

Press Release - Local Landscape Architecture Firm Takes Out Prestigious Award - Growing Up Competition : 3rd Place Botanical Traditions

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Botanical Traditions is a Landscape Design Business based in Nunawading, Victoria. Started in 1996 the business focuses on sustainable landscape design at both the domestic and commercial scales.

The 'Growing Up Competition' was recently held and run by the committee for Melbourne 'Future Focus Group'.

The competition called for a design for a roof top garden for one of 3 buildings in the Melbourne CBD. The competition was open to all registered Architects, Members of AILA (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects) and AILD (Australian Institute of Landscape Designers and Managers) members.

In our current climate, green roofs are proven to provide significant reductions to the urban heat island effect, aid storm water management, provide important habitat links, reduce the energy demands of buildings as well as providing social and amenity value to buildings. However, there are very few roof top gardens in Australia.



Southern Roof Top Area

The 'Growing Up Competition' encouraged designers to demonstrate innovative and cost effective ways to retrofit roof gardens in Melbourne.

With this in mind, Botanical Traditions sought to transform the wasted roof top space into a unique garden space designed along sustainable lines, which would provide communal garden areas where friendships could be formed and neighbours met. The rooftop would become the social hub of the building allowing neighbours who usually might only pass in the hall to actually get to know each other.

The design, 'Beyond Expectations' of Manchester House on Flinders Lane, designed two distinctly separate spaces. The Southern Area utilized the warm sunny climatic conditions to create a large social gathering area complete with covered pergola, Raingarden and Kitchen. A Raingarden is a specially designed garden area that filters stormwater to remove nitrogen, phosphorous and suspended solids. Large planter boxes defined this space, function as seating areas and provide small more intimate seating areas for residents to enjoy the views of the bustling city below.

To the North, a communal productive vegetable garden and open pergola were designed to give residents the opportunity to grow and nurture their own fresh produce. The area can support fruit trees, herbs, vegetable and productive vines. The iconic garden shed is also included.

Between the two areas an elevated area which could be used by Researchers and Melbourne University to test different plants



Northern Roof Top Area

species for their suitability for roof top gardens.

The designers Ruth Czermak and Fiona Hurse, have a strong interest in sustainability and believe that huge environmental and other benefits can be gained through well planned landscaped areas.

They think that a good landscape design looks at the clients needs and the environmental needs of the site, doesn't conform to the latest fad and where possible include rainwater harvesting, treated greywater systems,

raingardens, recycled products, social areas and productive garden spaces should be part of most garden settings. They would like to see roof gardens installed on every new building - not only office or apartment builders but also new homes. Ruth, who will be renovating her original 1950's weatherboard is aiming to put one on her planned extension.

Key sustainable features which they included in the competition entry were an Integrated Water Management Strategy to capture all stormwater off the roof surface, solar hot water, photovoltaic cells, large productive areas and composting systems.



Fiona Hurse and Ruth Czermak



Plan and Elevation

Other projects which Botanical Traditions has been involved in include the design and implementation of Raingardens in Armadale Primary School, St Bedes Primary in Balwyn, St Johns Primary in East Melbourne, Clifton Hill Primary School, Flemington Primary School, and Debney Park Secondary. They have also designed a new playspace area including vegetable garden and rainwater harvesting at Monash Caulfield Kindergarten and Taralye Kindergarten. Their Integrated Water Management Plan for a Solar Power Plant in Rural Victoria was a finalist in the 2008 Greenplumbing Awards.

If you have any further questions please contact us.

Other information can be obtained from:

<http://www.botanicaltraditions.com.au>

<http://www.growingup.org.au/>

<http://greenroofs.wordpress.com/>