

Rachel de Thame

Biography

Born in central London, Rachel trained in classical ballet at The Royal Ballet School and subsequently in History of Art at City Lit. She initially joined the international art dealers Colnaghi but was scouted by a modelling agency and embarked on a career as a model, which continued for ten years and encompassed numerous commercials and acting roles. However, a life-long passion for plants and gardens, inspired largely by her father, led to Rachel's decision to change course and re-train at The English Gardening School, where she gained qualifications in Practical Horticulture and Plants & Plantsmanship.

Rachel became a member of the presenting team on **BBC2's** flagship gardening series **Gardeners' World** in 1999. Following a break in 2009, she returned to the series at the beginning of 2011 and continues to report from locations across the UK. During her time on the programme, she has also developed several strands and specials. Her proposal for a one-hour special **The Fate of the Cottage Garden** went on to win the Garden Media Guild award for Television Broadcast of the Year in 2008.

Rachel is also currently travelling the length and breadth of Britain, presenting for **Countrywise** on primetime **ITV1**. She also presents the **BBC1** and **BBC2** coverage of the major RHS gardening shows, including **The Chelsea Flower Show** and **Hampton Court Flower Show**, **Malvern Flower Show** and **BBC Gardeners' World Live**.

In a sole presenter role, Rachel has fronted her own 6 part series **Small Town Gardens** followed by another, also with 6 episodes **Gardening With the Experts** both for primetime **BBC2**. She has co-presented several editions of **BBC Gardener of the Year**. Appearances on other horticultural interest programmes for the **BBC** include **The Joy of Gardening** and **40 Years of Gardeners' World**.

Rachel's TV work encompasses team captainship for a series of **Going For a Song** and appearances on **Call my Bluff**, both for the **BBC**. She was a reporter on **Heart of the Country** for **ITV1** and featured on **Restoration**, **The Stirling Prize for Architecture** and **Blue Peter** for the **BBC**. Other appearances include **The Alan Titchmarsh Show**, **Richard and Judy** and **The Vanessa Show** for **ITV 1** and **Market Kitchen** for the **Food Channel**. Rachel was also a guest on **Friday Night with Jonathan Ross** for **BBC1**.

Rachel's radio broadcasts include **A Good Read** and **Great Lives**, both for **BBC Radio 4**. She was guest of the week on

Essential Classics for **BBC Radio 3** and has been interviewed on various programmes, including **Woman's Hour** for **BBC Radio 4** and numerous general interest and gardening slots for **BBC** local radio stations.

In addition to her television and radio work, Rachel has written two gardening books—**Small Town Gardens** and **Rachel de Thame's Top 100 Star Plants**. She co-authored a third **Gardening With the Experts** and contributed to **Moving On Up**, edited by Sarah Brown.

As a garden writer and journalist, Rachel is a regular columnist for **The Sunday Times**. Contributions to other publications include **The Daily Telegraph**, **The Guardian**, **Gardeners' World Magazine**, **Amateur Gardening Magazine** and **New Eden Magazine**. She has also written a regular online gardening column for **AOL**.

In a horticultural and design capacity, Rachel designed the silver medal-winning **LK Bennett** garden in the Urban Category for **The RHS Chelsea Flower Show**. She has created planting schemes for gardens featured on **Gardener's World** and co-created show gardens for **BBC Gardeners' World Live**. Rachel undertakes private commissions for garden and planting design. In 2012 Rachel was the floral designer for the Royal Barge, which conveyed the Queen and other senior members of the Royal Family during the **Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant**, watched by millions around the world.

Rachel has hosted several awards and events, including the **RHS Britain in Bloom Awards** and her public speaking engagements include giving a talk at the opening of the exhibition **Claude Lorrain: The Enchanted Landscape** at the **Ashmolean Museum** in Oxford. Her corporate work has featured collaborations with **Disney**, **Rachels' Organic** and **Tesco Finest**. She is also proud to support numerous charities, including **Save the Baby Unit**, **Thrive**, **Living Paintings** and **Mind**.

Rachel is married with four children. The family divide their time between central London and rural Oxfordshire. When time allows, she continues to design and develop the seven-acre plot, where she is currently working on a traditional cottage garden, incorporating a series of themed garden rooms and a fruit and vegetable garden.