

Museum Collections of Early Modern Dress and Textiles

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Museum Collections in England

LONDON

Victoria and Albert Museum

The Victoria and Albert Museum has collected dress since its earliest days. The collection covers fashionable dress from the 17th century to the present day, with the emphasis on progressive and influential designs from the major fashion centres of Europe. The V&A collections also include accessories such as jewellery, gloves and handbags.

The national collection of Textiles covers a period of more than 2000 years. It has a broad geographic range with a particular emphasis on Europe. Most techniques are represented, including woven, printed and embroidered textiles, lace, tapestries and carpets. These are classified by technique, countries of origin and dates of production. Particularly rich areas of the collections are the early silks from the Near East, lace, European tapestries and English medieval church embroidery.

Fan Museum

The Fan Museum is devoted entirely to every aspect of fans and fan making. The Museum is home to a collection of more than 3,500 predominantly antique fans from around the world dating from the 11th century to the present day. Its collection and fans on loan from other collections are displayed in changing themed exhibitions in which fans are presented in their historical, sociological and economic contexts.

Geffrye Museum

The Geffrye Museum depicts the quintessential style of English middle-class living rooms. Its collections of furniture, textiles, paintings and decorative arts are displayed in a series of period rooms from 1600 to the present day.

Kensington Palace

Kew Palace and Queen Charlotte's Cottage

Museum of London

The dress collection is internationally recognised for its quality and diversity – it was collected as a social record and accorded the same historical significance as other artefacts of material culture. There are over 24,000 objects in the collection, dating from the Tudor period to the present day. The core of the collection consists of fashionable dress and accessories. Holdings also include textiles manufactured in London, such as silks woven in Spitalfields and printed textiles.

The costume collection is complemented by holdings of related material in the social and working history, photograph and printed ephemera collections and the library. The Harry Matthews Collection of costume and fashion plates consists of almost 4,000 prints dating from the 16th century to 1829.

The Cheapside Hoard is the greatest hoard of Elizabethan and Jacobean jewellery in the world.

Of similar national importance is the collection of base metal dress accessories.

Royal Collection

Shaped by the personal tastes of kings and queens over more than 500 years, the Royal Collection includes paintings, drawings and watercolours, furniture, ceramics, clocks, silver,

sculpture, jewellery, books, manuscripts, prints and maps, arms and armour, fans, and textiles. It is on public display at the principal royal residences and is shown in a programme of special exhibitions and through loans to institutions around the world.

BATH

Fashion Museum (formerly known as the Museum of Costume)

The collection's earliest pieces are embroidered shirts and gloves from about 1600. It comprises dresses, coats, jackets, corsets, knitwear, accessories, pockets, shirts, blouses, waistcoats, fans.

OXFORD

Ashmolean Museum

Holds an important collection of English 16th and 17th century embroideries.

CORNWALL

Cotehele

Tudor house with collections of textiles, armour and furniture.

DERBYSHIRE

Hardwick Hall

Built by Bess of Harwick and home to Europe's finest collection of 16th- and 17th-century embroideries and tapestries.

DURHAM

Bowes Museum

Home to one of the largest and most significant European dress and textile collections in Britain. The collection contains examples of all textile techniques and all the European centres of production, from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries. These include tapestries and upholstery textiles (17th to 19th century), ecclesiastical embroidery (15th to 18th century), and costume and accessories (late 18th to 20th century), as well as carpets, woven textiles and lace.

LEEDS

Temple Newsam

The Temple Newsam collection of textiles consists of both furnishing fabrics and upholstered furniture, some of which is indigenous to the house. The museum also houses The Roger Warner Collection of historic textiles, which includes furnishing and dress fabrics from the 17th to the early 20th century.

MANCHESTER

Gallery of Costume

The Gallery of Costume holds one of the largest collections of clothing and fashion accessories in Britain, containing over 20,000 items. The collection includes clothes worn by men, women and children from the 17th century to the present day. Many of the clothes represent high fashion of the day. Other, much rarer items, represent the dress of working people, such as the clogs and shawls of Lancashire weavers.

STOKE ON TRENT

Potteries Museum and Art Gallery

Holds a regionally important collection of costume and textiles dating from the 15th Century to the present day.

SUSSEX

Brighton and Hove Museums

The Costume collection includes items of men's, women's and children's clothing and accessories from the early 17th century to the present day. The textile collection includes holdings of needlework from the mid-17th century, and includes 18th and 19th samplers. The Decorative Art collections can be found throughout Brighton and Hove's museums. The contents of Preston Manor, a historic house, include the Macquoid Bequest of 16th and 17th century furniture. Jewellery is also part of the Decorative Art collections.

YORK

Embroiderers' Guild Museum

The Embroiderers' Guild Museum houses a collection of over 11,000 embroidered objects. The embroideries in the collection have been gathered from around the world, and take many forms including costume, furnishings, decorative and non-functional textiles. A particular strength of the collection is the holding of embroidery worked in Britain from the 16th century to the present day.

Museum Collections in Scotland

ABERDEEN

Blairs Museum

Blairs Museum holds a major collection of church textiles spanning more than 500 years, with some rare examples of church embroidery surviving from the 15th and 16th centuries. The collection of hand-embroidered vestments demonstrates a wide range of ceremonial clothing worn by the Catholic clergy during worship.

EDINBURGH

National Museum of Scotland

Collections include costume and textiles (from prehistory to the present day).

GLASGOW

Glasgow Museums

Collections include major holdings of Scottish, English and European costume and textiles including: tapestry (14th to 17th century); woven, printed and embroidered textiles and needlework (16th century to present); furniture, furnishing fabrics and carpets (14th century to present).

CARDIFF

St Fagans National History Museum

The furnishing collections include a comprehensive range of interior fixtures, furniture, and furnishing fabrics ranging in date from the 16th century to the present day. Clothing from the same period is also collected, both fashionable and everyday wear, official uniforms and occupational dress. Also included are accessories of all types and items of personal use. A study collection has been compiled for use by students and specialised school groups.

Museum Collections in the Netherlands

AMSTERDAM

Rijksmuseum

UTRECHT

Centraal Museum

DEN HAAG

Gemeentemuseum

LEIDEN

Textile Research Centre

TILBURG

Audax Textielmuseum

Museum Collections in Belgium

ANTWERP

MOMU

The Antwerp Fashion Museum owns a collections of over 25,000 pieces: dress, shoes, accessories, lace. The focus is both on historical costume – the oldest pieces date from the sixteenth century – and contemporary fashion designers

BRUSSELS

Musée du Costume et de la Dentelle

Museum Collections in France

PARIS

Musée Galliera

Musée des Arts Décoratifs

LYON

Le musée des Tissus et des Arts Décoratifs

Museum Collections in Italy

FLORENCE

Bargello

The Islamic Gallery of the Bargello Museum is one of Italy's most important textile collections. It was compiled from two major gifts in 1888 when Luis Claude Carrand gave the principal donation to the Florence Commune and in 1906 when Baron Giulio Franchetti bequeathed his textiles in hopes of providing materials for the study of artists and archaeologists, as well as those who have an interest in the historical and technical developments of the art of silk. The collection is not displayed in its entirety at one time, except for the jewels. The textile collection also contains numerous fine Ottoman weavings, a group of "classical" pieces, as well as three medieval fragments.

Galleria del Costume in Palazzo Pitti

The collection covers the period between the 18th century and the present-day. It also contains the recently restored funeral garments of the Grand Duke Cosimo de' Medici, Eleonora of Toledo and her son Don Garzia, showcasing some rare examples from the 16th century.

PRATO

Museo del Tessuto

PISA

Museo Nazionale di Palazzo Reale

The collection includes several rare examples of sixteenth-century dresses.

MILAN

Museo Bagatti Valsecchi

VENICE

Palazzo Mocenigo

Museum Collections in Germany

BERLIN

Kunstgewerbemuseum

The Kunstgewerbemuseum (Museum of Decorative Arts) is the oldest of its kind in Germany. It houses world-famous examples of European arts and crafts, including textiles and fashion.

DRESDEN

Rüstkammer, Residenzschloss

Originating from weapons owned by Saxon Dukes and Electors, the Dresden Armoury has one of the most valuable collections of weapons and armoury in the world. It unites the masterpieces of armourers, artists and artisans from all corners of Europe and the Orient and includes around 10,000 ceremonial weapons – armour, helmets, shields, swords, rapiers and daggers, sabres and maces, pistols and rifles. The exhibition also includes riding equipment, ceremonial clothes and works of art works as well as portraits which are largely from the 16th to 18th century and come from the collection of the Wettin Elector. The Turkish fashion that was popular at the Electoral Saxon court is reflected by the exquisite collection of oriental and oriental-style weapons, clothes and riding equipment as well as in the magnificent Turkish tents.

NUREMBERG

Germanisches Nationalmuseum

With more than 25,000 objects, the collection comprises textiles from late antiquity to the present day, clothing from the 16th to 21st century and a range of traditional fabrics and regional costumes. It is complemented by the Jewellery Collection whose holdings stretch from the Middle Ages to the present day.

Main collection areas

The main areas of the collection are medieval tapestries, clothing from the Renaissance and Baroque periods and a collection of regional costumes and traditional dresses. More than just a fashion show, the costume collection is of great cultural-historical importance. The majority of the items in the Jewellery Collection stem from the 16th and 19th centuries.

MUNICH

Bayerisches Nationalmuseum

With all of its special subsections, the collection of textiles is one of the most important of its type. Our tapestries from the 16th to the 18th centuries, largely inherited from the royal House of Wittelsbach, are one of the most important ensembles of Brussels tapestries and products of the Munich manufactories worldwide. Most rare and precious are not only liturgical vestments from the Middle Ages, but also costume and textiles from the Renaissance and the clothing from the princes' crypt at Lauingen. The material evidence of courtly and patrician fashions in the 18th and early 19th centuries, together with matching accessories, is rich and varied. There are also further important special collections of historic shoes and fans which stretch over 500 years. In addition the museum owns

excellent study collection of silk fabrics and an important collection of knotted oriental carpets.

DARMSTADT

Hessisches Landesmuseum

KREFELD

Textilmuseum

Museum Collections in Sweden

STOCKHOLM

Nordiska Museet

Livrustkammaren

Royal armoury with a large collection of royal garments from the seventeenth century onwards.

Museum Collections in USA

NEW YORK

Metropolitan Museum of Art

The Costume Institute houses a collection of more than thirty thousand costumes and accessories spanning five continents and as many centuries. The Antonio Ratti Textile Center keeps textiles from all of the world's civilizations - archaeological fragments, tapestries, carpets, quilts, ecclesiastical vestments, silks, embroideries, laces, velvets, and more - dating from 3000 B.C. to the present.

PHILADELPHIA

Philadelphia Museum of Art

BOSTON

Museum of Fine Arts

Art of Europe Collection ranges in date from the seventh century to the late twentieth century and includes paintings, sculpture, and works of decorative art.

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Boston

WASHINGTON D.C.

The Textile Museum

CLEVELAND

Cleveland Museum of Art

Museum Collections in Canada

Royal Ontario Museum

The Patricia Harris Gallery of Textiles & Costume is a spacious new gallery that presents the Museum's rich and diverse collection of 50,000 textile and costume artefacts through a rotating display of about 200 pieces dating from the 1st century BC to the 21st century AD.

Textile Museum of Canada

The Textile Museum of Canada's permanent collection contains more than 12,000 artefacts and spans almost 2,000 years and 200 world regions.