

landscape

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VOLUME 2 . ISSUE 5 . WINTER 2012 . FREE PUBLICATION

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profile of a gold medal winner

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INSPIRATIONS



Scenes from Niewoudtville • Photographs by Ken Gerhardt
"I intend that my pictures will tempt you to become more aware of what you see, how you see it and alter the way you decorate your environment."

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BLOOMING: Landscape Design and Garden's Jackie Mitchell, rubbed shoulders with celebrities such as Sir Cliff Richard, Sir Michael Caine, Sir Bruce Forsyth and South African horticultural legends Ray Hudson, Kieth Kirsten and David Davidson at the Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show in London in May. Our Spring edition will feature some of the leading floral exhibitions, not least South Africa's award winner. Here South Africans, (from left) Ray Hudson, Keith Kirsten and David Davidson, give their feet a rest on the first day of the exhibition.

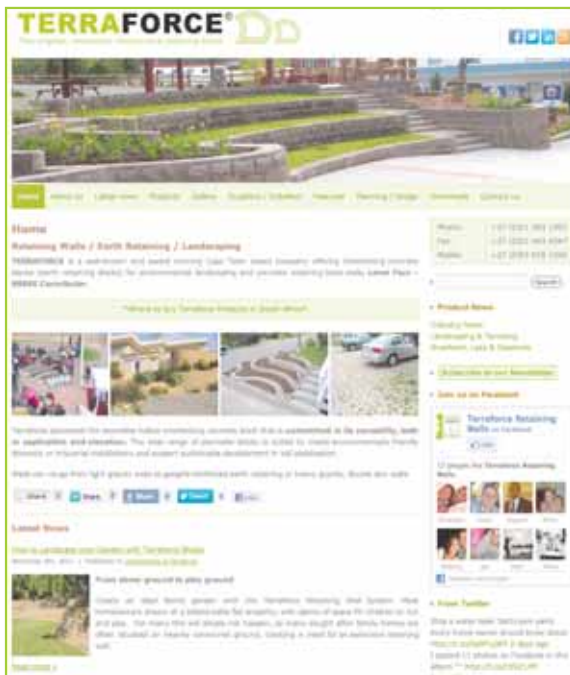
* See our interview with David Davidson on Page 26.



Botanical garden: Karoo – 24



COVER image – Heidi Bertish
Making an entrance – pg 12



Terraforce launches new web and social media presence

In 2009, when Terraforce, a Cape Town based pre-cast concrete licensor, specializing in modular, hollow core concrete blocks, turned 30, the company had this to say:

"We would like to carry on as before, driven by innovation, quality and commitment. We will do

everything in our power to avoid disappointment on the part of our partners. Our position as one of the industry leaders is based on co-operation with our licensees and those who specify our products. Without their trust and input, we would not have sustained the positive balance of account."

Today, Terraforce, honouring this commitment, is announcing the redesign of their web site to develop a more cohesive Web presence for their network of licensees, while improving the overall user experience for visitors to the site, which now facilitates easier navigation and serves as a practical access point for the range of products and services Terraforce has to offer.

"Considerable thought has gone into our Web presence and we are more than pleased with the launch of the new design," says Karin Johns, Marketing Manager for Terraforce. "This site provides our clients and prospective clients a solid platform where they can quickly and easily find important information on our precast modular concrete blocks, including a comprehensive Q&A section, a PDF downloads page for technical manuals, newsletters, bill of quantity, recommended specifications and detailed submission sheets and easy subscription to a monthly newsletter"

Terraforce's licensees can now also be contacted through several platforms, as each licensee has been allocated a separate page that allows web users to

contact them via an email form, while also providing a Google maps page that gives the exact location of each Terraforce associated business.

A completely new feature is the social media connectivity that has been added to the site. Visitors can share the content or follow Terraforce on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, making the site more interactive and turning into a hub of information about the retaining wall industry in general.

Says Johan van Wyk, Managing Director, Cape Retaining Systems, a Western Cape based Terraforce block supplier: "A lot of our customers' first contact with us is via the Terraforce web site, as Terraforce is a household name when people start thinking about retaining walls. We are very excited about the new web site, which will make it easier for potential clients to get in touch with us.

"Social media, which is used more and more by the pre-computer generation, also becomes a necessity when you want to share information, specifically in a dynamic environment such as the retaining industry, another benefit that will boost Terraforce's online presence."

Visit **WWW.TERRAFORCE.COM** to view the new site.

Special thanks to www.sitesourcesolutions.com



Building on a sustainable foundation

Pick n Pay's flagship store, On Nicol in Hurlingham, Johannesburg, has marked a turning point in sustainable architecture for South African retail environments. Among numerous innovations, an integrated energy-efficiency strategy in the store has reduced the demand on the electricity grid for up to 80 percent of the day, and has also reduced the store's refrigeration energy consumption by 40 percent. Water conservation is an integral part of the store design, and rainwater harvesting – which has a total storage capacity of 420 kilolitres – provides water for both garden irrigation and fridge cooling. It also serves to reduce the store's water usage by 30 percent. Other initiatives include the reduction of the store's annual CO emissions by 2000 tonnes through the use of national gas refrigeration, as well as the planting of 190 indigenous trees around the property. Building on years of research, innovative thinking and strong sustainability principles, Pick n Pay On Nicol now offers customers a truly unique and sustainable shopping experience.



1 – Heidi Burtish | Photographer

I'm head-over-heals in love with creating and photographing beautiful gardens for my clients.

Inspiration?

Beautiful light.

2 – Marijke Honig | Landscape Designer

I love creativity, street life, café culture, homegrown veggies and cooking—the slow way.

Inspiration?

People—especially those that use their skills to help others.

3 – Christine Stevens | Designer/Gardener

After 20 years as a designer in the clothing business I now find nature provides me with my creative energy.

Inspiration?

Nature. I always zone-out when gardening. This is when my mind becomes clear and ideas form.

4 – Tamsin Faragher | Landscape Designer

Public space is where we connect with humanity and reconnect with the universe and as landscape architects we are privileged to play a role in creating the environments that host these happy activities.

Inspiration?

Seeing the spaces and places we create invaded by shouting, crazy little people determined to delight and be delighted.

5 – John Richardson | Landscape Designer

I grew up in Palmboom Road, Newlands, in a ramshackle old cottage with a rusty tin roof and garden full of mulberry trees, elephant ears, roses, fushias, ivy and whatever other slips and cuttings my Mom's friends had given her to try.

Inspiration?

Potential.

6 – Ken Gerhardt | Photographer

My images portray a definite sense of realism—I'm led by nature.

Inspiration?

The light, early or late light of day, more especially 'magic light'—that luminance that becomes evident gradually.

7 – Carrie Latimer | Landscape Designer

I believe in unifying the landscape and architecture to create a cohesive environment sensitive to the needs of my clients.

Inspiration?

Mother Nature and the Internet that has made it possible to reach deeply into the creative worlds of people living across the globe.

8 – Denis Jouglet | Photographer

My philosophy is to get as much out of life and to experience as many things as I can, while I can.

Inspiration?

Everything—when I'm in the mood.

FRESH THOUGHTS



The fact we draw inspiration from nature is a simple truth but one of which we sometimes lose sight. This was brought home during a recent visit to the Karoo, my favourite winter destination. I shook off the frantic stress of life in the city and absorbed the tranquil vastness, the open blue skies punctuated with white fluffy clouds, and was aware of how this blended perfectly with the browns, yellows and oranges of the Karoo landscape: a rhythm of contour, contrast and colour, as highlighted by Carrie Latimer on page 9.

We aim similarly to inspire you with the spaces captured by photographer Ken Gerhardt in our picture gallery on page 3. And we pay tribute to our regular contributors whose energy and love for this magazine is greatly appreciated.

In the materials feature, "Designing with Concrete", we show how concrete not only ages beautifully, making it a wise choice for design and beneficial for the environment but how it compliments many natural materials and planting designs. We look at a variety of different installation techniques to fit both traditional or contemporary space and chat with landscape designer Mary Maurel, whose clever design of a meandering concrete path solved a problematic entrance at a home in Kenilworth.

We are delighted that Kirstenbosch won another gold medal at the Royal Chelsea Flower Show in London in May. Designer David Davidson spoke to Len Ashton about his design for the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens exhibition, read the interview on page 26. David creates his award winning ideas for the display using scale models rather than drawing up plans. According to him this is a fundamental process for achieving correct scale and plant quantities, for the design.

Water harvesting in the Western Cape, and the rest of South Africa is critical to manage water consumption and an environmental responsibility that most home owners should commit themselves to. In this issue look at easy ways to start making that commitment and offer one of our readers the chance to win a tank of their own, a must for every home.

I hope that our pages this winter will inspire you, as we have been inspired in bringing another edition of *Landscape Design and Garden*.

Happy reading,

Carla

contributors



EARTHARTIST



earthartist

Natural gardening, eating and living

Jenny Louw

A love of an uncluttered life, joy in the simple things and harmony with nature are themes that permeate this friendly handbook on love, gardening, eating and living a simple, healthy life by Cape Town based horticulturist, landscaper, mother and wife, Jenny Louw.

And at a time when sustainability is current coin, *Earthartist* contributes a practical approach to living in harmony with nature that can be adopted by anyone, whether they have a large garden in which to play, a small patch on which to produce food for the table or no garden at all.

The book opens with clear views on the philosophy of earth artistry, discusses finding freedom in a natural environment and touches on the benefits of being in touch with our spiritual nature.

Having thus set the tone in her appealing and open style, Jenny gently moves into the practical side of gardening, offering insights into landscaping, sharing her experience of "living with weeds, pests and predators" to maintaining a healthy worm farm.

As an enthusiastic "worm tea" producer myself I can heartily endorse her tips on how to achieve success with a worm farm populated by happy worms that contentedly produce bottle after bottle of their magic tea.

I also found her concept of viewing a garden, as one

might listen to music, by feeling the rhythm and following the melody with plants and pathways, particularly refreshing and insightful.

Having given her readers the benefit of her knowledge on how to get the best from their own soil, Jenny moves into the kitchen sharing her approach to nourishment, and her routine with food giving about a third of the book over to recipes—with, as can be expected, an emphasis on cooking in a style which is natural, simple and nutritious.

In my opinion *Earthartist* is not a book to be read from cover to cover in one sitting, but one to be left in a convenient space always readily available to dip into from time-to-time—like you might dip a sliver of home-baked bread into a bowl of the delicious humus you might make using a recipe in this guide to the cultivation of a more healthy life for its readers and—if we all paid attention—to a better world for us all.

[Evelyn John Holtzhausen]

Text & Publishing

Jenny Louw

Photographs

Stephen Goldberg & Jenny Louw

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EDITOR

Cara Smith – cara@ldgm.co.za

MANAGING EDITOR

Donald Paul – don@cupoftea.co.za

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Evelyn John Holtzhausen

HWB Communications Pty Ltd

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Ryan Donald – *ROLLING CREATIVE*

ryan@rollingcreative.co.za

www.rollingcreative.co.za

WEBSITE

www.ldgm.co.za

FEATURE WRITERS

Carrie Latimer – carrie@hsgardens.co.za

Marijke Honig – honig@intekom.co.za

John Richardson – johnrichardson@telkomsa.net

Evelyn John Holtzhausen – evelyn@hwb.co.za

Len Ashton – len_ashton@mweb.co.za

Tamsin Faragher – tamsinfaragher@gmail.com

Christine Stevens – christine@mountainoaks.co.za

ADVERTISING BOOKINGS

Jackie Mitchell – jackie@ldgm.co.za

RESIDENT PHOTOGRAPHER

Denis Jouglet – www.denisjougletphotography.com

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{ RHYTHM }

By Carrie Latimer

Royal Chelsea Flower Show 2011

The fundamental design series covers the essential principles of garden design. Like building blocks, these principles form the foundation of all design and the most timeless of gardens are those with a strong enough set of fundamentals to withstand the changing fashions that each decade brings.

To find the beat of your garden you need to think about repetition, pattern, progression and contrast.

If you've ever been placed on hold by a call-centre or had to endure the dull elevator music as you take the lift to the top floor, then you will understand quite clearly the dismal effect of boring rhythm. Applying this rather hard earned lesson to design makes understanding the principal of rhythm very easy. As with music, rhythm in the garden carries the eye along a visual path at a pace that is enjoyable for the viewer. To find the beat of your garden you need to think about repetition, pattern, progression and contrast. Using one or more of these mechanisms will create the pulse your garden needs to feel alive.

Repetition:

Repetition is the use of an element more than once through part or all of the garden. For example, choosing to plant predominantly purple-flowering plants in different areas allows the eye to smoothly connect the various spaces rather than jump erratically from one spot to another. Plants can bloom so vividly that it is often difficult to carry a colour theme into the hard landscaping of your garden. To create a more assertive rhythm, consider picking up on your choice colour in the soft furnishings of your deck or patio by placing purple cushions on your pool loungers as an example.

or large pot is the easiest way to establish a baseline beat in your garden. The spacing of these bold forms will determine the pace of the beat and can provide enough rhythm to hold together a riotous melody of colour.

Pattern:

Hitting the same few notes over and over to create a rhythm can be as gratingly dreary in a garden as in a song. An interesting rhythm is achieved by creating a repetitive pattern of musical notes, and in a garden we are able to create fantastic rhythm by establishing repeating patterns in the planting or hard landscaping. When designing a plant layout, I enjoy working with textural patterns of grey and green foliage, as this maintains the beat through the seasons regardless of what is in flower. For this same reason, it is important to consider creating simple rhythms in the hard surfaces of your garden. Staggering the paving slabs of a pathway for example is a wonderful way of adding tempo to the landscape.

Progression:

By taking an element in the garden and increasing or decreasing one or more of its qualities, a progressive rhythm is created. The most obvious tactic here is a progression in

Shape can be as useful in establishing rhythm as can colour. Repeating a strong form such as a conical evergreen

size. I often see a little copse of trees being planted in a single species. Generally the trees will all be the same height and I am often struck by the thought that the grove would have far more rhythm and life if the trees planted were of varying heights and sizes.

Progression can also be created through colour. For example, flowers could bleed from red, through orange, to yellow as you move through the garden. Alternatively, a planting of soft pinks could fade to mid-pinks scattered with deep-cherry buttons of *Knautia macedonica*. Without the very intense shades, the rhythm of a plant palette in a single colour can be pleasing, but rather dull.

Contrast:

Putting two elements in opposition to one another, such as a square pond in the centre of a circular area of paving creates an abrupt change and an interesting rhythm. This type of rhythm can be created not only with shapes but by contrasting light and dark, short and tall, bold and soft, etcetera. This is the crash of the cymbals, the jarring rhythm used to introduce punch and drama. Be careful not to undo any thoughtful use of the other mechanism of rhythm by introducing too much contrast.

The ebb and flow of a well-orchestrated landscape is determined, intentionally or not, by an underlying rhythm created by these design tactics. Ultimately, it's the rhythm of a garden which makes it sing. ▶▶

CONCRETE

by Carrie Latimer

*Landscape designer Carrie Latimer gives us expert advice on a variety of hard-landscaping materials.
This month: Concrete*

Concrete is a mix of cement, stone aggregate and water. When water is added to the dry components, a chemical change is initiated that leads to hardening. This basic technology was known at least 500 years before the time of Christ by the Ancient Romans who used a mix of quicklime, pozzolanic ash and a pumice stone crush to create architectural icons such as the Pantheon, the Baths of Caracalla and many Roman aqueducts that still stand today. Modern tests show that this cement called "opus caementicium" had as much comprehensive strength as the concrete we use today.

With the fall of the Roman Empire, the use of concrete disappeared almost entirely for an astonishing 13 centuries. The technology was re-pioneered in the mid-18th century in Britain, and by 1850, the Portland cement-based concrete of today was in use.

The understanding that concrete is strong in compression, but not in tension led to the use of steel to reinforce the material. This development sparked a revolution in architecture with the world's first reinforced concrete skyscraper, the Ingalls Building, built in Cincinnati in 1903 and still in use today.

In 1953, the architectural term "brutalism" was coined from the French *Béton brut* meaning "raw concrete". The term gained currency in the 60s and mid-70s describing a rising style of functional, fortress-like buildings constructed predominantly from concrete at low cost. Its critics found

brutalist architecture cold and domineering and often associated the style with urban decay as its smooth, blank surfaces proved highly attractive to graffiti artists. Though concrete carries with it this stigma of a material used to render brutal, unemotional design, in the decades that followed innovations in its applications have seen a renaissance of this material. Today, we see many examples of delicate design, sophisticated precast products and sensitive applications of texture—all exploiting the special virtues of concrete.

More than any other hard landscaping material, concrete can conform to almost any shape and can be coloured, scored, embellished and textured to create unique finishes. This degree of adaptability means that when correctly used, concrete can be equally fitting in both traditional and highly contemporary landscape design. Indeed, the inexhaustible potential of this material is dependent only on the innovative spirit of those who celebrate it in their design.

Concrete and the environment

The overall impact of concrete on the environment is complex and open to debate. Of the three ingredients which make up concrete, cement is the major offender. Cement production is energy intensive and a major contributor to CO₂ in the atmosphere. Latest studies show that the life cycle of carbon dioxide emissions from concrete contribute 5% of global carbon dioxide emissions.

Though the recycling of concrete structures once demolished is becoming increasingly common, concrete's very long lifespan is considered an environmentally positive

attribute. Concrete also has a high thermal mass and very low permeability making it suitable for energy efficient housing.

My top tips for designing with concrete

- If you are stuck selecting a colour, remember that you can seldom go wrong with concrete's natural grey. A design workhorse, it works surprisingly well in most situations.
- Concrete works brilliantly in contrast. Soft, feathery planting caressing the edge of sharp, shuttered concrete stepping-stones for example, brings a fantastic tension of masculine and feminine to the garden.
- Large areas of concrete cast in-situ require expansion joints. Whether you're designing a geometric patio or flowing pathway, get the proper technical advice and consider how best to incorporate these lines into your design.
- Though man made, I tend to think of concrete as a "natural" material as its rough, pitted texture pairs beautifully with other natural materials such as wood, metal and glass.
- Concrete likes simplicity—keep this in mind when shopping for pre-cast concrete accessories such as planters and benches. The more straightforward the shape and the less fussy the finish, the more elegant the end result.
- New concrete birdbaths, paving stones and wall mouldings can look too bright and chirpy in some gardens. To add a bit of history to your hardscaping consider applying an aging technique such as yoghurt or cow dung washes to the surfaces.

DECORATIVE SURFACING

natural

Cast concrete has a natural degree of colour variation within each piece and from one piece to another. This is what makes it feel natural and is one of the fundamental aspects of its beauty.



stamped

By pressing moulds into concrete still in its plastic state, patterns and textures such as wood, stone and shell can be imprinted on the surface of the material.

floated/trowelled

Patterns such as swirls and arcs can be created on a concrete surface by using a wooden float, which will impart a coarse texture. An aluminium float/steel trowel will create a medium or smooth texture.

tinted

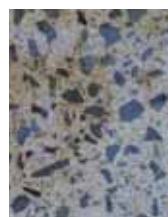
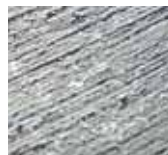
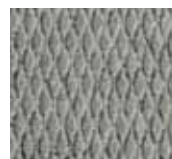
Colour can be achieved by adding oxides to a concrete mix before it is thrown/poured. It is also possible to "float" pigment on top of wet, freshly laid concrete allowing pigmentation of the top few millimetres only. For light, clearer colours, a white cement base can be used instead of the standard grey.

stained

Uneven, translucent colour can be achieved by applying either an acid- or water-based stain to the concrete surface. Acid-based stains create colour through a chemical reaction while water-based stains coat and bond with the concrete. These stains are often protected with an epoxy layer.

embedded

When well executed, a concrete surface that has been embedded with pebbles when wet can add considerable charm to a design.



engraved

Concrete floors can be given a face lift by angle grinding geometric patterns directly into the existing surface. The "tile" effect created can cost-effectively break the visual monotony of a large screeded slab.

brushed

By brushing the surface of curing concrete with either a coarse or fine bristled broom, a reliably non-slip surface can be created.

salt finished

This traditional technique can be used to add subtle texture at relatively low cost. Coarse rock salt crystals are broadcast onto fresh concrete, pressed in using a roller and later washed, dissolving the salt and leaving a speckled pattern of shallow indentations.

sandblasted

By protecting parts of a surface with a template, it is possible to create ornate patterns by sandblasting cured concrete.

polished

By grinding/passing over a concrete surface with increasingly fine grit diamond pads, a hard, glassy finish can be achieved. Decorative aggregates in the concrete mix can be exposed through polishing to create a speckled effect.



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making an
ENTRANCE

a conversation with
Mary Maurel

by **John Richardson**

Photographs by Heidi Bertish

“...as far as entrances go, they are first impression areas and a statement garden was called for.”

Technology changes things. Take, for instance, the ubiquitous garden path, that previously utilitarian beeline from the garden gate to the front door—for all intents and purposes, a simple A to B. But these days things are often different and the modern practice of entering the house via the garage can leave the old garden path a little left out in the cold: confused, disconnected and a long way from the dwellings entrance. This is exactly how garden designer Mary Maurel found this South-facing foyer garden in Kenilworth, in Cape Town's Southern suburbs, before completely transforming it.

How did a qualified architect end up in the garden design business?

I studied architecture at the University of Cape Town (UCT). After a brief career in architecture in the UK following graduation, I returned to South Africa, and an opportunity arose for me to work with [landscape designer] Franchesca Watson in 2003. I worked there as a design assistant until the end of 2006. I have always loved plants, having grown up in Elgin in a family of horticulturists. Landscape design affords me the opportunity to combine two of the loves of my life—design and plants. My background in architecture means that I recognise the importance of the relationship between the architecture and the garden and respond to it accordingly.

Yes, the architectural background is evident in this garden, but what was the client's brief?

To create an entrance garden. At the time, the brick paving of the driveway extended into this area. It was hard and uninviting. There was also no clear indication of where the front door was, which is quite confusing for an arriving visitor.

It seems like the front door is almost hidden from the driveway.

Yes it is. The area is strongly defined by the articulated house edges, which are quite convoluted, and the garage wing, which is at a diagonal to the main house. The area is largely bound by the client's office to the left, the bedroom wing to the right and the back of the kitchen in front. Beyond this, one moves into a smaller, separate area, a type of ante-space before entering the house.

Ante-space, I love that. It describes the importance of the entrance garden so well...

Yes, as far as entrances go, they are first impression areas and a statement garden was called for.

I get that, but statements are often short, whereas this 'ante-space', as you call it, is actually quite long, yet there is no monotony to it. How did you keep what is essentially a long corridor interesting?

Well, I made it longer. In pulling the driveway back out of this space, the distance from drive to front door was increased to about 22 metres. I felt that, while the route needed to be

direct, it would be best to divide it up into sections, thereby making it seem shorter. These three areas are each quite different in their planting styles and hard-surfacing, yet together they form a coherent whole due to elements which thread through them.

Yes, I can see the three distinct sections—a concrete path, a gravel area with water feature and then, on the final stretch, linear concrete pavers. Could you tell us a bit more about each section?

Yes, the first section of path is curvilinear. It's form is due to the fact that I wanted to enter the central gravel area at the mid-point of the water feature, yet the starting point from the driveway was way off this line. So, by curving the path I was able to square everything up and avoid a nasty diagonal.

What about the detail in the concrete screed?

The path itself is constructed by shuttering concrete with a black-oxide screed topping. The detail you see is a brick soldier course that runs through it at intervals, picking up the brick paving of the driveway and carrying it through into the new garden, thereby marrying the two spaces.

And the bricks run parallel...

Yes, the brick motif runs parallel to the house and other hard landscaping elements so that even though the path curves, it still acknowledges and carries the angularity of the overall space.

So the curved path leads to a sort of nodal space?

That's right. It leads to a central gravel area. This area is rectangular and essentially the "knuckle" of the design. The space was defined by the very articulated house edge and called for strong hardscaping elements to tie the various spatial components together. The severity of the back kitchen wall, which is a large expanse, presented the challenge of how to break it up. The solution was a water feature with back plate. However, the trick was to pull it away from the wall and leave a planting gap between it and the house. As such, it is not a part of the house wall, but rather its own separate thing, allowing planting to soften the wall behind it. Into this strip I planted ticky creeper (*Ficus pumila*), so that ultimately the back plate will be a green rectangle on the wall.

And I see you have pots in there as well.

There are two pots at each end which help reduce the wall further. These were placed within a low, abelia hedge (*Abelia grandiflora*), which appears to 'hold' the water feature and along with the Fairy crassula (*Crassula multicava*) implies that the hedge continues behind the water feature.

Which I must say doubles as perfect bench for chatting on.

Yes, we all seem to gravitate towards the water, and a nice wide wall at about 400mm high makes a perfect bench.

From here we move on to the concrete strips.

This area is composed of linear pavers of various lengths and widths. Each was cast in situ within its own box of formwork, with steel reinforcing. The finish is in the same oxide screed as the curved path and between the pavers is tumbled slate, laid in a curvilinear form reminiscent of the fluid form of the concrete path and directing the visitor to the front door.

The tones and linearity are quite dramatic and go well with the plant selection. Tell us more about the planting.

Well, overall the planting palette is limited to largely green and white. I have tried to use sufficient evergreen, structural plants like the Pale blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium*) to the path edges, the mini aggies (*Agapanthus africanus*), Mock orange (*Murraya exotica*) and ferns so that the garden is able to "hold" itself seasonally—an important consideration for an entrance garden which you don't really ever want to look messy. This also makes the garden easier to manage. Within this framework I have introduced more ephemeral plants, like the Butterfly bush (*Gaura lindbierrii*), Obedient plant (*Physostegia* sp.), Japanese anemones (*Anemone japonica*) and a few others. I also used a few fragrant plants, which I like to use in entrance gardens, where you can really appreciate them as one passes by several times a day.

You mentioned different planting styles.

Yes, each section has its own style within the overall planting concept. The planting in the curved path section is loose and meadowy, which complements the fluid form of the pathway. In the water feature garden it is more static, with the rectangle framed with a double row of miniature agapanthus. There is also a strip of *Thymus serpyllum* 'Snowdrift' planted in the gravel along the brick edging and this helps to soften it a bit.

And this last bit of path, my favourite part, the ante-space...

This whole garden is south facing, so I had to be mindful of the shade in the plant selection. Especially here in this last bit, which is even darker than the rest. Plants are: various ferns, Maidenhair fern (*Adiantum raddianum*), Leatherleaf fern (*Rumorpha adiantiformis*), Dwarf tree fern (*Blechnum gibbum*), *Pteris dentata* 'stramina'. There are also two beautiful large Sacred Bamboos (*Nandina domestica*) that were saved from the original garden and now enjoy pride of place either side of the front door.

Notes:

Garden installation by Heimo Schulzer Gardens.
Irrigation by Romi Irrigation.



1



3



2

Design Tips

- Where planting into gravel in the full sun use a groundcover that can cope in the heat. (See 1 above.)
- It is a nice idea to use fragrant plants in an entrance garden, as in this position you can really appreciate them as one passes them several times a day upon entering and leaving the house (unlike it they were buried deep in the garden). Try Gardenia's, Star Jasmine, Datura/Brugmansia, Murraya exotica. (See 2 above.)
- Balance of structural plants to perennials. Plant sufficient evergreen plants that the planting palette looks good all year.
- Drip irrigation—in confined spaces such as this, consider drip irrigation as you want to keep your walls clean and avoid the possibility of damp.
- Where you have a hard horizontal surface meeting a hard vertical service, try to break the severity with a narrow planting strip. For example, take ground cover to the base of the water feature.
- Where lighting a garden—focus on lighting the structural elements. In this case, the Bauhinia, the Nandina's, the pathways, and the water feature. (See 3 above.)

Below: Concept plan



CONTEMPORARY LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

OUTSIDE IN

KEN GERHARDT ORIGINAL PRINTS



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Exposure



1



2



3

1 – Vertical Garden

This living tapestry at Trinity night club was created using a mix of hardy and contrasting textures such as *Carex* frosted curls, *Erigeron karvinskianus*, *Crassula multicaeva*, *Asparagus densiflorus* and *Portulacaria afra* 'Prostrate'.

Design & Construction: *Cape Contours*
www.capecontours.co.za

2 – Curved Stone Walls

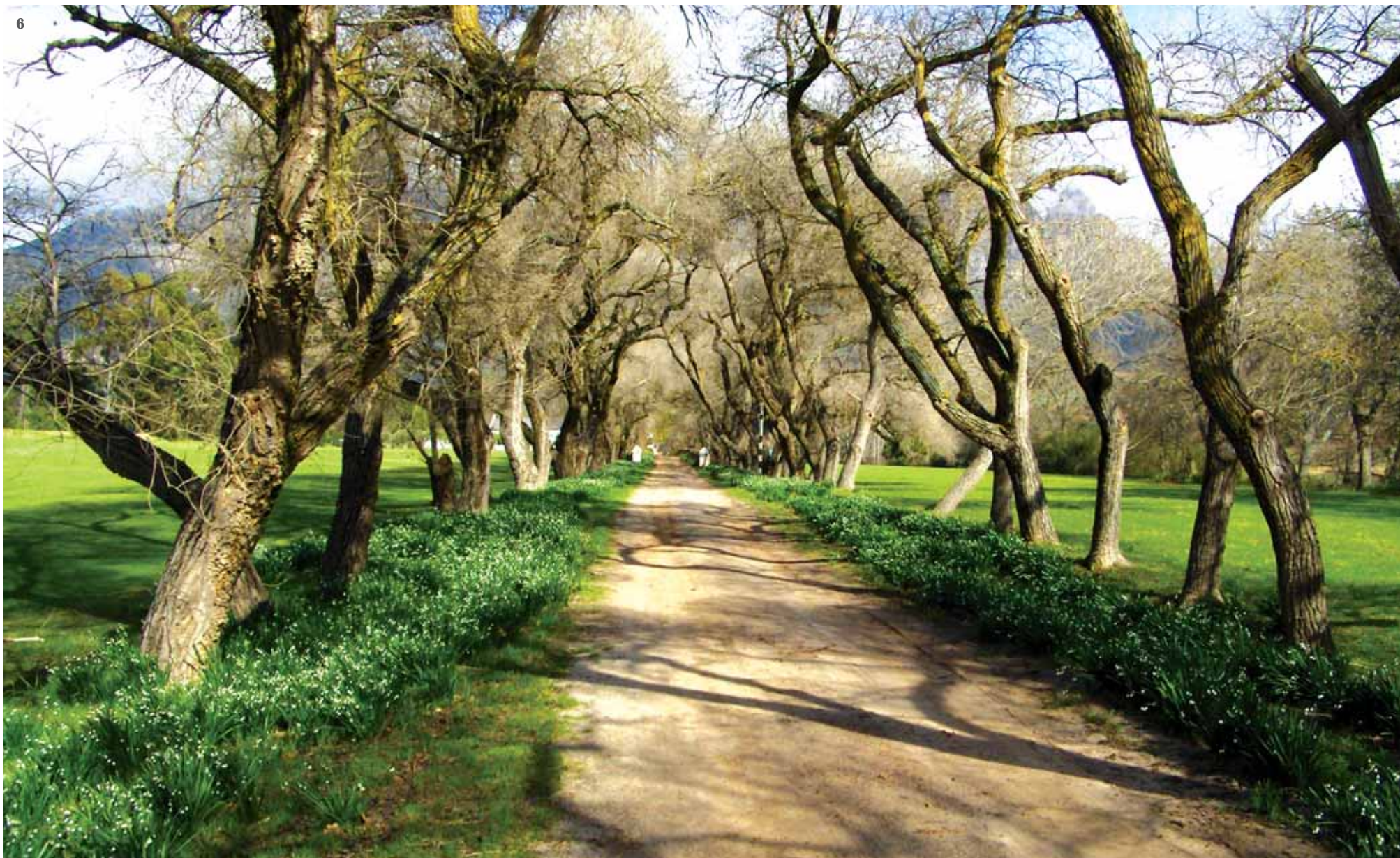
The clever use of a retaining bank with curved and sloping stone walls creates a dramatic and strong architectural feature to complement the lawn and pool terrace.

Design: *Mary Maurel*
www.marymaurelgardens.co.za
Construction: *Ross McGill Landscapes and Wild Cape Stone Works*
www.rossmcgilllandscapes.com | www.wildcape.co.za

3 – Romantic Garden

Soft planting of mixed borders and clipped pyramids of *Ragoda hispida* creates a beautiful combination of soft and architectural planting in this romantic garden.

Design: *Mary Maurel*
www.marymaurelgardens.co.za
Construction: *Ross McGill Landscapes*
www.rossmcgilllandscapes.com



4 – Clipped Spheres

Clipped spheres of *Westringia fruticosa* form the backbone of this sculptured bed. The silver foliage is offset by the contrasting purple foliage of *Trachelium caeruleum*.

Design: *Mary Maurel*
www.marymaurelgardens.co.za

5 – French Courtyard

Large areas of travertine paving laid in a French pattern are complimented and softened with custom-made stepping-stones and thyme groundcover. The courtyard is beautifully framed with an arching steel pergola and flowering creepers. A careful selection of garden ornaments, water features and herbs decorate the courtyard space.

Design & Construction: *Eco Creations*
www.ecocreations.co.za

6 – Franschoek Wine Farm

Leucojum snowdrops were planted under these beautiful old cottonwood popular trees keeping the design authentic and seasonal with a sense of romance and mystique.

Design and Construction: *The Pink Geranium*
www.thepinkgeranium.co.za



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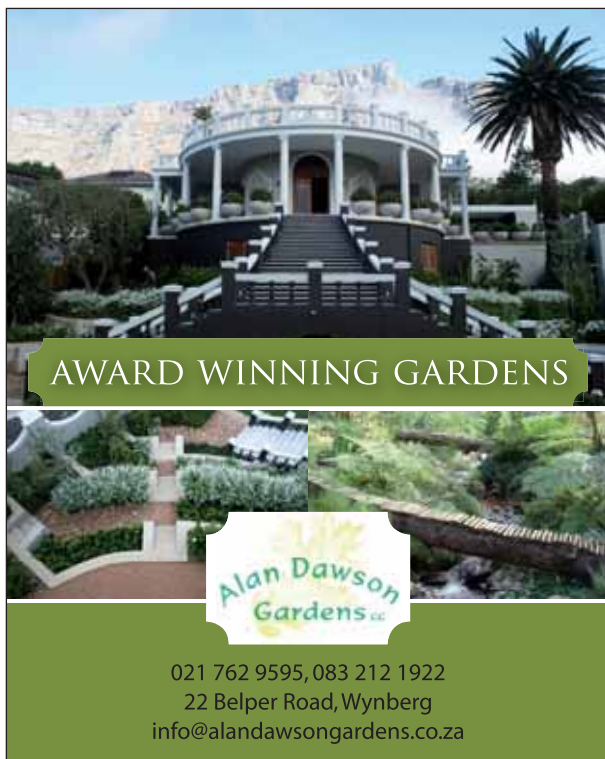
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RIGHT:
At Kirstenbosch
the Mickey Mouse
bush has been
clipped into a
neat hedge about
50cm high.



plant PALETTE:

by Marijke Honig

Hedges

Clipped plants—whether shaped as a ball, a hedge or rectangular block—add structure to a garden and contrast well with soft informal plantings. *Landscape Design & Garden* looks at some of the options.

The faster the growth rate of a plant, the more clipping and maintenance it will require. When making your selection, also consider the natural size of the plant. For example, keeping a naturally two-metre shrub at knee height will take a lot of pruning. For a low-maintenance hedge choose a species with moderate growth rate which naturally grows to the desired height.

Indigenous plants tend to look informal, even wild, but there are several species that clip and prune well, giving a formal effect or saving precious square meters in a town garden.

1 – Green Carpet

Carissa macrocarpa

Green carpet is a form that has smaller leaves and thorns than the regular *Carissa macrocarpa* and serves as a groundcover or small shrub. It produces starry white flowers in spring followed by red fruit, which stand out against the dark green foliage making it a highly ornamental plant.

Height & Spread: up to 80cm x 80cm.

Garden Info: A plant that clips beautifully, not unlike traditional box (*Buxus sp.*), suitable for the formal edging of beds. It is very tolerant of coastal conditions where it may look "clipped" by the shearing force of wind. *Carissa* can tolerate some shade. In my garden I've used it as a natural "balustrade" or thorny barrier at the edge of the patio.

2 – Cape May or Confetti Bush

Coleonema album / C. pulchellum

A rounded shrub with sweetly aromatic leaves, *Coleonema* is one of a group of plants known as 'buchus', which belong to the citrus family. The common name Aasbossie refers to its use by fishermen who rubbed their hands on the bush to counter the smell of red bait. In winter the bush is covered with masses of small starry flowers—either white (Cape May or *C. album*) or pink (*C. pulchellum*)—which are pollinated by bees.

Height & spread: 1.2m x 1m (*C. album*) or up to 1.6m (*C. pulchellum*)



Garden Info: Prefers full sun but can handle some shade. While its natural shape lends itself to being clipped into a ball, it can also be planted along a path or wall. After flowering, trim by giving an all-over "hair cut" Pinch any long growth to keep it bushy.

3 – Dune Crowberry

Searsia crenata was *Rhus crenata*

A large shrub with glossy dentate leaves in threes, which is typical of the genus *Rhus*. The young foliage is reddish, adding some colour. Tiny insignificant flowers are followed by small dry red berries, which are rich in carbohydrates. Only female plants bear fruit.

Height & Spread: the dune crowberry will grow to 3m high and 4m wide if unchecked. Nonetheless, with regular pruning it can be kept to a height of 50cm to 1m.

Garden Info: a vigorous grower so prune regularly—every two to four weeks in summer and less often in winter. Old plants can be pruned hard and will regrow from the woody stem. Plant in full sun. The dune crowberry makes a great screen or windbreak and is excellent for coastal gardens and sandy soils.

4 – Mickey Mouse Bush

Ochna serrulata

The Mickey Mouse bush is a decorative shrub with an upright growth habit and shiny serrated leaves. Young leaves in spring are pinkish bronze, adding seasonal interest. Yellow flowers are followed by small berries borne on a pretty red star-like structure (the calyx), the berries changing from green to black when ripe.

Height & spread: 2 x 1.5m

Garden Info: Its upright habit makes it useful for screening in narrow spaces or along a path. It grows rather slowly, but flowers from an early age (two years), making it a decorative and useful bird plant for small gardens. It self-seeds rather prolifically.

5 – Strandsalie/Beach Sage

Salvia africana-lutea

This hardy coastal shrub belongs to the sage family. The grey aromatic leaves are arranged in opposite pairs, giving a geometric look. The strandsalie flowers profusely in winter and spring. The orangey-brown sage-like flowers attract sunbirds and contrast beautifully against the grey foliage.

Height & spread: 1.5 x 1.5m

Garden Info: Plant in full sun. In nature, the strandsalie re-sprouts from a persistent rootstock after a fire, so it can be pruned back hard (even to the base). The striking grey foliage provides year-round interest in a garden. Suitable for clipping into a formal shape or planted in a mixed hedge together with shrubby *Rhus* species, *Grewia occidentalis* and *Carissa macrocarpa*, to name some examples.

My Top 10

- *Anastrabe interrigima*
- *Rhus crenata*
- *Salvia africana-caerulea*
- *Coleonema album*
- *Carissa* (Green carpet)
- *Ochna serrulata*
- *Maytenus bachmannii*
- *Grewia robusta*
- *Diospyros whyteana*
- *Podocarpus falcatus*

GARDEN TIP:

Keeping a naturally two-metre shrub at knee height will take a lot of pruning effort so choose a species with moderate growth rate which naturally grows to the desired height.

vegitate

IN PURSUIT OF FLAVOUR

by Christine Stevens

As winter starts to force its wrath upon us, my thoughts turn towards future sun-filled days where garden planning is concerned. On our organic farm the last of the autumn fruits hang on the trees and we are in the citrus season, the Satsuma oranges and lemons will be the last fruits I can harvest until early spring when the strawberries start to ripen. This is the time to think about planting out fruit trees and fruit-bearing shrubs such as berries. I like to get my young fruit trees planted out from May and my berries and grape vines in the ground through June and July.

I have collected a variety of fruit trees, most of which have given me effortless joy and produced fruits far superior in flavour to anything available in the shops. They also provide me with a constant reminder of what fruits are in season. Today there are so many varieties to choose from and many have been cultivated with size in mind: a lemon tree can give

wonderful shade as well as fresh fruit in a small urban garden. Apricots, peaches and plums all perform well when trained espalier-style up a wall, preferable one that is sun-facing. You can create a productive and attractive space with some large pots of these trees on a patio.

A bit of planning is required before buying fruit trees. For those with limited space, a self-pollinating tree is a necessity, and that rules out apples, pears and cherries, which all need cross-pollinators (and cold winters). Plums, peaches apricots and most of the citrus family are self-pollinating—and I can't think of a day when I don't use a lemon in the kitchen. When you have decided on your desired fruit, take a look at varieties. A good nursery will be able to advise. Also, it is pointless getting a tree that bears fruit each December if you normally go away on a holiday at this time. You will return to fallen fruit rotting on the ground. For flavour I can recommend the following varieties

Peaches

- Culemborg is my first choice for taste. It's a desert peach with white flesh that ripens in late November.
- Elberta is not as hardy but produces wonderful yellow dessert peaches each January.
- Oom Sarel for a later crop is a tasty cling peach variety.

Plums

- Laetitia is flavoursome and produces a lot of fruit each January
- Van der Merwe produces huge quantities of small prunes each January. These are lovely eaten fresh and dry well for storing.

Apricots

- I swear by Cape Bebeco for beautiful and tasty fruit early in December

Lemons

- The tree I could not live without is the Eureka lemon: it will produce fruit endlessly and can be grown in a large pot for a small area. Each spring be sure to remove any green suckers shooting up from the base of the tree to prevent ants. I also plant the herb tansy around the base of my lemon trees to prevent pests. You will be rewarded with kilos of unwaxed tasty lemons.

Most fruit bearing trees do not like "wet feet" so choose a site that drains well and gets some sun. When planting remember to dig a hole twice as large as you need and plant the tree with plenty of added organic compost, then water immediately. If training a tree up a wall place a metal training frame at the time of planting so you do not damage the trees roots at a later date. A fruit tree trained up a wall will require extra pruning, free standing trees are pruned only in winter. Any good nursery

will pass on specific growing and pruning advice for your area.

Berries are a must-have in the garden as far as I am concerned. Strawberries are the easiest: they are hardy and if you keep them well mulched during summer and water regularly they will reward you with a bountiful crop. I grow onions and chives between my strawberries: they are great companions and their strong smell confuses birds and insects. Plant out young strawberry plants in late autumn for a crop the following spring.

Blueberries like peaty well mulched soil that drains well and sunshine. They do not like limey soils. A mature plant will give you a couple of kilos of berries each season.

Raspberries I find more difficult to grow, but I persevered as I love them. They like cold winters and partial sun and must be planted in moist soils that drain well. The canes will need some support. Be vigilant in summer the birds love raspberries!

Figs are one of the most forgiving of fruit trees to grow. To take a cutting slice a young shoot about 10cm long and place into a pot in a protected area, (wind free) and water regularly. I always take my fig cuttings after fruiting in autumn, the roots will then be established for planting out the following spring. When the roots are established plant out and mulch well with compost. Figs will grow well in a large pot, this would be another of my must have trees for a small garden, as they require very little care.

A grape vine is a wonderful asset for a small patio, plant in a pot or directly into the soil and train up a pergola arch or tall frame for summer shade. I would recommend one of the seedless table grapes. The best time to plant a grape vine is in the winter months when the vine is dormant. Ensure you prune the shoots of the leader stems back each August leaving two buds for next year's growth and mulch each spring with an organic compost. ▶▶

RECIPE

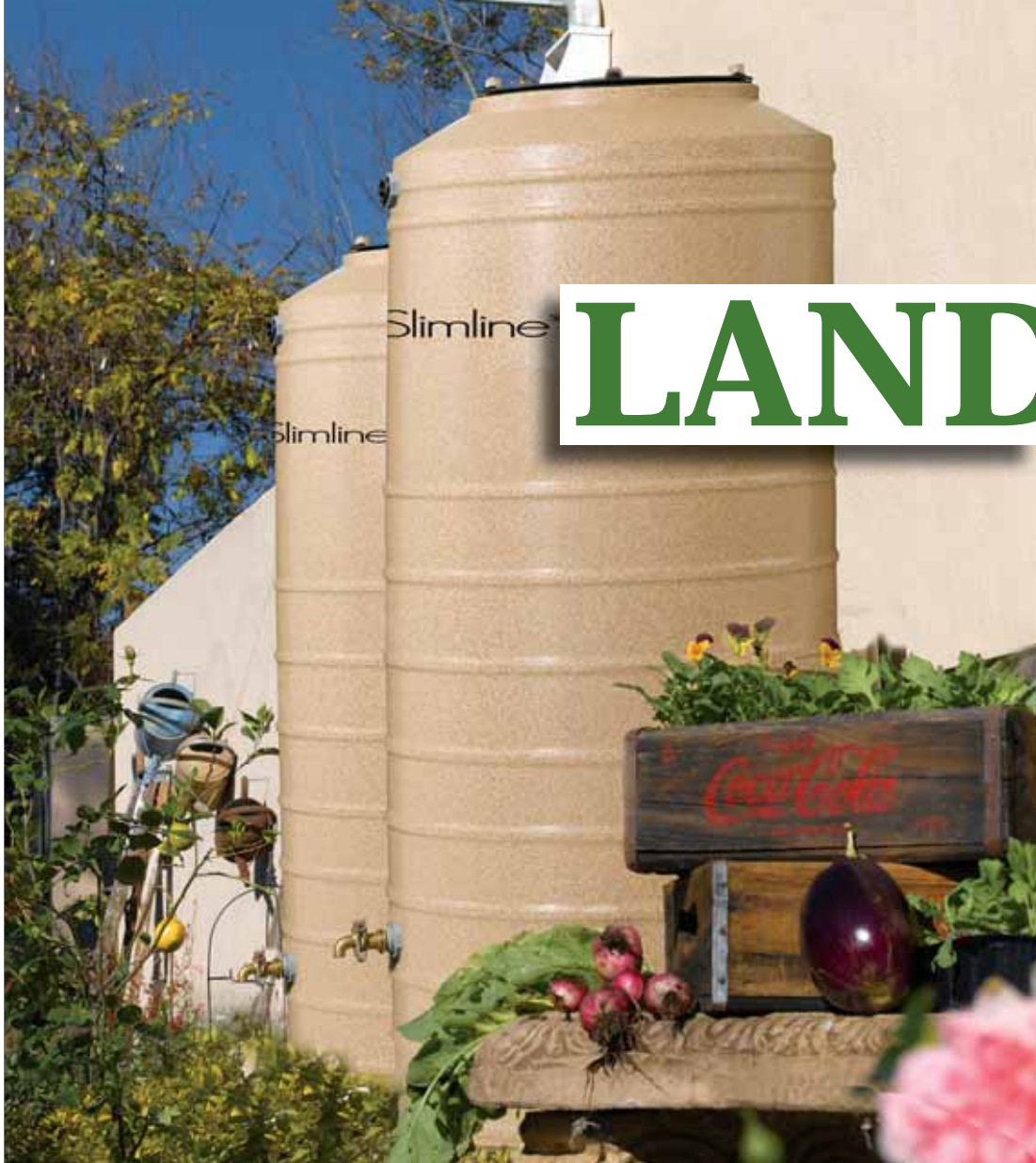
Autumn Mixed Fruit Compote

This is a wonderful recipe for using up fruit passed its best, either from the fruit bowl or once you have your own fruit that has fallen from the trees. The best fruits to use are stone fruits, figs, apples and pears and grapes. I like a mixture of three or four different fruits. Store in a jar in the fridge and use as a dessert served with ice cream or added to yoghurt and seeds for breakfast.

- Two cups chopped mixed fruit
- Half lemon
- Two tablespoons honey
- Cinnamon stick (a piece about 2cm long)
- Vanilla pod

Place the chopped fruit into a pan with the squeezed half of lemon, the cinnamon and a vanilla pod. Simmer for five minutes to lightly soften the fruit, add the honey and simmer for a further five minutes until it has dissolved. The fruit should still be soft but not mushy. Place in a clean jar and store in the fridge. Use within two weeks.





LANDSCAPING

going (even) greener

by BK Khumalo

Rainwater harvesting utilising rainwater tanks is not a new concept but its revived popularity is due to the growth of eco-savvy consumers who recognise the need to conserve precious natural resources combined with the simple fact that the mains tap water is becoming a precious and expensive commodity.

Substituting rainwater for all water applications—excluding drinking water—could result in potable water savings of around 50% on all domestic water consumption and more than 80% in corporate and public buildings. This would relieve the stress placed on municipal water supplies, not to mention the domestic water bills. Rainwater harvesting, in conjunction with Xeriscaping, sustainable landscapes and permeable pavements are among the top 10 international landscaping trends today.

The benefit of rainwater harvesting on ecosystem services in urban areas are two-fold. First, the increased use of rainwater harvesting provides additional water supply

and reduces pressures of demand on surrounding surface and groundwater resources. Second, it can reduce storm flow, decreasing incidence of flooding and short peak flows. Urban-water use is mostly for non-consumption, so 80-90% of harvested water is returned to the landscape water cycle.

Rod Cairns, managing director of water storage industry leader JoJo Tanks, said South Africans should invest in water tanks. “You should have some sort of system in place to save water, whether it’s a small 750-litre tank or 20 000-litre [both offered by his company with a range in-between]. The cost of water in South Africa is not that high so we tend to be wasteful. The reality is water is becoming more and more expensive and in the future there may simply not be enough water to meet the world and the country’s future needs. The need to save water will be forced upon us.”

According to the Earth Policy Institute, municipal water rates around the world have increased dramatically over the past five years: 27% in the United States, 32% in the United Kingdom, 45% in Australia, 58% in Canada and 50% in South Africa.

Many people are concerned about the storage life of harvested water but as Rob points out, depending on what one intends using it for, it can be stored indefinitely.

“JoJo tanks are resistant to the sun’s UV rays and lined with a carbon black food safety accredited material to keep the water algae free and fresher for longer,” he says.

Before you rush out to buy a rainwater storage tank there are a few things to consider: the amount you will be able to harvest—it depends on your roof size—and the amount of water you use. This will

then determine the size tank you buy. Simply multiply your total square metre of roof area by your annual rainfall average and this will give you the total potential catchments for the year. “With an average rainfall of 464mm in SA, you could harvest up to 23 000-litres of water from a 50m² roof,” says Rob. “That’s enough water for 165 showers.”

Rob advises against using rainwater collected off a roof for drinking purposes (unless there is no other source of water). “If one is in this situation,” he says, “it is advised to boil the water before drinking it.”

Anyone with basic handyman skills can install a water

“The reality is water is becoming more and more expensive and in the future there may simply not be enough water to meet the world and the country’s future needs.”



tank for rainwater harvesting says Rob. “Remember, the platform or base on which your tank is installed must be 100% level and solid. This is probably the toughest part of installation.” The tank must be positioned where a downpipe can be connected to the roof guttering to harvest the rain.

Rob says JoJo Tanks has been in business for more than 30 years and every JoJo tank has a five-year guarantee on workmanship.

“They’re built strong to last long.” ▶▶

Principles of sustainable, water-wise landscaping

- Plan and design for water conservation.
- Include green retaining walls by building small out pockets and planters on the sides to absorb water and reduce run-off.
- Reduce impervious surfaces by replacing solid driveways with porous alternatives.
- Interrupt walkways with creeping groundcovers, such as thyme, which will help to slow stormwater flow and create a more aesthetic space.
- Design green spaces between hard surfaces (patios, walkways, and parking lots) and building edges.

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WHY GOING GREY IS GOING GREEN?

The average family of four uses between 300 and 350 litres of water per day—and 90% of that water leaves the home as wastewater!

With approximately 60% of household water re-usable as greywater—perfect to water gardens, wash cars and driveways and flush toilets—it can potentially save thousands of litres of drinking water a year, not to mention the positive impact on the water bill.

The simplest greywater system consists of gravity feeding water to an underground sump (a 50-litre JoJo drum placed in an enclosure with an inspection cover) where it passes through a macro filter to remove hair fluff and lint and is immediately pumped or drip-irrigated into the garden.

With this system the greywater must be utilised within 24 hours. If stored for longer, it changes into blackwater, developing an offensive odour and becoming foul.

A more sophisticated system pumps the water from the 50-litre JoJo drum into an above ground 750-litre JoJo Slimline™ tank, passing through a Venturi valve, that injects ozone into the greywater, cleaning, disinfecting and oxidizing all impurities.

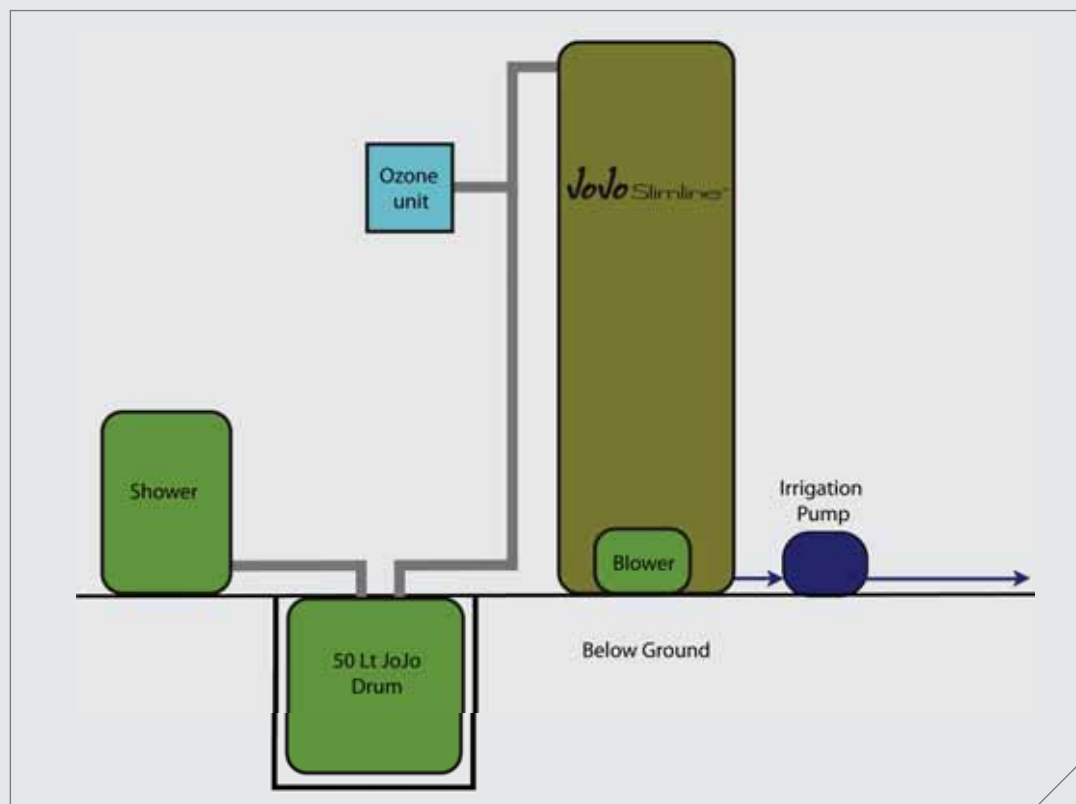
This system allows greywater storage for a much longer period of time. A pressure booster pump attached to the tank, can pump the water to an irrigation system.

A greywater harvesting system using JoJo tanks, reduces water consumption and saves money and the environment.

“Greywater is defined as water from showers, baths, hand basins in the bathrooms and washing machine water. It does NOT include water from the toilets, kitchen/scullery sinks or dishwashers. This water is classified as blackwater.”

BELOW:

JoJo Tanks schematic showing a basic installation plan for the greywater harvesting system.



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"How much water does a family of four use on average per day?"



spiky, waxy, squat and hairy

by John Richardson

In 1921, the director of Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, Professor Robert Harold Compton endeavoured to create a second botanical collection in the Karoo. This garden, he envisaged, was to operate as a kind of “substation” or “outstation” of Kirstenbosch, specifically for the purposes of growing, propagating and studying succulents: aloes, cacti and other xerophytes or, as the professor himself put it, “to be a repository of some of the most remarkable forms of life that the world contains”.

And boy was he right! These genera of plant life have over millennia in the desert morphed into a motley crew of Dr Seuss-like characters that have had to pull every dirty trick in the book to survive in one of the toughest neighbourhoods of the natural world. Places that we humans tend to give names like Death Valley, Skeleton Coast, the Empty Quarter or even... Hotazel.

I am referring, of course, to the Karoo Desert National Botanical Garden in Worcester, Africa's only truly succulent garden. And while the 250mm of rain it receives per annum leaves it on the cusp of being a true desert, it is undoubtedly a moisture deficit environment—it loses more moisture than it receives. As far as plant adaptations go this means it helps to be spinescent, epicuticular, caudiciform and tomentose (read spiky, waxy, squat and hairy) with poisonous sap and unapologetically few leaves—just for good measure.

These remarkably freakish floras have found so many resourceful ways of cheating death in parched landscapes, it's ingenious. Granted, they ain't all pretty. Yet somehow they've managed to creep into the hearts of many a discerning gardener with their stoic pragmatism and oddball beauty. Fact is, there are so many unusual plants here, the kind of things you just don't find in all the normal places one looks for them. Like the weird but nonetheless charming Namibian grape (*Cyphostemma juttae*), which can store up to 60 litres of water in its bulbous trunk and consequently looks more like a colossal upside-down potato than any sort of grape. It's found naturally only in the north-western corner of Namibia in the remote and arid Kaokoland but seems to have adapted well to the slightly wetter conditions of the Klein Karoo. Then there's the mesmeric forest of famously resolute Kokerboom (*Aloe dichotoma*) standing together on a rocky hill, as if gathered in unified defiance of the endless drought—a living Stonehenge quietly awaiting the rain.

However, although they are infinitely impressive, it is not only the large architectural specimens that define the garden. It is often said that spring is the best time to visit, when the

slopes are a blaze of chromatic effervescence, courtesy of the normally demure vygie. It's true, no other plant does spring quite like these intoxicating little groundcovers.

Other seasons are good as well. Our visit coincided with a spectacular display of the autumn-flowering bulbs, *Brunsvigia bosmaniae* that were rescued en masse from the Knersvlakte some years back and now turn the red-earth into a carpet of electric pink every April. I am told that every year the display becomes more breathtaking.

Aside from the plants, this garden is remarkable in that it's actually a reincarnation of its original self, having been moved, along with all the major specimens and a fair amount of infrastructure, from a previous site at Whitehill, in Matjiesfontein. It was there, on a stone-clad hill of shale and Dwyka conglomerate, that South Africa's second official National Botanical Garden got its rather inauspicious start, as part of the Matjiesfontein railway station garden back in 1925. Former stationmaster Joseph Archer was appointed curator and along with award-winning railways horticulturist Frank Frith developed the gardens until 1939 when the Second World War and the diversion of a national road, left it somewhat inaccessible to the visiting public. This necessitated the move to Worcester in 1945. Archer's contribution to horticulture is still honoured today in the plant names *Drosanthernum archeri* and *Tanquana archerii*, among others.

Today the garden at Worcester encompasses 57ha (140 acres) of natural semi-desert on the foothills of the Hex River Mountains and includes four hectares (10 acres) of cultivated garden. A narrow tarred road provides vehicle access to parking at its centre, from where several gently sloped paths link up various parts of the garden, providing easy pedestrian access to the 400-plus plant species that occur naturally in the park—of which more than 300 are protected.

There is also a maze that has been constructed out of the free flowering *Tecomaria capensis* (to which children and brightly coloured birds seem to be attracted in equal measure), a Khoisan cooking shelter, a plant sales nursery, several (easy) hiking trails, organised tours, a Braille trail, a shale trail, a nursery... and of course, a whole lot more weird and wonderful plants to marvel at. ▶▶

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WHY IS THERE NO lavender in Lavender Hill?

A gang-infested community that needs help. Charles Maisel, a South African social entrepreneur, came up with the idea to populate Lavender Hill with lavender. The idea is to reclaim the land and turn it into something beautiful, something that can uplift the community and instil pride.

Charles lectures on innovation at the UCT Graduate School of Business. One of his students asked him if he could work on a project with him and when Charles asked him where he lived he replied "Lavender Hill". Charles asked if there was any lavender in Lavender Hill and the student did not know what lavender was. This started the project "Lavender in Lavender Hill" project.

The vision of the project is to create an urban farm that will produce unique lavender products such as lavender cooking herb, lavender tea and lavender wedding confetti. These products will be sold in stores and the money will go directly back into the upliftment of the Lavender Hill community.

Apart from the urban farm this project is aimed at uplifting and beautifying Lavender Hill. The entire project will bring a huge beneficial change to the community.

First, there will be a huge amount of job creation for the community at the lavender farms.

Second, skills training of how to grow lavender and other

plants will allow the community members to start their own planting businesses.

Third, the lavender fields will attract many tourists and over time pride will be instilled in the community which will decrease the amount of gangsters and crime. The project also aims to create an experience in the lavender fields.

The lavender fields will host corporate workshops and school outings but most of all lavender training where skills can be taught and transferred to the community and visitors.

Fourth, Lavender Hill will be beautified by lavender flowers all around. When you fly over Lavender Hill you should be able to see purple patches of lavender all over. The entire community will become an urban farm.

Currently, the Lavender in Lavender Hill team has set up their first nursery at Zerilda Park Primary School, Lavender Hill. On a daily basis the team's master gardener Vuyesile is training community members how to plant lavender cuttings.

The lavender cuttings are donated from members of the public who own lavender bushes and want to be a part of this social upliftment project.

Let's make Lavender Hill work! Have a lovely lavender filled day.

www.lavenderinlavenderhill.co.za

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The design of the 2012 Chelsea exhibit is dominated by a quartet of gateways framing dramatically varied views of South African regional horticulture. The entry title is Gateways - a Botanical Travelogue.

By rights, David Davidson should be strutting around like Idi Amin, bedizened with a chest full of medals. Except, "Our David" has actually earned his.

Designer David goes about his business in modest, schoolmasterly array. He looks preoccupied, but those sharp eyes, peering out of a hairy face, give the game away. This is the gaze of a detailist, one who takes infinite pains to get things right. Right as in perfect.

Chief creator of a seemingly endless cascade of annual medal-winning South African presentations at the world's leading horticulture extravaganza, the Chelsea Flower Show, he nevertheless does not presume success. There are too many risks and dramas involved in the business of transporting jungles of live greenery thousands of miles to fly the flag for his country. And he has had his share of obstacles, from difficult bureaucrats to sudden climatic challenges.

For years he has been sloping off annually to the Chelsea Flower Show with his Kirstenbosch team, chatting on opening night to royalty and other notabilities—and yet he still sweats like an anxious impresario while the learned judges confer. Something like nine times out of 10, South Africa triumphs. For victory at Chelsea is a national win. This country's display is in competition with major big money exhibits by countries including Australia and a slew of entries from the Far East.

While the opposition is generally backed by huge official investments, South Africa has for years had to scramble for

profile: DAVID DAVIDSON

by Len Ashton

donors. For some reason, the South African government seems reluctant to grasp the opportunity of capitalising on the tourism and business opportunities offered by Chelsea. Perhaps this is partly because it's billed as a flower show, whereas it is in fact also a huge international industrial exhibition, often featuring the latest small vehicles, furniture, tools and other wonders developed by a nation of fanatical gardeners.

“ This is the gaze of a detailist, one who takes infinite pains to get things right. Right as in perfect. **”**

You can snap up life-size statuary and ironmongery to jazz up the stately pad, and you can tote (when the show ends) colour for the window box.

David believes Chelsea is the best possible marketing venue for international tourism, involving comparatively modest expenditure. Lavish television coverage goes on for days on end, with everything from weird designer gardens to celebrities featured.

He says fascinated crowds usually besiege the South African stand, wanting information about the flora, which is seen in exotic contrast with the vast majority of neighbouring national displays. And the crowds are healthily nose about the country.

Incidentally, he says national flags are not permitted on national stands at Chelsea. The idea is to concentrate on plants, not vainglorious trappings of national pride. One year, ignorant of this rule, the new South African flag was incorporated in the design. When the inevitable inquiries came (Chelsea judges are nothing if not beady-eyed) the team managed to duck the issue by asserting that the flag had not yet received the official imprimatur.

David's own garden, off Rondebosch Common in Cape Town, is a world away from the aspirations and seething humanity in the northern springtime on the South Bank of the Thames. "It needs work", he concedes. Lush greenery, growing to great heights, conceals the huge Common, just

visible across the road. Ferns tremble under overhanging shrubbery surrounding the small swimming pool.

Gewgaws hang from trees, or are perched on tree stumps. An eclectic range of toy figures, sculptures, and pottery is scattered on deep verandas. It's a rambling, comfortable old house, guarded like the Chinese imperial palaces of old by a small army of rescued dogs, who have fiercely derogatory opinions about unknown trespassers.

This is not a trendy garden. Clearly, David is inclined to let nature have its way in his living space. So questions about gardening trends meet with a philosophic shrug. There is much interest in vertical gardens these days ("Which means getting good advice if you want to be successful at it.") The

vertical trend reflects the times: in a busy world, gardens are getting smaller.

"There are more and more hard elements in gardens, for both economic and aesthetic reasons. They demand less maintenance. These are recession gardens."

He is pleased that a number of architects are beginning to pay serious attention to the question of designing with gardens in mind. In the past, many architects neglected entirely to take gardens into consideration, which often led to gardeners having to break down walls and other obstructions for aesthetic and practical reasons.

David is a peaceable man. He plays the organ at his church, and tinkles the piano to entertain the elderly. And he addresses hordes of keen gardeners. Apparently, retired folk are particularly needful of tips. Some 700 do-it-yourselfers pitched up to one of his talks recently, wanting the latest information.

He grins mischievously: "Of course, if you cast your mind back, 60 years ago all gardens were organic. Fertilisers are a comparatively recent development."

A request to view a genuine Chelsea gold medal gets a big laugh.

"Do you know, I have never seen an actual Chelsea gold medal?" he says. "I asked about them once, a few years ago, and was told that they cost about 400 sterling each."

Well, who wants to look like Idi Amin? ▶▶



A FEAST OF FYNBOS: South Africa's exhibit at the Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show in London, drew huge crowds of people keen to see what the perennial winners would conjure up this year. South Africa has now won 32 Gold medals at the prestigious show over the years. The exhibit, a major crowdpleaser and advertisement for South Africa's floral biodiversity, is sponsored by South African National Biodiversity Institute (Sanbi) and is designed by David Davidson and Ray Hudson.




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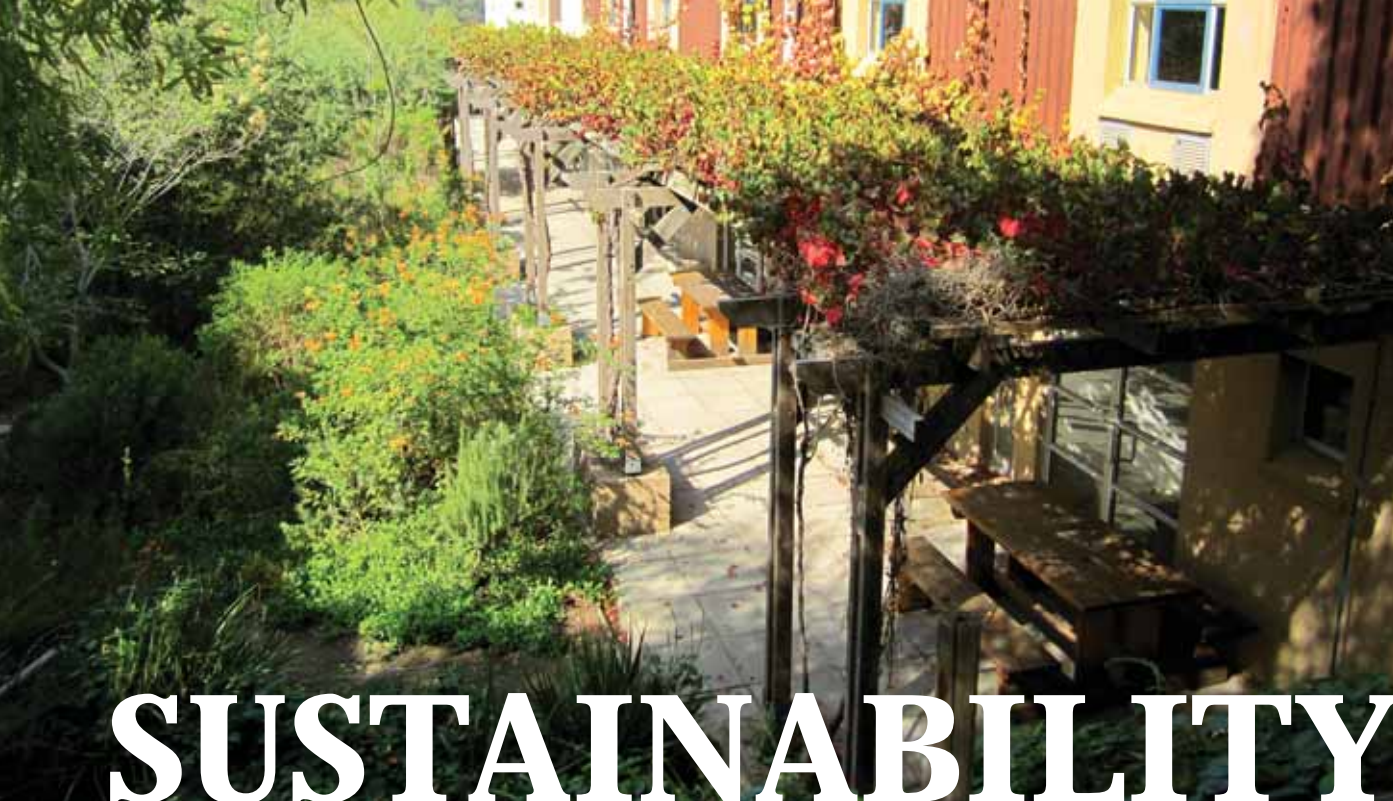
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SUSTAINABILITY

quest for balance

by Tamsin Faragher

Sustainability often crops up these days: whether speaking about the economy or growing their own vegetables, everyone's using it. But what is it and how is it practically applicable to our everyday lives? This is not an easy question to answer as there are multiple interpretations, but as a starting point it seemed sensible to visit the Sustainability Institute in Stellenbosch and put the question to Professor Mark Swilling, the programme co-ordinator for sustainable development in the School of Public Leadership, University of Stellenbosch and academic director of the Sustainability Institute.

The Lynedoch EcoVillage, Mark's home, is located adjacent to the Sustainability Institute within the Stellenbosch vineyards and offers examples of some sustainable design interventions.

The ecologically designed, socially mixed community established in 1999 is structured around two schools and the Sustainability Institute. Lynedoch "offers a unique African setting where creative work and learning can be inspired by the joys and challenges of sustainability in practice" say the brochures, while creating hope and offering an education that enables people to live better lives.

This philosophy is demonstrated on multiple levels from the operational and the institutional, right down to the physical in the community's layout. Concepts of reduce, re-use and recycle permeate the design of the refurbished structures associated with the Sustainability Institute and the new housing structures located in the EcoVillage.

The houses are built according to the guidelines of the governing body with the emphasis on the construction materials as opposed to aesthetics. RDP-subsidised homes sit comfortably adjacent to more affluent architect-designed homes constructed from various materials including clay excavated on-site and reconstituted bricks made offsite. Small plots of approximately 120m² create a compact urban form that maximises the property area improving the urban systems' efficiency. The corollary is that this layout reduces the amount of private garden space available which imbues the public realm with a greater significance in terms of providing recreational and green spaces for the community. Mark

believes this is one of the community-building successes in bringing people from diverse backgrounds together.

The EcoVillage is located on the upper slopes closest to the vineyards with the schools and Sustainability Institute in the heart and vegetable gardens at the bottom, adjacent to the railway line. This spatial structure maximises the natural gradient which assists in the management of sewage and stormwater.

Architecturally, trellises are used to create shaded terraces

“Approximately 60% of household water is re-usable as grey water—perfect to water gardens, wash cars and driveways and flush toilets.**”**

while adding interest to the façade treatment. Granadilla vines camouflage utility structures—and provide fruit, adding to the productive landscape. A protective hedge of waterberry (*Syzgium cordatum*) screens the seedling area from sun and wind, while a white karee hedge (*Rhus pendulina*) screens the parking area.

The technology and methods used on Lynedoch for the day-to-day running are designed for a community scale but can be translated to domestic use. It is based on the philosophy that organic and inorganic materials are part of a circular—sustainable—cycle rather than a linear—wasteful—cycle.

Inorganic material is more difficult to re-use on site and is collected in bins at each house and taken to a depot, from where it is transported from the property to be either recycled or re-used.

Nutrient-rich organic material is collected in the same way, but is composted in worm bins. From here liquid fertilizer and solid compost is generated for the vegetable garden that supplies the restaurant located in the Sustainability Institute thus enforcing the “fork-to-table” philosophy.

Other waste material such as sewage is processed via a biogas digester or the ecological wastewater treatment plant. The biogas digester is an underground chamber designed

to store wastewater while it anaerobically decomposes the waste and directs the methane gas released in this process to households for cooking purposes.

Alternatively, sewage is treated in the ecological wastewater treatment plant. This consists of tanks filled with perforated agricultural pipes wrapped in shade-cloth in which red worms (*biolytix*) live and over which the wastewater is sprayed. The worms digest the matter whilst the remaining fluid is collected at the bottom of the tank and fed into a constructed wetland for filtering and further processing.

The constructed, sealed wetland is approximately 1.5m deep and filled with multiple layers of filter material that include sand, gravel and iron filings. Reeds and arum lilies that feed on the nitrogen in the wastewater are planted into the upper filter layer interspersed with the agricultural pipes laid across the surface that distribute the wastewater into the wetland.

The stormwater collected on-site is channelled into the wetland and, when cleaned to a safe level, is pumped to tanks uphill where it contributes to the water used for irrigation and flushing toilets.

To reap the benefits of sustainability is to understand the inter-connectedness of the world around us and the systems that support our lives and structure the web of life. Some interventions are long term, others short term, but combined, the benefits are endearing.

In a world of dwindling resources we need to make the most of each and every resource. The technologies seen at Lynedoch offer practical, implementable and sustainable alternatives to the wasteful, mainstream technologies on which we currently rely.

Combined with these practical applications, Mark offers unique thinking by suggesting that “there is no sustainability without children” and this is patent as you walk through Lynedoch, where their chatter fills the air.

We can only hope that the sustainability legacy Mark is creating will be passed to these children's children. ▶▶



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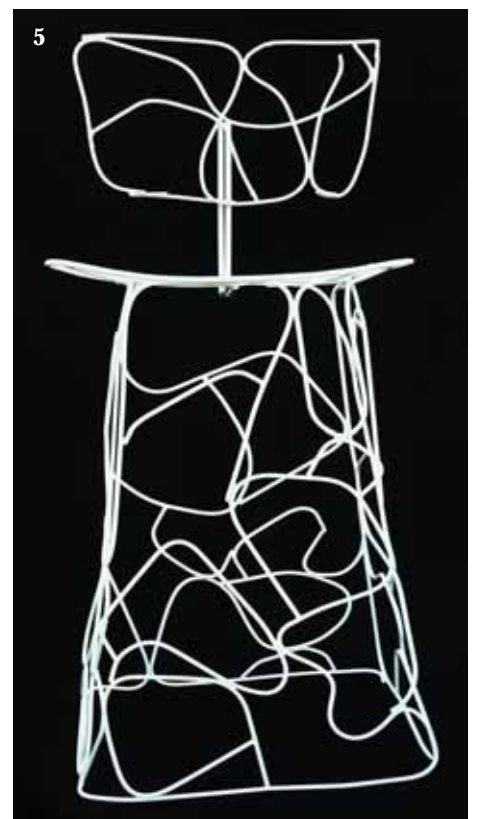
By Willard Musarurwa
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5 – Irene bar stool

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