

Domaine de Chantilly to Stage Le Grand Condé Exhibition | Artinfo

BY Sonia Kolesnikov-Jessop | June 22, 2016



Portrait de Louis II de Bourbon dit Le Grand Condé by Justus Van Egmont (Detail)

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Cousin to Louis XIV, Louis II de Bourbon, Prince of Condé, was one of France's great generals and was instrumental in preventing Spanish armies invading Paris in 1643. However, he was also a renowned rebel during La Fronde, when the French nobility rebelled against their king between 1648 and 1653, though he was later forgiven by the Sun King whom he served once more as a victorious general. Opening in September, "Le Grand Condé — Rival of the Sun King?" exhibition will recall not only the general's impressive military victories, with

weapons, ceremonial portraits, and spoils of wars, but also his less well known private life and love for the arts. Beyond his military bravery — that led to him being wounded numerous times on the battle fields — the flamboyant Condé was a cultured man who surrounded himself with works by some of the prized masters of the time (Van Dyck, Le Brun, [Pierre Mignard](#)) and welcomed pillars of French literature to his Domaine de Chantilly, including Molière, Racine, Boileau, and La Fontaine. He transformed the chateau, which he acquired in 1643, into a smaller Versailles, asking André Le Nôtre to create gardens that are still famed today, and Chantilly was reputed for the lavish parties he threw there. The exhibition will bring together over 120 artworks and historic documents on loan from several museums and institutions, including the Louvre, the Musée de l'Armée, Château de Versailles, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Amongst the items is France's oldest flag, taken by Condé in 1643 in his victorious battle of Rocroi, and busts by Antoine Coysevox, the great portraitist.

The exhibition will run September 4 through January 17, 2017, at the Domaine de Chantilly.