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FUSION FLOWERS



COLOUR BY
PER BENJAMIN

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FLOWERS

FTD
WORLD CUP
REPORT

FRÉDÉRIC DUPRÉ ★ IPM ESSEN ★ IZA TKACZYK ★ COHIM FORUM ★ GÁBOR NAGY ★ HAPPY TOGETHER ★ SARA-LISA LUDVIGSSON
GOING GREEN ★ MARK PAMPLING ★ SPRING INSPIRATION ★ JIMMY ENGLUND ★ CHINESE STYLE ★ AGNA MAERTENS ★ BLUE FLOWERS

The background of the advertisement is a solid blue color. In the top left corner, there is a pair of yellow-handled scissors. In the top right corner, there is a bouquet of large white peonies. In the middle right, there is a tangled coil of red floral wire. In the bottom right, there is a tube of Oasis Floral Products spray paint, labeled 'SPRAY COLOUR Fuchsia'. In the bottom left, there are several green floral foam blocks and a yellow flower. The text is arranged in a central white box with a dashed line separating the top and bottom sections.

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I am so excited! A few days after the publication of this issue of the magazine I am finally going to visit the Keukenhof gardens in The Netherlands. Several people have told me that they find it hard to believe that in all my years in the flower industry I've never visited this iconic Dutch event. But it's true. I have driven passed it. I have witnessed a parade that was going to it but, until now, I have never actually been there! Oh my - I just hope that the sun shines and that all the flowers are in bloom. Truth to be told though, I am informed that as my visit will probably be on the first opening day to the public this year, it's unlikely that I will see my much dreamed of banks of tulips, hyacinths and daffodils dancing in the breeze. You can but hope though!

As I told you in the last issue, I was also looking forward to attending the FTD-Fleurop-Interflora World Cup in Philadelphia, but the fates conspired against me and it was not to be. In the end, our own Sue Phillips attended this exciting event and, by all accounts, although she worked

very hard - she had a ball! We send our congratulations to everyone who took part because they put on a great show which I managed to witness via an online connection. This time though it is Sue who shares her report with you, and I have a feeling that you are going to love it.

So, am I challenging the fates again by telling you of my proposed trip to Keukenhof? I hope not! But whatever happens, you will hear all about it in our next issue - that's for sure. Whatever your floral dream may be I hope that it comes true for you. As for me - I am always the optimist, so look out tulips - here I come!



Alison Bradley
EDITOR



Frédéric Dupré

Frédéric Dupré studied landscape gardening and horticulture before branching into floristry. Four years of study led to a Bachelor's degree and the insight that he was attracted to floral design and the noble art of floristry. His record of achievements is pretty impressive. Frédéric is a professional teacher and gives demonstrations and workshops around the world.



Iza Tkaczyk

Iza Tkaczyk graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk, Poland and is an interior designer. She is now a Master Florist, won the Barcelona World Cup in 2016 and the **Fusion Flowers** International Designer of the Year 2017.



Sara-Lisa Ludvigsson

Sara-Lisa Ludvigsson is a highly talented and passionate florist who is a tutor, writer and demonstrator. Her enthusiasm and talent have found her travelling far but she still loves to incorporate her own version of 'Swedish nature' in her design work wherever she goes.



Per Benjamin

Per Benjamin is a former Fleurop World Cup winner who was part of the famous Life3 partnership. He is an author, teacher, demonstrator and judge and recently master of ceremonies for the FTD World Cup. Per is also the designer of the Nobel Banquet.



Agna Maertens

Agna Maertens is a highly talented florist who is based in Belgium. She recently achieved the EMC qualification. She is a charming person who enjoys teaching. Her work is very detailed and precise and she loves to include allied crafts in her bouquets and arrangements.



Mark Pampling

Mark Pampling became the Australian Champion in 2003 and was their representative in the 2004 Interflora World Cup. He is a teacher, judge and co-owner of Alstonville Florist. He has demonstrated worldwide and has won countless awards for his work.

Fusion Flowers
Awards



- 2015 Winner - PPA Small Publishing Company - Best Magazine
- 2015 Highly Commended – PPA Best Online Presence
- 2012 Winner - PPA Small Publishing Company - Best Magazine
- 2012 Highly Commended - PPA Best Online Presence
- 2012 Highly Commended - PPA Best Front Cover
- 2010 Highly Commended – PPA Best Small Publishing Company Magazine
- 2009 – Highly Commended – PPA
Consumer Specialist Magazine of the Year
- 2009 – Highly Commended – PPA Best Small Publishing Company Magazine
- 2008 Winner - PPA Best Magazine - Small Publishing Company
- 2008 Highly Commended - PPA Best Online Presence
- 2008 Highly Commended - PPA Consumer Magazine
- 2008 Highly Commended - PPA Magazine of the Year
- 2007 Highly Commended - PPA Consumer Specialist Magazine
- 2007 Highly Commended - PPA Best Magazine - Small Publishing Company
- 2006 Winner - PPA Best Magazine - Small Publishing Company
- 2006 Highly Commended - PPA Publisher of the Year
- 2006 Highly Commended - PPA Magazine of the Year
- 2005 Winner - PPA Best Magazine - Small Publishing Company
- 2005 Highly Commended - PPA Best Online Presence
- 2005 Highly Commended - PPA Magazine of the Year



FRONT COVER
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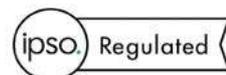
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2019 Trends from Flower Council of Holland

The Flower Council of Holland has identified 3 Trends for 2019 so we decided to give you a full review of their categories - Soft Landing, New Frontiers and Harvesting Elements.

New Frontiers

The future has arrived. This style Trend is all about speed, smart technology and our senses. How can we be at one with ourselves in an ever-smarter environment? We need to seek a healthy balance and find a new rhythm within this tempo, where so much is already decided for us, invented to assist us in our lives and where we are also expected to be up-to-date with all of this technology.

Interiors

This Trend engenders the feeling that smart technological solutions can be found everywhere. Unusual metallic finishes, transparent materials with gradients and reflections lend an overall sci-fi feel. Flowers and plants remain as simple as possible and are particularly seen in shades of purple.



Colours

Purple and lilac predominate. The gradients, metallic finishes and reflective colours are also linked to this style Trend.

Materials

The materials used are plastic, glass or metal, or involve the use of glass and ceramic with an unusual finish.



Outdoors

In the garden this Trend also takes a mysterious and futuristic form. We bring the technological conveniences from the indoors outside. The sense of a smart garden is reinforced by the use of colour and materials: disorienting depth, perception and patterns with oil stains or iridescent effects that create a sense of intangibility.



Patterns

Colour gradients, graphic line structures and line drawings with perspective regularly recur as patterns within this Trend.

Hot and Happening

Visit www.fusionflowers.com for up-to-the-minute news, special offers and FREE newsletters

Soft Landing

This style Trend is about a soft landing. For society, but primarily in your immediate surroundings. With so much chaos in the world outside, we want to make everything at home a bit friendlier, softer and more beautiful. A place where you can be safe and comfortable, like being wrapped in a warm blanket.

Interiors

This Trend leads to all things soft: soft colours, soft materials and soft, sometimes wavy forms of flowers and plants. Here and there folklore-related details point to an historic or ethnic origin.



Colours

Pastel colours alternate with creamy shades, pale lilacs and nude colours. If you're looking for a colour accent, add cheerful orange.



Materials

The materials used look welcoming, as if you can sink into them like a freshly made bed. You therefore see a lot of padded materials and long-haired (sheep) skins.

Outdoors

In the garden this Trend translates into an environment where you can happily walk around in your bare feet. Mosses, grasses and soft, velvety leaves create a sense of comfort and softness, just as indoors. The colours are also soft without becoming too twee.

Patterns

The patterns are also soft. Quilted, padded or patterns with feathers. We also see subtle folklore influences.



Harvesting Elements

This style Trend is about sustainability and all our tomorrows. Our concern about the future is leading to more restrained choices and a new sense of responsibility. The sustainability of our immediate environment, as well as that of the entire planet is a recurring theme.

Interiors

This Trend leads to calming interiors where rhythm and the pure product counts. The sustainable approach leads to a real revival in recycled materials that retain their authenticity. This means that the composite materials and products do not look perfect; instead, you can see their history. Flowers and plants also play a special role in this Trend: mono bouquets can be dried, or we take a fresh approach and place a colourful plant bouquet in a vase.



Colours

Shades of white and grey together with black predominate, followed by shades of blue accompanied by natural tones of green, blue and brown.



Outdoors

In the garden this Trend translates in the same way as in the interior but can be implemented even more clearly. The garden is tidied up, has a clear efficient layout and materials are reused where possible. The visual contrast is reflected in - amongst other things - the use of natural elements, such as concrete combined with recycled shells from the food industry as a by-product.

Materials

The materials used are varied and are often created by bringing together multiple materials. These recycled materials are often uneven and coarse.

Patterns

Patterns that appear natural or patterns without frills are favourite in this Trend. Marble-look and spot patterns, but equally a simple check or stripe for fabrics.



photography courtesy of Funnyhowflowersdohai.co.uk

Europa Cup 2020

European countries have begun the search for their competitor who will take part in the Europa Cup next year. We have been lucky enough to see that sensational venue and have already heard of some of the exciting plans that the committee have lined up. It's due to be held in Katowice, Poland from 5 - 6 June and following the actual competition, the designs will be on display for the public on 7 June. We will keep you informed as news is released but it already looks really exciting.



Hot and Happening

International Dates for your Diary

21 - 25 May: RHS Chelsea Flower Show, London, UK Floral design competitions, floristry competitions, show gardens, retail stands For more information www.rhs.org.uk

4 - 6 August: **Fusion Flowers** magazine Summer School, Kippen, Stirlingshire, Scotland Annual Summer School - tutor Iza Tkaczyk For more information www.fusionflowers.com +44 (0)1786 870204 Some places available

11 - 15 September: 5 Days 5 Stories PLUS, Bad Neuenahr, Germany 5 day seminar with Gregor Lersch For more information www.gregorlersch.de FULLY BOOKED

13 - 15 September: Harrogate Autumn Flower Show, North of England Horticultural Society, Great Yorkshire Showground, England Floral design competition, floristry competition, garden show For more information www.flowershow.org.uk

4 - 5 October: It's all about Autumn Bouquets, Bad Neuenahr, Germany 2 day hands-on seminar with Thomas Tergowitsch and Andrea Lehmann For more information www.gregorlersch.de

6 - 8 November: IFTF, Expo Haarlemmermeer, Stelling 1, 2141 SB Vijfhuizen, The Netherlands International Trade Fair For more information www.hppexhibitions.com/iftf/

6 - 8 November: Royal FloraHolland, Aalsmeer, The Netherlands International Trade Fair For more information www.royalfloraholland.com

2020

28 - 31 January: IPM Essen, Essen, Germany International Trade Fair, floristry demonstrations, Trend installations For more information www.ipm-essen.de

26 Feb - 1 March: WAFA competition, Diggi Palace, Jaipur, India Floral design competitions, demonstrations, workshops For more information wafaindia.com

5 - 6 June: Europa Cup, Katowice, Poland European floristry competition, demonstrations, exhibitions, seminars For more information www.florint.org/competition-and-events/europa-cup



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Tipped for Success!

by Frédéric Dupré

Photography by Denis Bradley & Mike Boerma

At this year's IPM Essen event I was honoured to be one of the designers featured on stage. One of the designs I created specially for the show drew a lot of attention and the editor asked me to recreate the original, this time taking my time to select some special flowers because, as she said, "I have an idea!"



I used:

Lisianthus

Gloriosa

Lathyrus

Oncidium Orchid

Muscari

Phalaenopsis Orchid

Narcissus

Myosotis

Nerine

Tanacetum

Rosa - spray

Hypericum

Sandersonia

Chamelaucium

Tradescantia zebrina

Glass test tubes - small size

Wood base - size optional

Q-tips® - 2,500 approximately

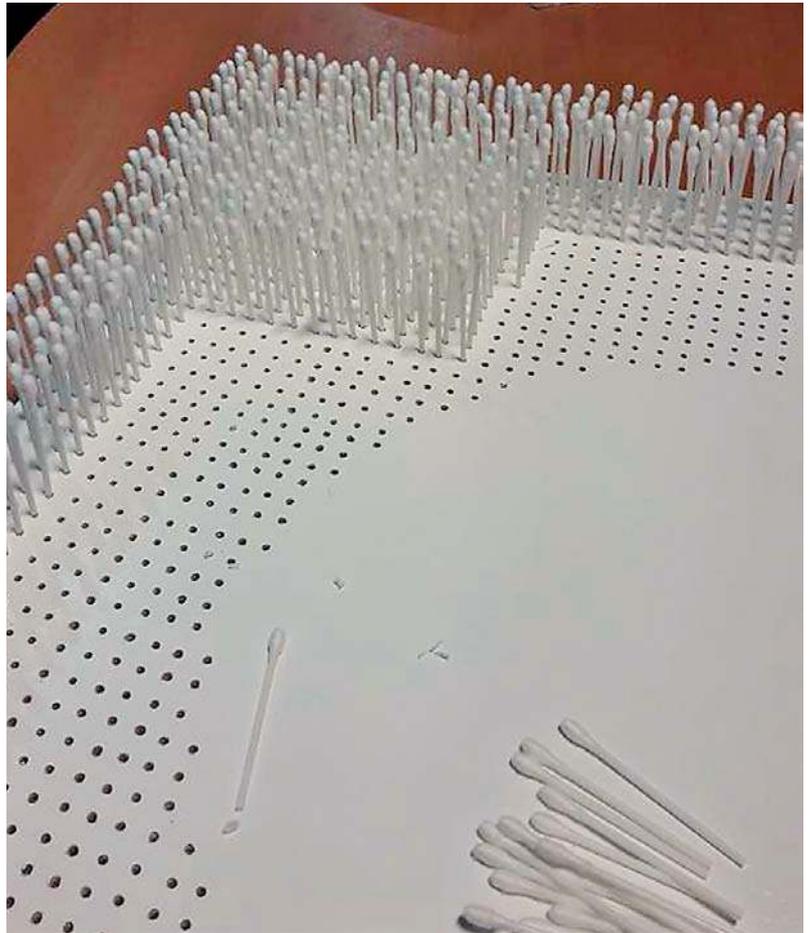
Water colour paints

Paint brush

Electric drill

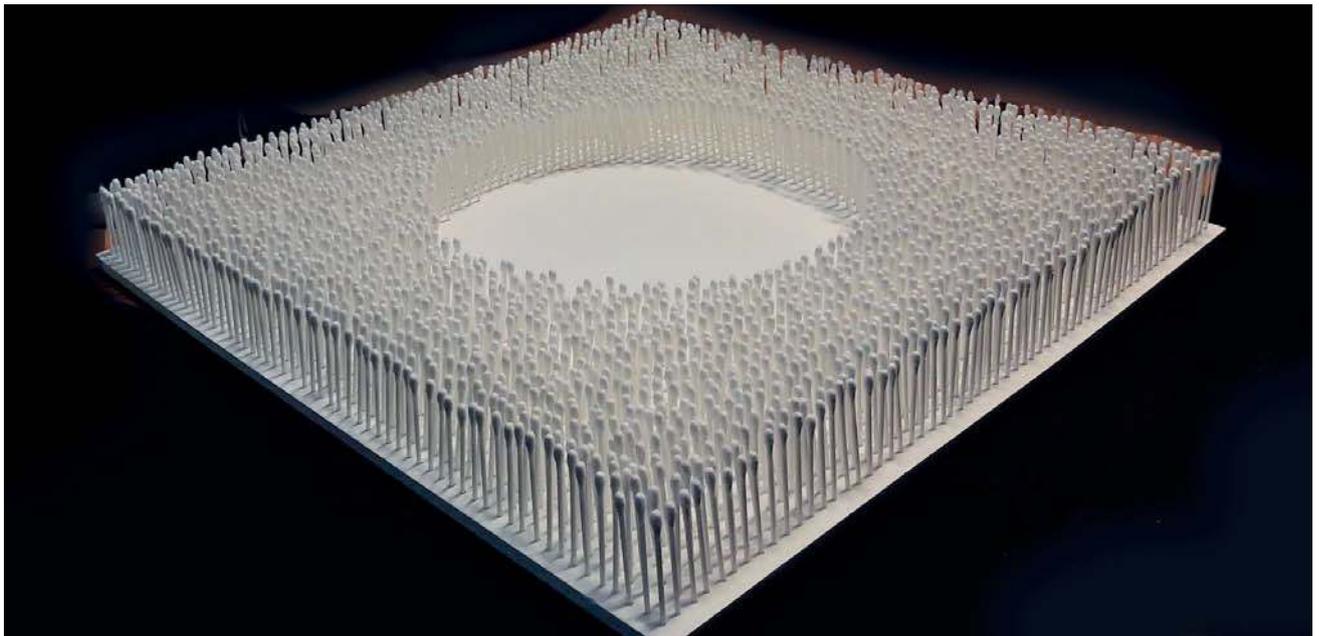
White paint

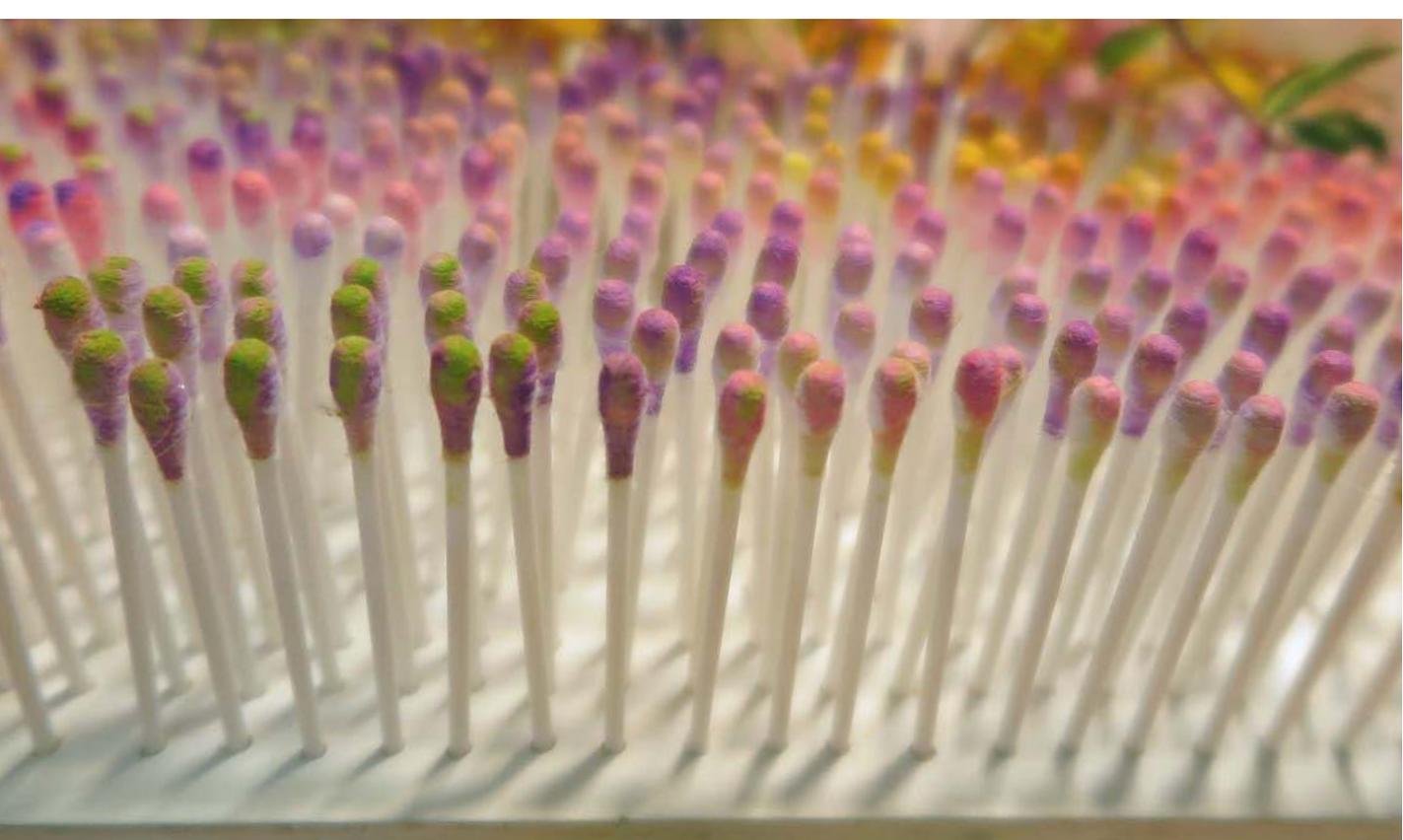
Cold glue



Choose a suitably sized wooden board and paint it white or use a manufactured white board. Mark out the position of the Q-tips® and then carefully drill holes in the board. Insert the Q-tips® in the holes to check that you are happy with the layout.

You now have two options. Option 1 (which is what I opted for) is to remove the Q-tips® and paint the tips in water colour paint of your choice. Allow them to dry and then add a second or even a third colour until you have the finish that you want. As you can see, I created different colourways to segment the design and to tone with the flowers. The second option is to do this hand painting when the Q-tips® are in position but you will need a very steady hand to ensure that no paint splashes on to the base!



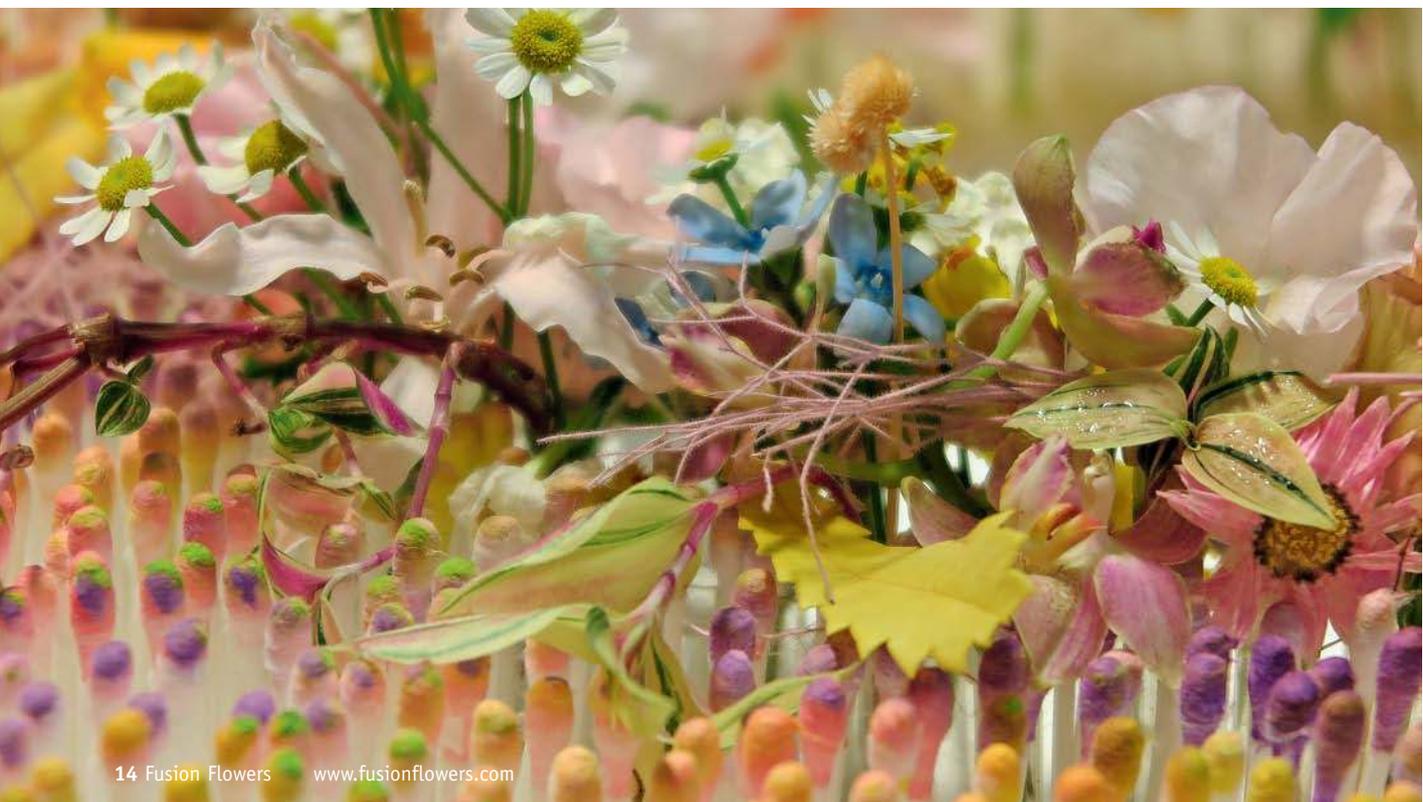


When you are happy with the paint finish, insert the Q-tips® in the layout of your choice. Glue or wire the mini glass test tubes in place onto the Q-tips®. Fill the test tubes with water.

Arrange the short-stemmed flowers and foliage in position. I would suggest that you ensure that some of the stems of Tradescantia (wandering sailor plant) and tendrils of Gloriosa 'wander' through the coloured Q-tips® to break away from the circular form.

For such a large-scale piece of work I had help from my assistants Max Hurtaud and Mike Boerma who worked tirelessly. I admit that this was literally a labour of love, but the reaction of the visitors was overwhelming and humbling and made it all worthwhile.

I loved making this and I hope that you enjoy it too!



The Power of Zen!

FTD-Interflora-Fleurop World Cup 2019 – Philadelphia

by Sue Phillips

Photography by Sue Phillips & Piet van Kampen

The suspense is palpable! A hush has fallen across the room, everyone is listening as the Master of Ceremonies finally says “and the World Champion 2019 is”. But that’s jumping ahead several days, there are 3 days and 6 preliminary rounds before one of the 23 competitors gets to hear the words that many of them will have dreamed of since beginning their floristry journey.



Four years on from Berlin and 34 years since the USA last hosted the World Cup, the competition venue for 2019 is the Philadelphia Flower Show – the largest and longest running horticultural event in the USA, staged in the city’s Convention Centre and with an expected attendance of 250,000 – 300,000.

A walk-through during staging (one of the perks of being Press) is a chance to see each of the competitors’ structures in position in their semi-circular pods. It looks good! It looks exciting! And it also brings a couple of questions to mind! What is ‘it’ that makes a World Champion? Originality is always, in my opinion, a must-have factor – yet there are some constructions where the inspiration is more-than obvious! And then, whether winning is in part dependent on the amount spent on commissioning bespoke staging from outside sources – we will see, but the ones that stand out, again in my opinion, are those where the creativity and technical skill of the competitor is already clearly evident in their construction.

Even more of a concern is hearing that several of the competitors have been seriously let down with their plant material. Can you imagine what it must be like to be representing your country on the biggest floral-stage of your career, to have invested months (and months) of your time, not to mention the financial commitment involved and then to arrive to find that your flowers are missing or in poor condition? There were worried faces and even a few tears! It’s something that the organisers and/or the wholesalers should never have allowed to happen, especially when you know that some of the growers would have handpicked more-than perfect flowers for the competitors.



Day 1 saw the competitors work on the first 2 of their Designer's Choice tasks and gave an insight into the number of visitors trying to get as close as possible to the action. The large scale *Harmony in Architecture*, with the added description "... the smallest detail should have a meaning or purpose", was followed by the handtied bouquet *Strength of Colour* where competitors were challenged with illustrating how light creates colour in nature. Already a few names were beginning to be mooted as possible contenders for the title, but all 23 competitors automatically moved on to day 2 - there was still everything to play for. *The Power of Flowers* was a Table for Two setting where the power of love had to be featured through flowers, with the added criteria of the design having to stimulate 4 of the senses. Then came the first of the Surprise Packages; a veritable feast of products and flowers, all from Certified American growers, together with a stone-effect plinth and bowl. Here the competitors could select as much or as little as they wished.



Bart Hassam, Australia FTD World Champion

Bart described his designs as showcasing form linear. Perfectly executed structures set the scene and a restrained use of botanical material, including the show-stopping *Anthurium vetchii* and *Ravenala madagascariensis* (it cost 180 Euros!) made this a space to watch from the outset. Bart's zen-like method of working, even under the spotlight of a World Cup competition, added to the justification of the accolade of World Champion.



At the end of the day, following a demonstration by AIFD, the 10 semi-finalists were announced as Australia (Bart Hassam), China (Wei Yao), Czech Republic (Přemysl Hytych), Finland (Pirjo Koppi), Germany (Stephen Triebe), Hungary (Tamás Mezöffy), Italy (Vincenzo Antonuccio), Japan (Kazuhiro Sugimoto), Korea (Myeon Oh) and Russia (Natalia Zhizhko). Day 3 came and the remaining 10 had another Surprise task. The booths were filling and, in some cases, overflowing and marring the ambient harmony created by the 3 Designer's Choice exhibits (it's a factor that should perhaps be considered for future competitions). Tension was mounting in readiness for the Gala Dinner when the final 5 were announced ... Australia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary and Russia were the finalists and took to the stage for yet another (one too many?) Surprise Package ... and it was to be completed in just 45 minutes!



Natalia Zhizhko, Russia - 2nd

Natalia's Table for Two was both innovative and inspired. Acrylic shelves, edged in her favourite yellow, were spiralled to leave a missing segment for the flowers. Holes inset into the acrylic cleverly allowed the flowers to seemingly float through the structure.







Tamás Mezöffy, Hungary - 3rd

Textures of black, accented with gold and a repetition of varied geometric forms set the scene for an exquisite collection of botanical materials in the 3 Designer's Choice pieces. His use of colour was masterly.

growing
life circulation seed
 unfolding
 soil rhythm
invariability blossoming
 balance tuber
 power

The suspense is palpable! A hush has fallen across the room, everyone is listening as the Master of Ceremonies finally says "... and the World Champion 2019 is Australia, it's Bart Hassam". The cheers were long and loud; it was, without discrediting any of the other finalists who each produced some spectacular designs, a popular choice.



Stephen Triebe, Germany – 4th

Stephen's *Harmony in Architecture* had both 'WOW and how!' impact. The sculpture was created with cut/shaved floral foam, painted with plaster, water and wood glue. The inset pattern repeated with an over-layer of white-painted twigs, randomly infilled with plaster.







Přemysl Hytych, Czech Republic – 5th

Always an artist in his use of non-botanical materials, Přemysl created a textured, wool heart-shape for *The Power of Flowers* with wool-bound branches supporting the flowers over a romantic table setting. The handtied frame made from laser-cut paper with a metallic finish repeated the pattern of his *Harmony in Architecture* structure.



The next day, *Fusion Flowers* spoke with Bart and asked him just what the accolade of World Champion meant. He answered excitedly, but with the same air of serenity that he had showed throughout the competition and which had been a sheer joy to watch “Everything!” “Opportunities!” “When I worked in a small florists, when I studied floristry; *this* was the dream”.

The next issue of Fusion Flowers will include a further report on the remaining competitors.

Upcycled Angularity

by Mark Pampling

Photography by Mark Pampling

As I was re-purposing a freight palette for a large scale display one of the legs fell off! Rather than despair I saw it as an opportunity and turned the dismembered leg into a platform on which to stage a design with distinct, angled lines.

I used:

Phalaenopsis Orchids - copper

Leucospermum - orange

Gasteria flowers

Carnations - magenta

Monstera leaf - small

Papaver (poppy) - seedpod

Howea forsteriana (kentia palm) - inflorescence, dried

Caryota urens (fishtail palm) - inflorescence, dried

Corypha (buri leaves) - lime

Banksia Pod - dried, blackened

Ting Ting sticks - lime

Palette support/leg - approximately 65cm x 8cm x 10cm (length x width x height)

1.8mm Stub wires

Test tubes - small

Paper-covered wire - natural







Trim or hammer in any nails sticking out of the pallet legs.

Cut the ends of the stub wires at a sharp angle to create a nail-like end. Using two pairs of heavy pliers, hammer the sharp ends of the wires into the pallet surface, distributing them asymmetrically. Hold each wire firmly between the cutting blades of the pliers (not so firmly that you cut the wire - just enough to grip it!), 2 or 3 cm above the sharp end and use the second pair of pliers to hammer the base of the plier head. Hammer enough to insert the wire into the wood firmly so that it resists being pulled out. I hammered all of my wires in vertically and then bent them as required later - this is a much simpler, safer and more secure process than trying to hammer them on angles. I used about 17 wires at this stage. You can always add additional wires later as required.

Cut the Buri leaves into longer tips and shorter (30 to 40cm) base sections and attach them to the stub wires in two places each. I used a tailor's awl to poke holes through the tough leaves first and then threaded the paper-covered wire through these holes before binding them in place securely.



Similarly, add the Ting Ting sticks. Leave a gap between the palette top and the base of the leaves and sticks giving an elevated, floating feel, and making this negative space a distinct design feature.

Bend the wires from their very bases (keeping the visible wire section as straight as possible) and interweave the leaves and sticks on the desired angles, meeting at a peak that is off centre. At this peak, fold/bend the materials to create the triangular form of the design. Bind the materials together where they cross in several places to give the overall structure some volume and to make it stronger.

Add the Kentia Palm inflorescence to the design, binding it in in two places with paper-covered wire and directing it toward the longer side. In the same way, thread the long Fishtail Palm strand through the structure and bind it in place. Invert the Banksia pod and bind it in toward the back on the shorter side, adding some visual weight to the area. The grey/black colours and texture of these dried materials will repeat some of those found in the palette base creating better overall harmony.

Position the Phalaenopsis Orchid within the design, binding in place where appropriate and adding a test tube. I cut an individual bloom from the full stem to allow it to nestle better within the structure. I added the individual cut bloom, and a tube for it, toward the rear of the design which distributed the colour and added visual depth.

Add the Leucospermum and the Monstera leaf. Be careful to align the leaf harmoniously with the lines of the design. Continue with the carnations, adding them through the depth of the arrangement. Keep the heads of the material concentrated around the peak of the structure and align the stems with the Buri leaves and sticks. Avoid cluttering the void beneath the peak, to give good contrast between the positive and negative spaces. As before, add test tubes for each of the stems.

Position and secure the Gasteria flowers within the design. I did not add test tubes for these stems, finding that the flowers last quite well without immediate hydration. Of course, use tubes if you require the arrangement to have greater longevity. Similarly, add the stems of poppy seedpods to complete the design.



My 'Thank You' Bouquet

or when the florist even uses the packaging!

by Gábor Nagy

Photography by Bálint Rádi



After winning 2nd place in the 2018 *Fusion Flowers* magazine International Designer of the Year Competition I wanted to create something which said "Thank you" to the three judges Timo, Mark and Jason and to Alison and Sue as well. I also wanted to create and use something which bonded to the competition in some way. When I opened the box containing my trophy I saw these white, foam rubber pieces and it was love at first sight. I knew in that moment I would use them to create a bouquet.

I really like to create bouquets which preserve a loose structure and can give an airy look. I think this one is a good example of this. It's a big bouquet but, because of the wire structure, you can add the flowers very easily and in a loose way.



I used:

- Helleborus 'Double Ellen' - white
- Helleborus - yellow
- Craspedia
- Paphiopedilum x leeanum
- Calceolaria - yellow
- Cyclamen- pink
- Rosa - pink
- Diplocyclos palmatus
- Viburnum opulus 'Roseum'
- Wire 2.5mm
- Stub wire 1.2mm
- Decor wire - white
- Thin decor wire - silver
- Foam rubber packaging pieces (compostable)
- Stem tape - white
- Binding wire
- Floral glue
- Candle
- Barbed wire
- Tubes
- Hot glue gun
- Wire cutter
- Scissors
- Secateurs
- Sharp knife



Take 8 pieces of the 1.2mm wire and cover the ends of the wire to about 8cm with stem tape. This will be the holder of the bouquet base. Bend the wires out. Make 3 circles from the 2.5mm wire with different diameters. Fix these circles to the bent wires with white floral tape. Try to set up the circles on 3 different levels.

Carefully pull a piece of barbed wire into the base and fix at certain points. The barbed wire will hold the Diplocyclos later. Cut approximately 10cm pieces from the thin silver decor wire and glue them into the foam rubber pieces. When glued, simply wrap the wires around to fix them to the bouquet base. With the white decor wire work it through some places in the middle of the base to create a net. This helps to keep the flowers loose into the bouquet.





Start to add the flowers in different heights but not too high. The only flower which can be on a higher position is the Craspedia. Infill the bouquet with Viburnum, securing with a binding wire. When you have added most of the flowers (but not the Cyclamen and Calceolaria), wax the ends of the Paphiopedilum stems and glue them into the bouquet.

Next wire and wrap the tubes with stem tape, fill with water and then insert the flowers of the Cyclamen and Calceolaria and fix them onto the wire bouquet base. Glue the Diplocyclos fruits onto the spiky pieces of the barbed wire and finally cut the stem ends with a sharp knife and place onto a tray filled with water.

It was only after I had completed my bouquet and sent a thank you photo to Alison that she told me that the packaging pieces are actually able to be composted – but I still love my bouquet!





The Power of Colour

with Per Benjamin

Photography by Helén Pe, Anette Andersson, Mark Trustrup and Dann Lepp

Per Benjamin is an internationally acclaimed florist and former Fleurop World Cup winner. He literally travels the world teaching and demonstrating but without question, one of his most popular subjects is – colour. Several years ago, I sat in on one of his workshops in Finland when he explained in detail his approach to the use of colour. The talk resonated with me as it is very much how I approach the subject too. At the time, I said to him that he really should produce a book about it and, finally, many years later – he has! He is probably best known for his use of ‘candy colours’ but in his book he explains, in detail, exactly *why* he is considered to be the go-to designer for colour.

For example, he believes that nature is the true master of colour. Looking at flowers in detail, sunsets, waterfalls, birds, the animal kingdom and everything that surrounds him is the core of his colour beliefs. There are many people who are involved in watching and, indeed, setting the Trends for colours. Of course, this is based on potential marketing and makes a lot of money for those involved. But people have core feelings about colour and Per feels quite rightly that there are more consistent uses of colour that prevail in floral design. He refers to colour-coded messages that apply in floral design – green for nature and energy; red the symbol of love, passion and danger; yellow is happy and energetic; blue is calm and relaxing whereas orange is vibrant and exciting.



“Over the years I have developed this system/way of working with colour because of the following: The colour circle is limited in use for a floral designer and stirs us all into already beaten tracks. It is a theoretical system. Mine is a hands-on, usable system that challenges our creativity and view on what colours are. The colour circle does not challenge our creativity. And most importantly is contrast based. My system is based on complex harmony. A complex harmony attracts more attention. Attention as being both customer value, higher scores in competitions and a general higher appreciation for our designs.



Today we have so many materials with a much more complex colour palette that need a more emotional way to describe and work with. Overall my system is more emotional and sense driven. And the reactions from people hearing about it and using it is that it changes their understanding, joy and work with colours.” “Colour is the strongest language in floral art” says Per and we completely agree.

The World of Colour according to Per Benjamin is available to order through *Fusion Flowers* Book Club or online at www.fusionflowers.com

We would like to thank Per Benjamin and Stichting Kunstboek for their kind permission to use their photographs.





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OCTOBER ISSUE!**

This arrangement won the 2nd place 'Wedding Bouquet' and Readers' Choice 'Wedding Bouquet' awards in our 2018 contest.

Floral Designer: Nancy Zimmerman
Garden Rose Variety: Constance (Austruss)
Photographer: Rachael Schirano Photography



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Chlorophyll Party

by Sara-Lisa Ludvigsson

Photography by Amanda Lennartsson

The winter in Sweden is beautiful and filled with snow, but we have short days, so we really long for the spring. To make the waiting a little bit shorter and easier to handle I love to surround myself with flowers in fresh and energetic colours. One of the colours I really miss during the winter is that strong and light green tone seen when the first leaves burst out on the branches of trees – so full of chlorophyll and so full of energy and new life. For me, that colour is a symbol of a new start and what is more suitable than to invite people to a Chlorophyll party to celebrate the arrival of spring! So, let's gather around the table and soak up the energy from the fresh flowers, the laughter of friends and before we know it, spring will be here!

I used:

Lepidium 'Green Dragon'[™] 
 Rosa 'Prima Donna'
 Dianthus 'Lege Marrone'
 Lilium 'Apricot Fudge'
 Ranunculus Butterfly 'Helios'
 Rodanthe roseum (dried)
 2 x half sphere hanging basket forms 35cm diameter with chain
 Zip ties (cable ties)
 Floral foam
 Waxed paper
 Floral foam wreath ring



To begin, soak the floral foam but don't over-soak. Cut the waxed paper and line both of the half baskets. If you don't have waxed paper, use cellophane or similar. I prefer the paper because it covers the floral foam so that it will not be seen. Fill each of the half baskets with floral foam. If you are going to make a big globe, you can use OASIS[®] SEC dry foam in the centre to make it less heavy. Join the two baskets together and secure them with zip ties (cable ties), making sure that they are used where the metal is at its strongest because this design gets quite heavy. Before you continue, check that the chains are strong enough to carry the weight, otherwise change them for a stronger wire.

Place the filled basket on a bucket or vase which is weighted with water or sand to allow you to work on the upper part of the design. Start placing the Lepidium 'Green Dragon' around the sphere. The stem of this variety is strong enough to go through the paper without cutting it first. It is important to insert it deep into the floral foam so it will hydrate and stay in place. Cover the whole sphere with Lepidium and create a round, loose outside shape.



After that, place the other flowers around the sphere in a regular rhythm and distance. In this design I wanted the green colour to be dominant to create a fresh and joyful impression so I used the Lepidium to make a lush foundation. Lepidium is very easily matched with other flowers, so you can use any flowers of your choice in this design. Make sure that you place all the other materials a little bit shorter than the Lepidium to get a looser impression.



When you have almost completed the whole design, it is time to hang it. You can do this now and place the last of the materials to finish the outside shape. This design can be used for both round and square tables.

In this round table set up, the Chlorophyll sphere is complimented with a wreath made of similar flowers with the Lepidium as the dominant material. The two round designs on a round table create harmony and the character of the Lepidium is what binds them together and brings that fresh and energetic feeling to the table.



For safety make sure to check that you hang your design from a place that can support the weight and that you also use wire that is strong enough. Make sure you secure it properly

NB Never leave lit candles unattended

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Purity

COHIM international forum part 2

Photography by COHIM flower school & Piet van Kampen

This is the second part of our report from the COHIM Flower School Forum in Beijing. This time we look at the work of 5 very different designers; Kristin Voreland (Norway), Gábor Nagy (Hungary), Tina Liu (China), Sherlovell Yu (China) and Song (China). The theme was *Purity*. Each designer set out to interpret this theme in their own unique way and the resulting designs could not have been more different.



Kristin Voreland is a bit of a legend in Norway. She has developed a way to combine wire and paper into containers and artefacts that are completely waterproof and washable! Apparently, she ordered many hundreds of reels of a certain type of wire but, unfortunately, it transpired that this was not available, so she had to ‘double reinforce’ each of her pieces of work. Kristin normally works in white but on this occasion, she used some coloured paper and admitted that she was nervous about the results. However, the results were beautiful, and the audience were entranced so much so that they wanted to buy them! On stage Kristin told how she had developed her technique and how smaller pieces are sold in art galleries whereas her large-scale designs decorate various hotels and restaurants. As one person in the audience said, “Watching Kristin at work showed that the possibilities in floral design are endless.” A great result for this very talented lady.



Gábor Nagy



COHIM took the unusual step of inviting an up-and-coming young florist to be part of the forum which, of course, was a wonderful opportunity but it was also, no doubt, quite daunting for Gábor Nagy given that he was surrounded by some of the biggest names in the flower world. He had a good track record having taken first place at the last Eurofleurs competition and then went on to take 2nd prize in the 2018 *Fusion Flowers* magazine International Designer of the Year competition too. Gábor is quite a quiet person albeit with a twinkle in his eye! However, I don't think anyone was prepared for what happened next. He literally poured his heart into his work and it showed. Working with models on stage he produced some outstanding pieces of bodywear, bouquets, handtieds and installations of the highest quality. He had worked around the clock, winning new friends and a lot of respect in the process. He shared with the audience that he had previously trained as a doctor but changed direction into floristry saying, "My medical training can be quite useful for a floral designer!" Yes, he has a charming sense of humour and the audience loved not only his work but ... him too! A young man who is without doubt destined for great things!





China Time was next. Three separate demonstrations which were intriguing in the extreme to the section of the audience from the West.

Song, a young Chinese designer who spoke passionately about saving the planet's resources and the horrors of plastic waste, kicked off the Chinese section. Her work was very different, and it was her bouquet designs that appeared to appeal most to the audience. She had a quiet, gentle style of presentation and spoke emotionally about her concerns for the future.



Song







Next was Tina Liu and there really is only one word to sum up her presentation ... WOW! Tina is a little firebrand and some of her designs had the Western designers sitting on the edge of their respective seats to get a closer look. The handmade bodywear structures were superb. Her presentation style was dramatic, and she was greeted with whooping cries from the audience particularly when her models walked the catwalk. Her *Golden Warrior Empress* design was remarkable, and it was wonderful to witness the emergence of yet another star of the future. Clearly she hit the mark because her designs were later featured by Harpers Bazaar!





Last but by no means least, one of the COHIM teachers took to the stage. Sherlovell Yu's students roared with approval when he came on stage and there was a lot of friendly banter taking place that was never translated! He completed one design but, it stretched from one side of the stage to the other. The work was clearly influenced by his love of nature combined with Ikebana. A very interesting presentation with a lot of love in evidence in every aspect of it.

The forum ended with a party and the opportunity for the audience to speak directly to the designers. The inevitable selfies were in clear evidence with lots of giggling and fun and we left with a very positive feeling for the future of Chinese design. It's going to be a case of ... watch this space!



2019 中国时间——2019 花艺艺术创作秀 COHIM INTERNATIONAL GLOBAL DESIGN FESTIVAL MASTER AROUND

于鸿琿 SHERLOVELL YU

中国
著名花艺设计教育家 / 艺术家

中国时间——2019 花艺艺术创作秀



Cohim
中赫时尚

The Greatest Show!

Passion for Flowers - Floral Fundamentals

with FDF and G-fresh

Part 1

Photography by Nico Alsemgeest & Denis Bradley

Breaking new ground is always challenging. This year the 5 strong team from Floral Fundamentals were on a very special mission at IPM Essen. The overall theme was *Passion for Flowers* and every design was created with some aspect of a wedding in mind.



Timo Bolte

The lights came on. A simple announcement asked the spectators to take their seats and then ... there was a pause. The music came on and immediately, everyone knew that this was going to be something different. "Ladies and gents, this is the moment you've waited for..." it was the song from *The Greatest Showman*. The designers came on stage and worked while the music played and then, onto the stage came Timo Bolte one of the two compères complete with top hat and cane. The second compère, Alison Bradley, joined him as the music built to a crescendo and as the last note played - the 5 designers revealed their first design! Voila! The show was off and running.

The demonstration was scheduled for three performances over three days and the designers decided to do different work every day. This meant that they created more than 15 designs each plus installations on the stand! The line up was, as usual, superb – Ahti Lyra (Estonia); Frédéric Dupré (France); Hanneke Frankema (The Netherlands); Tomasz Max Kuczyński (Poland) and Sara-Lisa Ludvigsson (Sweden). Given the quality and volume of design work created, we have decided to run this story in two parts to allow us to feature as many designs as possible. This time we feature Frédéric, Hanneke and Tomasz.



Alison Bradley

Frédéric's designs focused on a myriad of techniques, some of which were highly experimental. Waxed paper worked into test tubes was one 'simple' table idea as well as waxed and coloured foam spheres suspended in handmade wire holders used to create another table decoration. He also had a highly original approach to bridal pedestal design, working in shades of green and using dried and coloured lotus seed heads to conceal the flower tubes. His *statement of love* design was an unzipped heart that held beautiful peonies and orchids. Another of his table designs once again used waxed paper in an elongated form supported by metal rods. Perfect tones of green and white were combined to produce a magical piece.



Each of the designers had been asked to produce a surprise *proposal concept*. Frédéric's arc of flowers held a cushion covered in Stachys leaves where the rings rested ready for acceptance. But this design was a two-fold tribute. He used several varieties of David Austin® roses as a touching tribute to the great man which had several of us in tears. Initially we were slightly baffled by one of his pieces. It looked a bit like a Tiffany lamp but in fact it was his tribute to the stained-glass window of a church – it was amazing! As to be expected his bridal bouquets had more than a touch of French Ooh La La! So much so that one was designed specifically for Corine from Montana Lisianthus who had sent him a photograph of the dress she intended to wear, and the crowds loved it as did she!





Hanneke's work was also based on techniques, but these were completely different. She took great care to explain to the audience how some of her ideas could be scaled down for smaller more saleable projects. Without question, Hanneke's wirework is world class and she shared just how much work goes into her competition pieces. The audience actually gasped when they heard how many hours of work went into some of her bodywear for her competition pieces. Her bridal bouquets were quite simply superb. Each one was made to move with the bride as she walks, and her models clearly loved sharing the designs with the audience so that they could appreciate exactly what she meant.

Bang on Trend, Hanneke create a beautiful necklace that combined both fresh and dried flowers to spectacular effect. She also recreated her sensational award-winning collar which had some of the audience leaping out of their seats for a closer view! But it was the attention to detail in everything that she created that WOWED the spectators and the fact that she welcomed them to come and talk to her after the demonstrations if they wanted more information. Of course, the 'biggie' was another of her award-winning pieces from the Dutch national floristry competitions which she recreated each day and every time differently. It really was hard to drag people away from this work when the stage had to be cleared because everyone wanted to take a closer look which was exactly what Hanneke wanted them to do.





The work by Tomasz was, once again, completely different from that of the others in the team. His first piece was a beautifully-crafted love heart fashioned in wire that housed a central candle. This idea was for a church ceremony and you could imagine how wonderful a series of these would look in an old church. Later he literally created a full scale table design complete with chairs, glasses and crockery on stage with a suspended design linked to two candelabrum. But then he completely changed the pace with a foliage collar created for a bachelor party. The audience went wild for it and no wonder – it was spectacular! Layer upon layer of perfectly colour coordinated leaves with a section that trailed down the back – WOW! The photographers clamoured forward to get a good photograph!

Tomasz also made a beautiful grey foliage pedestal design that was then linked to a sceptre for a bride to carry. The detail in this was exquisite with bullion-covered wire details and handle – the work of a Master indeed. He also shared a series of bouquets that any bride would love to have carried but Tomasz has a lovely sense of humour. He made angel wings for a girls' night out covered in tiny heads of Santini Chrysanthemums with wool covered shoulder bands which could be adjusted to fit. And then he produced a spectacular moon gate that the crowd loved – everyone wanted to pose there! But this was a practical and different idea too because moon gates have become extremely popular and Tomasz wanted to share his version.

This series of demonstrations is reported as being some of the best that IPM Essen has ever seen. Apart from the design work, which was superb, the sense of camaraderie on stage was tangible. Each designer was very serious about their work but they also enjoyed sharing their ideas and wanted everyone to be inspired and to have fun too. FDF (the German floristry association) were delighted! But none of this would have been possible without the spectacular flowers supplied by G-fresh who always go the extra mile to ensure that the designers are happy.

But – there's more and next time we look at the work of Sara-Lisa Ludvigsson who charmed everyone and the theatrical designs and style of Ahti Lyra who may well indeed be – The Greatest Showman himself!





Tomasz Max Kuczyński





Something for everyone!

by Iza Tkaczyk

Photography by Iza Tkaczyk

For a birthday, as a thank you, as an expression of feelings ... for home, school, work ... for a mother, for a friend, for anyone; flowers express the most beautiful sentiments, give us joy and bring the same emotions to the person who receives them. This bouquet is, I think, suitable for all of the above!

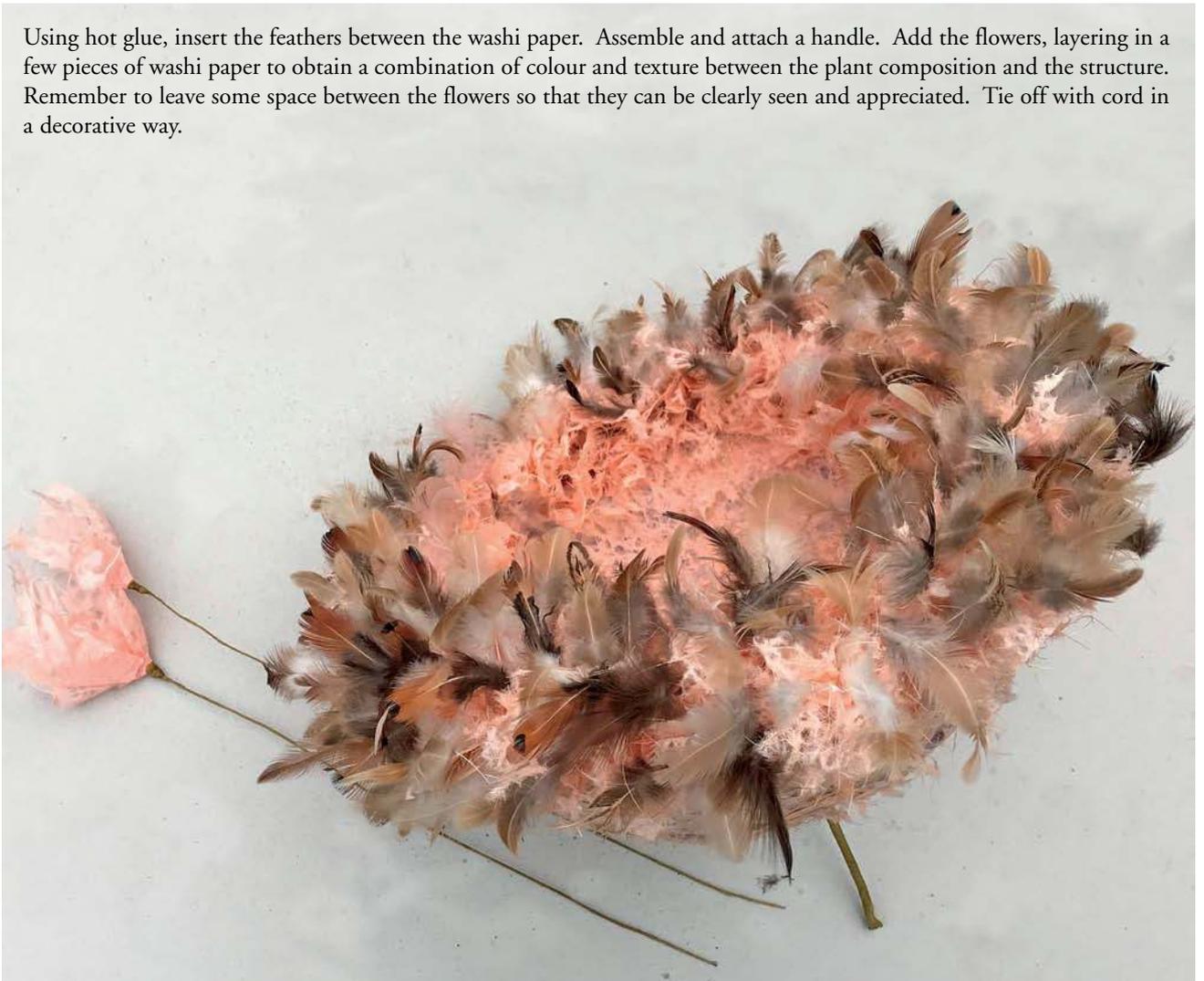
I used:

Gloriosa 'Lutea'
 Hippeastrum 'Mini Tarantula'
 Rosa 'Vuvuzela'
 Leucospermum
 Euphorbia fulgens
 Banksia - dried
 Lagurus ovatus - dried
 Styrofoam semi-sphere
 Washi paper
 PVA glue
 Hot glue
 Feathers
 Floral tape
 Anchor tape
 Wire 0.5mm
 Wire 1.8mm for handle
 Cord to tie



Cut a slice off a Styrofoam semi sphere with a diameter of 40cm (save the unused section of the semi-sphere for other constructions). Using PVA glue, cover the Styrofoam slice with washi paper (available from *Fusion Flowers* Shopping or online). You can glue a different colour as a background (washi paper is transparent) if you want a different effect. Next attach individual pieces of wired washi paper, remembering to create the most spatial construction possible.

Using hot glue, insert the feathers between the washi paper. Assemble and attach a handle. Add the flowers, layering in a few pieces of washi paper to obtain a combination of colour and texture between the plant composition and the structure. Remember to leave some space between the flowers so that they can be clearly seen and appreciated. Tie off with cord in a decorative way.



Inspired by Betula branches

by Agna Maertens

Photography by Agna Maertens

Finally spring is here! It's my favourite season, so I decided to celebrate the beauty of spring flowers with a natural design that's also colourful. Colours make me happy!



I used:

Helleborus 'Magnificent Bells'

Muscari armeniacum 'Manon'

Narcissus - mixture

Ranunculus asiaticus 'Giga Pink'

Tulipa - mixture

Tulipa Weber's Parrot

Betula pubescens - branches, dried

Nail gun and headless pins 18mm x 0.6mm

Round former 27cm diameter

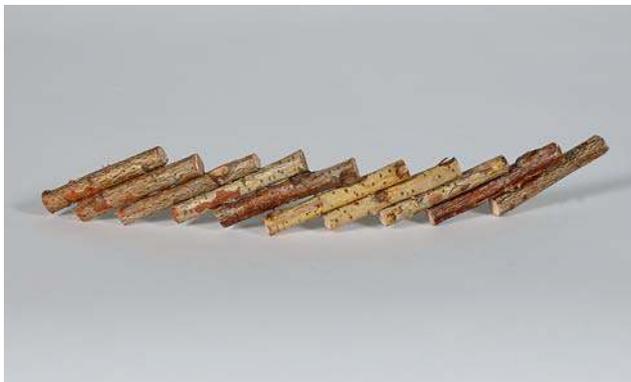
Round former 45cm diameter

Transparent tubes 7cm x 1cm (note - no higher than 9cm)

Cut the dried Betula branches into lots of lengths – 6cm, 9cm and 11.5cm (you can also use fresh branches). Take the round 27cm diameter former and put 2 branches next to each other. Place the twigs on the ground and join them together with the nail gun. Repeat this a bit lower on the branch so that they are well connected. Follow the circle for a round shape and every time you connect a new branch, ensure you are in control of the shape. It's important that you have a nice round shape. Continue in this way until you have an entire circle (see photographs).



Make a second circle on the 45cm form using the 6cm branches using the same technique following the round shape.



Take the 11.5cm branches and nail/connect the big and the small circles to each other. Connect the branches on both sides of the branch. Each time place the branch at the lower point - a bit like the spokes of a wheel. Repeat this every 3 branches. The bigger and the smaller circles are now connected.



Attach 2 longer branches parallel to each other from one side to the other side of the small circle. Now everything will be more stable. It looks more neat.

Then turn everything upside down and start again attaching branches from the small circle to the bigger circle as previously. Once again it becomes more stable. Attach the 9cm branches onto the branches of the big and small circles. They are now attached on one side. You can still move the branches a bit. Shoot 9cm branches in between the big and small circles in different directions with some space between.



Connect the top of the branches between the 2 circles with hot glue. It's important that the hot glue is transparent as the glue should not be visible. Remove excess glue after each application before it dries then everything will be very neat.

Take the tubes and glue them on different places using the transparent hot glue. Fill the tubes with water and then add the flowers roughly double the height of the ring. Graduate the colours from white to yellow and then to soft pink.

Have fun and enjoy the spring time.

Flowers make people GROW



Happy Together

Schaffer Designs at the Philadelphia Flower Show

by Sue Phillips

Photography by Sue Phillips

Flowers make people REMEMBER





Philadelphia-based florists and event designers, Bill Schaffer and Kristine Kratt, not surprisingly, have an ongoing relationship with the Philadelphia Flower Show. Their creative minds, combined with an expertise in large scale installations, have seen Schaffer Designs win multiple awards, including the accolade of Best in Show, on more than one occasion. And if that wasn't enough, they even got married at the show in 2012 in front of 10,000 visitors! So what better title could there be for 2019 than *Happy Together*.

The 190 square metre exhibit (it's big!) explored the connection between flowers and people. Bill and Kris shared their inspiration by explaining that "People have used flowers throughout history for celebrating, giving and remembering. We wanted the exhibit's illuminated story to show how the power of flowers makes people happy".

Eighteen tall metal frames spanned the circular space. Split into blue, pink, yellow, orange, red and finally green with white, the six sections of this rainbow of colour each took a different theme and showcased a different design style – sometimes even pushing the boundaries of materials used for the base structure.



Flowers make people CREATE



Flowers make people CONNECT



The most naturalistic of the storyboards was the green-themed 'Grow' display. Reminding viewers of the colour of nature, expanding foam filler, sprayed in earthy tones, securely held glass cylinders displaying a botanical collection ranging from Helleborus to Paphiopedilum orchids. Suspended below, a 'root' system of orchid roots, Muehlenbeckia and assorted ribbon trails added to the effect. Next, and in complete contrast, came tall columns of blue, mauve and purple paper plates (who would have thought of using paper plates for a floral construction?). The lighting added a 'moody' element to the supposedly tranquil and calm blue theme. A pink flower-filled hammock to 'Remember' and a red 'Connect' sat either side of the yellow and orange segments. Multi-textured 'Happy' spheres captured the essence of the "playing in sunshine" promised on the moodboard-table that accompanied each of the displays, whereas the adjoining 'Create' - a suspended circle creatively bound to the frame with fluorescent tape - said "Orange is the colour of energy, fun and imagination". It was!

Designing, planning the logistics and then managing an exhibit of this scale is no small undertaking. Bill Schaffer and Kristine Kratt are masters in the craft ... and then at the show they give their team of designers the freedom to do just that - to create and be happy together. This year Bill and Kris were joined by fellow Ambassadors from Floral Fundamentals, making up an international team of 31 designers from Sweden, Ireland, Belgium, Estonia, Spain, Holland, Norway and USA. All united in their dedication and passion for flowers and reinforcing what most of us already know - flowers bring people together!



My Spring Collection

by Jimmy Englund

Photography by Joakim Anrell

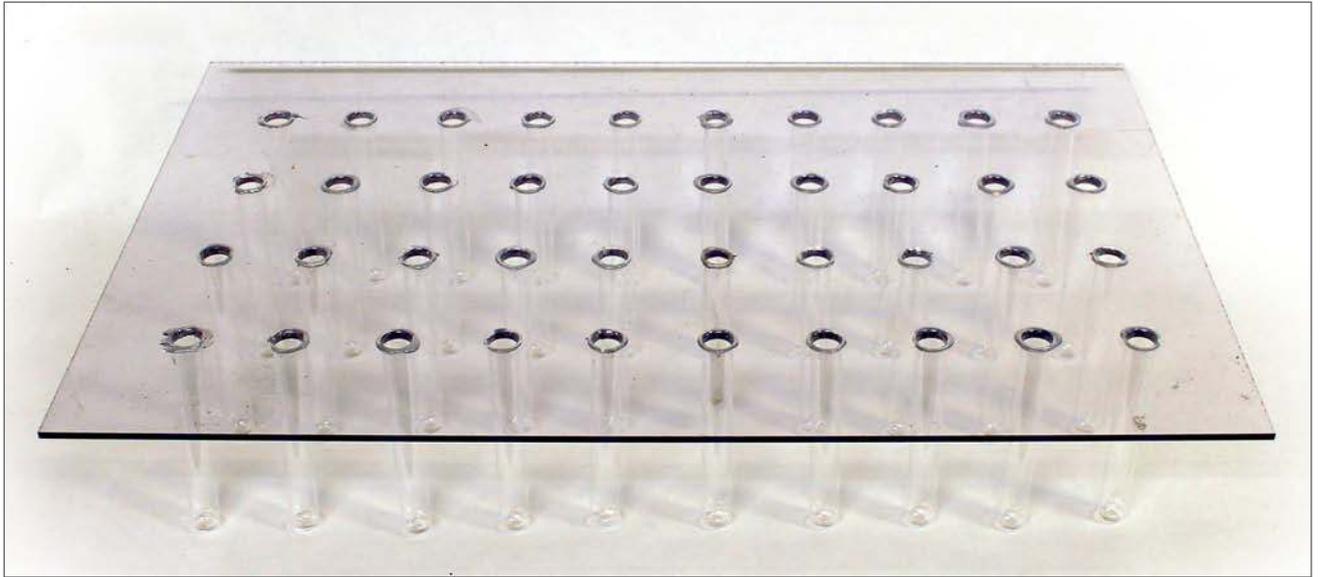


After a long winter I always look forward to the springtime. In many ways this type of arrangement is, for me, a celebration of springtime colour and form but once you have made the 'container' - it can be turned into a year-round celebration of the flowers you love.

I ordered a sheet of Plexi glass complete with ready drilled holes. When you order the sheet make sure that the test tubes can fit through the holes and that the small 'lip' rests on the surface. I often use this material as a construction because it gives these designs a very light and transparent feeling. Using a glue gun, glue a test tube into each of the holes (see photograph). Allow the structure to settle.

I used:

Viburnum opulus
Clematis Amazing® 'Star River'
David Austin® Wedding Rose 'Keira'
Rosa spray 'Sweet Perfumella'
Papaver nudiflora
Syringa - white
Lisianthus 'Botanic Pink'
Lathyrus 'Frolic'
Anemone 'Fullstar'
Helleborus 'Double Ellen' - red
Xanthorrhoea australis (steel grass)
Plexi glass sheet with premade holes
Glass tubes - small with a lip
Midelino cane - pink
Glue gun



Cut lengths of Midelino cane and then fit them in a decorative format into the tubes ensuring that the cut ends go to the bottom of the tube (see photograph). Next fill the tubes with water. I then added my first flower - Clematis. After that, arrange your flowers as desired, remembering to vary the heights to create some depth.

Finally, I added some stems of steel grass arching them over the flowers to visually link with the arched Midelino cane.

The Resolution

by Iza Tkaczyk

Photography by Iza Tkaczyk

From time to time, I make some resolutions. Sometimes I manage to see them through to fruition, others remain at the stage of quickly running through my head! My New Year resolution to do with floristry is to experiment more with form. But it's funny because immediately I become involved with the work ... a circle emerges. And then, after I have my wild moment with plants and colour, the thought of experimenting with the form appears with a sneering smile! The circle is pure perfection and can be developed in millions of ways – it will never become boring! My resolution stands but, we'll see what happens next!



I used:

- Fritillaria meleagris
- Clematis Amazing® 'Star River'
- Lisianthus Rosanne Deep Brown
- Anemone
- Helleborus 'Magnificent Bells'®
- Osmunda japonica
- Brunia
- Tulipa
- Allium 'Crazy Beans'
- Vanda Sunanda® 'Leopard Coral'
- Chaenomeles
- Grevillea 'Spider Man'
- Hedera helix
- Tillandsia xerographica
- Kalanchoe beharensis
- Container
- Floral foam
- Anchor tape
- Paper-covered wire
- Black stub wires 1.6mm
- Wool felt (available from Lehner Wolle)
- Wool cord (available from Lehner Wolle)
- Chenille covered wires
- Test tubes (optional)
- Wooden kebab skewers



Take 21 pieces of 1.6mm thick wire and create the base for your composition using the spider's web technique. It is important to first separate the upper and lower parts of the wire mechanic with anchor tape. Flatten out the top wires at a 90 degree angle above the anchor tape. Stabilise the centre of the wires by weaving paper-covered wire and, when you have a stable core, make the weaving wider (see photograph). The bottom part should be split into five parts and then

wrapped in paper-covered wire below the anchor tape. In this way, a base is created which we later place in a previously prepared container filled with floral foam.

Before this happens, however, you have to finish the construction. I used different colours of wool felt for this using hot glue to secure. A beautiful, subdued mosaic was created in this way. I liked it already, but I felt it was a little too flat so I made some tendrils with wool cord. I still wasn't happy, so I took some Chenille covered wires and cut them into smaller pieces, twisted them together and created an interesting openwork form. And finally, I thought, that was it!



Insert the legs of the construction into the container which has pre-soaked foam in position and start adding the flowers and foliage. I inserted the stems into the foam, and the tender ones were placed in tubes. Glue kebab skewers to the Tillandsia and Kalanchoe leaves and add to the design. It was a great pleasure to play with the colour between the structure and the world of botanics. The effect of the wool felt as a backdrop for the beautiful flowers created a unique mosaic.



My suggestion – take a container of a different shape, weave the structure and form it into a different shape unless, of course, you like the perfection of the circle, like me!

Blue-tiful!

The starkness of winter with frosted, naked stems has a particular appeal, but then the novelty wears off and I yearn for something other than its monochrome tones. Spring, when it finally arrives, reminds me why colour is so important in our lives. With a palette ranging from delicate primroses to vibrant daffodils, it's the smile-factor tints and tones of yellow that, for many, sum up spring and the beginning of a new gardening year. It certainly does that, but for me it's blooms of beautiful blue that capture the essence of the season and makes my spine tingle.





Muscari aucheri 'Blue Magic'



Muscari aucheri 'Dark Eyes'



Muscari latifolium

If there's one must-have blue flower (but then they all are!), it has to be Muscari. It's worth searching out some of the more unusual varieties (there are also some non-blue ones, of course) such as *M. aucheri*, *M. azureum* and the oh-so delicately toned *M. muscarimi*; it's a good idea to plant these close to the house so that their beauty is easily seen, not lost in the distance. The more-common grape hyacinth, *Muscari armeniacum*, with its tendency to spread, even take-over borders is surprisingly seen as something of a pest by some - it's simply a case of planting them in the right position! An option, if this is an issue, is to restrain them in pots and planters. Better still, naturalise as ground cover under trees and shrubs and you'll be rewarded with rich blue pools of colour or, if space allows, plant a 'river' of these beautiful flowers, letting them meander through a garden vista.

Also thriving in naturalised planting schemes are *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* (our nature bluebell) and *Camassia leichtlinii*; visit Kew Gardens, London in mid-May to delight in mass meadow-plantings of both flowers. The only downside with naturalised *Camassia* is the slow die-down of the leaves; that's a small price to pay for such a magnificent display, whether it be massed or planted in a smaller group in a border. It's also a flower that's excellent for cutting.

Blue, from the palest of pales to a deep, almost black, can be seen in bearded Irises. Liking well-drained, neutral soils, these statuesque plants have a flowering season from (depending on your location) as early as March. The medium bearded I. 'Eramosa Skies' with violet blue petals and beard is a particular favourite. Appearing even earlier is the miniature *Iris reticulata*. Plant these at the front of borders, in grass or in pots to enjoy both indoors and out. They are irresistible!



Hyacinthoides non-scripta (bluebell)



Iris 'Eramosa Skies'



Leucocoryne ixoides

Photography courtesy of iBulb and Sue Phillips



Iris reticulara 'Harmony', 'Katherine Hodgkin'



Anemone blanda, Hyacinthus orientalis, Scilla siberica



Scilla peruviana

Alpines should not be forgotten from any Blue collection. The rare dwarf perennial *Globularia cambessedesii* (the Balearic Globe Flower) is perhaps one to nurture in a conservatory, but *Scilla ramburei* will be happy in a sunny, raised, well-drained spot. *Scilla siberica* is one of the most popular types of this spring-blooming bulb. Not fussy about soil conditions, it will multiply quickly if planted in a sunny spot. The most dramatic of all the Scillas is the large-headed, deep blue *S. peruviana*; each of the stems will open into as many as 50 star-shaped flowers.



Camassia leichtlinii



Scilla ramburei

Just what is it that makes blue flowers so appealing? It could be the symbolism of hope and that they help create calming, serene spaces in a garden - and we all need that from time to time. But maybe the attraction also has something to do with the promise of what's to come ... those days of blue skies and summer! Then with that comes the blues of Agapanthus, Meconopsis and the exquisite *Oxypetalum* ... do you need any more convincing?



Globularia cambessedesii

Duchess of Cambridge designs for RHS Chelsea!

Not to be missed at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show will be The RHS Back to Nature Garden, co-designed by HRH The Duchess of Cambridge and Landscape Architects, Andree Davies and Adam White.

Key elements of the woodland garden include a beautifully crafted hollow log for children to climb through, a den, waterfall, stream and tree houses. Wild trees and shrubs and a cool, calm colour palette will provide an instant 'nature fix' that will relax and calm. Sue Biggs, RHS Director General, said "We couldn't be happier with the wonderful design ... the RHS's Garden is a beautiful natural space for families to get together, play, dig, grow plants, connect with nature and spend time in the great outdoors - something core to us as a charity to promote, inspire and encourage people to do".

After the Show, much of the planting and some of the landscaping will go to an NHS Mental Health Trust, as part of a national competition run by the RHS.

RHS Chelsea Flower Show is open 21-25 May 2019

www.rhs.org.uk



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Thomas Tergowitsch and Andrea Lehmann



WORKSHOP

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ENGLISH / GERMAN Friday, 04.10. - Saturday, 05.10. 2019

In autumn, the variety of botanical materials available for bouquets is huge.

From hand-tied bouquets to more structured forms, from constructed to free-flowing shapes, from symmetrical to asymmetrical, from fresh to dried material – this season's Trends rely on contrast and exploring opposites.

Beginning in autumn, we will work towards decorative Christmas bouquets and end with ethereal winter arrangements.

During these two days we would like to inspire you and share ideas that cultivate a passion for quality craftsmanship and individual creativity.

Thomas Tergowitsch and Andrea Lehmann, long time co-lecturers and assistants for Gregor Lersch, both experienced floral designers, will guide you through two days in the wonderful garden of Bad Neuenahr. Don't miss this first time opportunity!

More price information & registration: info@thomastergowitsch.at

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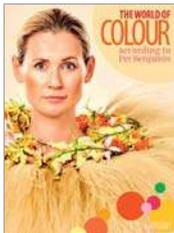
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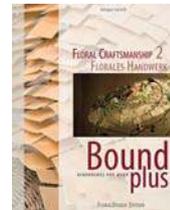
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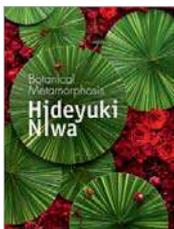
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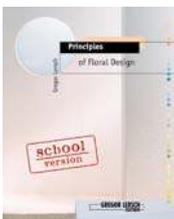


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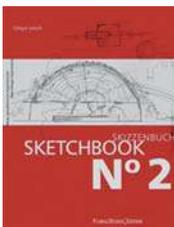
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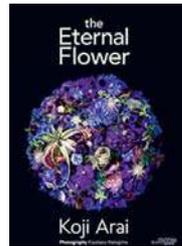


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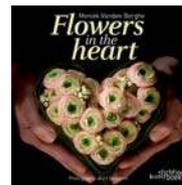
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Rustic Wire - The wire is actually quite heavy duty 18 gauge and could be used for serious structural design. Currently available in natural dark brown or natural green a roll measures approximately 21.34 metres (70 feet) – £8.00 plus P&P *Please state colour choice*

Original Japanese floral scissors (4cm Blade) inclusive of post & packing UK £28.00, Europe £29.50, Rest of the World £31.00



NEW STOCK ARRIVING

Japanese floral scissors (New 5cm Blade) with red handles... harder to lose them in foliage and throw them out! They can be used both left and right handed. The scissors are razor sharp and should last a lifetime. Recommended and endorsed by floristry superstar Jeff Leatham of the George V in Paris. The boxed scissors include a protective blade cover are inclusive of post & packing UK £28.00, Europe £29.50, Rest of the World £31.00



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Shopping



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HALF PRICE



Screw Top Test Tubes

Approximately 16mm diameter 100mm length.
Price Bag of 10 - £3.00 20 - £5.00 plus P&P
NB please note that there are no tops supplied with this item.

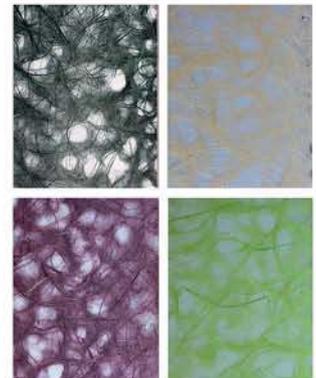


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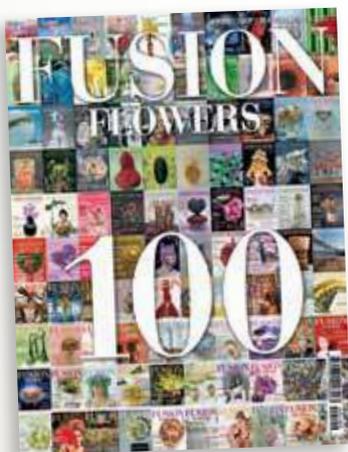
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- **More bridal surprises from IPM Essen**
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FF Brain Floss

In the dim and distant past known as the 70s there was a film entitled *One of our Dinosaurs is Missing*. It was a comedy tale (excuse the pun) and I have to be honest and say that it really wasn't my thing! A couple of incidents have happened to me recently and for some reason, on each occasion, the title of that movie has popped into my head. As a demonstrator of many years standing, I am used to coping with the unexpected and many unexpected and unexplained incidents have occurred. But in truth I have always believed that they make you stronger. These events often force you to re-evaluate what you are doing and, indeed, where you are doing it. However, in the main part, few of the events ever involved technology. Of course, many will recognise and perhaps even sympathise with the almost inevitable microphone failure - this is as nothing to a ceiling collapsing, a stage collapsing and the big one - the backdrop collapsing due to a lightning strike. And at all of these so-called disasters, my attitude was - the show must go on. Nothing has changed much except for - technology!

At a recent series of demonstrations one of my first tasks was to win the trust and, dare I say, respect of a team of technicians who didn't normally respond well to the world of the floral demonstrator. After the initial hurdle of establishing that my 'music stick', which had been created on my PC, wasn't a happy bedfellow with the world of the MAC I found that a bag of sweeties and the promise of a glass of prosecco made them find a solution very quickly. The same couldn't be said for a pain that I was experiencing in my back! An *incident* in a taxi literally left me with a pain in the back that just kept getting worse. The start time for the demonstration was fast approaching when, fortunately, I spotted two Irish designers that I know. When they came up for a hug and a chat, I asked them to do me a favour. "Can you take a look at my back please? Check under the hooks of my bra", I said. To give them their due, they didn't break stride and before I knew it my back was discreetly exposed. Now at this point I would just have expected someone to tell what it looked like but no, these young women are of a different generation. They whipped out their phone and ... took a photo! I was slightly non-plussed by this but right enough I could see that there was an injury of some sort. There followed a quick chat with another designer and a large waterproof plaster was located and in position in a matter of minutes. The

thing is - I would never have thought to take a photo if the roles had been reversed! But their quick thinking and some technology saved the day.

HWMBI (He Who Must Be Ignored - my husband - the long-suffering Denis) was admitted to hospital this week for surgery on his knee. It was all a bit of an emergency really, and I noticed when we met his surgeon-to-be that his hand appeared to have been injured. My initial reaction when

he told me that the accident had happened while playing football was one of concern. Not being an athletic person myself, I had always imagined that the operating word in football was foot - so why an injury to the hand had occurred went over my head! However, the next day saw HWMBI being wheeled off to re-connect with the surgeon with the dodgy hand. Hmmmm! I settled down to read my book while I waited. Of course, inevitably, I was nervous sitting there but being me, I had a rough idea of when HWMBI would be back. And so it was, that as I sat beside the bed that the door swung open just about the time I expected my husband's return but - it wasn't him. It was the surgeon and his assistant. He said, "Where is he?" I looked at him and answered, "Well you had him last. What did you do with him?" "Oh, he must still be

in recovery. I'll just give you my report and you can pass it on" he said. It was one of those déjà vu moments. He told me about the surgery and quick as you like, his assistant brought out - wait for it - an iPad to show me a video of the inside of HWMBI's knee! Well that's technology for you!

Time passed. The door swung open again and in popped a lovely nurse. "Oh! Where is he?", she said. "You had him last", I answered "and his surgeon was in a while back looking for him too." "I'll just go and check", she said as she bustled out the door. As I sat there in popped the name of that film again but what on earth had they done with my very own dinosaur? It transpired that he was still in recovery and it took them almost two and a half hours to physically recover him from there! These days, you are sent home almost immediately when you come around from anaesthetic but poor HWMBI, when he finally did he was not released until the physio had ensured that he was able to walk and climb stairs!

Denis takes a large proportion of the photographs that you see in *Fusion*

PROMISE OF A GLASS OF PROSECCO

Flowers and elsewhere and this does involve a lot of standing and often working in awkward positions. So, for the next few weeks, there is a role reversal here and, indeed, at several overseas events. The ladies are taking over! Sue and I will be taking the photos and I have to admit that I am a little bit nervous. Not about Sue's ability, but about my own! On the plus side, I have a sneaky suspicion that we are destined to have a lot of laughs! So, while my dinosaur may be back in residence here at *Fusion Flowers*' HQ, *this* dinosaur is about to realise just how much work he does for us.

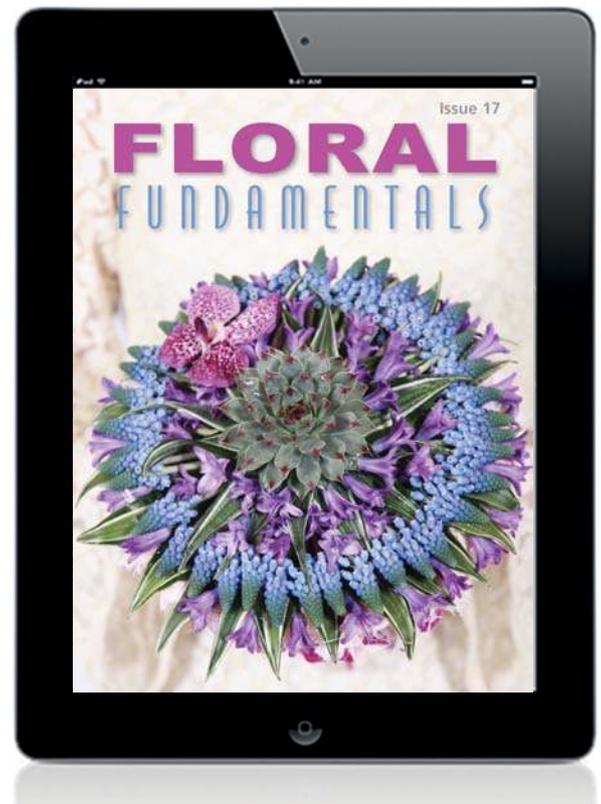
This is my way of saying a huge thank you to Denis for all his hard work - whilst playing 'The Girls are Back in Town' in my head - here we go on another adventure Sue!



floral fundamentals

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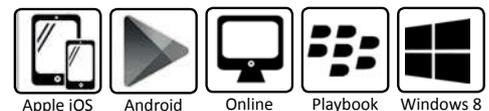
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