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Giving Rooms a floral Setting

A creative study aid for every (floral) room designer

The purpose of this book is to provide the reader with a complex overview of how to create a room decoration using flowers and plants. The first step consists in analysing the design parameters and the technical conditions of the assignment and the associated rooms, with respect to the theme and the occasion, as comprehensively as possible. The designer can then use this foundation to present a proposal, taking into account other relevant parameters like time and costs, and then subsequently implementing the project accordingly.

The authors use many practical and replicable examples to convey the necessary knowledge about styles and customs, the effects of colours and surface struc-

tures, size and quantity ratios, flowers and plants and other materials, the knowledge of design criteria and mastery of technical floristry skills. A study book, thus, for everyone who wishes to design a room or space using flowers and plants – whether indoors or outdoors: undergraduate students and masters' students, as well as experienced professionals and interested entrepreneurs. Even architects, interior designers and interior decorators will discover ideas for their work. The reader profits from the profound experience of the authors, who ensured that numerous useful tips and ideas from their daily work flowed into this practice-oriented guide.

FLORALDESIGN | EDITION

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Floral Room Decoration | de Carnée Karsten Meiner Potthoff
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A Study Book by

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Jürgen Potthoff

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Please open this fold-out page and use it as a reference guide for the examples of completed room decoration projects (from page 154).

The sample work sheets in the appendix can be photocopied.

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e.g. a concert:

Music and flowers in harmonious unison

To set the right mood for a musical highlight, flower arrangements and plants create the right setting. They create the visual treat that with the sound experiences combine to a harmonious whole – like on the occasion of the Chemnitz music festival (see also page 67) or the mid-German summer concert at castle Augustusburg (see also page 160).

e.g. public streets and squares:

Floral ideas sharpen the senses

Floral presentations in unexpected places arouse attention, stimulate debate and define a room or space in a new way – like in Hamburg City, where the aim was to attract the attention of passersby to the German Floristry Championship, the Golden Rose, taking place at the conference centre. With success.

In terms of design it was interesting that in this case one consciously avoided creating reference points in the surroundings and instead very consciously chose a contrary design vocabulary; the aim was not to create a harmonious setting for an event, but to attract attention by means of contrast. Design: participants at the Golden Rose 1998 in Hamburg.

Similarly for the arrangement of further open spaces in the grounds of the water palace Klaffenbach. Here too, with plant containers positioned high above the heads of the visitors, completely new spatial impressions were created.

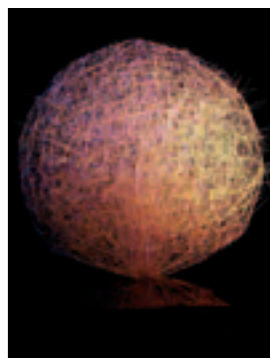
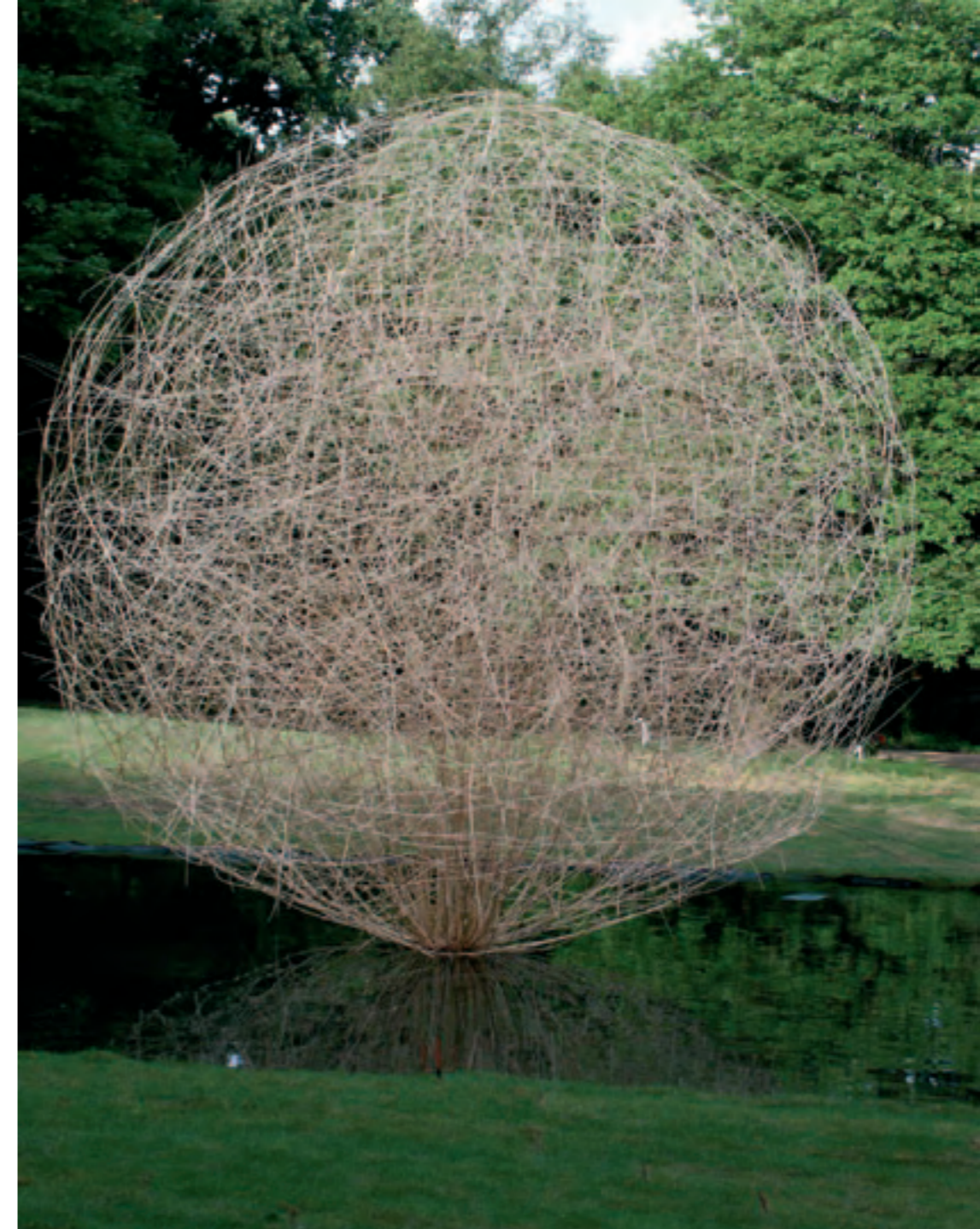
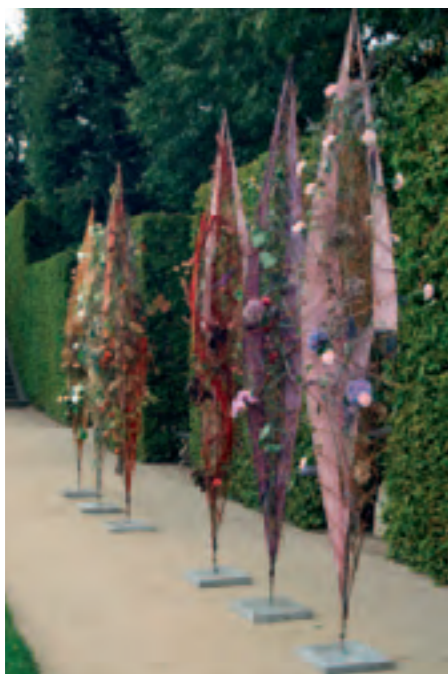




e.g. gardens and parks:

Creating new ways of seeing and setting accents

The hornbeam topiary hedge in the baroque garden at Großsedlitz forms a backdrop that allows the spindle shaped objects to be presented to good effect. The unity comes from the standard sizes and shapes, the diversity from the various floral materials and the paper surfaces.



This 5.5 m high sculpture of planet Mars was erected for the summer festival, with a "Satellite" theme, in the ramparts of the Bremen fort. The changing colours from the special lighting installations and their reflection in a specially designed water body created an outer space feeling. For the production 5'000 peeled willow rods and 120'000 cable ties were used in two weeks.



History of floral room decoration

When we as florists today speak of room ornamentation, we mean floral objects and arrangements that decorate a specific room or space for a specific purpose, in order to give it a special radiance.

It is really not possible to name the exact moment when a room ornament first appeared in history. Yet in the early history of human development diverse examples of a room design with floral techniques are found. If first they were more just collected herbs hung up in the home to dry, and thus, if possibly unconsciously, creating a prehistoric ornament for the first time, nonetheless the preference for floral beautification of the home subsequently happened relatively quickly. Hunting trophies, stores of wild herbs and roots became emblems of courage, dexterity and thus of rank in the group. The preference for decorating one's self or one's surroundings became more and more pronounced as one could express one's status in society and consolidate one's position.

The acquisition and mastery of the most diverse manufacturing techniques for ceramics, weapons, tools and other objects and the division of labour that resulted, more and more gave rise in the following centuries to an orientation towards creative design work. The focus of human kind what no longer just on the reproduction of the species and the satisfaction of existential needs. Mining and processing of metals like copper, bronze, iron, gold, silver or precious stones especially promoted the crafts of the time. Jewellery design, intended exclusively for personal ornamentation and decoration, became ever more beautiful with breathtaking rapidity.

Every period referred to the respective dominant value systems of the time, to historical and cultural connections and social values (see also the chapter on style characteristics from page 79).

There are some interesting supplements on this subject at www.floristikwissen.de.

Flowers and herbs: articles of every day use become ornaments.

The division of labour encourages the orientation towards creative design work.



The history of herbs goes back thousands of years. Archaeological excavations have unearthed evidence that herbs were collected in the stone age. As humans became more sedentary herbs started to be cultivated. Here there are bundles of herbs, in the authentically reproduced huts built as lake dwellings in Unteruhldingen (lake Constance), hung up to dry; and at the same time serving as room ornaments.
[Photo: Dr. Gunter Schöbel, lake dwellings museum Unteruhldingen]

Graves
Graves are important archaeological sources of evidence for our knowledge of prehistoric men. Scientists made important discoveries from which they were able to derive evidence of their daily habits (e.g. Cro-Magnon man). Like many tribal people today, and like many other people have done till much after the birth of Christ, surviving group members gave their dead objects of daily use, ornaments, talismans and some food stuffs for their journey to the underworld. When someone died a grave was dug for him in a cave or holy place, and he was laid in it and flowers strewn on top. Then tools, weapons and food were added for his journey and stay in the underworld.

Egyptian civilisation

The oldest culture where signs of developed flower binding have been found is that of the Egyptians. Apart from flower and leaf necklaces, diadems and wreaths, room ornamentation was also an important desire in that period. Another dream of every ancient Egyptian was to have an architecturally landscaped garden with water bodies, date palms and fruit trees.

Green was the colour of newly emerging life and a healthy flourishing and was also the emblem of youthful vigour. Green was also however a metaphor for peace and joy. The Egyptian language had a word that united all the concepts like green, freshness, youth, or flourishing: 'wadj'. It is derived from the word for the single papyrus rod and was used as a common term. This was no coincidence, because apart from the lotus flower, papyrus was the national plant of Egypt. It was one of the original plants and



The value and honour given to the lotus and papyrus is clear from various paintings found on decorative columns. Their plant forms were models for the design of various tops of columns, the capitals.



The evidence for which plants and parts of plants were specially preferred has been found on images found in cemeteries.

[Images from: Oven Jones, The Grammar of Ornaments, published by Verlag Parkland]

Earliest signs of floral culture in ancient Egypt.



Floral staffs and planted arrangements decorated halls and banqueting chambers in which during harvest or fertility festivals additional plant offerings were made (see Davies: The Tomb of Nakht at Thebes, New York 1917).



Artistically bound floral staffs with lotus flowers as well as papyrus columns were regularly used for the death cult. Like here during the blessing of two mummies with water, the element of life. This wall painting on stucco in the cave of Nebamun and Ipuki dates to the 18th dynasty around 1350 B.C.



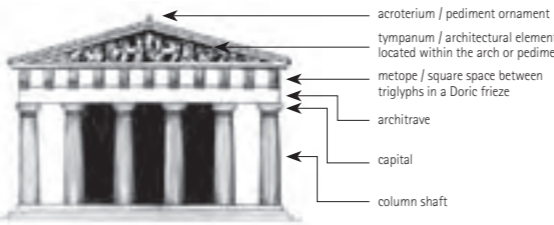
This image on the lid of a small ivory box is housed in the Metropolitan Museum in New York City . It shows the ruler Tutankhamen and his wife in a gazebo. The edge of the roof is decorated with bouquets. Supporting columns are decorated like floral staffs. All this points to the importance of garden culture in ancient Egypt.

symbol of the mythic place in the dense wetland in which life was resurrected after death and where the birth of the god Horus (son of Osiris and Isis) was supposed to have taken place. In ancient Egypt this ancient plant was the all encompassing symbol of growth and the well being of the kingdom: "papyrus of life". A pond formed the centre of the garden. On the one hand the pond served as a water reservoir and on the other it stood symbolically for the primal ocean, the place of mythic creation, from which according to ancient Egyptian belief all of life emerged.

One also paid special attention to gardens. Apart from supplying food and flowers gardens also had a religious significance. They had life giving powers through their existence alone. For laying out such gardens, straight lines and right angles dominated the scene. The garden itself, the beds laid in it, as well as the pond, were square. The edges of the pond were planted with parallel rows of plants. Bridges and paths also ran at right angles.

Greek antiquity

The Greeks had a strong sense of shape and form. The main elements of a building, i.e. the supporting verticals and the balancing horizontals, always formed a harmonious connection between differing elements.



Zeus temple, Olympia, 456 B.C.
Typical construction elements of Greek architecture, as they are found in all the buildings of the ancient architectural masters.

The special desire was for complete harmony in all aspects of life. Godheads for every situation in life played an important role. To protect and preserve their well being special plants were dedicated. Temples and altars were adorned and their support was invoked.



In ancient Greece, temples and altars were decorated with plants in order to give emphasis to the pleas for help.



Regularly arranged recurring stylised natural motifs served as wall, floor or ceiling ornament.

[images from Oven Jones, "The Grammar of Ornaments", published by Verlag Parkland]



Loosening of the strict looking band with images of mythological beasts or stylised plants.



The Maeander band is a stylised image of the winding river course of the Maeander and a Greek ornamental element that was often found inside buildings as wall painting, or on ceilings, or also as cloth decoration.



Containers for storing cereals, oil, and fruit and so on were essential and were in daily use. The artistic decorations on this amphora from the collection of antiques in the state museums in Berlin represent mythological scenes as well as scenes of daily life. Supported with stylised representations of plants.

Postmodernism

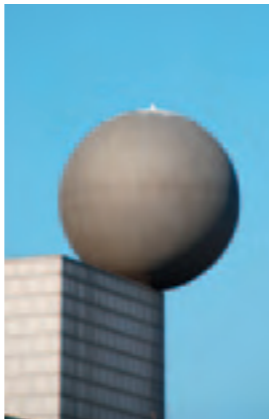
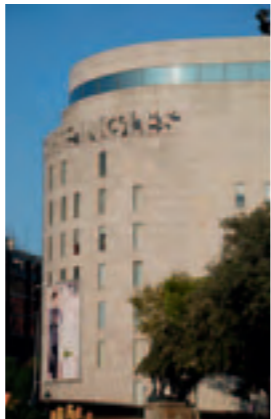
Time tested forms in combination with new materials and technologies: this is our contemporary motto.

Postmodernism is defined by the loss of traditional social bonds and the absence of community solidarity as well as the destruction of the feeling of community generally. Instead social life becomes atomized into numerous small groups and individuals who all have contrary and conflicting attitudes and behaviour patterns. In art and culture a radical pluralism develops, with an emphasis on tolerance and freedom, which is elevated to a dogma. Style elements from previous peri-

ods are rediscovered and possibly combined with a kind of modern functionality, or reinterpreted with innovative technologies. Existing codes are deconstructed, collected and put together again as new constructs. The world becomes a sign, a media event, it also becomes more feminine and it is multi-cultural right down to the last and tiniest detail. The medium is more important than the message.



The Saxony state legislature in Dresden was built from 1991 – 1994 by Prof. Peter Kulka. It is considered a post-modern building.



Spectacular forms that make the construction elements visible, tension-filled constructions that seem to defy gravity, architecture that is transformed into a medium of communication, monuments to our lifestyle obsessed time that seem to speak to us without an interpreter and that compete with each other to grab the attention of their global target groups.

An important survey for every floral designer

"Without a suitable level of knowledge of modern technologies or an intensive analysis of the past, there is a danger that the past and the present are mixed up incoherently."

James Stirling

This statement by James Stirling, one of the most important British post-modern architects, shows how important the preceding short survey of the important historical periods is, and that an intensive analysis of the various historic styles is absolutely essential if one wants to design spaces as a florist, for they always have their own story, their own, special history.

It is only the intimate knowledge of ornamental and architectural elements, of typical flowers and plants of a

particular period, and the understanding of the relationships and conditions in particular periods that enables us to plan and finally realize room designs in a sensitive and appropriate manner – which above all means stylishly and stylistically correctly.

For designing and making a room ornament a florist is required to be sensitive in order to do justice to the room, the occasion and the architects of the past and present. Even if the florist wishes to purposely break with existing styles or wants to set up a contrast or confrontation by using stylistically incorrect elements, he must first have a fundamental knowledge of basic of design criteria.

In the chapter on stylistic attributes (page 79 onwards) there is a table summarizing the facts provided in the preceding survey, with a detailed list of architectural elements, ornamental elements, colours and so on.



Like many post-modern buildings, the state gallery in Stuttgart finds its place in the city landscape confrontationally on the one hand, and harmoniously on the other. Architect: James Stirling



The design of the façade of the Musée du Quai Branly is a uniquely novel application of plant materials. This plant wall of the museum was planted in the summer of 2004. More than 15'000 different types of plants from Japan, China, USA and Central Europe are growing on a wall surface measuring more than 800 m².

What exactly is a room?

Those who wish to know more about the meaning of the terms space or room may look up the terms in a dictionary or the online-encyclopaedia Wikipedia.

Thus when we speak of a room in this book, we mean one of the primary architectural elements, and indeed it is in most cases a place to live, or a place to be used in other ways, but in any case it is an enclosed part of a building.

Outdoors it may be less common to use the term room, the concept of a space may be used provided what we are talking about is a more or less closed, delimitable area.

Rooms as having a particular function

Dealing as we are with floral room decoration, we as florists are mainly interested in rooms because of our work. Thus we ask whether they are rooms that have a particular theme or a certain function. Humans generally use rooms for specific purposes.

The interior design and the furnishings and the atmosphere of a room are generally adapted to this purpose more or less well. There are rooms where we do chores or work, rooms in which we live, watch television and sleep, and rooms in which we relax or study. Often we judge rooms by their functionality and whether or not they are suited to their purpose.

e.g. rooms in a flat

Living room: A room to withdraw to. A habitable room. A family room. Comfortably furnished with suitable furniture and multimedia gadgets.
Kitchen: The room for preparing food; the place where we keep various household machines. A functional room. Easy to clean.
Bedroom: A room to sleep in and (usually) the room to keep one's clothes in. An intimate, private space. Suitably functional but also personal in its design and furnishings.

Bathroom: The room where we have our bath and clean and wash ourselves. Place to store the necessary toiletries. Functional design with a shower, bath, basin and lavatory.
Children's room: A room to spend time in as well as a bed-room. Filled with toys and learning aids depending on the child's age.

e.g. rooms in hotels

Hotel rooms come in the most varied sizes and can be equipped in various ways. The restaurant and bar are generally comfortable or elegant and have an inviting atmosphere where guests enjoy eating and drinking. The reception area is usually friendly and generously proportioned so that the hotel makes a good first impression on the guests. The conference rooms are likely to be sober and functional, and the seating arrangements for example can probably be rearranged quite quickly depending on the occasion.

Lectures and seminars for example have different requirements than conferences. A hall for partying and dancing will be different from a conference hall if only because the floor has to be different. All these rooms generally have their own distinctive character which is given to them by their function. Florists must learn to recognize the character of a room so that the floral arrangements can be designed to suit the room and its character exactly.

The effect of a room: what is its effect on us?

The effect of a room is nothing other than the influence of the environment of a room on the viewer. Depending on the character of the room there can be varying effects. Rooms have an emotional effect on people. The important elements that contribute to the effect a room has

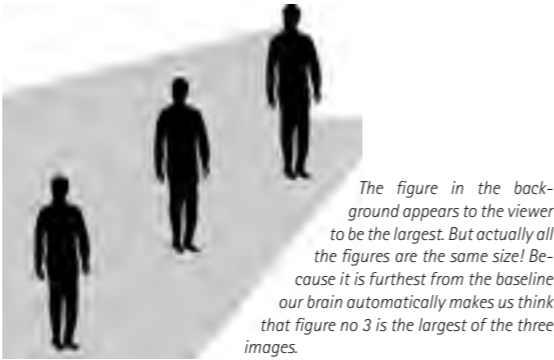
are such things as: light, colour, furnishings, style, function or form.

In order to be able to judge a room visually we need to have a strong ability to perceive and judge spaces.

Perception of space

In order to perceive spatial depth we need to understand that it depends on two principles:

- distance as perceived by the eye, and
- our experiential judgement of the room and the objects in it.



In two-dimensional images like for example pictures or photos, these objects allow us make judgements as to the depth of a room or space and thus allow us to interpret depth, defining foreground and background, or at least thinking we are thus defining depth. (see for example the optical illusions created by Escher)

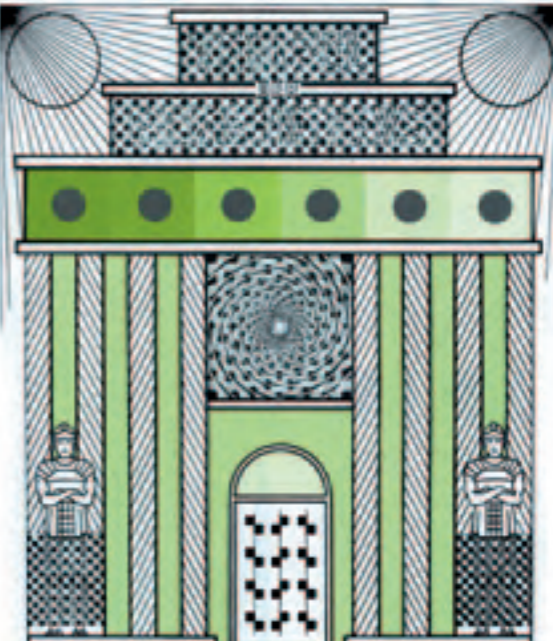
Anatomy is also important for spatial perception. The eyes of human beings like those of many animals are next to each other, this allows them to place a point in a space. Each eye sends a separate image to the brain, each one slightly different from the other, and the brain in turn combines them and collects information about special depth from the differences.



Foul or no foul? The same scenes from two angles at 90° remove.



If we follow every detail of this construction by M. C. Escher with our eyes we are not able to detect a single error. The whole is nonetheless impossible because we suddenly experience shifts in our interpretation of the distances between our eye and the object.



It is hard to believe, but all the vertical lines in this strange drawing are straight and parallel to each other.

[from: Edi Lanners, Illusions, Edition C.J. Bucher, Luzern]

There is an experiment that can be carried out on this same question: If you take a photograph of an object with an analogue camera, taking a picture first with the left and then with the right eye, the result is two slightly displaced images (slides). If we now make a slide projector so that both pictures can be placed next to each other in such a way that we can view one with the right eye and one with the left eye, we experience the image as three dimensional.

A person's perception of a room or space does not only depend on special factors. Influences such as temperature, heat conductivity, absorption capacity, haptic effects (to do with feeling and touching) of the surface and its characteristics, reflexivity, colouration, texture, pattern, smell, decomposition, effects of aging and so on all play an important role.

A measurable space or room is also variously interpreted simply because of the unpredictably varying perceptions of human beings, each of whom will interpret and perceive the room differently because of his or her socialization. The subjective stock of experiences of each person is responsible for each of us experiencing, feeling and understanding a room differently.



The diversity of forms provides the order in this big hall which thus feels less impersonal.

The perception of a room can be influenced by cultural, historical as well as economic issues (is it in an agglomeration, a rural area, an artist's quarter, an elegant residential area...). And children have a different perception of rooms than adults or elderly people. Blind or deaf people also have a different perception of their immediate environment.

Vertical orientation of a room.



All these elements of course influence the arrangement in-
terior design and the position of the core space and thus in
turn the positioning of the floral arrangements.
Columns (round), pillars (square) or pilaster (built into the
wall) determine the orientation of the verticals. In modern
buildings it is often simple stands that give a room its
structure and emphasize the height of the room. All these
elements almost always have engineering as well as design
functions, both of which must be taken into account.



*Pilaster, pillars that are partially set
into the wall, create the basic struc-
ture of a room, as do the characteris-
tic pointed arches of the Turku castle
in Finland, or the columns of the
Brandenburg gate, the severe frame
and the round arched window of the
industrial building or the columns of
the conference centre.*

Existing shapes in a room

Rigorous analysis of the
available forms in a room.

Whatever forms are already available in a room should def-
initely be given careful attention. Generally it makes sense
to use the existing forms as a reference point for one's own
design or create a conscious connection. Even if the aim
later is to create juxtaposition, it is nonetheless sensible to
take careful note of what is available.
Whether juxtaposition or reference, there should be a basic
design concept that should be followed throughout.

Original shapes

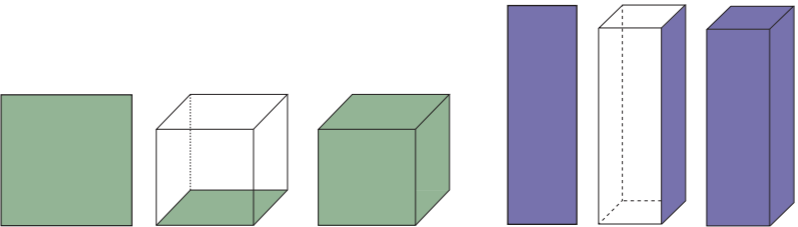
Square, triangle and circle are all two-dimensional basic
shapes which we as designers come across and use again
and again. We use them to build up three-dimensional
forms such as cubes (lat.: cubus), cones, pyramids, spheres
and so on.
In geometry, forms are connecting parts of a plane or parts
of a certain space, which can be calculated mathemati-
cally.



*In the Magdeburg Hundertwasser
house colourful spheres and ring
shapes not only have engineering
but also design functions; in the
Benno-gymnasium in Dresden the
highly visible chaotic order of the
steel structure sends a strong design
message.*

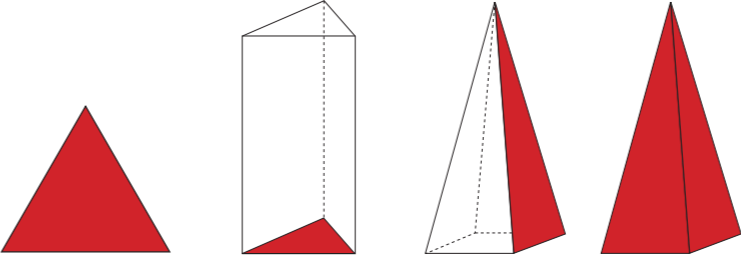
Square, cube, rectangle

The character of the shape: Firm, stable, built, constructive.
Position: True to form whether it is standing upright or lying
horizontally or propped up at right angles in a room.
Meaning: Important contrasting form to living, free forms, they convey
peace and firmness, suitable as backgrounds or floors,
for containers or silhouettes.
Examples: Phalaenopsis and hydrangea flowers, bulrushes, containers,
boxes, picture frames, balcony segments, boards,
decorative boards, decorative stools, building blocks...



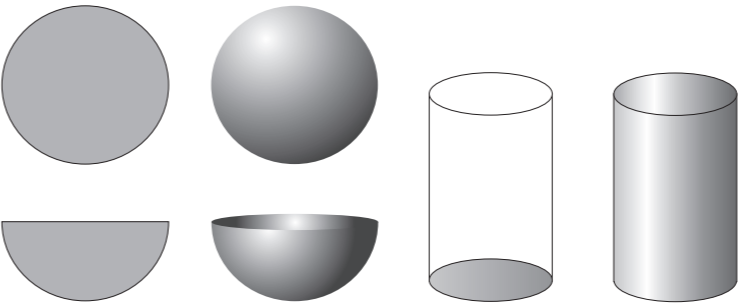
Triangle, tetrahedron and pyramid

The character of the shape: Pushing forward, moving away, active, dynamic,
filling the room, dissolving.
Position: In exterior settings and arrangements they need free space
above their tips.
Meaning: Design element that gives the designs movement and verve,
elegance and vitality, suitable for parallel arrangements and
in staggered arrangements.
Examples: Eremurus, gladioli, snake plant, candles, containers, vessels and
vases...



Circle, sphere and cylinder

The character of the shape: Soft, adaptable, pleasant, sociable, concentrated,
gathering in, content rich, organic.
Position: Does not need much space, suitable for dense abundance,
suitable for a central position of a movement.
Meaning: Important partner for dissolving forms, ideal as a part
of a luxurious arrangement.
Examples: Hydrangea, snowball, carnation, cyclamen leaves, fruit, balls,
moss tufts, voluminous vases....



Drawing techniques

An employer will always find it easier to read a coloured drawing than a black and white one. He will be able to tell more easily whether the proposals correspond with his wishes and whether they match the existing colours of his room or of his event.

Colouring a drawing is best done in the following way: do the drawing in pencil. Then trace it out with a water proof fine liner. While doing so pay careful attention to depths and layers as well as overlapping elements and fore- and background.



The pencil drawing should ideally be done using a pencil with medium hardness (HB). The pencil should be neither too hard nor too soft as the drawing will be erased later.



Slightly thicker fine liner (0.5 – 0.7) also make a drawing more lively. They are especially useful in darker shaded parts of the drawing.



After the pencil drawing is finished and completely traced out with the fine liner the pencil lines can be erased. The drawing can be further improved with fine liners at this stage too.



Though it may initially be difficult to be restrained when applying the colour, this kind of drawing profits from "less is more". If the colours are too intense the drawing will be garish and over the top.

Water colour pencils are suitable for colour drawings as are water colour paints. The former are easier to use. But it also takes some practice to achieve a professional result.

Use the water colour pencils to make the drawing. Then apply water using a good quality soft paintbrush that picks up the water and spreads it evenly on the coloured areas.

Important tip: apply a thin layer of colour from the pencils. The water intensifies the colours.

These kinds of pencils are available in many different qualities. Good ones last a long time and it is thus worthwhile to invest a little more. Good ones are usually softer and easier to apply.



Use fine (0.3 – 0.5) thin liners to trace the outline.



By indicating shadows a three dimensional effect is achieved. Use thin (0.1 – 0.3) fine liners.



Use water colour pencils to colour in the drawing. The colour should be applied lightly and thinly. Good quality colour pencils are useful because the colours can be mixed even before the water is applied.

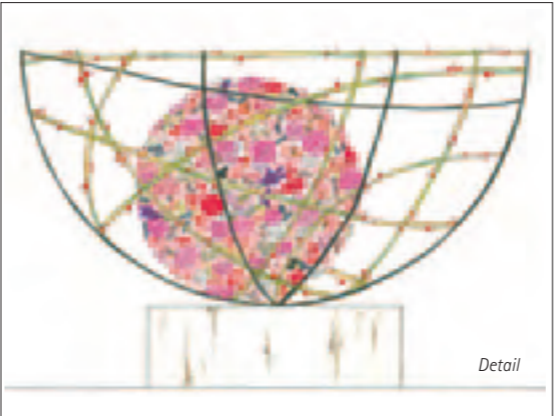


Apply water with a soft paintbrush. Latest at this stage you will realise the value of good quality paper. Thin paper becomes wavy with the slightest application of water. Paper weighing 170 g/m² is recommended.

Detailed drawings

Detailed drawings – as the name implies – are drawings of individual details either of whole floral arrangements or parts of them. They are important when the scale of the general drawings do not allow a clear depiction of forms, colour themes and choice of floral materials.

Theme: floral basket with rose ball.



Scale of 1 : 2

Name: Elke Nestler
Location: Dresden
Date: Juni 2006

Theme: window decoration with rose theme.



Scale of 1 : 10

Name: Elke Nestler
Location: Dresden
Date: Juni 2006

These drawings were created for the masters examination in Dresden 2006.

Sketches

Sketches are neither scale drawings nor are they technical representations. Their purpose is to capture an image or view of the surroundings or an object, and they are also used to sketch out some first ideas of the technical details of individual arrangements. They are drawn freehand and may also be the basis for detailed drawings later on.

Despite the fact that they are done quickly they are a very helpful and efficient means to establish a first impression of a room or an object. They are helpful for early rounds of discussions and avoid possible misunderstandings.

Sketches are useful for developing first design ideas and putting them down on paper. They can thus be communicated to others.



The design of a stand at the IGA in Rostock (September 2003) was supposed to bring out the theme water. First sketches are based on various shell and snail forms that the designers wanted to use to symbolise water.

Model building

The construction of scale models is a relatively expensive but very expressive method for creating three dimensional impressions of rooms. Proportions and the relationships of objects to each other and their sizes are easy to visualise. Model makers can use a diversity of materials such as cardboard, paper, wood, or simple wire. Galvanised wire is an excellent material for making simple wire models.



The cost of a model should be in proportion to the total volume of the contract.

Design decisions using the criteria available

In order to use design criteria in one's work in a clever and productive manner, it is important to have a comprehensive knowledge of methodological approaches. The most diverse design elements, design categories and design

principles are part of this. Those which are most important for floral room decoration are listed in more detail here, others we mention in passing, though they of course also are part of our floristry work.

Respecting design elements

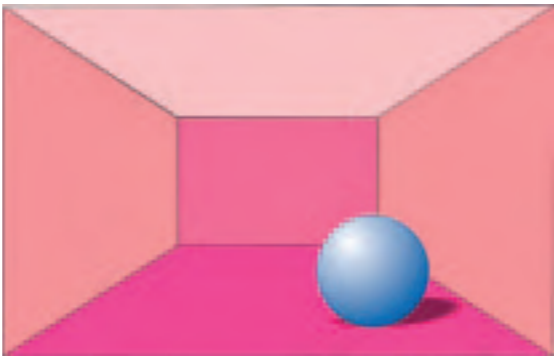
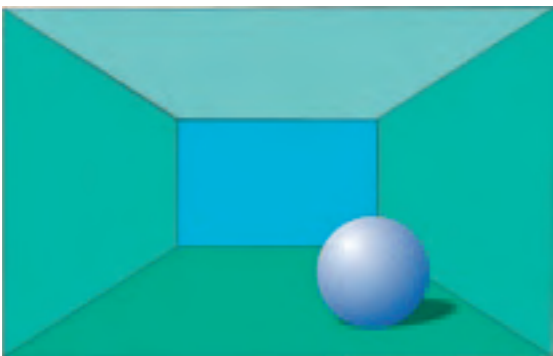
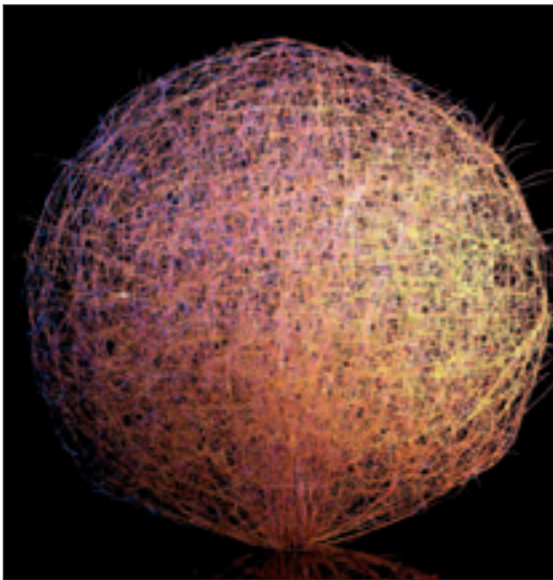
Form, colour, light, texture, structure and movement are the important design elements that are used in every floral arrangement, but given different weight depending on the occasion. Floral room decoration depends above all on light and colour for the effect of an arrangement, and these are two inseparable elements that are inextricably linked.

But a clear design vocabulary, the careful selection of textures, the surface structure of the floral materials, the precise structuring of the inner construction of the arrangement, as well as of the total room decoration, and finally the conscious application of style, are also all part of this.

Purposeful use of light and colour

In the chapter on analysis we explained that colour is not thinkable without light and that its effect is dependent on the quality of the light. The careful use of light can also highlight certain areas of an arrangement or indeed obscure

it more or less completely. Spot lights can create accents, or contrasts, or they can give surfaces certain unexpected effects. This is usually especially visible in photos.



Whether rooms or objects seem cold or warm is determined primarily by colour.

Colour is our set. It determines our visual environment. Colour creates the backdrop against which we live our daily life.

There is plenty of literature on the subject of which colours match and which colour combinations achieve which contrasts and effects. There are scientific studies, e.g. by Johannes Itten, who intensively studies colour theory in general. He was a teacher at the Bauhaus in Dessau and published numerous books, including several on the subject of colour. His contemporary Tricia Guild is also famous for publishing several books about colour, including e.g. "White Hot – the Glow of Soft Colours. The New Quality of Living", or "Think Pink – Rooms in Colour for Modern Living". Of course there is even more literature on the subject of equally high quality.

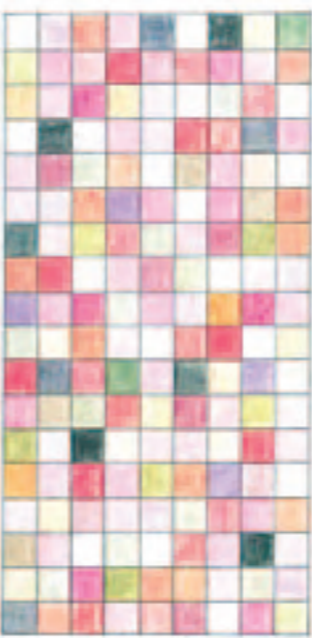
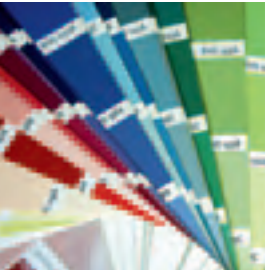
It is absolutely vital that room designers, and florists who belong to this group in a broader sense, engage with the subject of colour. This only deals with the theme briefly as it would be impossible to cover this vast subject comprehensively.

80 % of our optical perception takes place by means of colour, which thus has an extremely important role as a means of expression. Colours influence mood and create atmosphere.

In a well designed and suitably furnished room the main colour usually sets the tone. Rooms that need to accommodate various events with ever changing occasions and themes will usually have neutral interiors, so that the colour scheme can change depending on the occasion. This could be because the organiser might want a specific colour for the table cloths or the buffet, and this will then of course influence the colour scheme of rest of the entire design.

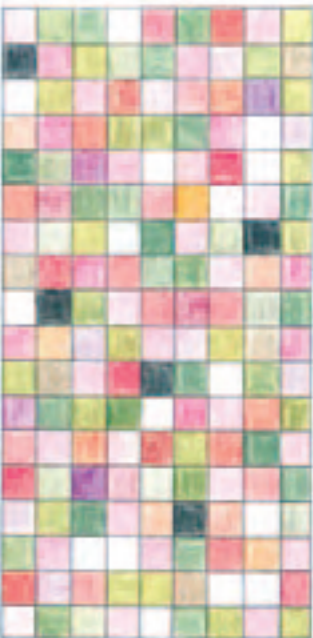
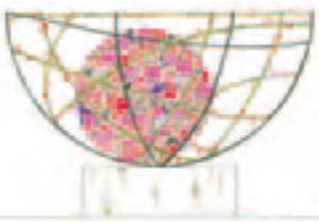
To document the pre-existing colours and plan the additional colours it is very helpful to make use of a colour card. They are available from paint companies. The perception of colour is very personal and thus subjective, and a colour card can act as an important neutral aid for determining and choosing colours. But here too it is important to remember that colour and colour perception are closely related to the available light (see page 51 onwards).

Colour card



No language and no vocabulary however sophisticated can describe the combination of colours, let alone the difference between colour scales. This makes clear that it will often be necessary to do a detailed colour study for a larger arrangement. Such a study can be very useful for the customer, the florist and as the case may be for the assessments at an examination.

Colour grid by Elke Nestler



The size of the room also influences the choice of colour. The greater the distance between the observer and the source of the colour, the more blurred and indistinguishable the colours become. In larger rooms it is thus a good idea to use suitably plain colours or to group similar colours into larger areas. This prevents the colours appearing fuzzy.

A larger assignment will be easier for a customer to understand if he receives a proposal for the colour scheme. The florist himself will find such a draft helpful for choosing certain colours and colour combinations. When we can see something we often become conscious of it. This is also the case with various colour combinations and especially also colour quantities.

A colour grid is one way of doing this. The grid will allow us to read off certain ideas such as colour composition, colour combinations, colour themes and quantities of colour.

Colour is a very sensitive means of expression. It can be stimulating or calming, colour can be perceived as warm or cold, or active or passive. The ancient Egyptian word for colour also meant "being". This is not at least the reason why we also use the idea of the character of a colour. Colours influence the emotions of a person to a greater or lesser degree (see page 61 onwards).

Colours carry symbolic meaning, and these can sometimes lead to unwanted misinterpretations. This is another reason why the choice of floral materials is also always a sensitive subject involving a preference for or against a particular colour.

More on the subject of the effect of colour in relation to distance on page 46.

e.g. wood

The naturalness of wood and its individual grain goes well with plants, as it does when it is painted, polished, stained or glazed.

The grain of wood can be used as a background as well as individually for special objects.

Painted wood

The use of paint depends on its application – mainly, whether the painted wood will be used in a closed room or whether it will be exposed to wind and weather.

Applying mud – clay or lime

A natural rustic look is achieved with mud made of clay, lime, chalk or plaster. Plywood can be painted as can rough planks, with a narrow or broad brush or roller.

Apart from sand and silt the other ingredient of lime is clay. This material is an undeniable link to nature and thus to plants. It is taken from nature itself. Clay is thus a very important design medium for florists and floral designers. But for room dividers it generally has to be used in combination with a medium. It could be cloth, cardboard, Styro-foam or wood and such like.

If it is combined with wallpaper glue, clay is a better base and is not so brittle after it has been worked.

Clay is available in a variety of earthy colours as it is also naturally varied in colour. Clay is also very cheap provided designers get it directly from the source. It is also available in most artist shops or clay oven makers. Once it has been kneaded into a watery paste it can be applied to cloth using one's hand or a brush.

The more watery the mixture, the more the clay disintegrates and loses its structure. Lovely natural coloured paints are made and when applied to the chosen surface it creates a lovely natural background or other feature that can be used for many different kinds of presentations.



Oven clay is very easy to work with. It is available in powder form. It is sprinkled on to the base material and then evenly moistened.



The water evaporated – as was wished for in this case – and a rough, cracked surface remained. It created the appearance of a clay pit or something similar, which in turn creates a relation to soil in which plants grow.



The thicker the clay is, the more grainy and rougher the surface will be. Floral designers must choose the right effect for their design.



Once clay is mixed with plenty of water it loses its grainy structure. As it comes in so many different colours it is possible to achieve many interesting floral design solutions.

Before it is painted or worked on in some other way cloth should be stretched onto a frame because if it is handled too much after being treated the surface can easily be damaged.

Clay can also be worked well in its dry, ground form. For this it is best to use oven maker clay which is available in shops that supply the for oven builders. In this technique it is important that the surface is in a flat horizontal position when it is worked. The clay powder is sprinkled onto an as rough as possible area and gradually moistened with more and more water so that the clay turns into a soupy mixture (it should not be too wet). Ideally the water is sprayed on with a spray bottle. The cloth should be allowed plenty of time to dry. The clay should dry slowly so that it does not crack.

e.g. glass

Glass, especially opaque glass, can be used at quite respectable sizes as a dividing wall that lets light through. The opaque effect can also be achieved a plastic sheet and water and a squeegee.



Plexiglas can also be used. It is light and easy to work with but feels less natural.

Creating basic frames

Frames are essential aids that give form to an arrangement, help to structure it, and give it stability.

The construction can be done using various materials, including floral materials. They help do place the flowers and plants.

Individual wire frames

Wire structures have become the most popular systems in floristry in the last few years thanks to their near ideal qualities for floristry. Wire looks a bit like Lygodium which used to be used as floral construction material in the past. Wire is much stronger of course, can be shaped into an infinity of shapes and can thus be used almost anywhere.

Wire can be stretched into a metal or wooden frame either horizontally or vertically. These wrappings can then be used for arranging the floral materials as well as attaching the water pipes.

The metal may corrode, and this is fine if the effect was planned, if not wire can be protected from corrosion with a plain or coloured varnish.

Wire is awkward material, but its unattractive appearance is compensated for by its tensile strength. It is important to use the right kind of wire in terms of colour and strength to suit the purpose at hand.



Using 1-2 mm thick wire for the base and around. 0.6 mm thick wire for the wrapped section, the most varying forms can be formed. Using this simple wrapping technique using simple blue anodised wire a cone was created.

Wire also can be responsible for interesting results in connection with wood. Sticking wire can be hammered into wood or holes can be drilled in the wood and the wire inserted and secured with glue.



In combination with a strong frame – in this example it was made out of round steel – and using weaving or wrapping techniques, as neutral transparent surface is created that offers a beautiful contrast to the floral materials thanks to its cool appearance.

A little bit of statics

The technical implementation of large or tall arrangements requires a high level of skill as well as a healthy sense of responsibility. Unprofessional erection can lead to accidents, for which the builder is responsible. This is true even if the customer has signed a document accepting the risk.

Tensile strength is a special challenge for an initially technically inexperienced floral designer. Will the frame carry the weight of the arrangement? To what extent does the weight increase due to the water requirement of the

plants? Will floor and ceiling withstand the pressure or pull sufficiently?

For all these questions of tension and stability there are appropriate and exact engineering calculations. But for someone who has never learnt such a thing the formulae are often a mystery. For this reason we decided to do without a typical mathematical example as this would go beyond the remit of this book.

If a florist is not certain of what he is doing he should call a specialist (structural engineer). For outdoor objects higher than 4 m this is generally a legal requirement.

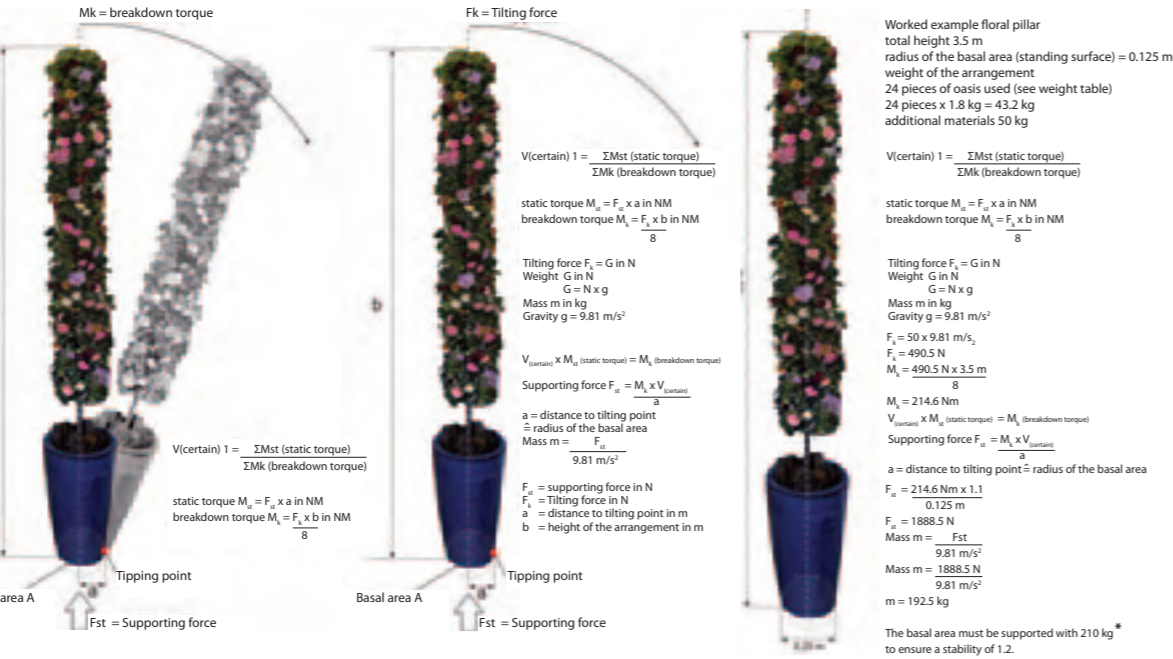
Floral room designers should with time develop a sense for how his designs can be secured and made to stand upright.

The next section provides some hints to understand the issues a bit better, and provides some tricks of the trade that may come in handy. But a floral designer must always be his own judge of whether the aids are compatible with the floral design or whether they should be incorporated better into the design or hidden.

Stability

If the weight is off-centre a lever effect will occur which will tip the arrangement over.

In this case the base needs to be weighed down more or the base should be enlarged in the direction of the pull.



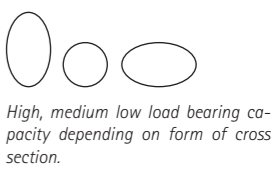
Bending moment

Floral material like other materials have varying levels of elasticity. Some are more or less rigid, other infinitely bendable. The more bendable the material the lower its carrying capacity. As floral designers we must decide which level of elasticity or stiffness is needed for our particular purpose.

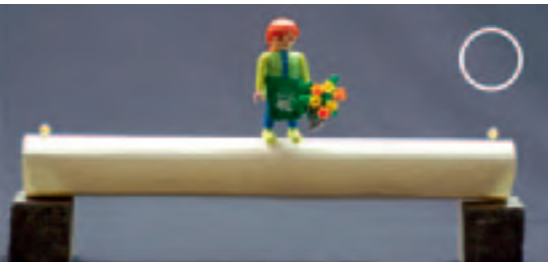
If we choose a stiff arm or a rigid joint, we can be sure that such a construction will fold or even break. A higher degree of stability is achieved by changing the cross sec-

tion of the form. For example for the same mass oval pipes positioned vertically are stronger than round pipes, or horizontally positioned oval pipes. In nature the cross section of roots often adopt such optimised shapes.

The following pictures illustrate the distortion of sections and pipes under the influence of constant pressure in relation to cross section (bending moment).

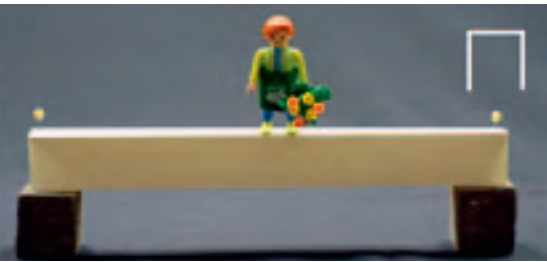


Form of cross section: flat profile
Distortion: strong bend – very low load bearing capacity



Form of cross section: pipe
Distortion: low – very high load bearing capacity

Form of cross section: flat profile; vertically positioned
Distortion: twisting along the lateral axis – low load bearing capacity



Form of cross section: U-, T- profile or double T- profile
Distortion: very low – very high load bearing capacity



Nature sets an example: optimised root cross section to oppose the pull of the tree.

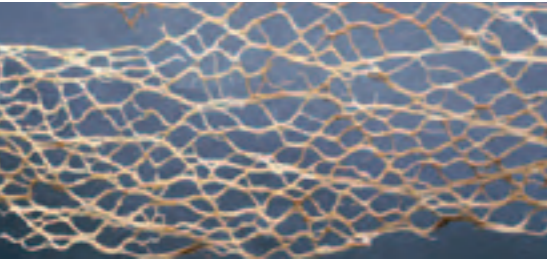
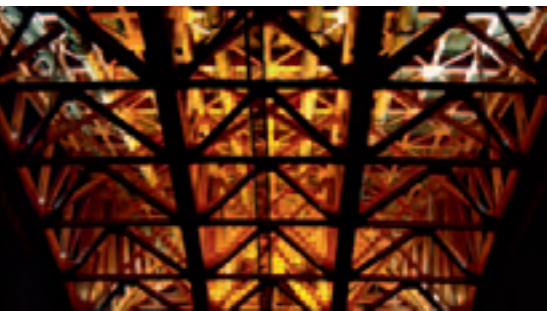
The influence of the bending moment and the choice of the correct cross section for the right level of load bearing capacity, can be tested with a simple experiment. Lay a ruler across two points and apply pressure in the middle. It will succumb to the pressure in the direction of the flat side. But if it is on its end it will remain absolutely stable.



Structures

Buildings that imitate the web-like forms of nature always attract attention.

The aim of this kind of steel frame building is to build using light but strong construction systems such as we find in nature, in the artistic skeleton constructions of the supportive interwoven systems of plants or in aerial root systems. The aim is to distribute the tension evenly across as large an area as possible. Steel frames can achieve high tensile strength with a low volume of material. They can resist traction and pressure forces.



Natural frame such as the tissue of a dead opuntia and a construction based on the same system.

Example of an offer with concept development and design suggestions

An example of an event planned for around 1'000 guests in a former factory that was converted into a museum; a presentation was needed, to capture the conceptual idea and the floral design approach as well as providing concrete, well displayed design proposals for floral arrangements and the costing to go with it.

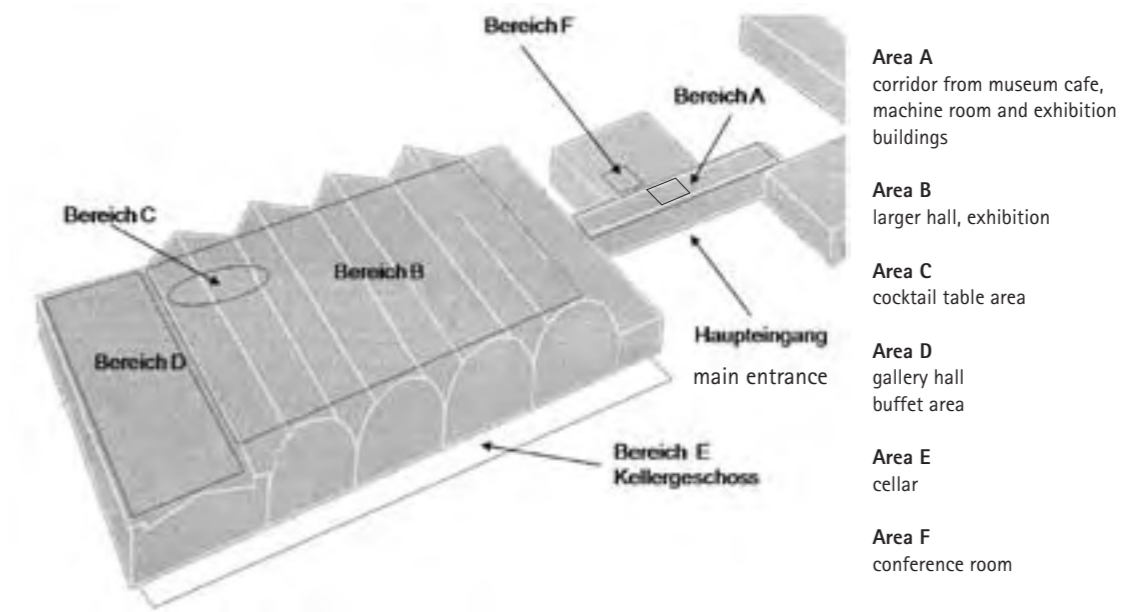
Inspection of the buildings and the rooms
The qualities of architectural clarity, transparency, functionality and generosity determine our impression of a building. The character of the building as a former factory was maintained by keeping the brick walls in their original condition and using exposed concrete. A further important design feature is the arched windows.



Basics of concept and design

Floral room design must take into account the type of event, the customer's specifications (e.g. company colours, company symbols) and the architecture of the building. At the same time floral arrangements must also have their own individual character and an individual beauty. Our technical professional knowledge and our floral design

knowledge open up an enormously wide spectrum of possibilities based on our knowledge of plants, their surroundings, their growth characteristics and other properties. Seasonal flowers and plants are at the heart of our work. We are committed to the principles of nature through our work.



Area A:
Corridor from museum cafe, machine room and exhibition building

Area B:
Larger hall, exhibition buildings: sitting area

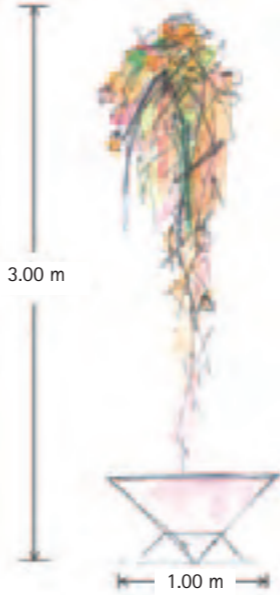
Paths: main entrance -> coats -> larger hall

Design proposal: cascades
Six arrangements on glass pillars - dissolving, plaited, individual forms clearly visible
The arrangements placed behind the glass façades are visible from far away, and the visitors have a raised level of anticipation and expectation. The arrangements themselves have exaggerated stretched proportions, which makes them fit with the height of the room. They have a strong presence in the room, but are transparent and thus fit smoothly into the dominant atmosphere without competing with it. By choosing a rhythmical row the design presents the visitors with a clear pathway through the display. The individual arrangements have limited form and colour variations, and thus do not disturb the simplicity and clarity of the room. In order to give the arrangements more emphasis however, they were displayed on transparent glass pillars, which were illuminated from below. Very simple vessels, but made of an unusual material, namely paper, provided this floral design with its visual presence and connected the arrangement into a single unity.

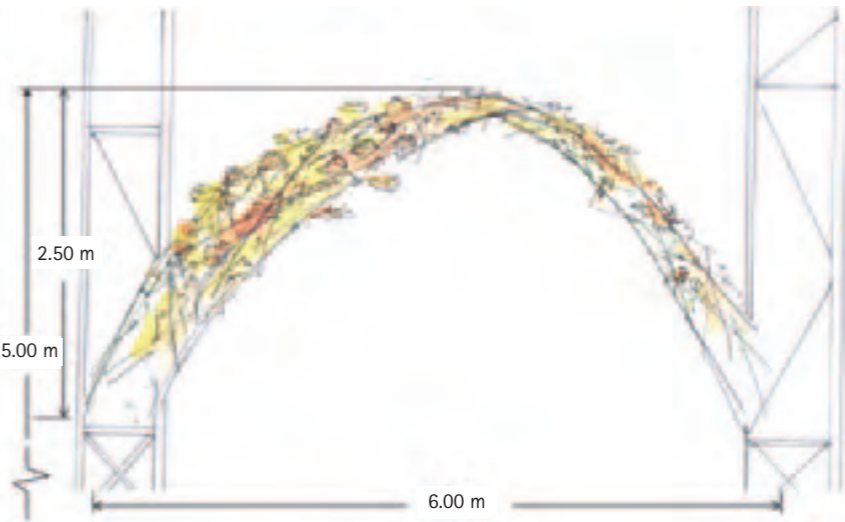
Design proposal for the floral room arrangement: arches
Several arches span the distance between the individual supports for the crane lines that run through the hall - floating, light and flowing. The decorative modern arrangements refer to the arch form of the windows and the functional, generous, transparent character of the room. They create connection, without overly structuring the space.

Design proposal for the table decorations:
Floating metal cones
There is not much space on the tables for elaborate floral arrangements the tall slender ornaments instead create a structural visual space above. Blossoms cascading from narrow metal cones which are suspended from simple metal rods.

- Arches**
Floral material:
Tulipa- hybrids; French tulips
Zantedeschia, Calla
Papaver nudicaule, Iceland poppies
Aristea cyanea
Sandersonia aurantiaca
Forsythia x intermedia
Chamelaucium



- Cascades**
Floral material:
Eucalyptus coccifera bark
Tulipa - hybrids; French tulips
Zantedeschia
Papaver nudicaule
Aristea cyanea
Ranunculus-hybrids
Sandersonia aurantiaca
Forsythia x intermedia
Chamelaucium



Series of open air concerts with classical music.
Lasting several days.
Stage, open core area in the courtyard a castle.
Renaissance.
Plastered exterior walls. baroque cobbles.
White. Pink. Grey.
Light.
Façades with windows, doors, gates.
Friendly.
Open. Communicative. Awe inspiring.
Photographs. Sketches. Horizontal plans. Advertising material.
Plant boxes. Cone shaped plant containers. Columns. Columns with cut flowers.
Various types of roses.
Working drawings with references to the buildings.
Durability of the arrangements in summer conditions on an outdoor site. Safety of tourists on normal daily routines.



Southern gate wing with portal.



Gallery tract (later the stage area) .



Notes and flowers in harmony: Mid-German summer concert at castle Augustusburg



The courtyard was given a uniform visual design using plant containers in the shape of upside down cones. The cones refer to the triangular gable and the shape of the roof of the four main buildings on the corners.

The series of concerts is an open air event that taking place over some days takes place annually in the courtyard of the castle. The audience listens to classical music in the warm atmosphere of late summer.

The floral decoration had to cover the 18 metre long stage side, the positions left and right of the stage at the corners, the path in the courtyard and a separate chamber music area. The floral arrangements were exposed to the weather for several days. They had to remain fresh for the duration of the period of the event. There were frequent gusts of wind in the courtyard area. The inside of the castle is open to visitors before and after the concerts. The baroque cobbles are not only a challenge for the party shoes of the female guests but also for the stability of the floral pieces. The stone floor was also sloping.

The event space is light and generous. The symmetrical arrangement of the surrounding buildings creates a calm atmosphere in the courtyard and is thus a fitting location for a special musical experience.

Apart from photographs and drawings the horizontal plan drawings and advertising material from the museum shop help during the development stage of the ideas for the design.

The stage design referred to the classical portal with pillars at the northern courtyard entrance, which are each flanked by two columns. Thus here four column shaped pieces each with a height of 3.80 m were made and placed to the left and right of the stage. Due to the wind conditions, higher columns would have involved substantially more technical effort and would also have required a certificate from an engineering company with respect to the stability of the structures.



View of the stage from the back audience area.

The use of ladders was restricted and thus the care and maintenance of the plants in the arrangements would have been made substantially more difficult. It was not possible to erect the arrangement directly on the stage because of space constraints. Two of the column shaped arrangements were repeated on the stage opposite the core area of the chamber orchestra. The stage edges were decorated with rectangular plant containers, the arrangement and form mirroring the architrave running round the entire building.

In the courtyard the upturned cone shapes of the plant containers picked up the roof shape at the four corners of the main building. They were raised up on 1.8 m high metal stands, which in turn echoed the shape of the columns.

The colour combination in all the arrangements was matched harmoniously to the colour of the façade.

The design proposals were presented in the form of drawings of the individual arrangements as well as by means of a presentation portfolio in which the relation of the arrangements to the surrounding architecture was illustrated. The positions of the arrangements were also provided on a horizontal plan drawn to scale.

The frames of the columns were constructed out of 12 mm round metal rods, connected at the lower and upper with two triangles each. To simplify the transport they could be dismantled into two sections. The inner part of the columns was made of pieces of branches, that were tied to each other with wires and attached to the rods. The pieces of branches were used to attach the glass pipes and the floral material. The decision to use cut flowers in glass pipes was made for technical reasons, as plants and soil would have been very heavy and would have meant using additional plant containers. The technical effort would thus have been too great.



Planned stage edge decorations.



Entrance castle church – core area chamber music.

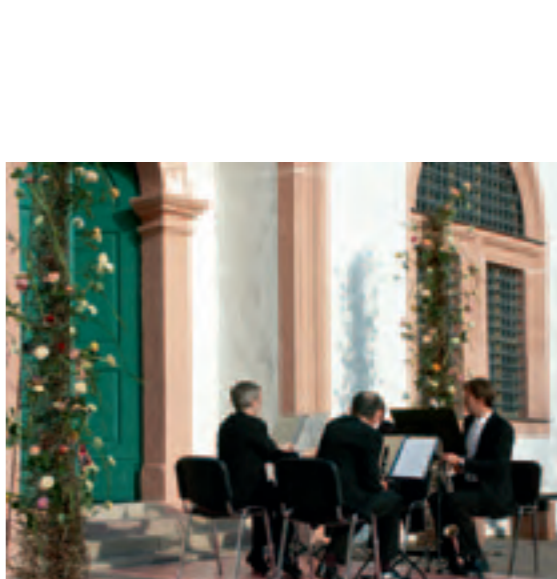
It was nonetheless imperative to ensure that the arrangements were stable. For this reason the columns were screwed down onto 12 mm thick and 80 x 80 cm large metal plates each weighing around 80 kg. In order to even out the height differences in the floor there were height adjusters at the corners. These were chosen to handle the heavy weight. It was not possible to use tie wires on the sides because of the danger of accidents, especially in the evening light.

For the arrangements round the edge of the stage commercial water boxes were used as plant containers. The boxes were hidden behind u-shaped metal blinds, so that they were only visible from the stage side. Water boxes have the advantage of being very stable and that water can be supplied to the plants over long periods. The time and effort associated with plant care is reduced as is thus the cost of maintenance.

In addition to their own weight the plant bowl stands in the courtyard were additionally weighed down with a triangular metal plate at the foot of the stand.

All the planted arrangements were planted a week before the beginning of the event to give the plants a chance to become upright again.

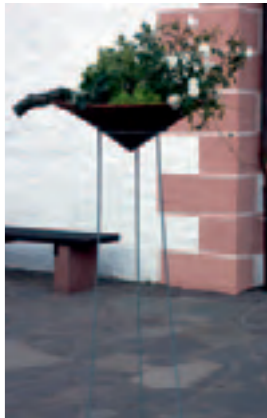
The entire maintenance effort was concentrated more or less exclusively on the six columns made of cut flowers. The glass pipes had to be refilled with water and dead material had to be removed. By using seasonal flowers (field roses) the need to replace the cut material was much reduced.



In the core area for the chamber orchestra opposite the stage two of the column shaped arrangements were repeated.



Arrangements at the sides of the stage area.



The plant containers were placed on 1.80 metre high metal stands, which also mirrored the column shape.

<p>State landscape garden association saxony.</p>	
<p>10 days.</p>	
<p>Exhibitions and party events.</p>	
<p>Charm thanks to un-renovated and only partially reconstructed elements of buildings. Baroque. Prepared as best possible.</p>	
<p>Predominantly visible sandstone.</p>	
<p>Beige, grey.</p>	
<p>Mixed light.</p>	
<p>Large window. Pillars. Columns. Niches. Round arches.</p>	
<p>Partly light, partly diffuse light.</p>	
<p>Impressive spatial effect. Dilapidated condition.</p>	
<p>Photographs. Size.</p>	
<p>Planned beds. Hanging and standing rods, with cut flowers (calla). Half moon shaped glass objects. Mirrors. Vertical transparency. Wall and niche designs.</p>	
<p>Spring flowering plants. Calla. Azaleas, Rhododendron, Hydrangea, Convallaria, Tulipa, Hyacinthus.</p>	
<p>Drawings, sketches, photographs, colour analyses.</p>	
<p>Complex spatial effect. Space in a space. Clever erection planning. The exhibition should captivate all the senses of the visitors.</p>	



Core of the flower arrangement was the 6 x 9 m area with a corridor down the middle. Around 1000 Calla suspended from the ceiling and floating above the floor captured the room with a powerful look – accompanied by half moon shaped art glass objects.

Spring awakening in historic surroundings: Dresden spring 2006

Already 200 years ago the Palais in the "Great Garden" in Dresden, which was exclusively used for the amusement of the Saxon court, was the site for diverse flower exhibitions. For the town of Dresden 800 year celebrations in 2006 it was decided to revive the tradition. Nearly 30000 visitors delighted in the early glory of flowers of the approaching spring. Saxon gardeners and florists had successfully lived up to the challenge to show, at a historically meaningful place, viz., the oldest baroque building in the town, what the industry was capable of. Together with some landscape architects, an artist couple, which had specialised in metal and glass art, as well as the Dresden Institute of Floristry a convincing concept was developed that once again showed what power flowers and plants have and how rooms and spaces can be given new life with floral room design. The Dresden spring celebrated an impressive premier.

The florists had the job of decorating a large part of the party hall and the niches and wall areas of the palace, to interpret rooms and spaces anew, to hide unsightly objects like heaters, and bring out worthwhile features.



The former party hall of the palace exudes a wonderful atmosphere despite architectural and construction short comings.



In the area at the front there was a plan for tulips in various colours and varieties. The floral design of the walls and the illuminated niches with baroque shell shapes supported the rest of the room design. To bring out the design of the wall and to cover the black heater light, printed cloth was used.



The design area measured 6 x 9 m. In the 6 m high room a 45 square metre sized area was to be given a small park to walk through with a compact and yet transparent design.



A space measuring around 1 m in height was planned for about 1.50 m above the ground, where the glass objects would float.



In the newly renovated ceiling area there were opportunities for mounting the arrangements to construction steel. The architect confirmed that the structures were strong enough for suspending the planned objects.



The whole installation was divided in the middle by a path into two same sized segments. The path was strewn with white granulate. The edges of the beds were rimmed with lilies of the valley. These additional design features connect the show to the baroque, with the 18th century love of geometric forms for parks and topiaries and demonstrated the power of the rulers.



Mirrors were popular design features in the 18th century which made rooms seem bigger. This period feature was also incorporated into the design.

Before the arrangement in the lower area could be started it was urgently required to finish the work in the upper area which demanded precise time planning.



The light conditions were very variable depending on the site.



The niches and arches are the only remaining features of the baroque interior.



Steel mats were hung from the ceiling around 1 m apart. 16 size wires were used to make hooks which were attached to them. In turn nylon string was attached to these and willow rods from the strings, covered with glass pipes.

The authors

Johanne de Carnée

Johanne de Carnée is floristry master and diploma holder in design. She completed her floristry education at the state technical college for floristry in Weißenstephan as well as the master school in Dresden with Peter Assmann. After two years of self-employment she worked as an educator at the Academy Überlingen in Verden and Oldenburg from 1984 – 1991, and then moved to the Dresden Institute of Floristry (DIF), of which she became the head in 2001.

In competitions in which she participated with the DIF she received numerous awards. E.g. at the federal garden shows 1995 in Cottbus, 1997 in Gelsenkirchen and 1999 in Magdeburg and at the IGA 2003 in Rostock as well as in competitions in Poznań / Poland and Hradec Králové / Czech Republic.

Johanne de Carnée is member of the technical worker and master examination committee of the IHK Dresden and is a member of the jury in diverse national and international competitions. She has moderated important floral events and competitions. She engages in numerous professional demonstrations and seminars at home and abroad in addition to carrying out her profession as well-known floristry teacher.

Both as a teacher and lecturer in technical worker and masters' examinations, she is especially closely associated with the theme and the examination subject of floral room design.

Denise Karsten

Denise Karsten completed her master examination in September 2005 at the Dresden Institute of Floristry (DIF). Since 2004 she has been mainly teaching design studies, style studies and drawing. She also works as an independent contractor in floral room design. She participated at various events together with the DIF team; including the IPM 2005 exhibition on the subject of funeral floral design, the BUGA Munich, the BUGA Gera, and in the floral design of the Church of Our Lady in Dresden. She twice won gold in the state awards together with the DIF-Team.

Torsten Meiner

After his education in Chemnitz and subsequent masters' examination at the German Institute of Floristry, Torsten Meiner set up his own florist shop as independent floristry master in Hohenstein-Ernstthal. He is also a lecturer in masters courses and adult education at the DIF. It is also his technical expertise and practical experience in building and erecting frames that makes him especially suited to be an expert in floral room design.

He successfully competed in local, state and federal competitions as well as international competitions such as in Poznań / Poland where he demonstrated his creativity. In 1997 he won the "Bronze Rose" in Chemnitz and in 1998 in Leipzig he won the "Silver Rose". Together with the DIF team he won numerous other awards at the federal garden show in Gelsenkirchen 1997 and in Magdeburg 1999 as well as at the IGA in 2003, the international garden landscape exhibition in Rostock.

He also attended trend events of the IPM in 1998 and IFLO in 2000 and numerous professional demonstrations in Europe and Asia as well as the 'leave taking and new beginnings' funeral floral design event of IFLO 2004.

Torsten Meiner is a member of the examination committee of the IHK in Chemnitz and of the masters' examination committee of the IHK Dresden. In 2000 and 2002 he was a judge at the "Golden Rose" awards. www.meiner-floristteam.de

Jürgen Potthoff

Jürgen Potthoff is a professional designer and Executive Director of a marketing agency that over the last 30 years has set itself the task of creating memorable brands for companies and organisations, to communicate their messages and to protect their intellectual property. And he does this as well for the green sector – from floristry shops to global plant producers.

As publisher of the Donau Verlag from 1996 to 2006, he created the visual appearance and was substantially responsible for the editorial content of the professional magazine 'florist' as well as the international magazine 'greenbusiness international'. The experience from this as well as from conceptual collaboration in various book projects with famous expert authors, prove him to be a successful entrepreneur of floral teaching and learning. His task in the book projects of FloralDesign Edition is to communicate the content in such a way as to facilitate learning.

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Further information is available in the picture and text references in the appendix.

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