PAINTING PARADISE: THE ART OF THE GARDEN

20 MARCH – 11 OCTOBER

PLAIN ENGLISH SCRIPT
Welcome and Introduction.

Welcome to The Queen’s Gallery, and our exhibition ‘Painting Paradise: The Art of the Garden.’ This exhibition has over 150 exhibits, spanning a period of 400 years. It celebrates art inspired by gardens, and explores how people from different times in history have tried to create their own Paradise on earth.

These notes contain the same information as the audio-description provided for hearing visitors. They are adapted from a script produced by Antenna Audio with information from a number of experts from the Royal Collection and Buckingham Palace, whose names are included at the end of these notes.

We hope you enjoy the exhibition.

PARADISE

1. Seven Couples in a Garden, from the “Quintet of Nava’i” written by Mir ‘Ali Sir Neva’i, made around 1510.

The idea of a garden as ‘paradise’ dates back nearly 2,500 years. The ancient Greek writer Xenophon borrowed a Persian word ‘paradeisos’, to describe the royal hunting gardens of Persia, the country we now call Iran.
They are the first recorded gardens. This jewel-like picture dates from around 1510 and shows us what they might have looked like. They are enclosed on all sides by high walls. Inside the gardens there are pavilions where couples spend time together. Water was a very important feature in a Persian garden and here we see water in a tiled eight-sided pool, surrounded by a marble path. Trees were very important for giving shade and the tree here is a plane tree. Its leaves are mixed with the leaves of an evergreen cypress, which was a symbol of eternity in Persian art. The garden is filled with blossom, and alive with birds.

Above the head of the female lover in the centre of the picture there are two nightingales perching. Seeing them here we know that spring is approaching.

The early Persian Paradise gardens inspired gardens throughout the Islamic world. The idea of a garden paradise took on new meaning when Greek translators of the Bible used the same word to describe the Garden of Eden.

You can see more Persian miniatures in the Cabinet Room to the left of this picture. To find out more about the portrayal of sacred gardens in the Christian tradition, when you're ready, go to the display in the centre of this room, where the exhibition continues.

THE SACRED GARDEN

2. Christ and St Mary Magdalene at the Tomb, by Rembrandt, painted in 1638

In this painting by Rembrandt there is a gardener wearing a broad-brimmed hat, carrying a spade. He has a pruning knife tucked into his belt, ready to trim the neatly-clipped hedges in the lower left foreground.
The woman beside him turns in surprise. The morning light shining on her face shows that she is beginning to understand that this is no ordinary gardener. It is Christ, the son of God, risen from his empty tomb on the right. Rembrandt has arranged the composition so that viewers share Mary Magdalene’s moment of revelation.

Just as Christ is shown as a gardener, the two workmen in the painting are actually angels. They both seem to be lounging on the tomb after a hard day’s work lifting up the great big slab to let Christ out. This is typical of Rembrandt, who often includes people doing everyday things in his paintings.

The fact that Mary Magdalene at first mistook Christ for a gardener is very significant, because it makes us think about how Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden of Eden. According to Christian belief, Christ’s sacrifice on the cross offered mankind the chance to return to the Paradise which was lost.

Please take your time to explore the other exhibits here in the centre of the room. When you’re ready, the exhibition continues to the right of this painting, along the wall, with the section entitled ‘The Renaissance Garden’.

**THE RENAISSANCE GARDEN**

3. *Pleasure Garden with a Maze*, by Lodewijk Toeput (also known as Pozzoserrato), painted around 1579-84
The people in this painting seem to be having a lot of fun. We can see flirting couples in the maze. There is a feast taking place in the centre, and also under the pergola on the right.

The scene reminds us of Venice. We can recognise parts of the architecture of St Mark’s Square in the background on the right, and there is a double-storey gondola with a musical party on the left.

The painting is meant to warn us of the dangers of spending too much time looking for experiences which delight the senses. It tells us that it is very easy to get trapped in the maze of the senses, but very difficult to get free. Images like this would have been produced as decoration for the interiors of palaces or villas in Italy in the late 16th century.

The picture printed above is Landscape with the Cretan Labyrinth, an etching by Hieronymus Cock made in 1558, showing the mythical labyrinth in Crete, where Theseus defeated the minotaur. Pozzoserrato’s painting of the maze in the Pleasure Garden seems to have been inspired by this etching, but Pozzoserrato’s garden may not be entirely imaginary. Garden mazes were very popular in 16th century Italy. Some even had water running between the hedges, so the image may look like gardens which really existed.
4. *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, attributed to Francesco Colonna, made in 1499

The great publisher Aldus Manutius from Venice released this fine illustrated volume in 1499. It tells the story of the dream of Poliphilo, as he searches for his beloved Polia. His dream takes him to many strange places, featuring mysterious ruins, gardens and fountains.

The text and illustrations had a big impact on garden design at this time. Renaissance gardeners were looking for new ideas to create theatrical effects in their gardens to surprise and amaze visitors. The book contains pictures of obelisks, topiary, and pergolas, which all inspired real-life imitations. They can be seen in the images included below:
This painting is particularly interesting because it shows us the first recognisable garden in British art. This is the great garden at Whitehall Palace in London. We can see the garden through the archways on the left and right.

The painting celebrates the Tudor royal line. At the centre is King Henry VIII, with his young son, the future Edward VI, and Queen Jane Seymour, Edward's mother, who had in fact died shortly after his birth. On the left of the painting is Henry’s eldest daughter, Princess Mary, and on the right the future Queen Elizabeth I.

The garden is an important part of the painting because around this time people started to use gardens as a way of showing off their fame and status. Henry knew very well how the French
Kings (especially his great enemy, Francis I) were using magnificent gardens to show how grand they were.

So Henry transformed the gardens at Hampton Court Palace and Whitehall Palace, as shown in this painting. Raised brick flower beds, planted with herbs, can be seen through the archways. They are marked by rails in green and white, the King’s colours.

The feature which stands out particularly is the use of carved and painted wooden animals on upright poles. They were a very noticeable feature of Henry’s gardens at Hampton Court and at Whitehall. They are emblems used in crests and coats of arms. They are part of a propaganda message by Henry which is clear in this painting - the Tudors are here to stay and they are the rightful Kings of England.

This is an image of a beast from the roof of St George’s Chapel at Windsor, similar to those installed at Whitehall Palace by Henry VIII.

It seems that Henry found some of his green-fingered inspiration in the gardening manual on display in the case to the left of this painting.
There is a real connection between the painting of Henry VIII’s family, the first painting of a British garden and this book, because this was the first gardening manual. It introduced the idea that gardens could be used to show off the status of a royal family.

It was first produced in 1304 by a lawyer from Bologna in Italy and many handwritten copies were distributed all over Europe. Printed copies were produced at the end of the 15th century, making its influence even greater. We know that this book was in Henry VIII’s royal library at Whitehall Palace.

The book includes sections on gardens for people of moderate means, but also gardens for kings and other famous and rich people. The gardens were particularly attractive to a Renaissance monarch like Henry. This page includes a very practical illustration. Below are more pictures from this book:
How to make a turf bench

How to train a vine on a trellis

How to prepare your soil

Mandrake (mandragora) with roots in human form
7. Portrait of Jacopo Cennini, by Franciabigio, painted in 1523

This is the earliest surviving portrait of a professional gardener. It shows a man of modest means, portrayed by one of the great Florentine painters of the late 15th century and early 16th century.
The gardener in the painting is Jacopo Cennini. He worked for the Medici family, running their family estate in Italy. At the bottom of the image in the middle, we see the coat of arms of the Medici family. The keys hanging over Cennini’s arm show that he was a trusted family servant.

In the top right corner of the picture there are two tools used for gardening at that time. On the right-hand side at the edge of the painting is a chisel-headed tool used a lot by farmers. The one on the left is a crescent-shaped vine knife used by gardeners growing grapes.

In the bottom right-hand corner are two sprigs of olive. They are important because the Medici encouraged all their subjects in Tuscany to plant olive trees and to cultivate the land. At that time olive oil, along with grain, meat and wine were considered the absolute basic necessities of life.

8. Boys among apple trees, woven around 1650 at Mortlake Tapestry Works

In this tapestry a crowd of boys gathers apples in the tree tops, while down below on the left, two of their companions dance to the music of a pipe and drum. This is a garden which can be enjoyed indoors - tapestries were used just like paintings today. They were hung on the wall all year round, so even in winter there would be a lovely scene of autumn apples and sunshine to look at. It would also, of course, keep the draughts out.

The tapestry is based on a design by Raphael, one of the most famous artists of the Italian Renaissance. It was woven in England at the Mortlake tapestry works, in the mid-17th century.
Tapestries were very popular just after the Civil War period in the 1650s, when wealthy people were refurbishing their houses. A lovely garden scene like this one would have been of particular interest as people got their lives back to normality after the years of war.

The exhibition continues back at the other end of the room, on the other side of the arbour, where you will find a panel entitled ‘The Botanic Garden’.

THE BOTANIC GARDEN

9. Job’s tears by Leonardo da Vinci, drawn around 1510

Leonardo da Vinci was one of the first artists to produce accurate drawings of individual plants. In this drawing he is more interested in the forces that are acting on the plant and the way it moves than in its decorative value.

The grass in the drawing is called Job’s Tears. At the time he drew it, this was a new plant, introduced from East Asia. As enthusiasm for cultivating unfamiliar plants spread through Europe, a new kind of garden layout was developed.

To the right of this study is an illustration of an Italian garden, dating from around 1550. The long thin beds are arranged in rows for easy access. At the back of the garden, on the right, is a covered outside corridor, known as a loggia, planted with a roof garden.
This looks like something which could be found in a modern garden - it would work well in an eco-garden today, but it was something that was explored by Leonardo and other artists at the time. There are other drawings showing planted terraces and planted roof gardens with low growing herbs and plants like this.

10. *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium: a ripe pineapple, caterpillar, chrysalis and butterfly and beetle*, by Maria Sibylla Merian, painted around 1705

In 1699 the artist Maria Sibylla Merian set out for the Dutch colony of Surinam in South America, to study plants and insects there. It was a great novelty for someone of her status to go there to paint and record things, but at the time Amsterdam was a centre of the sugar trade. Europeans had developed a real sweet tooth, and pineapple was one of the main sources of sugar.

Merian’s pineapple is covered in butterflies and beetles, with a caterpillar and chrysalis, representing the complete life cycle of the insects that feed on the fruit.

This introduces the theme of metamorphosis – how things change from one thing into another. The theme is interesting because there were big changes in gardening practice at the time. People wanted to bring pineapples back for sugar, but they also wanted to grow these exotic plants in Europe.

To grow them was very difficult because they needed to be kept in hothouses, at around 25-30° C. The first European to grow a fruited pineapple successfully was Agneta Block in 1687. She was a wealthy Dutch woman who loved gardens and was the artist’s patron.
When you’re ready to move on, make your way through the door to the right at the end of the room, next to the tapestry, and into the large red gallery beyond. Our next exhibit is another large tapestry that you will find hanging on the right.

**THE BAROQUE GARDEN**

11. *The Formal Garden*, made between 1700 and 1730 at the Lille Tapestry Factory

![Image of the tapestry](image.png)

In this tapestry four figures carry their loads across a magnificent garden. It was woven in France at the Lille tapestry factory in the early 1700s. The garden shown in the tapestry is not real. It is an ideal which represents the grandness and formality of the royal gardens of France. The style is called French Baroque and it was admired all over Europe.

The garden has many features which would have interested English people designing their own gardens at that time. For example, the obelisk, the topiary (bushes cut into shapes), the parterres (planted beds in formal patterns), neatly clipped hedges and the fountain on the left.

This fountain contains a sculpture of Hercules killing a dragon. This sculpture fits very well in a garden setting, because one of the labours of Hercules was to collect the golden apples from the mythical Garden of the Hesperides. But first, he had to kill the dragon guarding the entrance.
12. A View of the Cascade, Bushy Park Water Gardens, Studio of Marco Ricci, painted around 1715

This painting depicts the grand fountain, or cascade, in the water gardens at Bushy Park, south west of London. It is framed by curving embankments in the park-land setting, with cave-like grottoes on either side of the waterfall. Such magnificent features were a feature of Baroque style. They showed that the owner of the garden had power to command and control nature.

On the left, in the foreground, dressed in blue, is the owner of the garden, Lord Halifax, proudly showing off his new water feature to his royal visitors. The future King George II is dressed in red. On the right of the picture is his wife Caroline, wearing gold, attended by her black page.

This is a case of one-upmanship by Lord Halifax. Bushy Park was right next door to the royal palace of Hampton Court. Several monarchs had tried to install fountains there, but they were not always successful. Lord Halifax is showing them how it should be done.

In the distance, hidden by trees, is the canal dug for King Charles I, in the 1630s, to supply the royal water garden. The water was originally meant to go straight to Hampton Court, but Lord Halifax diverted the water to create a fountain in his own garden.
The painting has recently been used in the restoration of the water gardens at Bushy Park. Here is a view of the cascade as it is today.

13. A View of Hampton Court by Leonard Knyff, painted between 1702 and 1714

The royal palace and gardens at Hampton Court are shown in this painting in a bird’s eye view - the perfect angle to get a feel for the huge extent of the grounds, the radiating avenues, and the detailed pattern of the formal gardens. They were all designed to provide the best view when seen from the palace windows.

The palace is in two parts: one is in the new taste, what was then the modern style of the architect Christopher Wren, and behind that is the old Tudor palace. Just as the buildings were being brought up to date, so the garden was being changed completely. This painting records the major works carried out at the end of the 17th century, by William and Mary, who had come from Holland to be king and queen together. They brought with them new ideas of garden design from other parts of Europe.
On the left-hand side of the painting is the King’s Privy Garden, shown as a series of four compartments with a basin at the centre. It has been laid out with grass and other ornamental plants in the English style.

Before this time, the land rose up higher, so there was no view to the River Thames. William III and Queen Mary wanted to open up the landscape and to make a stronger link between the river and the palace.

On the opposite side of the palace, on the right of the painting, is the huge hedge maze laid out for William and Mary, known as the Wilderness. Visitors to Hampton Court Palace can still enjoy exploring (and getting lost in) the part of this maze that remains today.

One of King William III's greatest achievements was to create the great fountain garden shown in the bottom half of the picture. The lime avenues are arranged in a radiating pattern which looks like a goose's foot – the design was called a 'patte d’oie' which is French for goose’s foot. Thousands of trees were planted to create this pattern.

This image is a painting of Hampton Court Palace by Hendrick Danckerts from around 1665, showing what this part of the garden looked like before. It was a simple hunting park, with the long stretch of water running right up to the palace. This was pushed back to create space in front of the palace.
The new fountain garden was laid out to plans by the designer Daniel Marot, a French Huguenot who had already worked for William and Mary in Holland.

This picture is a detail from another painting of Hampton Court painted by Leonard Knyff sometime between 1702 and 1714. The gardens were decorated with statues and other ornaments, including two sundials, which stood just where the red circle is on the picture. They were made by Thomas Tompion in 1699.

This photograph shows the replica sundials that stand there today.

The actual sundials are on display on either side of the picture.
14. *Pair of Sundials, by Thomas Tompion, made about 1699*

Sundials had been a popular garden feature since Renaissance times. These two are special because they were made by the finest English clockmaker from that time, Thomas Tompion. They were perhaps made in collaboration with his friend John Rowley, who made scientific instruments.

Each dial shows different information. One has a decorated pointer, called a gnomon, while the other is much plainer. The angle of the gnomons is set according to the exact position of Hampton Court on the Earth, so that at any sunny moment it tells exactly the right time.

On a sunny day, anyone could go into the garden with a pocket watch and set it to the time according to the sundials. They would then go round the house and re-set the clocks inside. In this way the sundials make a connection between the garden outside and the house inside.

15. *Pair of Tulip vases, by Adriaen Kocks made between 1689 and 1694*
These spectacular vases, in the form of towering pagodas, show off all the excitement of the Baroque style. They are made up of a base and nine interlocking sections. They would have been used to grow bulbs or to have cut flowers placed in water inside them.

The vases belonged to Queen Mary II who studied plants and grew a huge variety of flowers. The vases stood in her apartments at Hampton Court Palace. They were part of an impressive collection of blue and white porcelain which she bought from China, Holland and England. These vases were made in the Delft factory of Adriaen Kocks in Holland, but their decoration reflects a whole range of international influences fashionable during the period.

On the base there are peacocks and cupids, and between them a bust of King William III surrounded by wreaths of leaves and flowers. Between the base and the vase there are mythical creatures - one looks like a cross between a dragon and a crocodile. They are probably inspired by similar creatures that might have been seen on oriental porcelain at the time.

16. Boy with a Thorn in his foot, ‘Lo Spinario’, by Hubert Le Sueur, made between 1636 and 1637

This sculpture has a very simple subject- it shows a boy pulling a thorn out of his foot. It has an Italian name “Lo Spinario” which means “boy with thorn”. It is a bronze version of an ancient sculpture from Rome which still survives today.

When he heard how beautiful the sculpture was, King Charles I commissioned the French sculptor Hubert Le Sueur to make a copy for the royal collection in the 1630s. Charles gave it to his Queen, Henrietta Maria. She put it in the centre of her garden at Somerset House in London.
Putting statues in gardens was a new idea in England at that time. This may be one of the first statues to be placed in a garden in this country.

17. *Windsor Castle from the north*, Anonymous, British School painted around 1710

This is a view of the north side of Windsor Castle, seen from the direction of the River Thames. It is an unusual picture because the subject is not an ornamental garden, but a working fruit garden.

In the central pathway is a group of gardeners around a row of cloches, which are coverings to protect plants from the cold. One gardener has lifted off the glass cloche which is probably covering melons. They were a very highly prized crop at the time and they needed heat and manure to grow.

On the left of the path are raspberry canes and on the right currants. The small round plants in the rows in the centre are probably gooseberry stems. In the background is a gardener who looks like he is training fruit on the far wall of the garden.

Other artists of the period enjoyed making paintings of formal gardens, but this painting shows the garden as a small local business. The fruit grown in this garden was supplied to the Dean and Canons of St George’s Chapel, Windsor, and their families. On the right, two children can be seen playing on a see-saw they have put together in the wood yard.

*After this room, make your way back through the way you came. If you haven’t already done so, please look at the Fabergé porcelain and other works of art on display in the cabinets.*
When you re-enter the green gallery, go through the door on your right into the blue gallery beyond where you will find an extraordinary vase of porcelain flowers ahead of you.

**THE LANDSCAPE GARDEN**

18. *The Sunflower Clock*, from Vincennes porcelain factory, made around 1752

This magnificent vase, filled with hollyhocks, carnations, and lilies, is a perfect example of the fashion for exquisite decorative objects in the 18th century. They brought the garden indoors. This one was made at the Vincennes porcelain factory in France. Every petal of every flower was individually made in porcelain. They were then fitted onto the brass lacquered stems. About 45 women were employed to form these flowers.

Nestling in the centre of the bouquet is a brass sunflower which forms a clock dial. The use of a sunflower which has lost its petals, so that only the seed head is left might be a symbol for the passage of time, the seasons, or death.

The sunflower was also the symbol of the French Sun King, Louis XIV. He had died in 1715, but the design remained popular with the French upper classes.

This outstanding example of French craftsmanship has been restored specially for this exhibition. There is a film showing how the restoration was done. It is being shown on the large screen in the Millar Learning Room. You could see it at the end of the exhibition or watch it on our website.
Public gardens or parks started to become popular in the 18th century. This is a view of St James’s Park in London, with Westminster Abbey in the distance.

The figure just right of centre, dressed in red with a blue coat and sash, is Frederick, Prince of Wales, taking a stroll on the Mall. He is surrounded by rich, famous and fashionable people of the time, greeting each other with grand shows of grace and courtesy. Their greetings are over the top, compared with the lower classes on the left-hand side who are having a much happier time.

There is a cow in the left-hand corner. There is a record from a visitor to the park in 1765 who was very pleased to be able to buy fresh cow’s milk, served at a penny a mug. Close by, the woman pulling up her stocking suggests that other services are also on sale.

In the background couples are being chased off by a park warder. No doubt they have been caught doing something they should not have been doing.

This painting is a very accurate picture of life at that time. It shows a new society, where Princes mix with nobility and nobility mix with commoners. But the garden it is set in is actually old-fashioned. It is a formal garden created by Charles II, with straight avenues of trees and in the distance a straight, formal canal. But the way that the artist has composed the painting means that the formality is not really obvious. The artist may be thinking ahead about the transformation which did happen in St James’s Park, when it became an informal garden typical of the 18th century.
20. A View of the Wilderness with the Alhambra, the Pagoda and the Mosque, by E. Rooker, made around 1763

The huge gardens at Kew are typical of the 18th-century fashion for more natural landscape gardening. These gardens were laid out by the architect William Chambers. He introduced exotic buildings into gardens, like the pagoda in the centre, which is a garden building that many people will recognise. Under his influence these became a feature of garden design. This garden is designed in the Chinese style. Chambers had spent quite a long time in China in his youth and he brought the Chinese style to England and made it popular. But there is also a Moorish Alhambra on the left and a mosque in the background on the right.

For visitors to Kew it was like travelling the world with a new view from a different country opening up at every turn. This was intended to encourage people to think about different ways of life and different cultures, something which was beginning to be thought of as important for a proper education at that time.

The etching is one of a series. This is because the bird’s-eye view which had been painted so much in the 17th and early part of the 18th century could not really do justice to the landscape garden. The idea behind the series of etchings was that one view after another would be gradually revealed, just as they would be to visitors walking round the garden.
This watercolour by Paul Sandby is of the garden belonging to his brother Thomas, who was Deputy Ranger of Windsor Great Park and lived in a house on the royal estate. The open landscape of Windsor Great Park, with sheep grazing, is in the distance on the left. In the foreground, a little boy skips along, following his pet dog and companions. This is a picture of the family going for a walk in the garden on a beautiful summer’s day.

The garden itself is planted in the natural style, which became famous in 18th-century England. The path is wavy and has very soft edges and shrubberies have been planted beneath young trees in the plantation. This is a very good example of the soft planting of the landscape garden.

In the foreground is a housemaid, watering pots that have been put out together on the lawn. The watercolour might have been painted shortly after Thomas Sandby died, as the woman on the left is shown in mourning.
This royal family portrait shows Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, with their eldest daughter, Victoria, the Princess Royal. It was painted by Sir Edwin Landseer in the 1840s. Prince Albert has just come back from a shooting expedition. They are standing in the Green Drawing Room at Windsor Castle, with a very clear view out of the window towards the garden on the East Terrace at Windsor Castle. In reality, the view has been changed slightly so that viewers of the painting see it more clearly than they would in real life.

Queen Victoria’s mother, Victoria Duchess of Kent, is in the garden in the background, being wheeled around in a bath chair by a footman. The garden was included in the painting because for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert it was a very important part of their family life, their domestic harmony and good order.

In Victorian times, plants once again took centre stage in the garden, and growing them was very popular. Both Queen Victoria and her husband were very fond of flowers. Here, Victoria stands on a floral carpet, she has flowers pinned to her bodice, and she offers Albert a posy to welcome him home.
Hanging from the ceiling is a spectacular floral chandelier: This impressive piece caught the eye of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, who bought it for their private home, Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. It reflects the richness of style and impressive technical skill of European glassmaking in the mid-19th century. The glass was made in Bohemia in Eastern Europe. The lilies, morning glories and leaves are all made of glass. The leaves are partly gilded and are attached to a gilt metal structure. Originally the lilies would have held candles but later on the chandelier was converted for electricity.

Some recent research has found out that it was probably made by a Viennese company called Lobmeyr, who are still working today. There are about five similar chandeliers known in the world, but they were very unusual objects in their day. There is a film of the restoration of the chandelier which you can watch in full on the large screen in the Millar Learning Room at the end of the exhibition, or on our website.
This painting by Laurits Tuxen records the Garden Party held at Buckingham Palace on 28 June 1897, the year of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee, after sixty years on the throne. The long shadows shows that it is the end of the day. Queen Victoria is riding in an open carriage, dressed in black, with a matching parasol. She is returning from the royal tent to the palace, accompanied by her daughter-in-law, Alexandra, Princess Of Wales.

The Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VII, is shown in the painting chatting to guests, but he is a small figure in the crowd in the left half of the painting. He can be seen in an opening in the crowd, dressed in black with a top hat, side-on next to a woman in a grey and white dress. The child on the path in the foreground is the future King Edward VIII.

Buckingham Palace Garden Parties were introduced by Queen Victoria, and are now an important fixture in the royal calendar. In 2015, there will be six garden parties. Three are The Queen’s garden parties officially held by Her Majesty, but there are also special garden parties for various charities. Eight gardeners look after the 39 acres of the Buckingham Palace garden and it can take the team up to 16 weeks to prepare for garden parties. Their policy is ‘no leaf out of place’, so that everybody who comes to the garden party can look out from the West Terrace and see a garden of very high quality.

The view in this painting is quite different from what is there now. The ornamental fountain has gone and so have the trees on the right-hand side of the picture. The majestic elm trees have been replaced by the very well recognised London plane tree. Standing in the same place as
the artist now, the viewer would be looking through an avenue of Indian horse chestnut trees which usually flower in June, looking very attractive.

25. *Child’s wheelbarrow and garden rake*

This tiny wheelbarrow and rake were used by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert’s children to cultivate individual vegetable plots allocated to them at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. It was part of a programme of education for the young princes and princesses devised by Prince Albert. Life in the open air with the children playing and the Queen sketching was exactly how the Queen and Prince Albert enjoyed spending holidays at Osborne House.

An oval painting by Winterhalter hangs on the wall above the garden tools. It shows Victoria nursing her third son, Prince Arthur, on the terrace at Osborne House. The style is similar to Renaissance paintings of the Madonna and Child in an enclosed garden. The painting is sealed inside a frame that looks like a rose garland.

To the right is a watercolour by William Leighton Leitch that shows this terrace from below. It has an impressive staircase, balustrading and urns, and flowerbeds planted with exotic species.

Another watercolour on the right hand wall is by William Leighton Leitch. It shows the Swiss Cottage built in the grounds of Osborne House.
This was where the royal children used their garden tools to tend their vegetable plots. Inside they were taught cooking, housekeeping and budgeting skills.

26. Headdress, two brooches and earrings from the Orange Blossom parure, made by an unknown maker between 1839 and 1846

This is a set of jewellery, known as a parure. This set has two brooches, a pair of earrings and a wreath which would be fitted around the hair. The jewellery was commissioned by Prince Albert over a number of years, to give to Victoria on special occasions in their life together. One of these brooches was one of the first gifts Albert gave to Victoria. It was given when they got engaged to be married. The wreath was the final item in the set, presented on their sixth wedding anniversary.

The delicate white flower is orange blossom, made out of porcelain, nestling amongst leaves of gold. In amongst the flowers on the wreath there are four tiny immature oranges in green. They probably signified the first four of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert’s children, the ones born before 1846.

In the language of flowers orange blossom was a symbol of chastity, so it was the right gift to symbolise a faithful marriage. Queen Victoria made its use by brides fashionable.
This picture is a portrait of Queen Victoria wearing her bridal veil, painted by her favourite portrait painter, Winterhalter. She wore real orange blossom around her hair, and pinned to her dress.

This is the final stop on our Tour. We hope you have enjoyed our journey through the history of the art of the garden. You can continue your exploration into the language of flowers in the Millar Learning Room, immediately to your right as you exit this gallery.

This script has been compiled from a tour produced by Antenna Audio with information from the following experts:

Vanessa Remington, Royal Collection
Sally Goodsir, Royal Collection
Desmond Shawe-Taylor, Royal Collection
Todd Longstaffe-Gowan, Gardener and Historian
Mark Lane, Gardens Manager at Buckingham Palace

To find out about our programme of events relating to the exhibition pick up a What’s On guide on your way out. To be the first to know about future exhibitions and the latest news from the Royal Collection Trust, please sign up to the e-newsletter on our website at royalcollection.org.uk and like us on Facebook.

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