

Fashion Revolution showcases natural dyes and plant fibres at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2022

In support of [Fashion Revolution](#), garden designer Lottie Delamain has created the first-ever garden at the world-famous RHS Chelsea Flower Show solely featuring plants that can be used to make or dye our clothes, showing us how ancient wisdom can be the height of innovation. *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. 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.

"We can have any fabric, material, ink, or dye shipped directly to our door. We have a bottomless choice of materials from which to design and create. And we are wholly divorced from the practices, skills and methods required to grow and produce these materials. This became the founding principle behind the garden – I wanted to challenge myself to create something using the resources we have readily available, using a restricted palette that would force a new creative approach, that explored the lost connection between plants and textiles."
- Lottie Delamain, Garden Designer

#WhatsInMyClothes?

Today's 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 and the health of all living things.

- Fashion Revolution's Fashion Transparency Index 2021 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, our research found that only 30% of brands disclose their commitment to eliminating the use of hazardous chemicals from our clothes.
- Although textiles are the largest source of both primary and secondary microplastics, accounting for 34.8% of global microplastic pollution¹, with around 700,000 microfibrils being released in every wash cycle,² Just 21% of brands explain what they are doing to minimise the shedding of microfibrils.

¹ Boucher and Friot, 2017

² Napper and Thompson, 2016

The philosophy behind the garden is about seeing the potential in the resources we have 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:

- Feel inspired by the many plants that can be used to make natural dyes and fibres.
- Be encouraged to try dyeing with plants at home, or even create a mini-dye garden.
- Think about the plants that they might be wearing and ask #WhatsInMyClothes?

After RHS 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. 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.

"I have been exhibiting at RHS Chelsea Flower Show for over a decade with Pachacuti, the Fair Trade and sustainable panama hat brand that I founded. Pachacuti's 30th anniversary coincides with this year's show in May. I can't count how many times I've thought how wonderful it would be to have a garden showcasing the plants that can be used to make our clothes. A Textile Garden for Fashion Revolution is the realisation of a long-held dream!" - Carry Somers, Co Founder and Global Operations Director, Fashion Revolution.

Notes to editors

RHS Chelsea Flower Show takes place from 24-28 May 2022, with a press preview day and exclusive gala evening on 23 May. [Download images for press here](#). For further information about the garden, to request interviews and imagery, please contact press@fashionrevolution.org or call 07545135015 for interviews on location.

[Fashion Revolution](#)

Fashion Revolution is the world's largest fashion activism movement campaigning a global fashion industry that conserves and restores the environment and values people above growth and profit. The organisation 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](#)

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. 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](#)

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.