

V&A Academy

GARDENS AND ART

Thursdays

12 November – 10 December 2026





Introduction

Explore the creative interplay between gardens and art. Glorious depictions of plants, flowers and verdant settings will be considered alongside a selection of iconic gardens. A feast for both eye and mind.

The garden is both an artistic space in its own right, and an 'idea' which has appealed to artists across time and geographical boundaries. Glorious depictions by both well- and lesser-known artists will be explored – from the garden paintings of James Tissot and Beatrice Parsons, to flower studies by Fantin-Latour, Ehret and Beatrix Potter, to the 20th-century Land Art movement. Gardens themselves will also be studied, including the grotto at the Medici villa Castello near Florence. Together, we will delight in the creative relationship between gardens and art, and uncover the representation of gardens in the V&A collection.

Information

Thursdays, 12 November – 10 December 2026, Online.

Watch lecture recordings on demand, available at the end of each day, until Thursday 14th January 2027.

Your course leader

Christine Lalumia lectures and writes on design, art and garden histories with a keen interest in cultural context. A consultant lecturer at Sotheby's Institute of Art, she was deputy director of The Museum of the Home for 21 years and is lead-Convenor for the Seminar in Garden History & Designed Landscapes at the Institute of Historical Research.

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

Week 1 – 12 November

How to Read the Painted Garden

- 10.20 Introduction
- 10.30 Learning to access and analyse depictions of painted gardens and plants, Part One, **Christine Lalumia**.
- 12.00 How to read the Painted Garden, **Christine Lalumia**.

Week 2 – 19 November

Real Gardens filled with Art: The Italian Renaissance Garden

- 10.30 Florence and the Medici, **Christine Lalumia**
- 12.00 Roman Gardens, Power and the Papacy, **Christine Lalumia**

Week 3 – 26 November

The Depiction of Gardens and Flowers in the Decorative Arts

- 10.30 Blooming Fabrics: Textiles in Focus, **Jennifer Wearden**
- 12.00 Swags, Bouquets and Trompe L'oeil: Wallpaper in Focus, **Joanna Banham**

Week 4 – 3 December

Love, Intimacy and Meaning: Depicting the Domestic Garden c1870-1940

- 10.30 Private visions and Genre Scenes set in a London Garden: James Tissot in Focus, **Christine Lalumia**
- 12.00 Impressions and Reflections: Garden Paintings in the late 19th and early 20th Century in France, the USA and Britain, **Christine Lalumia**

Week 5 – 10 December

New Ideas about Art and Gardens

- 10.30 Modernism and Early 20th Century Gardens from Europe to Latin America, **Christine Lalumia**
- 12.00 Land Art, Conceptual Gardens, Colour and Artistry in the 20th and 21st Centuries, **Christine Lalumia**