

BOTH PAGES In this month's line-up of top garden designers, photographed in the Chelsea Physic Garden, are, from left, Robert Myers, Dan Pearson, Arabella Lennox-Boyd, Tom Stuart-Smith, Cleve West, Andy Sturgeon, Brita von Schoenaltch, Arne Maynard and Kim Wilkie. Shown overleaf but not pictured here is Todd Longstaffe-Gowan

The House & Garden guide to the LEADING GARDEN DESIGNERS OF TODAY



Clare Foster has scoured the country to identify the UK's most talented



garden designers. Here, for part 2 of 3, she presents L to Z of her findings.

PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW MONTGOMERY

ROBERT MYERS

Robert joined Elizabeth Banks Associates in 1993, and continued the practice under his own name when she retired in 2006. Working with a team of seven, he takes on both public and private clients, and describes the practice as 'large enough to be able to handle complex, long-term projects, but small enough for the work to bear the imprint of a personal approach'. Many of his projects are historical in nature, and the practice has built a reputation on providing innovative, current solutions within this historical context. 'It's more about adding layers to what's already there than pure restoration,' says Robert. As a result, his gardens are timeless and elegant, exploring the relationship between formal and informal, and drawing inspiration from both architecture and the natural world. Designs for private gardens include the dramatic parterre at the Tregothnan Estate in Cornwall and a modern garden in Geneva. Robert has also designed six gardens at the Chelsea Flower Show, and is designing a seventh for this year's show, sponsored by Cancer Research UK. Design trend: 'Combining strong architectural structure with naturalistic planting; blurring the distinctions between interior and exterior, wild and cultivated'. 01544-232035; www.robertmyers-associates.co.uk



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ROBERT MYERS

DAN PEARSON

Internationally renowned for his design and planting excellence, Dan Pearson trained at the RHS Gardens, Wisley, and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. An innate and deep understanding of plants, together with an appreciation of natural landscapes and landforms, shapes all his work. 'Our work focuses on heightening the existing sense of place with the aim of evoking an emotional response,' states Dan. Typically characterised by combinations of understated hard landscaping and subtle, often naturalistic planting, his gardens work with nature rather than trying to dominate it. 'We're committed to creating better environments for wildlife and people

'We try to make as gentle a mark on the land as possible'

DAN PEARSON

and making as gentle a mark on the land as possible,' he says. Perhaps more than any other designer, Dan is as happy working in an urban environment as in the country, and prides himself on being able to adapt to any situation, climate or native flora. Although much of Dan's work involves designing private gardens, one of the projects that he feels best represents his ethos is the Millennium Forest in Japan. This large 200-hectare ecological park near Hokkaido is being landscaped into a series of more intimate spaces, and includes a giant earthwork that echoes the surrounding mountains and a large perennial garden inspired by the natural layers of plants found in the surrounding woodland. Design trend: 'Using gardens and landscape to encourage people to reconnect with the natural world, and to re-engage with bigger environmental issues'. 020-7928 3800; www.danpearsonstudio.com

