





This and previous page: Photography: Alister Thorpe

While kicking off 2025, Atelier Vierkant finds itself in a frontrunning position in the field of inventing and reinventing the ancient art of pottery making. As sole independent family-owned ceramic production in Belgium, we are positioned at an intersection of product development, architecture, interior and landscape design. In February, together with cherished partners, we open our first exhibition space in Cape Town, Ballotina, and we are excited to bring our work to the South African design community as an open invitation to collaborate on future projects. In April, our second production unit close to Brussels will open its doors; our commitment to invest in advanced production facilities remains a top priority. Manual production with assistance of modern mechanical support allows us to generate a unique product. At the yearly design fair in Milan, Salone del Mobile, we will reveal an ‘animistic’ collection of vessels, shapes and volumes, in a setting created under the guidance of architect Dieter Van der Velpen.

In this review, we report from the 60th Venice Biennale where Belgian artist Arne Quinze presented his exhibition ‘Are we the Aliens’, inviting the spectators to reflect on the transformative potential of humanity’s reconnection with the natural world. The exhibition presents the artist’s creativity and imagination in a variety of materials, such as glass, metal, paint and clay. Together with a team of Atelier Vierkant craftsmen, Quinze spent two months sculpting in clay, ‘not only trying to get the shapes right but also getting familiar with the material’. The result was an installation set in the courtyard of a renaissance church complex, campo San Francesco della Vigna in Venice.

We also dive into the microclimate around lake Annecy, the promontory of the French Alps, where Arnaud Charvin has been exploring the work of his father, François, and pursuing the introduction of new colourful furniture like the ones of Paola Lenti into traditional settings. Keen to achieve a homogenous result, Charvin challenged his partners to collaborate and to match colours and textures to an exquisite result. With this layout and level of presentation, the Pépinière has become a ‘point incontournable’ in the world of outdoor furniture.

Atelier Vierkant often goes on-site with a photographer to document the garden projects. What happens however if the photographer is asked to shoot his own garden? London-based garden photographer Alister Thorpe has a keen eye for detail and a deep appreciation of nature. Designed by landscape architect Stefano Marinaz, Thorpe’s garden is conceived as a captivating woodland experience, featuring diverse plant life with a mix of perennials, annuals, self-seeding and evergreen plants. A passionate plantsman himself, this garden has become a daily sanctuary where every element draws attention and begs to be photographed. In this review, we present details of the garden in various seasons, from spring to summer, autumn to winter, illustrating how the outdoors can be experienced differently depending on the season and how additional clay works can be enjoyed throughout the year.

Furthermore, we make a stop at Lake Maggiore where designer Tanja Casparis has gone back to her roots. As a child, Casparis spent summer vacations with her family at the lakeshore and this is where she recently chose to build a tiny holiday home in the attic of an old cheese factory. For more than 20 years, Tanja was part of the team at a highly esteemed landscape firm, and since a couple of years, she has been working independently, now setting her own course as a designer. The house and its surroundings in Ticino allow her to find new inspirations, like the constant changes of light running off the mountains and into the lake, a source of creativity, ensuring the feeling of regeneration each time she arrives there.

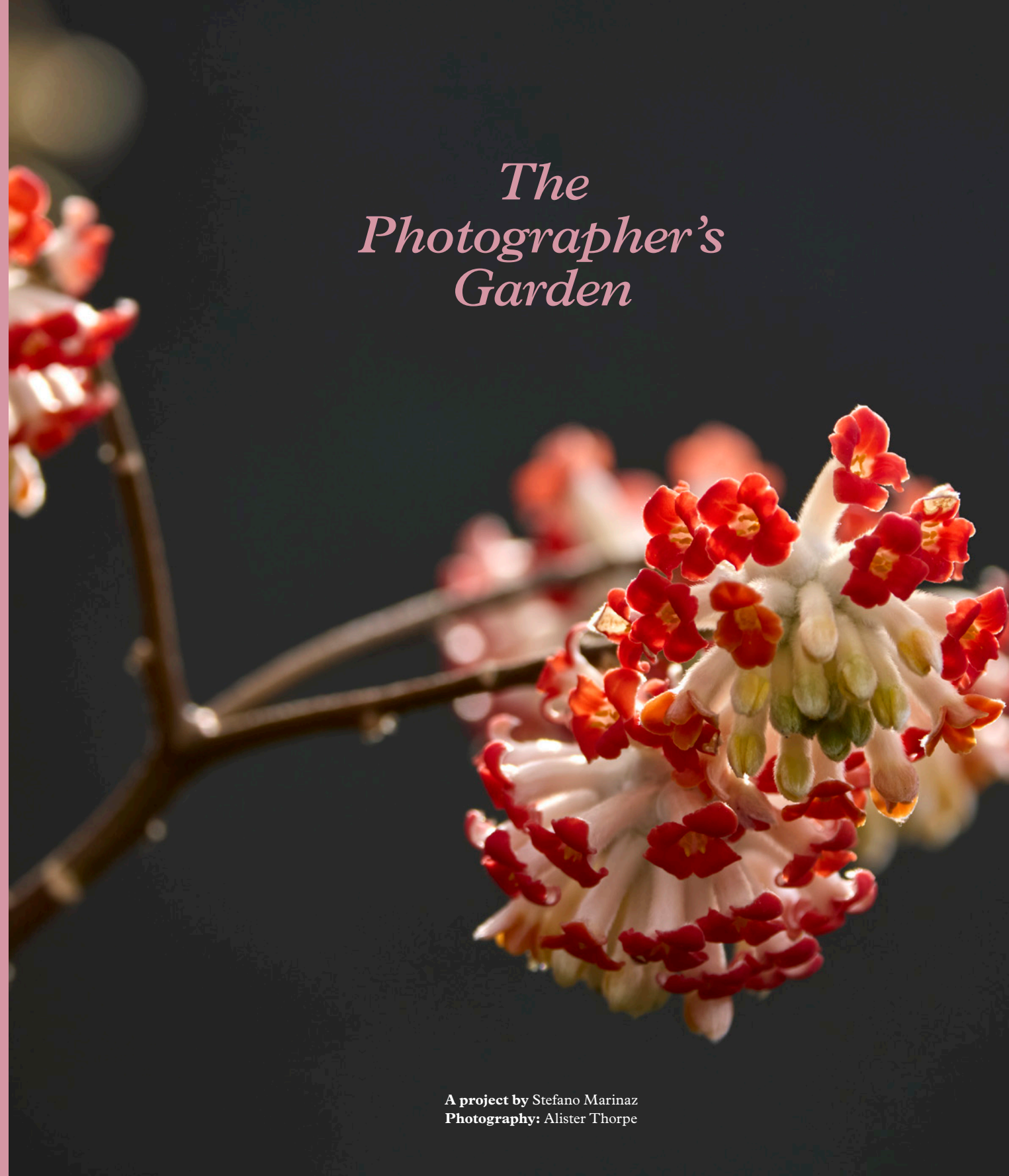
At the end of his poem *Le Voyage*, dedicated to Maxime du Camp, French poet Charles Baudelaire throws himself on the brink of eternity to find ‘du nouveau’. With the new year ahead, Atelier Vierkant also makes resolutions. We reach out to the design community, partners and colleagues to pursue new designs with innovative approaches and interpretations, and to find new ways to handle old challenges. In Northern Italy, at the Loggia dei Mercanti, the south wing of the Cathedral of Ferrara, the sculptor started with the classical renaissance Ionic column, then got bored and launched infinite variations, to end up with a new interpretation and invention of the column. That same eternal search for newness drives us too in our daily wonderings about beauty.

Nestled in the heart of West London, amidst the city's hustle and bustle, lies The Photographer's Garden—a tranquil oasis beneath the towering canopies of old London Plane trees. This natural canopy creates a woodland habitat within the city, providing the perfect escape and opportunity for creativity. The garden's serene environment, with dappled sunlight filtering through the leaves, invites you to pause, appreciate the details captured by the light, and immerse yourself in nature's beauty. Our client, Alister, who is also our photographer, has a keen eye for detail and a deep appreciation for nature. He envisioned an atmospheric garden with a naturalistic feel and a sense of privacy. His desired for us to create a unified design that harmonised all aspects of the garden. The result is a captivating woodland experience, featuring diverse plant life and a secluded seating and dining area. The garden is designed as a walk-through woodland experience, with intriguing plant life and sight-lines that reveal hidden corners, playful elements along the path and sculptural elements within the planting. It offers a tasteful and engaging environment that invites exploration and relaxation.

The planting scheme includes a mix of perennials, annuals, biennials, self-seeders, and evergreen plants, creating a successional display that changes with the seasons. The planting is like a symphony, orchestrating a dynamic and ever-evolving display of colours and textures. It has been designed to mimic natural woodland habitats, with careful consideration given to the establishment of plant communities. Our aim is to create plant palettes that grow harmoniously together, ensuring a balanced and thriving garden. This approach ensures that the plants complement rather than compete with each other. Additionally, the planting is designed to create a haven for wildlife, providing habitats for animals, birds, and invertebrates. Alister, also passionate plantsman, has played an active role in the garden's establishment and ongoing maintenance, ensuring its success. The garden has become his daily sanctuary, where every element draws attention and begs to be photographed. It is not just a space to enjoy but also an ever-evolving masterpiece, captured through the lens of the photographer who pours his care into it. The garden provides endless inspiration in the ever-changing play of light and shadow, the vibrant seasonal colours, and the intricate textures of its lush vegetation.

The Photographer's Garden is a testament to the harmonious blend of nature, artistry, and thoughtful design, offering endless opportunities for enjoyment and inspiration. It is a place where one can sit and dine outdoors, explore winding pathways, and experience a piece of nature, managed organically to encourage wildlife in all its forms. This garden is a living, breathing canvas, reflecting the dedication and vision of its creators. It stands as a sanctuary in the city, inviting and enchanting all who step into it.

## *The Photographer's Garden*





February



April



May



June



July



August



September



October

# A tapestry of urban greenery

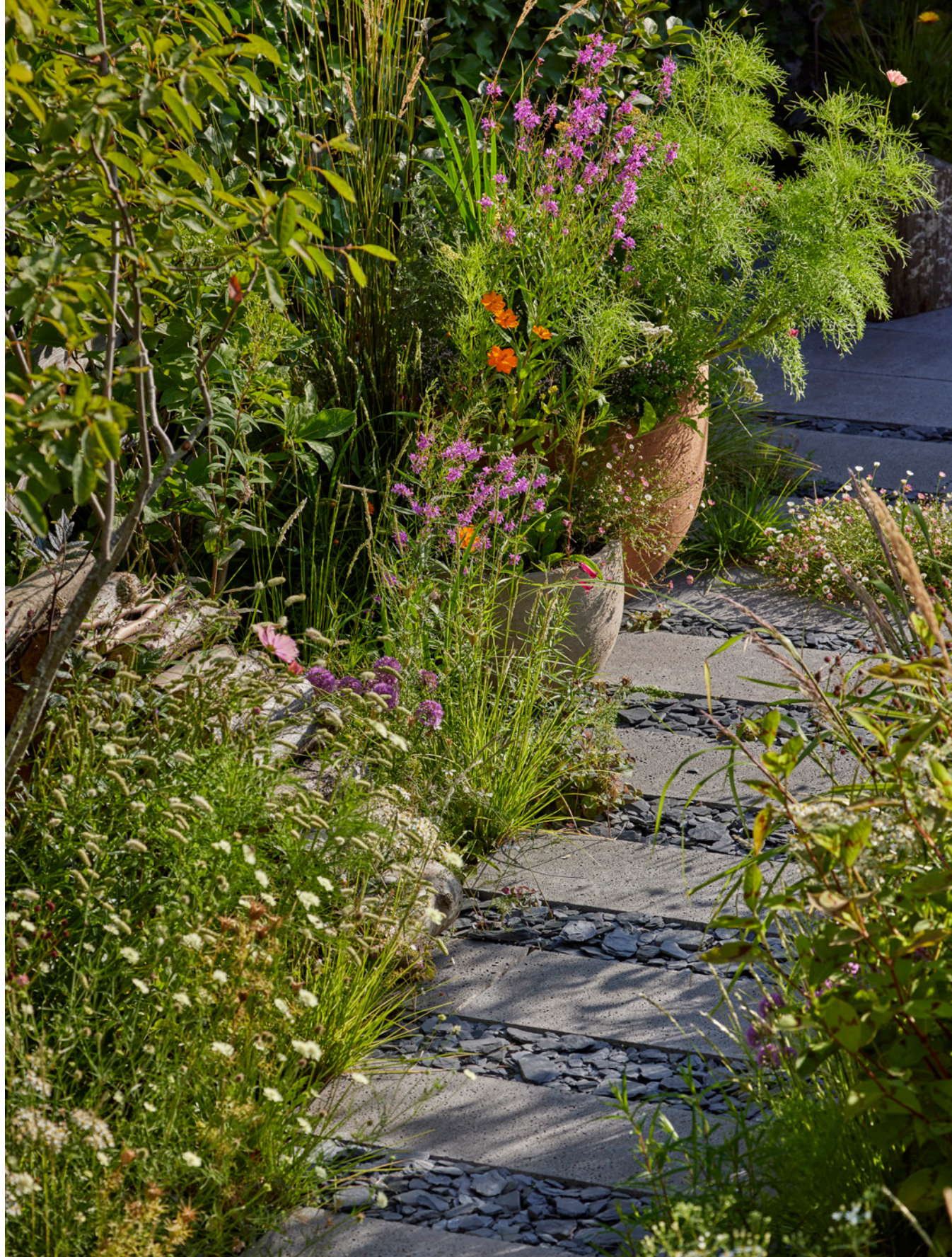
Nestled on an east-facing plot, this sun-soaked haven measures approximately 20 x 6 meters. Bounded by the rear facade of the house on one side and a sleek black timber fence on the remaining three, this space is a harmonious blend of nature and design. As you step in, you'll notice the concrete paving creating a terraced expanse near the house, tapering into a winding path with spaced paving units and low creepers weaving between. This leads to a tranquil seating area at the far end, perfect for basking in the late afternoon sun. Closer to the house, a welcoming arrangement of tables, chairs, and a bench sets the stage for delightful breakfasts in the morning light.

A central play area takes center stage, embraced by lush, naturalistic plantings that offer a canvas for kids to set up tents and enjoy playful moments with friends during warm months. Amidst this verdant tapestry, three multistem *Amelanchier lamarckii* trees stand tall, casting their graceful presence. Softening the perimeter, ivy graces one side while *Akebia* and *Hydrangea petiolaris* lend their charm on the other. A captivating water feature positioned in the garden's initial third serves as both a focal point and a wildlife oasis, graced by miniature water lilies. Meandering through the soft plantings are log waves that guide the path from the house to the garden shed.

The paving units, each measuring 1m by 30cm, create a structured pathway, complemented by Belgium terracotta pots scattered throughout the garden. These pots mirror the lush planting beds, housing an array of captivating flora. The diverse plant community offers year-round interest, featuring the intriguing patterns of *Persicaria filiformis*, the fragrant charm of *Mentha requienii*, the cotton-floss flowers of *Sanguisorba 'Burr Blanc'*, the elegance of *Nigella damascena*, and the enchanting *Lunaria annua 'Chedglow'*.

Ornamental grasses play their role too, with *Sesleria autumnalis 'Greenlee Hybrid'* as a low filler, *Schizachyrium 'Ha Ha Tonka'* providing a short accent with its hairy blue-hued leaves, and the majestic *Calamagrostis 'Karl Foster'* as a taller accent that graces the garden from summer through winter. In this urban sanctuary, nature and design converge, creating a harmonious space that thrives throughout the seasons, offering a haven of relaxation, play, and natural beauty.

**A project by**  
Stefano Marinaz  
**Photography:**  
Alister Thorpe







# The garden with a vibe

Situated near the picturesque Vondelpark in Amsterdam, The Garden with a Vibe is nestled in a neighbourhood known for its lush, leafy surroundings and historic homes. This charming setting provided the perfect backdrop for our garden design. The garden benefits from its proximity to the park's large, mature trees, which create a woodland edge and dappled shade environment. To complement these towering trees, we introduced twelve multi-stem trees in the rear garden and five in the front, enhancing the woodland atmosphere and making the garden feel like a natural extension of the park. The addition of these trees also helps harmonise the scale of the park's trees with that of the garden, creating a seamless connection. A notable tree added to the garden is the *Vitex agnus-castus*, known for its upright, fragrant flowers that bloom in autumn. This tree is not only visually striking but also an excellent choice for attracting pollinators.

We also designed extensive planting borders along the property edge and added climbers to the boundary walls. This approach disguises the property's boundaries and creates an illusion of an expansive space. As a result, the end of the property becomes less distinct, making the garden feel larger and more inviting. To maximise greenery and create a more permeable landscape, we strategically broke up the concrete pavers in the middle section of the garden. By bringing the planting closer to the house and positioning the lounge and dining areas further away, we enhanced the immersive natural experience. This arrangement provides stunning views of the garden from inside the house, which is especially valuable during the colder months when outdoor activities are limited but you still wish to enjoy the garden. Instead of looking out at furniture, residents can enjoy the vibrant planting year-round. Additionally, placing the outdoor living areas further from the house ensures that you are completely surrounded by nature when using the garden. The planting scheme is anchored by a matrix base layer of *Sesleria 'Greenlee Hybrid'*, *Sesleria heufleriana*, *Luzula nivea*, and *Melica uniflora f. albida*. Three of these grasses are evergreen, ensuring year-round interest and coverage. Perennials and bulbs emerge through this matrix, introducing seasonal



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variety, texture, and colour. The plants were chosen for their ability to thrive in woodland edge conditions, given the influence of the surrounding trees and those added to the landscape. This thoughtful selection fosters a harmonious and dynamic garden that maintains visual appeal and ecological health throughout the year.

To ensure the garden remains captivating even in winter, we included winter-scented shrubs such as *Daphne odora*, *Sarcococca confusa*, *Edgeworthia chrysantha*, and *Chimonanthus praecox*. These plants add fragrance and visual interest during the colder months, enhancing the garden's appeal throughout the year. The Garden with a Vibe seamlessly blends design with natural beauty, offering a serene and engaging outdoor space that invites exploration and relaxation. It is a place where one can enjoy the tranquility of nature, whether indoors or out, all year round.





