THE FLORAL CRAFTS OF INDIA

TOP 10 WORLD FLOWER SHOWS

FLOWERS FOR A CHURCH
CONTENTS

FLORAL DESIGN MAGAZINE MARCH 2020

3
MONUMENTS
Church decorations with Rose hips, stems and a few key flowers.

13
IT’S SHOW TIME
Our top 10 international flower shows and why you should visit them.

34
INSPIRED BY INDIA
The ancient floral crafts of India and how they are created.

50
HYDRANGEAS PART 2
Part two of this feature to introduce you to dried floret ideas.

55
BELLADONNA AMARYLLIS
A late Summer bulb worth growing in your garden or container

32
FROM THE ARCHIVES
A free magazine for you from 2016 featuring The World Cup for Floristry.

FREE
The Church of St Mary of the Snows is a Baroque church, built during the 18th century, with a wonderful entrance. Decorated for the flower festival in Olomouc in the Czech Republic, the side altars, side of the benches, and main gate were emblazoned with Roses, Rose hips and white flowers.
The arrangements were in the traditional English style and the white accents were a subtle nod to the name of the church. The other clever design decision was the use of dried bracken fern in the bases. This is a perfect match for the magnificent gilded backgrounds.
A novel starting mechanic for often difficult pew ends, the thick rope had Lambs' Ear glued along the bottom curve. The single Rose could have been wrapped in Sphagnum Moss or placed in a hidden glass water file.
It is amazing how gifted florists can take the basic minimum amount of purchased plant material, in this case three Roses, and with foraged materials add them into an arrangement worthy of a place in such a grand church. Rose hips, dried fern and seed heads have never looked so good!
And nothing was wasted. The Rose stems, twigs and Rose hips still on their branches were bundled together to make these wonderful garlands and swags along the steps and beneath the columns at the entrance to the church.

Against the grey stone, they add cheerfulness and an invitation to walk up the steps and into the church. Who knew that flora could be so eloquent at offering a silent invitation to worship?
As the visitors approached the top of the church a grand finale awaited. The white flowers tumbled down the steps on to the floor and to the visitors' feet for the full dramatic effect. Behind sat the long box set with the same plant material that dominated the other arrangements, decorating the white candles and encouraging the viewer to keep looking upward past the statues and into the high ceiling above.
It’s SHOW TIME

TOP 10 WORLD SHOWS TO ADD TO YOUR BUCKET LIST
The floral design team have loved attending these shows and so these are our pick for the best in the world from our experience so far. They are worth saving for!
Even if you only go to this flower show once in your lifetime it is well worth the effort. Alden Beiesen is a small castle in Belgium which each year is overrun with 200 top floral designers from 20 countries. Using well over 150,000 flowers, the designers are given rooms, the dungeons, the church or all the outdoor spaces, (including the moat) in the castle area to display their exhibition pieces.

Workshops, demonstrations, trade stands, floral fashion parades, and even a floral hat competition, will keep you in awe. Running this year from 25th to 28th September, the website for all the information is https://en.fleuramour.be/ or CLICK HERE.
What a shame you have just missed the Philadelphia Flower Show this year as it always runs around late February and the first week of March. Exact dates for 2021 will be available on their website, https://theflowershow.com as soon as they have recovered from this one. It’s worth the wait!

It’s our #2 because it can be snowing outside, the train station is underneath and once inside the huge covered building it is Spring. The venue is so big trucks are able to get inside to help create the exhibits. As well as extremely large floral courts, there are also floral art sections, flower miniatures, pressed flower art, demonstrations, workshops, trade stands, perhaps the most varied ways to enjoy flowers we have ever seen.
It’s LONDON, ENGLAND.
There is still time for this one, the **RHS Chelsea Flower Show** is being held in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea from 19 - 23 May 2020. The easiest way to get there is by using public transport, and there is a shuttle bus from Victoria Station.

World famous in particular for it’s impressive show gardens in small outside plots by leading landscape gardeners, it’s the Great Pavilion marquee you may be more interested in, as that is where the floral design exhibits are.

Floristry competitions, demonstrations, floral art exhibition pieces and the latest new flowers from the nurseries are all found there.

Only 157,000 visitors can attend each year because that is maximum capacity for the grounds so there are no gate sales and it pays to get your tickets online and early as they do sell out.

[www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/](http://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/) or **CLICK HERE**
It's

EAST MOLESEY

ENGLAND

floral design 21
The RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival is held in the grounds of Hampton Court Palace in East Molesey, Surrey. from July 7th to the 12th 2020. The easiest way to get there is by road or by rail.

It is fast outshining the Chelsea Flower Show, perhaps because of easier access, and seems to have been subtly renamed from its previous common usage title of RHS Hampton Court Flower Show.

Expect to see the emphasis on show gardens, but the Floral Marquee is still there. This is where you will find the talented floral designers either exhibiting show pieces or competing for the awards.

Being set in the palace grounds there is also an opportunity, weather permitting, for picnicking and browsing through the new offerings of plants and flowers in the marquee and trade stands.
It’s TORONTO CANADA

Running with the National Home Show, Canada Blooms takes place March 13th-22nd, 2020, (that’s next weekend!!!). Perhaps next year?) at the Enercare Centre at Exhibition Place in Toronto. All undercover, the best landscape, floral art and floristry designers all come together under one roof. The result is well worth a visit. More at https://canadablooms.com/.

Twenty or more flower arrangers will be competing as you watch, for the top awards, plus expect floral workshops, and stunning exhibition pieces by Ontario’s best floral artists.
It's MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

#6
The Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, www.melbflowershow.com.au has become an institution over the years. Here is where the flower buying public are introduced to the latest in floral fashion and also the avant garde. Being held in 2020 from 25th - 29th March (you can still make that flight) at the Royal Exhibition buildings and Carlton Gardens it is much smaller in area than the others featured but it is also packed full of interesting floral things. The floral design competitions, demonstrations, the window display contests for florists, the section for floral artists and of course the fashion designers inventing new ways to use plant material, will all inspire you.

Free trams make it easy to get there as it is in the centre of the city.
It's Katowice
Poland

Designer: Tamas Endre Hezoffy
Not so much a flower or garden show but more of a showcase for the world’s best talent in floristry.

The **Europa Cup** is held every 4 years in a different country, being from the 5th -7th June 2020. It is only open to contestants who have been deemed the best in their country so you can imagine the level of skill and artistry you will see.


As well as being able to watch the competitions so you can see how each piece is constructed you will also be able to attend floral theatres and shows demonstrating the skills of past winners. This is where you will see the latest trends, techniques and materials used by these exceptional florists.
The Harrogate Spring Flower Show was a very pleasant surprise when we visited. Floral art, using themes is the main feature of the floral marquee. A much smaller show than the others, this doesn’t take away from the skill and imagination of the very talented flower arrangers with designs that are incredibly beautiful in the English style.

In the same area of the show you will be blown away by the Chrysanthemum and Dahlia growers competitions, just the colour and size of these flowers is a sight to behold and the growers are happy to talk about them.
Arriving by car, there is plenty of parking in this country styled show. Held from 23rd - 26th April 2020, find out all the details at https://www.flowershow.org.uk.
It's Hong Kong

Both the Singapore Garden Festival and Hong Kong Flower Expo have been cancelled for 2020 but they will be back!

Both are in exciting Asian cities that are worth visiting even without the festivals. The shows both include a very Eastern way of arranging flowers. The Singapore Event includes a section for international designers as well as wonderful garden displays while in Hong Kong expect floral arrangements and gorgeous landscape displays.
It's SINGAPORE
SINGAPORE

https://www.singaporegardenfestival.com
From the Archives

Each edition for our celebration year, will also feature an article from our archives.

Each will be taken from a past edition of floral design magazine, and this time you can download this edition free.

In this sixth in the series enjoy the floral design magazine from 2016...

with a World Cup Special

This special edition includes an extensive coverage of the World cup contestants and therefore you get to see all the methods and techniques they used.

Read it at www.floraldesignmagazine.com/0516/May2016 or click here.

Password is FD0516
Username is constructions
CRAMMED FULL
OF REMARKABLE
HOT NEW
CONSTRUCTION METHODS
Indian flower arranging clubs were the recent hosts for the World Association of Floral Artists four yearly international gathering. Hundreds of passionate flower arrangers from all the world gathered to compete, learn and enjoy friendships through a commonly enjoyed hobby.

A beautiful extra exhibition at the event showcased the crafts of India which use or copy plant material.
Each craft had a matching example and a few had workshops available to learn more. This opened up a mountain of ideas to develop, research and experiment with for many, when they returned home. You too now have the same opportunity as we feature some of the crafts presented and take you on a virtual journey through India’s ancient and decorative use of flowers and foliage.
Saccharum munja is a wild grass common in India and Pakistan. Commonly called Munja grass or sweet cane it is the source for Sarkanda basketry.

Harvested annually in the winter months it is then dried and bundled for later use. The stems are used to make furniture, its outer skin to thatch roofs. Its top half is coiled for baskets, while its feathery leaf is processed into sturdy ropes.

It looks so much like Pampas Grass although it is no relation but perhaps it is the first of your experiments to introduce a brand new trend to the flower world?
Weaving of baskets in India is an art as ancient as the making of pottery. The early nomadic tribes of the region wove reeds together to prepare baskets.

Later, different materials and cultures developed a variety of basketry for domestic use, as well as for ritual purposes. They developed special patterns based on local traditions and techniques.

These days light-weight sturdy furniture made from Munja is used all over India and exported worldwide. The woven patterns may be your source of inspiration to try table mats or smaller coasters for a start.
Corchorus capsularis is more commonly known as Jute. It is an annual, which grows two or more metres in height. Grown mainly in Bangladesh and India, it has also spread across much of tropical Africa and is now cultivated in the Amazon region as well.

The fibre emerges after the plant is soaked in water and is either spun or plaited to make very long lengths. Then it is often dyed before being spiraled or looped with stitches holding the form in place.

You may not be able to grow jute in your region but the same techniques are possible with New Zealand Flax or any very fibrous leaf. There is very little experimentation with this technique in India, so here is your opportunity. You may become a world leader in new techniques using jute!
Watch the techniques on these two free YouTube videos, above or go to
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwUCdGUUHHQ
and
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bz24i1zx_Q8
Sholapith or shola pith is a dried milky-white spongy plant matter from Aeschynomene aspera. It grows wild in waterlogged swamps. The stem is very light, floats in water and is often known as Ambatch wood or Indian cork. It can be cut, pressed and shaped into many forms.

An interesting fact: This is what pith helmets are made of and hence they were the essential sun hat of the English colonists in India and Africa in the 18th Century.

Sholapith is similar in form to man-made polystyrene foam so what an amazing eco friendly replacement for that from Nature. It is more malleable and flexible and was originally only used for religious icons and tributes. These days crafts made from it are in many Indian markets but you could be easily fooled into thinking the objects are made of paper.
You won't believe how the Indian people turn the stem into a sheet of pith as thin as veneer. If you want to try it, you are going to need a very sharp machete! It is all explained in full on this free streaming video.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmqSNAJAkcY
Eulaliopsis binata is commonly known as Sabai Grass. It is a perennial grass in West Bengal and Orissa where it is cultivated on marginal uplands as a source of raw materials. It also grows in Asian countries like China, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Philippines.

It is used to weave fabulous ornaments, baskets and bags. Fortunately these are becoming very fashionable and entrepreneurs are actively working with poorer Indian tribes to revive these skills to improve their socio-economic situation.

If you are interested, this website link which you can click on if you are on the Internet, tells the full story. It may even inspire you to have a go.: www.wbkvib.org.in/index.php/village-industries-m/cluster-development-m/480-sabai-grass-weaving-bandwan
It seems reasonable to suggest that you will have grasses in your region that would also be able to be used. This free video shows you the bundling technique used, and all you need as an implement is a very large eyed needle. The grass is dried before it is used to stop shrinkage after the spiraling process. 
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhcS5Y4HNvk
Limonia acidissima (Kaitha Tree, Wood Apple, Elephant Apple) is a large tree growing to 9 metres tall. The gum is the chief ingredient for making paint for Pattachitra painting. Different pigments are created with this base by adding available raw materials such as conch shells ground up to make white.

A fine open weave cotton cloth is coated with white stone powder and gum made out of tamarind seeds (Tamarindus indica). This makes the canvas ready to accept the paint.

Pattachitra is religious art with themes around the deities and their stories. There are set rules and restrictions as a result and once a painting is finished, the canvas is held over a charcoal fire and lacquer is applied to the surface.
This free video doesn’t show you how to make the paint from the gums but it is an interesting insight into how these paintings are created.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFp-viWDjho
Indian style flower lacing or threading is seen all over the world when you are close to an Indian temple as they are usually used as offerings to the deities. While there are Roses and other flowers, nothing dominates the market like orange and yellow Marigolds, which are widely used for religious rituals. The Marigold trade is huge. Therefore the growing of Marigolds and other flowers is just as big. Enjoy this free video which takes you to the Marigold farms. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RtxYHhFyG84
You may have to watch this free video on slow motion as these garland makers are so quick to attach the flowers to raffia or thread them with a needle.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCeOcoT6Nxw
You may also be wondering about those beautiful wooden blocks in the background of these pages. They obviously aren’t floral design but the patterns carved into these blocks do show petals and flower forms have been their inspiration.

These wood blocks have been used for centuries to print patterns on textiles. The textile is spread out flat, the block dipped in dye and then pressed onto the textile surface by hand.
To follow the process of making a block from teak, as they do in India, and then creating the printed fabric, click on the link. The accuracy, craftsmanship and time involved is awe inspiring!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TstBPOvYSTII
THE GLORY OF HYDRANGEA

Part Two
It’s been 6 weeks and the beautiful fresh Hydrangeas featured in last month’s edition of floral design (click here if you didn’t get it) have transformed into these equally lovely dried florets.

But what to do with them?

The colours are still bright and those delightful curls are so incredibly interesting there must be an end use, don’t you think?

So join us as we tumble down the rabbit hole checking out the latest, the trendiest and the downright wonderful with a bunch of dried hydrangeas clutched tightly in our hand.

First stop? Hand made paper with the Hydrangea florets embedded in the top layer....
Hand made paper with embedded Hydrangea florets
How much time have you got? Why? Because there is the easy and quick way to make paper and the longer more involved slow way. Think about the choice of being rather like a takeaway meal versus a slow cooked home made one! Both require a small paper making frame called a deckle which is easy to find online or in craft shops.

The quick method!

For this you will need old newspaper, wall paper, or similar which you mash up. The full method is easily explained below on the short video or if you prefer click here for the free you tube video link at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RR_218EtLJU&feature=youtu.be

Add the dry Hydrangea florets into the mashed up mix before you screen it and you have your permanent, beautiful paper.
Hand made paper with embedded Hydrangea florets

The authentic (slow) method!

Are you ready to go gathering plant material? You are looking for fibrous long leaves and grasses such as corn, Iris or Lily leaves, Yucca, cotton, etc. If you can’t tear the leaf easily across the grain it will be a good choice. What ever is readily available is best as you are going to need about a pound (half a kilo,) weighed after drying, if you want to make about 10 -15 A4 sheets of paper.
Each type of fibre will give you a different colour and texture and that’s before you embed the Hydrangea florets in the top layer. This, of course, the buzz for a floral designer. You will be making unique, beautiful little works of art just waiting to be transformed into book and writing pad covers, framed for wall art, or run through your home printer to be printed with inspiring messages on them.
2 Wreath decorated with Hydrangea florets
The thing about creating a wreath with dried flowers and leaves is the colour. They usually dry over time into a range of golden browns and creams..... which can become a little boring.

And hence the necessity to add colourful, dried Hydrangeas! As you gather all the dried plant material in contrasting forms and textures to keep your wreath interesting, add a pop of colour with this wonderful flower head and your creation will be instantly transformed!

Wreath rings come in many shapes and sizes commercially and you can also make your own base using vine or bundles of flora wrapped with yarn, string or nylon fishing line.

Use hot glue to attach all your dried plant materials and it’s as easy as that! If you would love more creative wreath making techniques CLICK HERE to pop over to the February 2015 editon of floral design, available with free access to subscribers only, using the username 0215Feb and password circles. Enjoy!
Coaster Art with Hydrangea Florets

floral design 59
These tiny coasters have been used constantly over the last few years so having these wonderful Hydrangeas available meant a great chance to reinvigorate them in some handsome new colours.

The originals were part of an instructional streaming video “Tiny Art Using Flowers” made for floraldesignmagazine.com, (see page 63 for details) and this one just as much fun to refurbish as it was to make originally.

A coaster waiting to be repurposed, a sketch of a person on plain paper to the appropriate size, spray glue and a few dried purple Hydrangea leaves and the Madame had a new ball gown full of wonderful puffs and swirls. Have a go... it’s easy!
Remodeling the guest bathroom at the Bed and Breakfast (which is another division of floraldesignmagazine.com) a few arty touches with flowers was an essential prerequisite.

The result was this, a few Spring Plum Blossoms embedded in resin on either side of the re-purposed bathroom cabinet.

It took a bit of courage to bore ‘sink holes’ (one hopes you get the pun) also known as depressions, into the restored wooden top after so many hours of sanding off old varnish, but when art and craft calls, one has to be brave!

Out came the shovel drill bit, the small packet of resin and the flowers which had been pressed in Silica gel for about a month. Imagine how much more colourful the result would have been if Hydrangeas were in season then.

With the hollow drilled, and painted black for a greater contrast the flowers were placed in. The resin is mixed in two parts so following the instructions on the packet is essential. It was poured into the top of the hollow so the petals were covered completely and 24 hours later it was dry, hard and very durable.
With the wonderful range of Hydrangea colours showcased in part 1 of this feature (available to download here), this technique using pressed Hydrangeas could be used on the edges of chopping boards as gifts, on driftwood pieces for floral art competitions, on sign boards outside flower shops, as durable decoration for borders for blackboards...endless possibilities!
Tiny Art Pieces using plant material

START WITH small canvas squares or recycled coasters
FINISH WITH your own exquisite and unique floral art pieces

8 ideas styles methods

ORDER TO STREAM AT floraldesignmagazine.com/floralcraftvideos.html
This series is dedicated to all the flower arrangers of time gone past whose only source of flowers was from their own gardens.

Belladonna Lily, Naked Ladies, Jersey Lilies a.k.a Belladonna Amaryllis is one of those plants you forget is there until suddenly in very late Summer, early Autumn the massive stems emerge from the huge bulbs buried underground. Within days the numerous buds on each stem open to reveal not only the glorious individual flowers but also a heady perfume.

It is perfect timing as the floral design magazine garden is in full drought conditions at the moment with no rain for 3 months leaving many plants suffering. Being in a temperate climate, they are used to a sprinkling of rain throughout the Summer months but these beauties don’t care. Up they have come, dominating the garden, big and blousey and beautiful.
Belladona Amaryllis
They look equally beautiful in containers with a contrasting plant around the base, and so they can be brought inside if you experience harsh winters. A wild flower in South Africa, they enjoy long hot Summers so that is obviously why these are looking so fabulous this year.

Those long stems are just begging to be picked as the start of a bouquet or to feature in a modern design but be aware that each bulb only sends up one stem so it may pay to wait a few years while they multiply (or buy lots of bulbs) if you want them in a vase and in your garden at the same time.
The stems are so easy to use. In this corporate design, three stems were grouped together in a black vase filled with water. The Pittosporum, Leucodendron and Aralia stems were enough to hold the Strelitzia leaves in place without the need for floral foam and it traveled well.

By picking stems with some buds still to open maintenance of the arrangement at the reception desk is as simple as snipping off any aging blooms as new buds open to take their place.
2020 NEW DECADE NEW OPPORTUNITIES

SUCCESSFUL DESIGN BLUEPRINTS EVERY MONTH

CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE TODAY TO FLORAL DESIGN MAGAZINE

Includes
- ad-free reading
- step by step instructions from accomplished florists
- highlighting the emerging floral fashion trends
- insights and techniques from around the world

www.floraldesignmagazine.com/subscribe.html