

Strictly embargoed until Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022

## Chelsea Flower Show 2022 - A Textile Garden for Fashion Revolution

In May this year, in support of Fashion Revolution, garden designer Lottie Delamain will create the first-ever garden at the world-famous Chelsea Flower Show entirely with plants that can be used to make or dye our clothes. A Textile Garden for Fashion Revolution will be part of the new 'All About Plants' category alongside several other gardens, supported by Project Giving Back.

Throughout history, plants have played a fundamental role in fashion - as dyes, fibres, floral motifs and in botanical folklore, connecting us to a place, a story or a culture. While trekking in Northern Vietnam, Lottie saw how families grew the plants to make their clothes alongside their vegetables and was fascinated by the close relationship between what they wore and what was growing in their gardens. However in our globalised world, this connection is rapidly being lost. A Textile Garden for Fashion Revolution provides a unique opportunity to showcase creative possibilities and innovative thinking around how we can use the resources that are literally on our doorsteps to create more sustainable solutions. It will help to re-establish the connection between plants and textiles, reveal the beauty to be found in plant-based dyes and fibres, and sow a seed of curiosity about what we wear.

The garden design is intended to imitate a textile, with planting in distinctive blocks of colour to create the impression of a woven fabric. Plants will be supplied by UK nurseries and growers and will be chosen for their use as fibres or textile dyes in commercial or craft use and the garden will feature a textile installation made entirely from plants by students of Headington School Oxford. Shallow reflective pools represent dye baths, with fabric or fibres soaking in natural dyes, and a series of paved seams will lead through the planting.

The fashion industry is dominated by synthetic fibres and chemical dyes. Polyester manufacturing is an energy-intensive process, requiring large amounts of water and producing high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, while wastewater emitted from its processing contain volatile substances that can pose a threat to human health. Despite this, Fashion Revolution's Fashion Transparency Index 2021<sup>1</sup> found that only a quarter of major brands publish time-bound, measurable targets on reducing the use of textiles deriving from virgin fossil fuels. More than 15,000 chemicals can be used during the textile manufacturing process, from the raw materials through to dyeing and finishing, yet only 30% of brands disclose their commitment to eliminating the use of hazardous chemicals from our clothes

Co-founder Carry Somers saw the impact our clothing has on the environment first hand two years ago, when she sailed 2000 miles into the South Pacific Gyre on an all-woman scientific research voyage<sup>2</sup> to investigate microplastic pollution.<sup>3</sup> Although textiles are the largest source of both primary and secondary microplastics, accounting for 34.8% of global microplastic pollution<sup>4</sup>, with around 700,000 microfibrils being released in every wash cycle,<sup>5</sup> just 21% of brands explain what they are doing to minimise the shedding of microfibrils.

The philosophy behind the garden is about seeing the potential in the resources we have on our doorstep and exploring how we can utilise them in more creative ways. Many of the plants are native wildflowers, easily propagated and grown in the UK and undemanding in terms of water.

We would like visitors to our garden, as well as those who view the television coverage, to:

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<sup>1</sup> [Fashion Transparency Index 2021](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Expedition Round the World](#)

<sup>3</sup> Carry Somers blogs on eXXpedition: [A trail of plastic waste left in the wake of uncontrolled growth](#) and [The Language of the Sea](#)

<sup>4</sup> Boucher and Friot, 2017

<sup>5</sup> Napper and Thompson, 2016

- Feel inspired by the many plants that can be used to make natural dyes and fibres, some familiar and some unusual.
- Be encouraged to try dyeing with plants at home, or even create a mini-dye garden.
- Think about the plants (or not) that they might be wearing and ask #whatsinmyclothes?

After Chelsea Flower Show, the garden will be relocated to Headington School in Oxford where Kate Turnbull, Head of Fashion and Textiles Design, has developed a new syllabus which includes the study of plants used for textiles dyes and fibres, along with their propagation and use. The garden will be reimagined in two parts - as a working dye garden for the Textile Design students, and as a Colour Wheel garden, designed to inspire students across the school about the myriad roles plants play in our lives.

– ENDS –

Chelsea Flower Show takes place from 24-28 May 2022, with a press preview day and exclusive Gala evening on 23 May.

For further information about the garden, to request interviews, or to be added to the RHS database for a press pass for Monday 23 May, please contact Carry Somers [carry@fashionrevolution.org](mailto:carry@fashionrevolution.org) Images can be found [here](#). Additional images will be added to this folder as work progresses between now and the end of May.

Fashion Revolution: [www.fashionrevolution.org](http://www.fashionrevolution.org)

Fashion Revolution is the world's largest fashion activism movement, formed after the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh in 2013 which killed over 1,100 people. Fashion Revolution believes in a global fashion industry that conserves and restores the environment and values people above growth and profit. In order to achieve this goal, Fashion Revolution conducts research that shines a light on the fashion industry's practices and impacts, highlights where brands and retailers are moving too slowly and incentivises and promotes transparency and accountability across the supply chain.

Lottie Delamain: <https://www.lottiedelamain.com/>

Lottie started working life in textile design and spent six years living and working in South-East Asia working in fashion and homewares. Whilst living in cities like Saigon cemented her love of pattern and colour, the high-density living, pollution and lack of green spaces left her feeling divorced from nature and with a hunger to apply her design experience in a new context.

On returning to the UK, Lottie retrained in Garden Design at the Inchbald School of Design, graduating with Distinction. Since then she has been working on gardens around the UK, from small urban spaces to historic estates. Lottie's background in textiles informs all her work – pattern, form, texture, colour are all central to her design thinking.

Lottie is a Pre-Registered Member of the Society of Garden Designers, and has been featured in House & Garden, The Sunday Times and The Telegraph. She also writes a column for House & Garden, called A Life In Plants about the many roles plants play in the lives of contemporary British creatives. This is her first show garden.

Project Giving Back <https://www.givingback.org.uk/>

Project Giving Back (PGB) is a unique grant-making scheme that provides funding for gardens for good causes at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. PGB was launched in May 2021 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and its effect on UK charitable fundraising. It will fund gardens inspired by a range of good causes at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2022, 2023 and 2024. PGB will fund eight Show Gardens at

RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2022 and four smaller gardens in a new category, All About Plants. In total, PGB plans to fund 42 gardens at the show from 2022 - 2024.