

Royal Fashions: Court Splendour from the Tudors to Today

Dates	Wednesday 7 and Thursday 8 September 2022
Times	11.00–13.00 BST
Location	Online (Zoom Webinar)
Tutor	Jacqui Ansell
Level	All Levels



Studio of Allan Ramsay, *George III*, 1762-82 (detail)

Course Description

Why do kings and queens wear ermine? How can we decode court dress in art? In the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year, consider the artists who have immortalised monarchs and learn about the vital elements of courtly clothing, seen over five centuries.

'The splendour of royalty delights the people', so Queen Victoria was told. A Victorian viewer would still recognise much in the richness and regulation of court ceremony today. Indeed, much of the royal regalia of Elizabeth II can be traced back to the era of Elizabeth I, if not earlier. In this course, we'll analyse the development of courtly clothing to learn how the iconography of majesty has been constructed.

Session One: Symbols of Sovereignty

Our course begins with a look at Holbein's miniature self-portrait, to help us consider his role in creating an image of Henry VIII that influenced perceptions of majesty. From the Tudors and Stuarts, we'll cross the channel to courts of Louis XIV and Louis XV in France, and compare the 'big wigs' of the Baroque era to those of the *Ancien Régime* (pre-Revolution France) to learn how power dynamics were played out through extravagant displays of sartorial splendour. Madame de Pompadour set a fast pace of changing fashion, and we'll compare and contrast this with clothing worn at the courts of George II and George III. We'll also consider intriguing insights relayed in correspondence from the time, to help reveal what was at stake when courtiers dressed to impress.

Session Two: Resplendent or Ridiculous? Napoleon to Now

George IV was so renowned for his sartorial splendour that we could name him the 'king of bling.' In France, Napoleon aimed to legitimise his new role as Emperor through a sumptuous show of velvet, ermine and embroidered iconography. In our second session, we'll consider the many ways in which clothing was used to consolidate the status of rulers and their subjects. Famous Victorian beauty and royal mistress, Lillie Langtry, portrays an intimate account of being presented to Queen Victoria in her correspondence, and we'll use this to gain insights into the discomfort of court regulations and dress. Bringing our journey of courtly fashion into the current century, we'll finish by looking at how couturiers including Norman Hartnell, and how photographers from Cecil Beaton to Annie Leibovitz, have created a lasting image of Elizabeth II.

Course Tutor

Jacqui Ansell gained an MA from the Courtauld Institute, enabling her to decode and date dress in art. She is an experienced gallery educator, teaching courses for the Wallace Collection and the National Gallery, and is an accredited lecturer for The Arts Society. As Senior Lecturer at Christie's Education she writes, presents and tutors online courses in Art History and Luxury. She is particularly interested in exploring the links between furniture, fashion and fine art, alongside the wider cultural history of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Previous Skills, Knowledge or Experience

None required. This course is designed as an introduction to the subject.

Joining Information and Format

This course will be taught through [Zoom Webinar](#). Each course session duration is 120 minutes, including a five-minute break and time for Q&A with the tutor.

Tickets are for both dates. Ticket holders will be emailed the Zoom link, Webinar ID and Passcode 24 hours in advance of the first course session, which should be retained for accessing both sessions of the course.

Course Recording

This course will be recorded. Within 48 hours of each course session, ticket holders will be emailed a link to view the recording, which will be available for one week only.
