

May 19, 2012
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gardening



All the fun of
Alternative Ch

Designers
Secrets of a top

And
The Chelsea
In the paper on

the Daily Telegraph |



Dream of perfection: Raymond Evison's stand in the Great Pavilion, which included this clematis tunnel, won the plantsman his 23rd gold medal at Chelsea last year

CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW

WHERE THE MAGIC HAPPENS

As the designers of the 15 show gardens at Chelsea put the final touches to their creations, **Tim Richardson** picks out the medal winners



LUKE MACGREGOR/GETTY IMAGES; WENDY OLIPHANT/SHOOTING STAR; GUY FOSTER/GETTY IMAGES

Adam Frost
Lands' End A Rural Muse
Odds: 8-1 Medal prediction: silver-gilt

● This Fenland-theme garden has had everything but the kitchen sink (though thrown at it, although some last-minute editing and superlative planting on site could still earn it a gold).

Diarmuid Gavin
The Westland Horticulture
Magical Tower Garden
Odds: 9-1 Medal prediction: silver-gilt

● Medals are immaterial for this "joker in the pack". What really matters is how good the television pictures are of the better shelter at the heart of this pyramidal garden. Gavin's main fear is not a poor medal but being ignored — there's only one thing worse than being talked about, and that's not being talked about enough.

Jason Hodges
Trailfinders Australian Garden
presented by Fleming's
Odds: 8-1 Medal prediction: silver

● It's Groundhog Day for the lads from Oz, who now seem to be in danger of repeating themselves ad infinitum. Didn't we see this hymn to outdoor living last year? (And the year before that?) A good medal is still a possibility, as the RHS needs its international exhibitors to give the show a multicultural dimension.

Thomas Hoblyn
The Arthritis Research UK Garden
Odds: 8-1 Medal prediction: silver

● This ever-ambitious designer's Italian-themed offering will stand or fall on the quality of the stonework, the water features and the overall detailing. Bucky, then. In addition,

there may not be enough space left over to win through with the planting. Riskier still!

Patricia Fox
Rooftop Workplace of Tomorrow
(RBS with Walworth Garden Farm)
Odds: 8-1 Medal prediction: silver

● The idea for this garden — seen-before glass-walled modernism and a green roof — is way off the pace and looks rather corporate. But if this lesser-known designer can make the planting really sing, all that could be overlooked.

Flemens Warland Design
The World Vision Garden
Odds: 10-1 Medal prediction: silver

● It's difficult to make a circular design that really works at the scale of a Chelsea plot, as this design team

may well discover. Tree ferns are also a tad Nineties. What can one say? If this wins gold I will eat my Panama.

Jihae Hwang
DMZ Forbidden Garden
(MUUM, Korean Air, the Dowager Viscountess Rothermere, gardenlink)
Odds: 10-1 Medal prediction: silver

● This year's real outsider and the most original think at Chelsea: a garden that is set in Korea's demilitarised zone. A designer from foreign shores who is new to Chelsea is very unlikely to demonstrate the necessary planting panache to gain a good medal, although the fascinating botanical mix that is promised could well compensate.

● For visitors this is one of the best places to see the show, as it's centrally located and easy to reach by public transport.

May 26-27

Witchampton open gardens, noon-4.30pm, nr Wimborne, Dorset. Twelve gardens, church flowers, plant stalls, tractor rides, hot and cold food, entry £5, children free (01258 841405).

May 27

Suffolk Plant Heritage spring plant fair, 10.30am-4pm, Helmingham Hall Gardens, nr Ipswich. Specialist nurseries, propagation workshops, plant doctors, plus 800 rare chrysanthemums to be given away. Entry £6, children free (01473 890799).

May 27

Secret Gardens of Caldy open day, 2pm-6pm, Caldy, Wirral. Entry £7 (includes tea and cakes), proceeds in aid of Cancer Research (0151 625 1344).

ChelseaCuttings

Beat a retreat to Paris

● Jardins, jardin, the French garden show set in the Tuileries in Paris, is perfectly timed as an alternative to the high stakes world of the Chelsea Flower Show.

This is a more playful, urban form of gardening — think of it as a hybrid between the best of Chelsea and the promise of the Fringe. It presents some 20 show gardens, plus 100 trade stands, a Village of Outdoor

Design, and a design contest for students.

There are familiar faces: Champagne house Laurent Perrier strikes camp in front of the Orangerie. Luciano Giubbilei, three times a Chelsea gold medal winner, has designed an installation that, he says, "attempts to crystallise the notion of simplicity". It comprises a clipped box parterre, eight domes surrounded by

low hedges, a framework for six benches. Here, visitors can view a stunning contemporary floral display: 6,000 roses in shades of elegant pink cover a 150ft-long hedge.

Post-Chelsea, take the Eurostar to Paris, arrive in time for lunch, and relax into a different gardening culture.

● Jardins, jardin, Tuileries, Paris, June 1-3; visit jardinsjardin.com

Leaf through botanical art at Potterton Books

● The window of Potterton Books, just around the corner from Chelsea, will be a magnet for garden-lovers this Chelsea week.

Florist Paula Pryke has decorated the window in the spirit of her latest book, *Everyday Flowers* (Jacqui Small, £25), and signed copies will be available in the shop and on the Potterton Books stand (EA35).

Potterton is also introducing a new artist, Katrin Moyo, who is exhibiting watercolours, cards and prints. Better known as a ceramic artist, she bases her designs on childhood memories of the Seventies.



Memories: Katrin Moyo's "Camembert Plate"

● Potterton Books, 93 Lower Sloane Street, London SW1 (020 7730 4235; pottertonbookslondon.co.uk)

Pinterest at the Athenaeum

● The Athenaeum Hotel is a landmark in city greening for its living wall designed by Frenchman Patrick Blanc. Its "Urban Gardens" Pinterest competition is tagged to the Chelsea Fringe. Pinterest (in case you didn't know) is a photo-sharing website, and the Athenaeum is encouraging snappers to capture the installations, events and experiences of the Fringe to create a "mood board". The best will win an Evergreen Tea for two (well worth the effort, it's delicious).

● The Athenaeum, 116 Piccadilly, London W1 (020 7499 3464; pinterest.com/theathenaeum)

Saatchi's bouquet of vibrant flowers

● Artist and garden designer Ann Yarew starts her day by picking flowers from her garden to paint from. The resulting canvases,

riotously colourful and vibrant, are on display at the Saatchi Gallery until June 16, a novel's throw from Chelsea. Ann was born and raised in

Creota and is very influenced by her travels. To support charity, she set up the Ann Yarew Foundation. Visit www.ann-yarew.com