



THE SUN KING and THE COURT OF VERSAILLES JANE GARDINER

The Arts Society Fylde
Lowther Pavilion Theatre
5 June 2024 at 2.00pm

Louis XIV of France (1638-1715) - Le Roi Soleil - became king of France in 1643 and ruled for 72 years. The calamity of the Thirty Years War came to an end early in his reign and France became one of the leading power in Europe. Louis found time to support the work of composers such as Lully, writers such as Molière and Racine and surrounded himself with major political and military figures, including the great military engineer Vauban. As if this were not enough, he also, of course, commissioned the Palace of Versailles whose size and splendour make the gardens and palace one of the most visited tourist sites in the world.

Today's lecturer, Jane Gardiner - on her first visit to The Arts Society Fylde - suggests that the Sun King is now perhaps best remembered for the creation of Versailles. This immense chateau, which he built on the site of his father's old hunting lodge, became the seat of French government, the setting for all grand court ceremonial and the envy of every other European monarch. Jane will offer an introduction to the sumptuous state apartments, the vast gardens and pleasure pavilions, the spectacular entertainments which took place both inside and out, the collections of the King and the whole etiquette of life at one of the greatest courts in Europe.

JANE GARDINER

Jane Gardiner has an MA in History of Art from the University of London. She trained at the V&A and continues to lecture there; she was Senior Lecturer at Sotheby's Institute of Art for 17 years, becoming a Deputy Director of Sotheby's, UK. Jane has also lectured for the National Trust, the Art Fund, London University, Buckingham University, the Institut d'Études Supérieures des Arts in Paris, a private women's college in Saudi Arabia, on cruise ships and at antiques fairs and interior design conferences in America.



SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Louis XIV and Versailles, D de Marly, Batsford, 1987
Louis XIV, I Dunlop, Chatto & Windus, 1999
The Sun King, Nancy Mitford, Mermaid Books, 1983
Saint Simon at Versailles, L Norton (ed), Hamish Hamilton, 1980
Versailles, J M Pérouse de Montclos, Abbeville Press Inc. 1991
Versailles, G Van der Kemp, Sotheby/Philip Wilson, 1978
Louis XIV's Versailles, G Walton, Viking, 1986

*Image: Louis XIV of France, 1701,
Hyacinthe Rigaud (1659-1743), Museo del Prado, Madrid (public domain)*