

R A V

THE ROSE
IN FASHION

I S H

I N G





Opposite above right
 4. Isaac Oliver, *Portrait of a Lady Masqued as Flora*, c.1605.
 Miniature, pigment on vellum,
 5.3 x 4.1cm

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
 The English court of James I enjoyed lavish masqued entertainments, often with allegorical and Classical subjects. Here, a fashionable woman is costumed as Flora, with roses in her hair.
 Artokoloro Quint Lox Limited/
 Alamy Stock Photo

Opposite below right
 5. Alexander Roslin, *Flora of the Opera*, c.1750.
 Oil on canvas, 91.5 x 72.5cm
 Musée des beaux-arts de Bordeaux
 Roslin was a society portrait painter, noted for his fine depiction of fashionable dress and jewellery. His Rococo-style Flora wears a flower wreath, armlet and holds a garland in which roses feature prominently.
 © Mairie de Bordeaux, Musée des beaux-arts

Right
 6. V Buso, 'Rose' shoe, USA, c.1960.
 Suede and metal
 The Museum at FIT, New York
 This gorgeous shoe might be interpreted within the contexts of Surrealism's preoccupations: the illusion of nature, displacement and improbability (a rose supports a person).
 The Museum at FIT, P90.78.2.
 Museum purchase

Bottom left
 7. *Rosa 'Christian Dior'*, a double hybrid tea rose introduced by Meilland, 1958.

Christian Dior was mid-twentieth-century fashion's floriculturist. Although the haute couturier's signature flower was lily of the valley, he adored and grew roses; this fragrant double hybrid tea rose was named after him following his premature death.
 Yellow Cat/Shutterstock.com

Bottom right
 8. Jeff Bark, Comme des Garçons, 'Roses and Blood' collection, *Dazed* magazine, spring 2015.
 Stylist Robbie Spencer has placed petals in model Molly Blair's open mouth, symbolising uncontrollable passion or sublime suffocation by roses.
 Courtesy of Jeff Bark





Above left
19. Full toilette for a ball,
Journal des dames et des modes, 1802.
Hand-coloured etching
The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York
A diadem of pink roses is shown worn
with a white and rose-pink tunic, the
skirt decorated with an asymmetric
swag of matching artificial roses.
Woodman Thompson Collection,
The Irene Lewisohn Costume
Reference Library, The Metropolitan
Museum of Art



Above right
20. Birthday card featuring roses,
1881.
Hand-coloured carte de visite
Private collection
The roses on this rare carte de visite
are painted, one pink and the other
red. With the addition of a printed
greeting, it became a birthday card:
handwritten on the reverse it reads,
"To dear Charlie from Clara,
Nov. 9th/81".



Below right
21. Birthday card, France,
early 1920s.
Colour-tinted postcard
Private collection



But roses wilt, their petals drop and perfume fades, and their moment of perfection is short-lived. Such is the shock of vanished beauty, of abundant growth withered and dying, that the rose is often understood as a symbol of the passing of time, of transformation and decay. As Shakespeare observed in his Sonnet 35, 'And loathsome canker lives in the sweetest bud', so Blake declared 'O Rose thou art sick', and Orson Welles, as Citizen Kane in the 1941 film of the same name, gasped the word 'Rosebud' with his dying breath (fig.48).¹³ This latter rosy death rattle ushers in a temporal revolution, as we are catapulted back through the dead tycoon's life in search of the enigmatic rosebud, his personal symbol of lost love and happiness. Equally disruptive is another cinematic rose – a perfect specimen that, in the hands of 'Conductor 71' in Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's 1946 masterpiece *A Matter of Life and Death*, can both halt time and turn the world from black-and-white to colour (fig.52). The Conductor, a foppish aristocrat who has been guillotined in the French Revolution, travels through time and space connecting his black-and-white 'other world' to Technicolor wartime Britain in order to save crashed fighter pilot David Niven's life. He demonstrates his ability to freeze time with the aid of his pale pink rose, declaring 'After all, what is time? A mere tyranny.'¹⁴



These time-defying roses are perhaps a response to the real rose's all-too-fleeting existence; occasionally, however, even dead roses can live again. One of Vaslav Nijinsky's most celebrated early roles was in *Le Spectre de la Rose*: the spirit of a fading rose –

Opposite

54. Vaslav Nijinsky in the Ballets Russes production *Le Spectre de la Rose*, Théâtre de Monte-Carlo, Paris, 1911.

Nijinsky's seductive personification of the spirit of a rose, with its mixture of dazzling athleticism and delicate floral beauty, enraptured audiences and remains one of the seminal moments in the history of the Ballets Russes. Historic Collection/Alamy Stock Photo

Right

55. Alexander McQueen, designed by Sarah Burton, rose-sleeved suit, Autumn/Winter 2019.

Some of fashion's hardest blooms decorated McQueen's womenswear collection for 2019. Androgynous, bovver-booted neo-punks sprouted masterfully draped, printed and gathered blooms, forming memorable bouquets of toughened sartorial fragility.

Firstview





Left
 64. Anna Maria Garthwaite,
 Design for a woven silk,
 Spitalfields, England, 1739.
 Watercolour on paper, 61.3 x 50.5cm
 Victoria and Albert Museum,
 London
 Nearly 900 of Anna Maria
 Garthwaite's drawings for textiles
 survive and are preserved at the
 Victoria and Albert Museum. The grid
 that Garthwaite used for accuracy is
 still visible in this example. Her interest
 in naturalism is evidenced by the tiny
 thorns on the roses' stems.
 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Opposite
 65. Dress (and detail),
 England, c.1840.
 Spitalfields multicoloured silk
 brocade dating from c.1760
 The Museum at FIT, New York
 Eighteenth-century silks – especially
 brocades – were costly, and gowns
 were frequently remodelled to keep
 up with changes in silhouette. While
 brocaded silk was not suited to the
 lightweight dresses of the early
 nineteenth century, it had resumed
 its place and value by the 1830s.
 The Museum at FIT, P87.20.7.
 Museum purchase



Opposite above
104. Artificial rose dress ornament,
Paris, c.1935.

Organza, paper and chenille
The Museum at FIT, New York

This magnificent ornament comprises the sole flower decoration on an unlabelled (possibly Molyneux) silk crêpe evening dress, printed with a graphic design of Classical urns and rose garlands. It is unusually sited, 46cm from the hem and at the tip of a pleated yellow silk godet; at 15cm in length and unsupported by the body, it is a robust decoration for a fine silk dress. The Museum at FIT, 90.33.6. Gift of Arne Ekstrom

Opposite below
105. Straw hat, New York, c.1924.
Silk rosebuds, chenille and
silk velvet ribbon

The Museum at FIT, New York
Above and, most profusely, below, the wide, pale blue silk-lined brim of this black straw hat are pink silk rosebuds with green chenille-like thread, very similar to those illustrated on the business card of the New York-based 'Parisian Flower Company' (see fig.116). The Museum at FIT, P83.18.6. Museum purchase

Above
106. De Pinna, Heart-shaped hairline
cap, New York, mid-1950s.

Fabric, paper, plastic and wire
The Museum at FIT, New York

The leaves that surround the prominent red silk rose at the centre back of this cap are each made from two layers of stiffened fabric, with crimped edgings. The face fabric is dyed green, with a white-painted central vein and powdered bloom; the underside is white. The leaves are attached to paper, and then to plastic-wrapped, padded and wired stems. The Museum at FIT, 82.3.66. Gift of Frederick Supper

Left
107. Lewis Wickes Hines,
'Margaret Ciampa, 29 January 1917'.
Photograph

Aged 14 years at the time this photograph was taken, Margaret Ciampa is shown finishing real roses dipped in wax for the Boston Floral Supply Co., 347-57 Cambridge St. The firm also made artificial flowers. The original caption to this photograph states that this was the only flower maker in Massachusetts.



Above left
118. 'Paris Dress', fashion plate for
Ladies Magazine, October 1804.

Hand-coloured engraving

The figure on the left wears a black straw bonnet (a hat that ties under the chin) trimmed with artificial roses and leaves; the figure on the right wears a long shawl embroidered with a floral design.

Gift of Woodman Thompson, Irene Lewisohn Costume Reference Library, The Costume Institute, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Above right

119. Fashion plate showing an evening toilette, c.1812.

Hand-coloured etching

Archive FIT

The pink roses hair ornament matches the clusters of artificial pink roses that accent the self-fabric *rouleaux* on this white, empire-line dress, which is teamed with long white gloves, white slippers and a double-strand pearl necklace with central ornament. Image courtesy of Fashion Institute of Technology | SUNY, FIT Library Unit of Special Collections and College Archives



Below left
182. Rose-themed issue of *Flair*,
May 1950.

The American magazine *Flair* was famous for its distinctive die-cut covers and inspirational graphic design. Artist Sylvia Braverman was invited to design this rose personification cover: the cut-out lifts to reveal a painted portrait of a young woman with pink roses in her hair. Balmain and Charles James designed dresses for the special issue. *Flair*, May 1950. Cover art by Sylvia Braverman

Below right
183. Christian Dior, two-piece
evening dress, Paris, 1950.
Schiffli-embroidered organdie
The Museum at FIT, New York
The Museum at FIT, 68.144.12.
Gift of Miss Adele Simpson





Opposite
194. Harry Gordon, 'Rose' dress,
USA and London, 1968.

Screen-printed rayon-nylon mix
The Museum at FIT, New York

This dress was worn and gifted to FIT
by the American actress and model
Ruth Ford, who, in the 1930s, was a
client of Charles James. She also wore
some of Schiaparelli's most daring,
surreal designs, including the 1938

'Skeleton' dress – a collaboration

with Salvador Dalí.

The Museum at FIT, 86.136.7.

Gift of Ruth Ford

Left

195. Stephen Jones, 'Rose Royce'
spiralled top hat, 'Contours'
collection, Autumn/Winter 1996.

Velvet and satin

Styling by Mattias Karlsson and patent
cotton jacket by Lutz Huelle.

Ben Toms for Luncheon

Below left

196. Halston, 'American Beauty'
evening dress, 'Resort' collection,
New York, 1980.

Organza

The Museum at FIT, New York

The French hybrid rose 'Mme
Ferdinand Janin' was bred by Henri
Lédéchaux in 1875, and renamed
'American Beauty' when it was
imported to America, becoming a
national favourite.

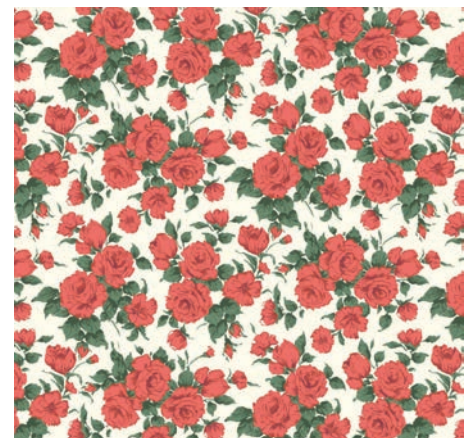
Below right

197. Liberty Studio, 'Carline', 1994.

Printed silk

This top-selling design is part of
the Liberty classic (as opposed to
seasonally changing) range.

Courtesy Liberty Fabric Ltd.





Above left
225. Alexander McQueen,
Silk bolero and ballerina dress
embroidered with ruby-red
stones, 'Girl Who Lived in a Tree'
collection, Paris, Autumn/Winter
2008.

This bolero is one of the most
structurally complex rose-themed
garments McQueen envisaged and
has inspired many subsequent designs
by the house.

FirstView

Above right
226. Alexander McQueen,
designed by Sarah Burton, 'Roses'
knuckleduster hard-shell evening
bag, 2017.

Silk satin with lace overlay, lacquered
metal knuckleduster handle
The Museum at FIT, New York
The Museum at FIT, 2019.20.1.
Museum purchase

Opposite
227. Alexander McQueen, designed
by Sarah Burton, 'Red Rose' dress,
Paris, Autumn/Winter 2019.

Silk taffeta

The fashion house refers to this colour
as 'lust red'. The dress, modelled by
Anok Yai, was created by working
directly onto the body, skilfully pin-
tucking and gathering whorls of fabric
to create volume.

FirstView



Opposite
239. Comme des Garçons,
trouser suit with self-fabric twisted
roses, Paris, Autumn/Winter 2013.
Cotton velvet
The Museum at FIT, New York
The Museum at FIT, 2016.55.4.
Museum purchase

Right
240. Comme des Garçons, dress,
'Roses and Blood' collection, Paris,
Spring/Summer 2015.
Polyester
FirstView



