Easy Table Settings
Playing with Texture
Wreaths
The Flora Cup was part of the 40th year of the Flora Bratislava exhibition in the Czech Republic.

Senior florists were given one hour to create a wedding table setting for a round table. That gave them little time to create anything elaborate, resulting in these easy, fast table settings.
Your European correspondent Pavol Kassak was there with his camera to share how they completed the task, step by step and as close up as he was able.

What was surprising was the range of styles and techniques by these three competing florists that go from the very pretty and feminine, to rustic and uncontrived. Yet each table setting could be easily adapted to any season, using plant material that is readily available in your own neighborhood.

Design by Mario Maska
Mario Maska gathered a collection of standard stemmed wine glasses into a circular grouping and filled each with water. Gypsophila twigs and thin sisal strands went in first, not only to add the feminine touch but also to act as a grid to hold the other stems. He then built up each glass with foliage.
Finally Mario added a larger flower in some of the outer glasses but he used them quite sparingly so the light airy feeling of the collection was not lost. The key was variety all within scale.
Klaudia Martinkova also went for the glasses filled with flowers approach, again avoiding the use of floral foam.

The tiered trays were pre-made, modeled in their construction on the conventional cake stands beneath.

With the large flowers placed in each glass, Klaudia added the moss around the trays and topped each with the edible fruit. What a wonderful idea for guests who could get hungry while waiting for their meal.

She also placed the decorative elements to one side of the table setting so diners could converse without having to look through them.
Patrik Komar started with an armature made from wires bound in white yarn.

This was mounted around the rim of the large glass bowl. The light, lime green foliage was threaded down into the bowl followed by the light green Lizianthus and Gerberas.

With the circle of tealights in their own glass containers of various sizes, the effect was beautiful.
Away from the competition area at the exhibition Pavol Kassak also went hunting for inspirational ideas for you. You will need many tall glass vases for this one.

This amazing display could easily become a luxurious long dinner table as the guests could see through the tall glass vases to the other side. And wouldn't they feel grand sitting at something like this!
Glass candlesticks hold the single flowers at a lower level and the larger glass dessert bowls hold dozens of Roses.
table settings
You couldn’t get much easier than this but the effect is stunning.

Again glasses are used, subtly decorated with diamante ribbon as is the larger glass vase in the middle. Place them on a silk drape and add Hydrangea, Gypsophila and Callas. Fast, effective and little skill required!
The table above has been left quite plain, with the cutlery, candles and crockery dominating.

The trick has been to add a pavilion overhead to define the space as special, with the globe light to add emphasis.

The background flowery hanging served to not only create a back wall, but also to add height to the space.
Part 2:
To enjoy the first part of this excellent demonstration by talented Canadian florist **Paul Jaras** go to floraldesignmagazine.com/download0519.html or CLICK HERE

**with Paul Jaras**

Photos: Victor Froese  
Words: Victor and Sandra Froese
Paul Jaras, an award winning Canadian florist lives in the interior of British Columbia.. His work may be seen at www.pauljaras.com
The base was a simple length of cut wood with wood twigs mounted on it. A branch of Japanese Fir created an arch between the skewers and a loose bunch of black Midollino sticks created a ‘swoosh’ that mirrored it. Pale Pink Nerines and Dusty Rose Roses were inserted into the water tubes attached to some of the skewers. A question from the audience came up as to ‘how many flowers were appropriate’ to the design; the response was that ‘the memorable designs—the ones you look long at—follow no hard and fast rule about numbers’. Three or four (or more?) can work.
For this design Paul created a wire stand with a central stem and five spread feet and more upper ribs. All this was made from a bundle of wires.

The upper ribs of the wire structure had short uprights that allowed them to be pushed into the bottom node of the Equisetum stems and glued. The Equisetum stems also had wire inside them. Other ribs were curled around glass flower phials.

At this stage the form looked like a candelabra.

Learn how to make these wire stands at floraldesignmagazine.com/wire.html or CLICK HERE
Holding the structure in one hand as for a standing bouquet, Paul threaded Allium, Heather, Clematis, Foxtail, Ming Fern, Desert Yearning (Aerva javancia), and Monstera leaf down to the base.
It was tied with bind wire and trimmed evenly before it was stood in the shallow bowl.

Bear Grass went into the water tubes and some of the Equisetum arms were bent or folded in different directions.
The base was created from two wood blocks, offset, and drilled for the insertion of wood skewers. Two cylinders, one short, one longer, made of rolled gold wire netting were suspended horizontally on the skewers. Spiky decorative balls were glued to two of the skewers.

Water tubes were attached to the other tubes and filled with flowers: Pincushion Protea, Craspedia, and Viburnum. Steel Grass in a water tube was bent back over the design from each end and narrow strips of Phormium (also in water tubes) were draped over the top.
This appeared simple but wasn’t easy!

There were two towers constructed of wood blocks with heavy, straight wires inserted into drilled holes.

Long strips of black foam board were inserted over some of the wires. Paul said this was tricky; it was hard to get the strips straight. The rest of the wires held water tubes into which white Sweet Peas and Scabiosa (without petals) were inserted.

Placement of the two separate towers was offset for effect.
Wire was folded and refolded, then formed into a Bonsai-like shape, rounded at one end with an extended ‘branch’. The bottom ‘stem’ was inserted into a dry Styrofoam block that had been glued into the container with hot pan glue and covered by rocks. Small ‘flowers’ were created out of wire screen squares, folded, pinched, trimmed and spread into flower-like forms, then wired in place. Nerines, Anemones and white Yarrow in water tubes were inserted in the rounded end of the form, and into cut Equisetum stems on the ‘branch’.
The Mad Hatter: “You used to be much more...’muchier.’ You’ve lost your muchness”

It was the 48th Czech mastership in flower arranging, held in Děčín in May 2019. One of the tasks for the junior and senior florists was inspired by Tim Burton’s movie ‘Alice in Wonderland’ using a floral foam based wreath.

The super talented competitors were all ready to prove that unlike Alice, they hadn’t lost their muchness as they harnessed the magical power of the movie and the story.
DESIGNER: Iva Bouzková
The cones were wired and placed so they would create an irregular edging both on the inside and outside of the finished wreath. If you follow the line of one of the wired cones you will realise the end of each is wound around the two larger central circles.

Iva manipulated the wire frame so the floral foam ring would sit securely into it.
DESIGNER:
Jana Lenochová
Alice went down the rabbit hole in a grassy field, hence Jana’s wonderful idea to knot pasture grass and place it in the basing for the wreath. Other lesser used foliage forms were added before the usual floral material graced the top layer.
DESIGNER: Eva Slocíklová
Alice met the red and white Queens playing chess once she was down the rabbit hole. Hence Eva’s beautifully and artfully made crown like structure later to be topped with very lifelike white mushrooms.
She allowed space below to place the commercial floral foam wreath which was decorated with interesting contrasting floral forms.

DESIGNER:
Eva Slociková
DESIGNER:
Monika Vencelová
The Mad Hatter’s tea party is perhaps one of the best known part of the story, and hasn’t Monika captured it superbly. The antique bone china was filled with floral foam and moss, and green plastic candle holder spike glued to the bottom of each piece.

The moss covered wreath was the bed into which she positioned the crockery and the vertically placed flower stems.

Using all the pastel shades created a dream-like ambience to the piece, but Monika wasn’t finished yet!
By mounting the wreath on a moss covered disc layered with wood, Monika added enough depth to replicate the dark and mysterious rabbit hole.

Adding a butterfly to the top made it even more tempting for Alice to venture within.
DESIGNER:
Šárka Pleskačová
Absolem the Caterpillar is a hookah-smoking character, sitting on a mushroom who meets Alice after she has been shrunk to a tiny size.
More stunning wreaths from these fabulous florists in next month’s edition.

With the rest of the wreath set in bold groupings with whimsical forms it sets the scene perfectly for the magical garden in which the scene takes place.

DESIGNER:
Šárka Pleskačová
This style (right) started life as one of a set of lessons on a streaming video by Tricia Legg (more on page 66) to show the readers of floral design magazine how to create several designs using the short stemmed Chrysanthemums from a potted plant.

A year later (left) it was the basis of a workshop with the Waihi Floral Art Club in New Zealand. Being designers with flair, they made it their own as they explored contrasts of texture in floral design.
For the workshop the club members needed to bring:

A cylindrical glass vase

A selection of natural, dried textures all in the same colour range such as cones, sand, pebbles, skeletonised leaves, seeds, pods etc

Eight flower tubes covered with plant material such as sisal, long lasting leaves, etc.

Fresh flowers from their Autumn gardens

Longer lengths of foliage.
These workshop designs are by Waihi Floral Art Club members.
Each designer placed their textured material into piles and they sorted out the best contrast. They were looking for light beside dark, rough beside smooth, and differing forms. Once they were happy they had maximized the differences it was a quick and easy task to build up each layer.

Or was it?

Not really. Sand had to go on the bottom as if placed further up the vase it found every crack and cranny to get itself back to the bottom. Hard surfaced forms like large scallop shells didn’t lay flat while smaller shells blended into layers more successfully.

The trick was to keep each layer obvious for a more dramatic, chic effect. If all the textures became muddled together it could easily look more like a random storage jar for all your foraged treasures.
At this stage one of the designers was happy to stop. (far left) She specifically wanted her piece to become a large doorstop and had collected the textures and natural colours to complement her home’s modern colour scheme.

Others carried on, placing a piece of wire vertically down each flower tube before covering them with either plant material or florists’ tape. The wire was then pushed down through the layers so the flower tubes sat around the rim of the vase securely and vertically.

With water placed in each tube, it was time to add the Autumn flowers, berries and top foliage. These designers have both carried the colour right through each piece for unity. Beautiful!
One of the dilemmas for those of us who do not live near flower markets is how to get flowers quickly and cheaply when a sudden request is received from a friend. Potted Chrysanthemums from a supermarket are the beginning of the answer!
Potted Chrysanthemums are cheap, easy to find and available in quite a few colours.

This video shows you how to take each potted plant and turn it into trendy, unique arrangements with enough buds remaining to create another when they have opened.

The techniques demonstrated don’t use floral foam and are creative and modern.

Tricia Legg used three different potted Chrysanthemums so you see 6 arrangements in total being made.

They are ideal for Autumn designing when there are few flowers to be had but foliage, cones and dried materials are still available.

Buy as a streaming video or a DVD, and not only learn about using short stemmed Chrysanthemums but also discover 6 different ways of arranging flowers without having to use floral foam.

https://vimeo.com/ondemand/chrys
Chrysanthemums

GARDEN FLOWER OF THE MONTH:

PHOTOGRAPHY TRICIA LEGG

This series is dedicated to all the flower arrangers of time gone past whose only source of flowers was from their own gardens.
When you buy Chrysanthemums as cut stems from your flower market you are missing out on a rich and beautiful resource that can only be found in the homegrown plants.

That is the ability to use the buds, half open flowers and fully formed blooms in your arrangements. Even more wonderful, if a branch loaded with the flower buds falls over as the plant grows, the stems will grown back vertically so you have lovely curves that are just perfect in horizontal designs.

Chrysanthemums are an Autumn flowering plant, perfect when all the Summer annuals have started to die down. That is when the Chrysanthemums come into their own in the floral design magazine garden. A hardy perennial, they come up every year as a bushy plant which you will have to stake, or they tend to fall over.
They grow easily from cuttings so if you spot one you like in early Spring, ask for a piece and you will have flowers by the next Autumn. They are also available in garden centres in a wonderful range of colours and forms.

To find the extraordinary specimens the place to start is a Chrysanthemum Show. A great starting point is at nationalchrysanthemumsociety.co.uk There you will find a huge list of affiliated societies and perhaps even one if you live outside the UK. Head to one of those shows and talk to the competing growers for all the tips to produce the huge and perfect specimens you will find there.

In the floral design magazine garden we do very little to ours, and yet they perform year after year. Being perennials they are brilliant as a flower arranging resource when the last of the Summer annuals have finished as they are Autumn flowering.

As a cut flower they are sublime. Many of ours last up to 3 1/2 weeks in our corporate designs particularly if they are in water, rather than floral foam.
For one of our corporate clients we like to bring the seasons and occasionally a little glimpse of the floral design magazine garden into their offices. Hence this style in their reception area this week.
A box with water filled jars inside, the old stems and fluffy bits off the Elegia for the horizontals, Honesty leaves tinged red from the colder weather with Pittosporum, Aspidistra and Iris Japonica foliage as the base.

Rose hips, Zinnias and Chrysanthemums placed as if they were growing was all it took and the receptionists loved it so much they took photos to show their Mums. Very appropriate.
But wait: there's more...

Because great floral design never dates

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