

V&A Academy

FASHION AND GARDENS: INTERTWINING HISTORIES



Introduction



Join us at V&A South Kensington as we explore how fashion and gardens influenced each other in past and present times. Since classical antiquity gardens have played a key role in the well-being of individuals. From providing plants for medication, to food, to essences for perfuming the body. A garden can be a feast for the eye, a trigger for the imagination, a place to think and love. It is no wonder that gardens have made their way onto clothing over the ages, and at the same time clothing has adapted to being worn in the garden.

The study day morning session will be dedicated to the past: beginning with the perspective of the garden historian who will take us through the magnificent, intertwining history of garden and fabric design. This will be followed by two sessions where dress and textiles historians will explore the fascinating ways in which garden plants made their way onto dress and accessories in the Italian Renaissance and Stuart England. The afternoon session will explore how dressing for the garden became a distinct fashion and how garden plants and flowers continue to play a key role in high fashion still today. The day will close with a presentation by a professional fashion embroiderer.

Information

Friday 15 May 2026

10:30 – 16:00

This study day will be held on site at V&A South Kensington or online.

For those joining us in-person, lunch is not included, however, tea and coffee will be available upon arrival.

All lecture resource sheets and presentation slides will be made available after the study day.

This study day will not be recorded.

Suitable for ages 18 and over.

Friday 15 May 2026

Fashion and Gardens: Intertwining histories

V&A South Kensington or online

Virginia Hill

10:30 From Leonardo da Vinci's knot designs to parterre de broderie gardens of the 17th Century

Filippo Pizzoni

11.00 Gardens on the point of a needle: floral motifs in italian textiles from the 16th to the 18th Century

Isabella Campagnol

11.45 Rose of tawney satin and gold lace: flowers in Tudor and Stuart dress and jewellery

Dr Susan North

12.30 Lunch (not provided)

13.30 Gardens and Fashion in the Modern age

Virginia Hill

14.45 Embroidering gardens in contemporary fashion

Liss Cooke (Hand and Lock Embroidery, London)

Note: V&A Academy programmes are subject to change without notice.