecting the sky and the light such as the Water Parterre and the Grand Canal.



THE LATONA FOUNTAIN

Inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the Latona fountain illustrates the legend of Apollo's mother and Diana protecting her children against the insults of the peasants of Lycia, and calling on Jupiter to avenge them. He heard their plea and transformed them into frogs and lizards. The central marble group sculpted by the Marsy brothers represents Latona and her children. In 1670, in the original work, the group was on a rock. It was surrounded by six frogs peeping out of the water, and twenty-four others set on the lawn around the fountain. The goddess then looked towards the Château. This arrangement was modified by Jules Hardouin-Mansart between 1687 and 1689. The rock was replaced with a concentric marble base and the Latona group henceforth gazes towards the Grand Canal. The Latona fountain is prolonged by a parterre holding the two lizard pools.

THE BACCHUS FOUNTAIN

Also called the Autumn fountain, it is the same size as the three other fountains dedicated to the seasons, near the Royal Walk. Bacchus, a figure of Roman mythology, teaches the cultivation of the vine throughout the world. The god of wine and drunkenness, he symbolises the harvest and is surrounded by little satyrs, half child and half goat.

THE MIRROR FOUNTAIN

Louis XIV commissioned the Mirror Fountain around 1702. Built opposite the King's Garden, the sculpture of the two dragons flanking the pool was entrusted to Jean Hardy. Set on three levels, the fountain leads to three paths and four antique-style statues, including one of Apollo.

THE SATURN FOUNTAIN

In perfect symmetry with the Flora fountain, the Saturn Fountain, located in the south end, was sculpted by François Girardon and symbolises winter. Saturn is seated on a throne in the centre, surrounded by small cupids, on an island studded with shellfish.



THE APOLLO FOUNTAIN

In 1636, under the reign of Louis XIII, there was a fountain here called the Swans Fountain, which Louis XIV decorated with the impressive and celebrated gilded lead group representing Apollo on his chariot. Sculpted by Tuby, after a drawing by Le Brun, it is inspired by the legend of Apollo, the sun god and emblem of the King. Tuby produced this monumental group between 1668 and 1670 at the Manufacture des Gobelins. It was then transported to Versailles and installed and gilded the following year.

THE FLORA FOUNTAIN

Located at the crossroads of several groves, including the Queen's Grove, the fountain of Flora – the Roman goddess of flowers, gardens and spring – symbolises the first season of the year. Sculpted by Tuby, she is represented with a crown of flowers in the centre of the fountain.

THE CERES FOUNTAIN

The square Ceres Fountain was laid out between 1672 and 1679 by Thomas Regnaudin, after a drawing by Charles Le Brun. Ceres, the Roman goddess of harvests, is seated on a bed of wheat sheaves, adorned with cornflowers and roses. Symbolising summer, the fountain forms a set with those of Bacchus, Flora and Saturn who represent the three other seasons.

THE NEPTUNE FOUNTAIN

The Neptune Fountain was built under the direction of Le Nôtre between 1679 and 1681, and was then called the “Pool below the Dragon” or the “Fir Tree Pool”. In 1736, Ange-Jacques Gabriel slightly modified its layout and in 1740, the sculptural decoration was installed. It consists of three groups: Neptune and Amphitrite, Proteus, and The Ocean God produced by Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne. The new fountain, officially opened by Louis XV, aroused admiration for the number, the force and the variety of the jets of water playing over the lead sculptures. It features ninety-nine jets of water that compose an extraordinary aquatic spectacle.

**THE DRAGON FOUNTAIN**

The Water Path begins with the half-moon of the Dragon Fountain which depicts one of the episodes of the legend of Apollo: the Python snake killed by an arrow shot by the young Apollo. The reptile is surrounded by dolphins and cupids armed with bows and arrows riding on swans. The principal water jet, which rises twenty-seven metres into the air, is the highest in the gardens of Versailles. On either side of this fountain restored in 1889, paths lead to two Groves: La France Triomphante and the Grove of the Three Fountains on the west side.

THE NYMPHS' BATH

Receiving the overflow from the Pyramid fountain, the cascade known as the Bath of Diana's Nymphs is adorned with low relief carvings of which the best known, cast in lead and previously gilded, and located on the supporting wall, is a work by Girardon (1668-1670). The others are works by Le Gros, Le Hongre and Magnier.

THE PYRAMID FOUNTAIN

Executed by the sculptor François Girardon from a drawing by Charles Le Brun, the Pyramid in the centre of the fountain took three years to complete. It consists of four superimposed lead vessels supported by lead tritons, dolphins and crayfish.

THE WALKS: WALLS OF GREENERY

BEYOND THE PARTERRES, the gardens are criss-crossed by a network of straight pathways laid out according to a geometric plan. In the 17th century, they were lined with hedges of hornbeam and elm trimmed to form great green walls. A few niches were set into these walls of greenery to hold statues.

**THE ROYAL WALK**

Also called the “Green Carpet”, because of the strip of lawn that runs down the middle, the Royal Walk is 335 metres long and 40 metres wide. It was laid down under Louis XIII, but Le Nôtre widened it and lined it with twelve statues and twelve vases, placed in symmetrical pairs. Most of them were works sent by the pupils of the Académie de France in Rome in the 17th century. On either side, paths lead off to the groves which strollers will discover as they walk along.



THE WATER WALK

According to his brother Charles, renowned for his tales, it was Claude Perrault, the architect, who designed this walk, also known as the “Marmousets” walk, a familiar derivation from “marmot”, a child. The promenade is flanked by twenty-two groups of bronze sculptures holding bowls made of Languedoc marble.

THE FLORA AND CERES WALK

Placed symmetrically to the Bacchus and Saturn fountains, the Ceres and Flora fountains respectively symbolise summer and spring. Flora, half-naked, reclines on a bed of flowers surrounded by cupids weaving garlands. The sculptor Tuby produced this group between 1672 and 1677. Ceres, holding a sickle and surrounded by cupids, lies on a bed of wheat sheaves. It is the work of the sculptor Regnaudin.

THE BACCHUS AND SATURN WALK

The Bacchus (autumn) and Saturn (winter) walks are punctuated by two pools whose centres are decorated with gilded lead sculptures. The first is the work of the Marsy brothers while the second was produced by Girardon. Along with the corresponding statues in the northern part of the garden, they symbolise the four seasons.

In his guide to the gardens, Louis XIV speaks of them in these terms: "On the other side, the Royal Walk, Apollo, the canal, the green groves, Flora, Saturn, Ceres on the right, Bacchus on the left".

THE GRAND CANAL



THE GRAND CANAL IS THE MOST ORIGINAL CREATION OF ANDRÉ LE NÔTRE, who transformed the east-west perspective into a long light-filled sheet of water. Its construction took eleven years, from 1668 to 1679. The Grand Canal, which is 1,670 metres long, was the setting for numerous nautical festivities and was used by a large number of boats. In 1669, Louis XIV brought in row-boats and model ships. In 1674, the Republic of Venice sent the King two gondolas and four gondoliers who lodged in a suite of buildings at the head of the Canal, since then known as Little Venice. In the summer, the King's fleet sailed along the Grand Canal, while skates and sleighs whizzed over its frozen waters in winter.

THE ORANGERIE



OVERLOOKED BY THE CHÂTEAU, THE ORANGERIE, WITH ITS WIDE SPACE, high trees and pure lines is one of Jules Hardouin-Mansart's greatest architectural achievements. Its orange trees from Portugal, Spain and Italy, lemon trees and pomegranate trees – some of which are over 200 years old – as well as oleanders and palm trees, are wintered indoors then brought out for the summer.

BUILT BETWEEN 1684 AND 1686 to replace the small orangery built by Le Vau in 1663, it consists of a central vaulted gallery 150 metres long, prolonged by two side galleries located under the stairways of the first and second Cent-Marches. The building is lit by large windows.

THE ORANGERIE PARTERRE covers three hectares and is visually prolonged by the Swiss ornamental lake. In the reign of Louis XIV, it was decorated with sculptures now kept at the Louvre. Consisting of four sections of lawn and a circular pool, in the summer it features 1,055 trees in containers, brought out in early spring.

PIÈCE D'EAU DES SUISSES / SWISS ORNAMENTAL LAKE



DUG TO EMBELLISH THE NORTH-SOUTH AXIS OF THE GARDENS, and used as a theatre for nautical spectacles under the Ancien Régime, this artificial lake replaced a marshy area known as the “stinking pond” which caused numerous illnesses among the inhabitants of Versailles.

GIVEN AN OCTAGONAL SHAPE IN 1665, it was enlarged around 1678 by the Swiss Guards and once again in 1682 when its extremities were made round. The earth removed during the work was used to create the King’s vegetable garden.

AT THE SOUTH END OF THE LAKE, an equestrian statue by Bernini depicting Louis XIV was installed. The figure was subsequently transformed into that of Marcus Curtius by François Girardon as the King did not regard it as flattering. Moreover, the King could reach his vegetable garden along paths lined with plane trees that are now two centuries old and a “royal gate” that still opens onto the ornamental lake.

KEY FIGURES

THE ESTATE OF VERSAILLES

Total area: 787 hectares, comprising the following:

- Grand Park: 428 hectares
- Trianon estate: 96 hectares
- Garden and groves (small park): 77 hectares
- Mortemets site: 66 hectares
- Marly estate: 53 hectares
- Swiss Ornamental Lake: 39 hectares
- Grand Canal: 24 hectares
- Place d'Armes: 4 hectares

THE GARDENS

PLANT STRUCTURES IN THE GARDENS

- 350,000 trees on the estate
- 40 km of hedgerows
- 32 hectares of lawn
- 43 km of walks
- 23 km of trellises
- 700 topiary elements with 67 different shapes
- 6,000 trees pruned regularly including 1,886 lime trees around the Grand Canal
- 300,000 flowers planted each year by the gardeners, of which 260,000 grown in the greenhouses of the estate.
- 1,500 trees in tubs in the Orangerie, including 900 orange trees.

EFFECTS OF THE STORMS OF 1990 AND 1999

- 1,500 trees felled in February 1990
- 10,000 trees destroyed in December 1999.

THE OPEN-AIR STATUARY

Sculptures in the Small Park (vases, fountain basins, pedestal carvings, statues, reliefs, mascarons, busts, candelabras, capitals, sculpture groups), of which:

- 235 vases
- 155 statues, 86 sculpture groups

POOLS AND FOUNTAINS

- 55 pools and fountains and over 600 water features
- 35 km of water pipes (90% cast iron and 10% lead)

52 gardeners and **11 water engineers** for the gardens of Versailles and the Trianon

PART IV

VISITOR INFORMATION

PLAN YOUR TOUR OF THE GARDENS

ACCESS

ON FOOT:

From the Latona Fountain and through the gates of the estate.

BY VEHICLE:

Through the Queen's Gate or Porte Saint Antoine. Car parks.

Note: Pay car park open from:

- 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. until 31 October (high season).
- 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. from 1 November to 31 March (low season).

ACCESS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

Free access to the park for vehicles transporting people with disabilities.

Lifts located at the top of the Northern parterre and at the Petite Venise gate.

Reserved parking spaces.

OPENING HOURS

UNTIL 31 OCTOBER (HIGH SEASON)

- Park open every day from 7 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.*
- Gardens open every day from 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.*
- Groves accessible only on days of Grandes Eaux musical fountain shows:
Tuesdays and weekends from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

1 NOVEMBER TO 31 MARCH (LOW SEASON)

- Park and Gardens open every day from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.*
- Groves closed.

** Except during exceptional events or bad weather. Please check on www.chateauversailles.fr before your visit.*

VISITING THE PARK AND GARDENS

Free admittance to the park every day of the year for pedestrians and cyclists.

Free admittance to the gardens, except on days of Grandes Eaux musical fountain shows:

Tuesdays and weekends until 28 October.

PRICES, GRANDES EAUX MUSICAL FOUNTAIN SHOWS

MUSICAL GARDENS

Every Tuesday from 2 April to 14 May 2013 and from 2 July to 29 October 2013, 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
€7.50 / €6.50 reduced rate

GRANDES EAUX MUSICAL FOUNTAIN SHOW

Every Saturday and Sunday from 30 March to 27 October 2013. Exceptional dates: 29 March, 8 & 9 May, 15 August. Every Tuesday from 21 May to 25 June 2013, from 9 am to 6:30 pm.
€8.50 / €6.50 reduced rate.

PURCHASE TICKETS:

- on site, at the entrance of the gardens, at the Grandes Eaux desks from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- online on www.chateauversailles-spectacles.fr

ON-SITE SERVICES

ELECTRIC VEHICLE RENTAL

Every day. Closed in January.
The vehicles hold up to 4 people.
6 vehicles specially designed for people in wheelchairs are available from the southern parterre.
€30 per hour
Information and booking: 01 39 66 97 66

TRANSPORT BY LITTLE TRAIN

Every day, except 25 December and 1 January.
Leaving from the Château, Petit Trianon, Grand Trianon and Petite Venise.
Two-way trip: €6.90; €5.30 reduced rate for under-18s;
free for children under 11.
One-way (return to the Château from the Petite Venise or the Trianon palaces): €3.70
Information and operating times: 01 39 54 22 00 or www.train-versailles.com

ROW-BOAT RENTAL ON THE GRAND CANAL

Every day. Closed December to February.
30 min: €11—1 hr: €15
Information, operating times and booking: 01 39 66 97 66

BICYCLE RENTAL

Every day from 10 a.m.
Closed December and January.
½ day: €15— full day: €17
Note: bicycles are only allowed in the Park.
Information and booking: 01 39 66 97 66

PONY RIDES FOR CHILDREN

Available from 15 March to 15 November:
- Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- during the autumn school break, every day from 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
30 min: €12.50—15 min: €7

SEGWAYS

Every day.

Guided tour to the Marie-Antoinette estate or around the Grand Canal (from the Queen's gate).

€35 / €55

Information and booking: 06 59 69 74 21

REDUCED RATES

Depending on the services, reduced rates are granted to mobility impaired persons and holders of "1 year in Versailles" passes or Versailles Passports.

VISITING COMFORT

WALKING TIMES

- From the Château of Versailles to the head of the Grand Canal (1,000 m): 15 min.
- From the Château of Versailles to the Trianon palaces and Marie-Antoinette estate (1,500 m): 25 min.
- From the Château of Versailles to the western tip of the Grand Canal (3,500 m): 60 min.

Picnics allowed in the Park and in dedicated areas of the Gardens.

Free toilets, accessible to disabled persons.

Note: Bicycles and dogs are not allowed in the Gardens.

RESTAURANTS

LA PETITE VENISE

Italian cuisine, tea room, terrace and take-away near the Grand Canal.

Open every day, except 25 December and in January.

01 39 53 25 69 www.lapetitevenise.com

LA FLOTTILLE

Restaurant, brasserie, tea room, terrace and take-away near the Grand Canal.

Open every day.

01 39 51 41 58 www.laflottille.fr

BRASSERIE DE LA GIRANDOLE

Terrace and take-away, located in the Girandole grove.

Open every day except Monday until end of October. Closed from November to March.

01 39 07 01 87

TAKE-AWAY

LA PARMENTIER DE VERSAILLES

Baked potatoes to take away.

Every day, except Monday.

LA BUVETTE DU DAUPHIN

Take-away, in the Dauphin Grove.

Until end of October: open every day, except Monday.

November to March: open only during school holidays, except Monday.