

GARDEN DESIGN JOURNAL

SGD

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INSIGHT INTERVIEW: PATRICIA FOX

This month, students from Inchbald School of Design put their questions to Patricia Fox MSGD of Aralia Garden Design

Saar Scholtes, Diploma in Garden Design: In 10 years' time, what will have changed in garden design? After a decade of minimalism the pendulum is swinging to gardens with meaning and usefulness. When we design spaces, we'll be thinking about how they make the user feel.

How did you evolve your personal style of design? I did A Level art and I have a degree in fashion, so I've always designed things. I inhale everything – a landscape, a fashion store, some paving on holiday... My influences come from many industries.

Who do you view as a role model? I've never modelled myself on anyone – I didn't set myself up to copy or emulate. My designs are a response to a client, the site and the architecture.

Petra Budai, Diploma in Garden Design: What advice would you give to a student who has genuine ideas but wants to be down to earth too? Get connected with what you're about, then filter it and put your stamp on it. Young designers often do what the client tells them, but you have to be brave. We always check that we're ticking

the functional boxes of a brief but they don't have to drive the design, or bring it down.

Lots of people want small gardens that fulfil several different functions. How can a designer be creative and still keep the client happy? Clients don't necessarily know what's going to make them happy. I don't 'take briefs' from clients – I draw a brief from them, then take them on a journey. We once designed a garden that was 4m x 5m and managed to fit in three seating areas and a shed. Small spaces need a higher level of creativity.

What was the most difficult garden you had to design? I don't think I've ever thought a garden is difficult. Difficult is a state of mind. Every garden has challenges, such as slopes – but they're opportunities.

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INFO

Do you have questions to put to an established and respected designer? We want to hear from student and Pre-Registered members who would like a chance to ask their burning queries to a fully registered Member or Fellow of the Society. Get in touch at gdj@jppublishing.co.uk

INSIDER INFO

SGD EDUCATOR STATUS

The SGD is offering programme leaders or course coordinators of recognised garden design courses the chance to apply for SGD Educator Status. Following acceptance and approval, it will give colleges the right to use the SGD Educator logo on their course literature. It is hoped that the initiative will forge a supportive relationship between the SGD and colleges. Find out more in a future issue.

DESIGN SECRETS UNVEILED

The London College of Garden Design is running several Garden Design Secrets Unveiled study days at RHS Garden Wisley this summer. They will focus on Bury Court, The Veitch Heritage Garden at Warren House, Serge Hill Garden and Sussex Prairie Garden. Find out more at lsgd.org.uk

GUIDE TO NEW CDM RULES

The SGD has launched a guide to the new CDM regulations (2015). It looks at the intricacies of the new rules and points out the penalties for not complying. The guide also includes a template for garden designers, plus a risk assessment template. The guide is free to Registered, Pre-Registered and Student Members – log in to the Member or Student Zones on the SGD website and look in the 'CDM Regulations' 'Useful information' and 'CPD' sections.

NEW CAPEL MANOR COURSE

Capel Manor College is offering a new Garden Design and Plantsmanship (Level 4 & 5) Foundation Degree from September. It will mix core design skills with practical horticulture, business plans, CAD and more. The degree will be full-time over two years or part-time over four. Call Lee Sanders on 08456 122122 or visit www.capel.ac.uk

SUBURBAN GARDEN IN FOCUS

The suburban garden will be the focus of a Garden History Society Annual Study Weekend on 3-5 June. Taking place in Oxford, it will look at British gardens from the early 19th century to the present day. There will be walking tour in North Oxford, including a visit to the private Park Town garden. www.gardenhistorysociety.org