

Manufacture Normand
Stoneware pottery since 1736

THE
**QUEEN'S
POT**

The secrets of a rebirth at the Palace of Versailles



Manufacture Normand // Press kit January 2020

THE SECRETS

of a reissue

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Which art craftsman has never caressed, even secretly, the idea of including his know-how in History, one that sometimes knows how to magnificently combine tradition, heritage and inheritance?

It took the restoration of the Queen's House in 2018 and this audacious proposal for the Château de Versailles made to our factory to see an exceptional piece of our heritage coming back to life.

From this unique Saint-Clement earthenware pot known as the *Queen's pot*, of which only one specimen had reached us, the Manufacture Normand has patiently and meticulously succeeded in reissuing a series that is in every way exceptional.

The following pages will tell you this fabulous story, the one that, together with the Château de Versailles, we strive day after day to preserve, conserve and pursue ...



Elisabeth Lebègue

Elisabeth Lebègue
Manufacture Normand
Labelled as a Living Heritage Company



THE SECRETS

of a manufacture



Founded in 1736, the Manufacture Normand is located in Saint Amand en Puisaye. This commune of the Nièvre has been known since the 14th century for the exceptional quality of its clay and pottery.

The oldest pottery in activity, it benefits from the label *Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant* (Living Heritage Company), a government recognition that distinguishes French companies with excellent know-how.

The takeover of Manufacture Normand in July 2017 by Elisabeth Lebègue has enabled this centuries-old House to strengthen its know-how and production.

With its creations always oriented towards the garden, food and ornamental sectors, the Manufacture has also developed a quality decoration department which today enables it to produce series for the largest and to adapt its production to special orders.

All the pieces of pottery are turned, glazed and stamped by hand.

With about fifteen employees, the Manufacture Normand allows its craftsmen to perpetuate the old gestures. All the pieces do pottery are turned, glazed and stamped by hand in its workshops.

The nobility of the materials, the richness of the shapes and the variety of colours make the Normand Manufacture the guarantor of unique, careful and innovative articles.

Manufacture Normand
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Funerary vase.
Sandstone with green glaze.
Song dynasty
(960 - 1127)

THE SECRETS *of the history of stoneware*

Stoneware is a ceramic material characterized by very high hardness and excellent resistance to chemical or climatic hazards. This resistance is obtained by firing at a temperature above 1,200°C.

Stoneware first appeared in China around the 10th century, during the Shang and Han dynasties. It was introduced to the West 400 years later. Then in the 19th century, stoneware became very popular in Europe, so much so that many regions developed their specialized manufactures, especially in Burgundy at Saint-Amand-en-Puisaye or in central France at La Borne, the traditional French capital of pottery.

The stoneware is made with a silicoclay giving a paste with a fine texture fired at high temperature, vitrified and non-porous. The watertightness of the stoneware makes it suitable for the storage of liquids at a very early stage.

In Europe, the places of production are initially the Rhine countries, the eastern regions of France and the Beauvaisis. During the 14th century, German ceramists developed a salt glaze, with a cobalt oxide decoration, which resisted better than lead glazes to the high firing temperatures required by stoneware.

From the beginning of the 19th century, the craze for stoneware production led many regions to develop their manufactures. Stoneware ceramics appeared in the centre (Bourges region, La Borne), in Burgundy (Saint-Amand-en-Puisaye), in the south-east (Saint-Uze).

Traditionally earthenware regions, Quimper with Odetta or Vallauris with Massier, in turn use stoneware for their up-market ceramics.

A thousand and one shades of stoneware





Photo : Hubert Fantomme for Paris Match



Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun,
Portrait of Marie Antoinette in chiffon dress
called 'à la créole', 'en chemise' or 'en gaulle'.
©Hessische Hausstiftung, Kronberg im Taunus

THE SECRETS

of a pot for a queen



The Queen's house is linked to another building by a gallery of olive-green wood decorated with trellises and hundreds of Saint-Clement earthenware flower pots. 1,232 earthenware pots were delivered for the estate. 656 were sold during the Revolution, the others disappeared. **One and only one original copy has survived.** Created by Richard Mique, the architect of the Hamlet, the pots were marked with the Queen's number, in blue in a medallion suspended from a ribbon surrounded by roses, reminding the Queen of her Habsburg-Lorraine ancestry. An eighty-eight-foot planter placed along the gallery also allowed flowers to be cultivated and climbing plants to grow up to the roof.





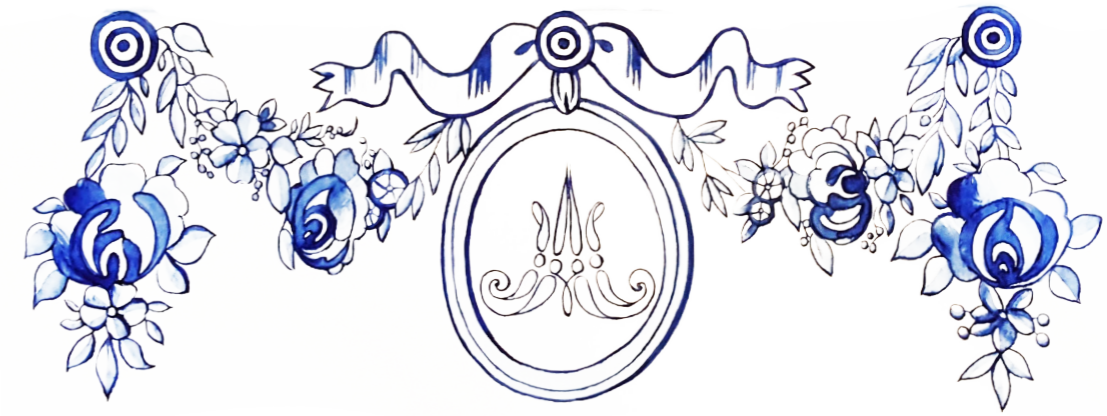
THE SECRETS

of a rebirth

The adventure was to be born from the meeting with the gardeners of the hamlet of La Reine, Alain Baratton and Yvan Thé. It began when Yvan Thé turned to the Normand factory to have large size frost-proof pots made in shades of blue and white. These two models, made according to the patrimonial background of the Manufacture, are set in the gardens of the Queen's hamlet in Versailles. They immediately met with great success and fit perfectly into all the hamlet's vegetable gardens.

Following this initial success, Yvan Thé started looking for a partner to reissue the Queen's pot, created in the 18th century by the Manufactures de Saint Clément, of which only one unique original remains today.





For the restoration of the Queen's House, the Palace of Versailles wishes to have 100 copies of an exceptional reissue produced.

The Normand factory responded to the request and was selected. The strength of the manufacture: an unfrozen earth and this ability to reissue a historical model corresponding to the desired standards.

The manufacture has worked according to the only original model that has been conserved and preserved. Draughtsman, painter, watercolorist, sculptor, modeler, color, a complete team was created around this rare project. And the pots materialized, elegant, just and refined as originally.

Within a few hours, they embellished the balconies and staircases of the Queen's house and the hamlet again, returning to their original layout.



*Bringing historic pieces
back to life*

Manufacture Normand
Stoneware Pottery since 1736

A LITTLE HISTORICAL REMINDER
**IN THE SECRETS
OF THE QUEEN'S HAMLET**

The secrets of a royal hamlet
Richard Miqué's Secrets



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THE SECRETS

of a royal hamlet

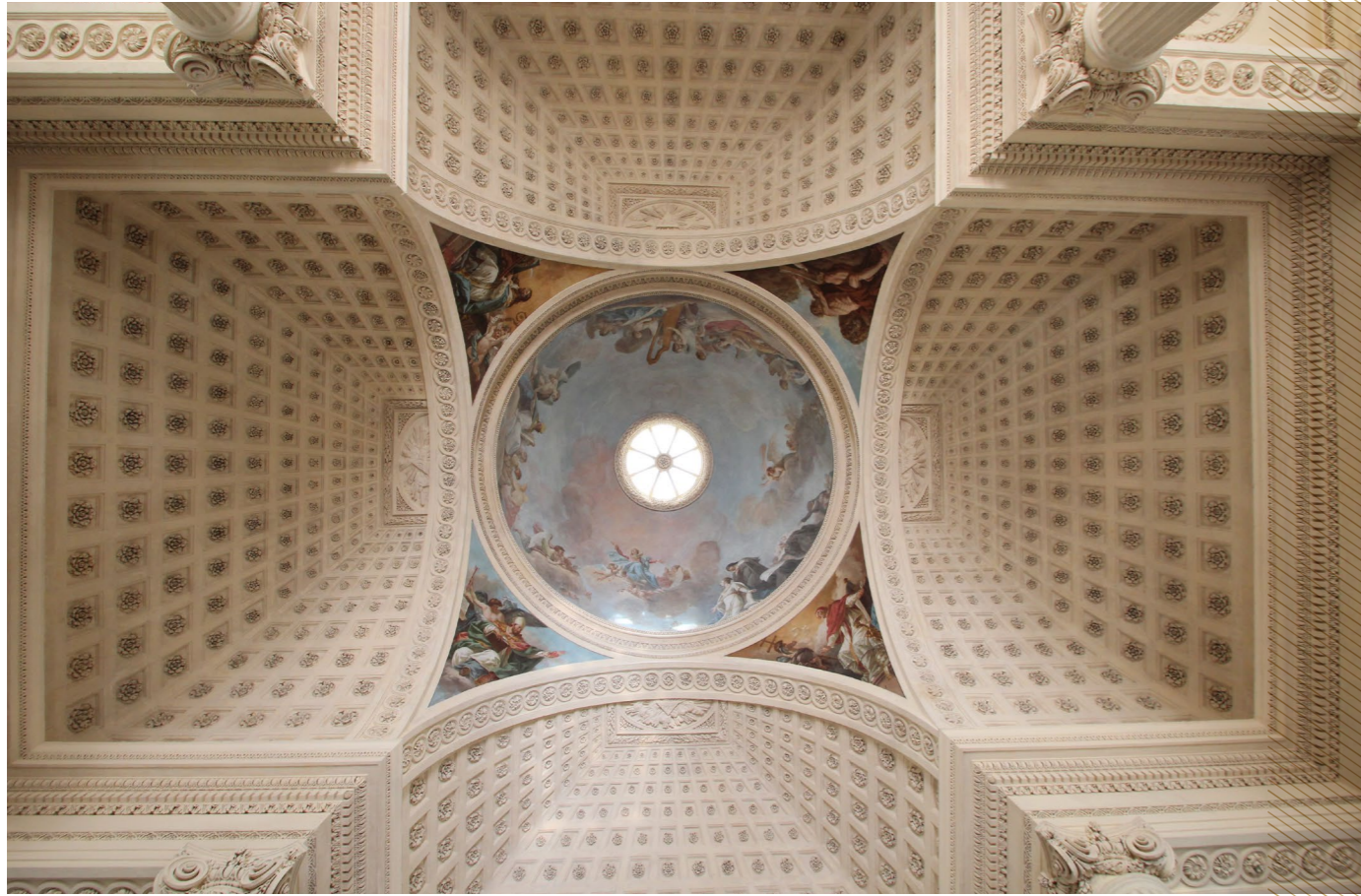
The Queen's hamlet is an outbuilding of the Petit Trianon located in the park of the Palace of Versailles. This pleasure hamlet was commissioned to the architect Richard Mique during the winter 1782-1783 by Queen Marie-Antoinette who wished to move away from the constraints of the court of Versailles, with the nostalgia of a more rustic life. In a natural setting inspired by Rousseau's writings, the hamlet is a small paradise where theatre and festivities made her forget her condition as queen. This rural place, which was also a farm, marked the influence of the ideas of the physiocrats and philosophers of the Enlightenment on the aristocracy of the time. The construction was entrusted to Richard Mique on the inspiration of the hamlet of Chantilly and the drawings of the painter Hubert Robert.



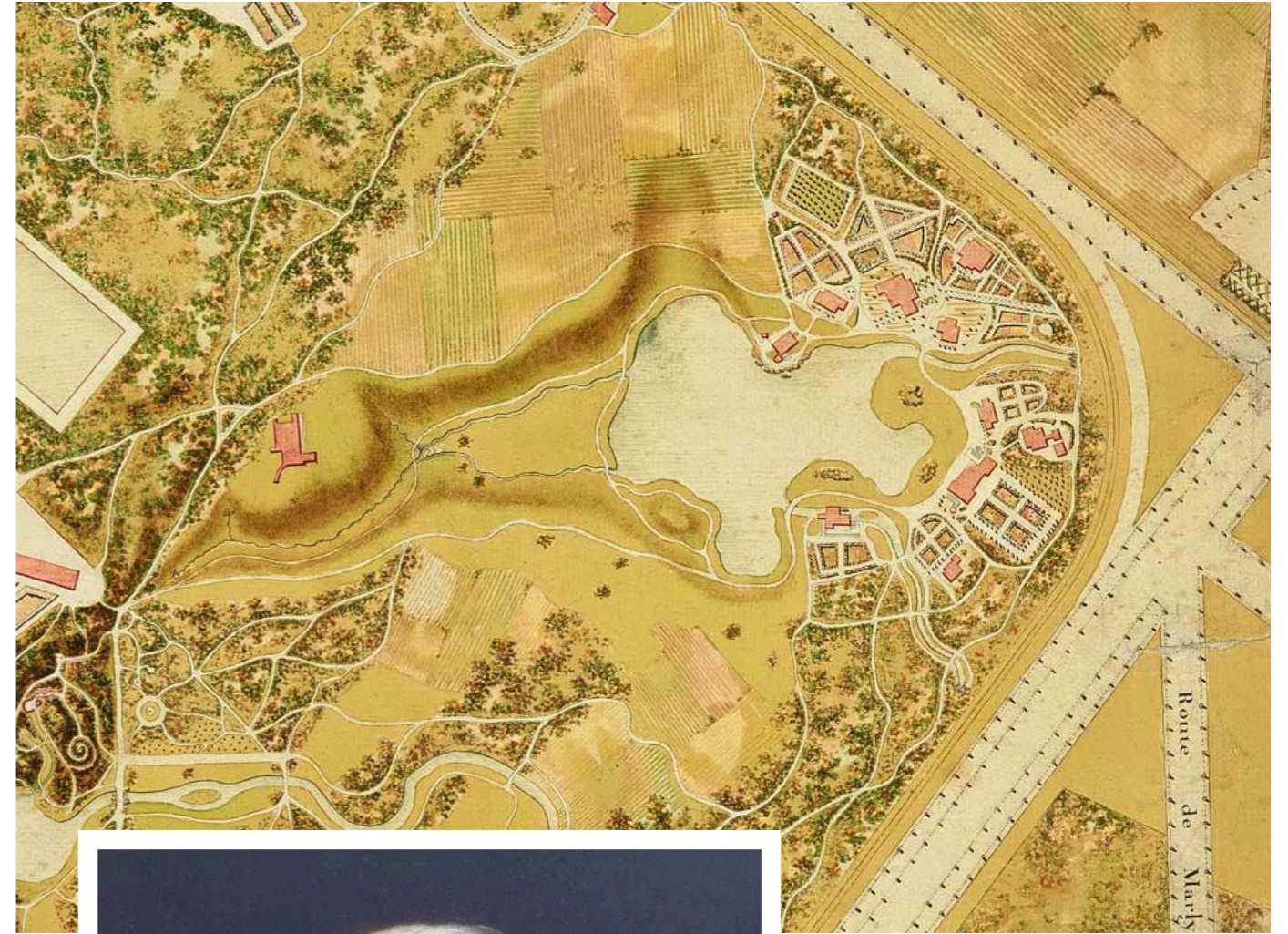
View of the Hamlet taken in front of the pond, Claude-Louis Châtelet, 1786. Biblioteca Estense Modena



The Hamlet nowadays.



Vault in the chapel of the Queen's convent in Versailles

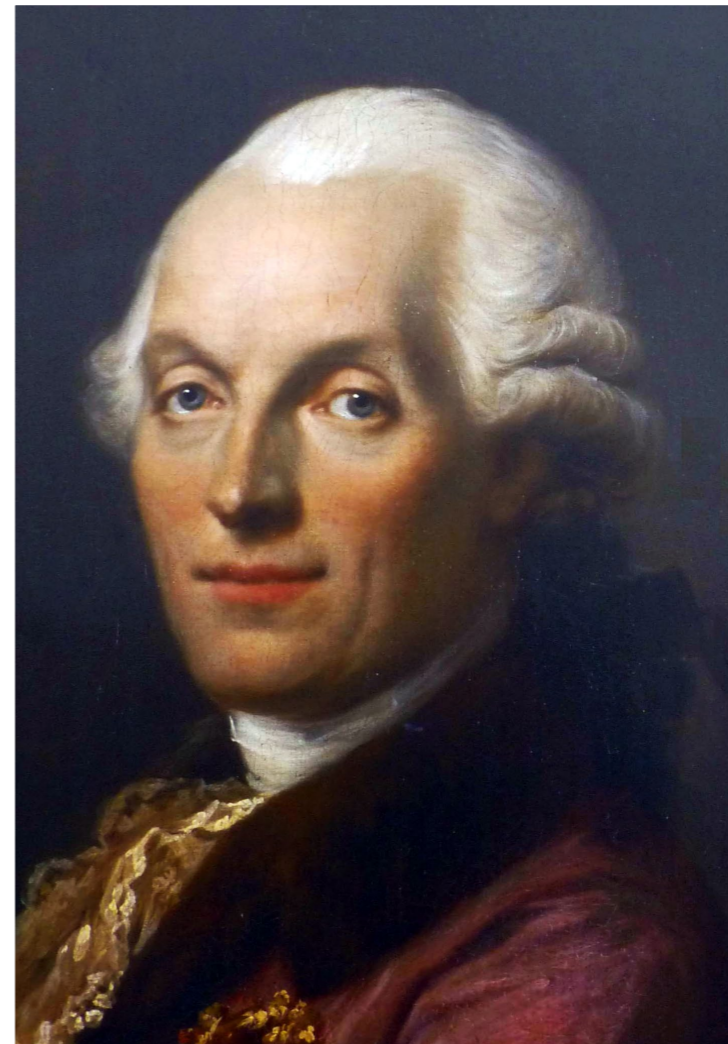


*General plan of the French and country gardens of the Petit Trianon.
Attributed to Richard Mique.
Watercolor between 1783 and 1786.
Versailles, Palace of Versailles and Trianon.*

THE SECRETS

of Richard Mique

Richard Mique was born in 1728 into a family of architects from Lorraine. He soon entered the service of King Stanislas and participated in the beautification of the cities of Nancy and Lunéville. For Queen Marie Leszczyńska, he completed several prestigious commissions, including the Queen's Convent at Versailles. After the advent of Louis XVI, he became the first court architect before taking over the direction of the Royal Academy of Architecture. He became the main master builder of the Palace of Versailles and distinguished himself with some of the most emblematic buildings of the place: the Queen's Theatre, the Pavilion of the Rock, the Temple of Love and the Queen's Hamlet. He also managed the Saint-Clement earthenware factory from 1772 until his death on the scaffold in 1794.



*Portrait of Richard Mique
Unknown author.*

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