



best private plots – Die besten Gärten 2012: International Garden Design Award Conferred

This year's international garden design award "best private plots" was conferred on Saturday, September 29th, 2012. The winners were Mann Landschaftsarchitektur from Germany, Ewa Wagnerová from the Czech Republic, and Christine Rottenbacher from Austria for the community garden project Angerdorf in Unterretzbach, Lower Austria. Honorable mentions went to doxiadis+ (Greece) and to 1:1 Landskab (Denmark). For information on the winning projects and images to download, see <http://www.privateplots.at/preistraeger.html>

The international garden design award "best private plots – Die besten Gärten" – an award coveted around the globe – was conferred for the fifth time this year. While the main prizes went to Japan and the US last time, European competition entries carried the day this year. The award, endowed with 15,000 euros, recognizes excellence in the design of sustainable private outdoor spaces, and promotes quality in garden design as well as global networking between landscape architects and garden enthusiasts.

More than 150 participants from around the world attended the award ceremony for best private plots 2012, which took place last weekend at the Essl Museum in Klosterneuburg near Vienna. The event highlighted gardens combining architecture, ecology and landscape as well-designed, inspirational and productive spaces, and as habitats that tell stories. The prizes were awarded by the expert jury convened by the organizers, consisting of Stig L. Andersson (DK), Franziska Bark Hagen (CH), Teresa Moller (CL), Vladimir Sitta (CZ/AU) and Tom Stuart-Smith (GB). From among 104 competition entries hailing from 26 countries, the jury nominated 29 projects. The final round of judging yielded the three winners and two honorable mentions, presented to the public on September 29th, 2012 by Lower Austrian Deputy Governor Wolfgang Sobotka during a festive ceremony moderated by Mercedes Echerer, with musical accompaniment by Bee Pop by Team Tool Time featuring Paul Divjak and Wolfgang Schlögl.

Catalog

The catalog "best private plots – Die besten Gärten 2012: Internationale Beispiele zu Gartenarchitektur" profiles the 29 projects nominated for the award in English and German. It also features essays by the jury members and speakers at the symposium. Catalogs can be ordered at www.privateplots.at/katalog.html

1st prize: Mann Landschaftsarchitektur, Germany – Garden Labyrinth, Erfurt

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The garden functions both as an image and as a physical, spatial experience. It offers great variety with a minimum of means, through a constant fluctuation of volumes and spaces. It extracts a maximum from a difficult sloping space and incorporates important elements from its previous life. It is a very seductive and inviting interpretation of the archetypal idea of the labyrinth. Although it is a private space, it also gains much from being overlooked by the surrounding houses for which this becomes a territory of imaginative wandering.

2nd prize: Ewa Wagnerová, Czech Republic – Trnka Garden, Brno

Copyright: Ewa Wagnerová



The project shows a clear spatial organization and carefully integrates the old and the new. It is a harmonious garden that seems exceptional and ordinary at the same time. It works well through the seasons, and the reflecting pond and long planks of paving form a poetic composition at the heart of the garden.

3rd prize: Christine Rottenbacher, Austria – Angerdorf, Unterretzbach

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The “Allmende” (village common) has been reintroduced to the local people for their enjoyment and to involve them in a common social responsibility for the neighborhood. The idea of the garden is the process of changing people’s everyday life so that garden work becomes part of life and enriches health and pleasure. Beauty on its own is not enough.

Honorable mention: doxiadis+, Greece – Landscapes of Cohabitation, Antiparos

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It is a brave decision to work in healing a landscape, keeping the line of time in the place, and resisting the temptation to introduce obvious and novel marks and materials. The nature of the interventions remains a little obscure in the presentation.

Honorable mention: 1:1 Landskab, Denmark – Courtyard Classensgade, Copenhagen

Copyright: 1:1 Landskab



This is an exceptional treatment of a space that is public as well as private. A dark courtyard is transformed into a metaphor of paradise through the motif of the carpet and fountain. The intriguing paving pattern is not quite supported by the quality of the other materials.

Criteria

The competition entries were judged on criteria including artistic and conceptual qualities, ecological use of plants and materials, delimitation of spaces and organization of outdoor spaces. Special attention was paid to variety of uses and sustainability.

Jury

The jury members are internationally renowned experts who pursue very varied and innovative approaches to questions of garden design and landscape architecture. The jury members also served as speakers at the international symposium on landscape design: Stig L. Andersson (DK), Franziska Bark Hagen (CH), Teresa Moller (CL), Vladimir Sitta (CZ/AU), Tom Stuart-Smith (GB).

Idea, concept and organization

Team private plots
Karin Standler, landscape architect
Christine Schatz, Doris Seebacher
Seidengasse 13/3, A-1070 Vienna
Phone: +43-1-5954549
Mobile: +43-664 2220322 (PR)
info@privateplots.at
www.privateplots.at

Sponsor

Land Niederösterreich, Natur im Garten
Umweltschutzverein Bürger & Umwelt
Landhausboulevard Haus 1, Top 1
A-3109 St. Pölten, Austria
post@naturimgarten.at
www.naturimgarten.at