

Garden of the Year 2010



What is the most remarkable garden you've seen in 2010? GARDENS ILLUSTRATED's editor Juliet Roberts and Christopher Woodward, director of the Garden Museum in London, get together with movers and shakers in the garden world to find out what has most impressed them this year

WINNER

Villa Augustus

NOMINATED BY JULIET ROBERTS
EDITOR, GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

Regular readers will know that I'm a keen veg grower, so when I first heard about the

contemporary organic veg plot at Villa Augustus in the Netherlands I was eager to see it. I was not disappointed; it's undoubtedly one of the most stylish, innovative and dynamic fruit and veg gardens I've come across. Importantly, Villa Augustus is a labour of love run by three friends who took on the derelict property with the aim of making the garden the hub of their business. As co-owner Daan van der Have explains: "when a garden is well done it's a statement of care and when people see personal care, it has a profound effect on them." Today the garden supplies fruit, vegetables and cut flowers for Villa Augustus' restaurant, café, shop and hotel (a beautifully converted water tower). This project has breathed new life into an industrial building and, importantly, the local community. Villa Augustus also stands out because of its integrity of purpose: it celebrates the great pleasures of growing and eating fresh seasonal produce, of bringing people together, and the restorative powers of beautiful gardens made with passion.

OPEN Daily. TEL+31(0)78 6393111 WEBSITE www.villa-augustus.nl



WALTER HERBST



JEFFERSON SMITH



Muse House

NOMINATED BY CHRISTOPHER WOODWARD, CURATOR, THE GARDEN MUSEUM

In 2006 Justin Bere, a visionary architect, bought a cheap backyard plot in North London and slotted in his new home and design studio. Landscape architect Kim Wilkie designed a rooftop woodland: "I wanted to remind myself of growing up in Somerset," says Justin. "But I also wanted to build a local ecology." The design studio looks out on two tiny woods of hawthorn and hazel. Goldfinches flit through the leaves. On the roof, Dusty Gedge planted a meadow. There's even a beehive.

At school Justin was a gardener, and sketched futuristic grass-roofed eco-structures. At Muse House he has dissolved the boundaries between house and garden – and between the city and the countryside. Millions of us want urban buzz *and* rural beauty. I want to live in London, but to wake up with wildflowers pressed against the glass, and go to bed with moonlight shining through woodland. Muse House is a glimpse of what city life could be.

OPEN For details of open days please email bere@bere.co.uk

“I wanted to remind myself of growing up in Somerset. But I also wanted to build a local ecology” JUSTIN BERE



The Garden House

NOMINATED BY CAMILLA SWIFT, GARDEN WRITER

Set in eight acres of a peaceful valley near the village of Buckland Monachorum in Devon, this tranquil, romantic place is several gardens rolled into one. Exquisitely and richly planted, it is a garden for all seasons. Sweeping carpets of spring bulbs are followed in summer by the exuberantly naturalistic planting of the South African, cottage and quarry gardens, and the vivid autumn colours of the acer glade. In the walled garden generous borders provide year-round colour.

When Matt Bishop took over as head gardener from the visionary Keith Wiley seven years ago, he had some big gardening boots to fill. Undaunted, he has upheld The Garden House's tradition of having "only the best plants" in his exhilarating planting, and the garden continues to evolve and flourish. Next year it celebrates its golden jubilee, yet The Garden House remains a magical place where original and innovative gardening continues to inspire and delight. OPEN February to October 2011 – contact garden for details. TEL 01822 854769 WEBSITE www.thegardenhouse.org.uk

CLAY PERRY / PHOTOLIBRARY



Broughton Grange

NOMINATED BY ANDY STURGEON, GARDEN DESIGNER

The walled garden by Tom Stuart-Smith is totally unexpected in the context of this otherwise conventional country house and grounds. But its master stroke is the way it embraces the adjacent Oxfordshire countryside. The rectangular pool and largely geometric layout echoes the field system it looks out on to and the rill and pool reflect a great swathe of sky. The planting is sublime. Sophisticated, repetitious, varied, mounding, harmonious and contrasting and yet somehow not only pretty at all times but unyielding to the ravages of the harsher seasons.

The vertical accents of dark green yews come into their own as autumn draws on and they punctuate the tapestry of brown leaves and darkening seed heads. This is a garden that never seems to have a down time. OPEN For details of National Gardens Scheme open days at Broughton Grange next year see *The Yellow Book 2011*, published in February.

JO WHITWORTH / GAP PHOTOS



Gifford's Hall

NOMINATED BY JERRY HARPUR, GARDEN PHOTOGRAPHER

What do you think of this idea? To discover an extraordinary, moated Tudor house in the village of Wickhambrook,

Suffolk, complete with a neglected six-acre garden set in 25 acres of meadowland, and then to renovate the house for four years before beginning work on the garden for 12. The delightful result is the achievement of Sir David and Lady Diana Rowland. Diana had previously shown little interest in gardening. Enthusiasm for Gifford's changed that. After a two-year course at the English Gardening School, she called in designer George Carter, who framed the lawn with low oak trellis and planted it simply with lavender. Around the house, the Rowlands have created a bold and simple structure of clipped trees and geometric paths. Further away, this gradually gives way to less formal and more experimental treatment. The quiet blending of Tudor shapes and structure with naturalistic planting actually enhances the peace surrounding Gifford's.

OPEN June 19, 2011, 2-5pm. EMAIL dianarowland@giffordshall.com

JERRY HARPUR

