

Chelsea flower show

Telegraph garden wins top prize at Chelsea flower show

Andy Sturgeon's depiction of landscape moulded by geological events is declared best show garden at horticultural event

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Designer Andy Sturgeon stands in his creation, the Telegraph garden. Photograph: Jonathan Brady/PA

Sources of inspiration ranged from algorithms to ancient oaks for designers taking coveted gold medals at the Chelsea flower show.

But it was Andy Sturgeon's dramatic depiction of a landscape moulded over millions of years by myriad geological events that clinched best show garden for the Telegraph at the world's most prestigious horticultural show.

Sturgeon's Captured Landscape had faced stiff competition. The M&G garden drew on designer Cleve West's teenage years spent in the ancient oak woodland of Exmoor to claim gold. "I think it's the best garden I've done here. So very happy," he said on receiving his medal.

Jo Thompson's Chelsea barracks garden, inspired by the development of the former barracks site next door to the show's royal hospital venue, also took a gold. It had been "a painful process, but it has been worth it," she said.



The best of the Chelsea flower show. Read more

James Basson's L'Occitane garden, a recreation of the edge of a lavender field, transporting visitors through colour and scent to the heart of Haute Provence, equally wowed the judges.

Sturgeon, however, had the edge. His bold design and attention to detail won the highest praise for a garden incorporating 17 huge bronze fins representing a mountain range, cool stream water, and semi-arid plantings echoing the chaparral of California's Sierra Madres and the Chilean Matorral.

His aim, he said, was to take visitors to an imagined landscape inspired by "things I have seen from my travels around the world and brought altogether into this place that existed only in my mind, until now".

It was a garden took 10 months to design, comprising 80 tonnes of stone, plants from France, Italy and Spain. It sought to highlight the need to adapt gardens to their environment and to changing climate.

Sturgeon, who has now won two best show garden awards, was "totally over the moon".

He had started as 2/1 favourite with bookmaker William Hill, but betting was suspended before the announcement because 100% of the wagers were placed on his garden winning.



The Morgan Stanley garden for Great Ormond Street hospital. Photograph: Neil Hepworth/RHS

"It appears that gardening is not one of our areas of expertise. We have clearly underestimated the Andy Sturgeon-designed garden which our green-fingered clients think is a certainty," said William Hill spokesman Rupert Adams, with the announcement still pending.

The Morgan Stanley garden for Great Ormond Street hospital, to which it will be relocated, also claimed one of the six show garden gold medals. The plant-rich design by Chris Bearshaw of woodland diversity, which features dappled shade, restful water and a rich green scheme sprinkled with pockets of colourful plantings, is designed to provide a reflective space for the families of children undergoing treatment.

Equally restful was Paul Martin's gold medal-winning Vestra Wealth garden of mindful living, which drew its inspiration from yoga and travel in the far east, to provide a calm space for a busy city worker.



The Harrods British Eccentrics garden. Photograph: Sarah Lee for the Guardian

Diarmuid Gavin's whacky Harrods British Eccentrics garden, with its revolving topiary trees, bobbing box hedge balls and levitating flower boxes proved, as some predicted, to be a little too out there for the judges, but did earn silver gilt. Nick Bailey's Winton Beauty of Mathematics, which translated mathematics and algorithms into a horticultural delight, was also among the eight silver gilt winners.

The best fresh garden award was claimed by the Marble and Granite centre with Antithesis of Sarcophagi, a stark and highly unusual garden within a giant 44-tonne granite cube, created by Martin Cook and Gary Breeze.

The fresh garden category aims to redefine the perception of the garden, taking a more conceptual approach, and embracing technology, trends and materials to create a truly innovative design.

The Modern Slavery garden, in which doors open a path to freedom from within iron railings in Juliet Sargeant's celebration of parliament passing the Modern Slavery Act in 2015, was awarded a gold medal.

Best artisan garden was given to Viking Cruises Mekong garden with Sarah Eberle's water garden drawing inspiration from the floating gardens of Cambodia and the Mekong river.

Senri-Sentei-Garage Garden, a garden for car enthusiasts who want to transform the car porch, and The Garden Bed - a partnership with Asda - which placed a hospital bed at the centre of a hospice garden, were both awarded artisan garden gold medals.

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