

the house & garden

top 50

garden designers

The pandemic has made many of us re-engage with our gardens and outdoor spaces, resulting in a huge surge in demand for garden designers. Among thousands of professional designers, we have chosen 50 who we think represent the top echelons of talent in the UK, each with an impressive portfolio of private gardens to their name. From promising newcomers to world-renowned figures, these designers are united by their drive for excellence and by their collective desire to work towards a better future for the planet.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

THE HEVENINGHAM COLLECTION

Harris Bugg Helen Elks-Smith Isabel & Julian Bannerman James Alexander-Sinclair Jane Brockbank Jane Brown, Jinny Blom Joe Swift John Davies Jo Thompson Julie Toll Juliet Sargeant

HARRIS BUGG

This year, the award-winning partnership of Charlotte Harris and Hugo Bugg designed the M&G Garden for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show and landscape displays at the Berlin Biennale. Current residential projects include a Cotswold property, where they are creating cutting, ornamental and productive gardens, and a feminist rose garden on the Isle of Man. 'Our work is informed by the spirit of place in each project, and we weave those narratives together with vernacular materials and exceptional planting,' says Charlotte. harrisbugg.com

ABOVE RIGHT Isabel and Julian Bannerman's garden at Trematon Castle in Cornwall. **BELOW RIGHT** A London garden by Jane Brockbank

HELEN ELKS-SMITH

Known for her client-centred approach to design, coupled with a sensitivity to site and an expertise in subtle, textured planting, Helen Elks-Smith says, 'My work is informed by a lifelong love for landscape and an intuitive understanding of the way gardens make us feel.' Her practice is currently adding the finishing touches to a New England-inspired coastal property, while working on contemporary town gardens and several large country projects. elks-smith.co.uk



ISABEL & JULIAN BANNERMAN

The Bannermans bring a touch of colour and bohemian magic to garden design. They have been creating dreamy, understated but abundant, flower-filled spaces together since 1983. 'We like to believe that we are protectors of the lost garden aesthetic,' says Isabel. 'Think wildflowers and long grass, rampant rambling roses, forgotten places and adventure. Gardens that make you feel like a child again.' The couple is currently busy working on a garden at their new home in Somerset. bannermansdesign.com

JAMES ALEXANDER-SINCLAIR

'I really enjoy a long, slow project rather than instant gratification,' says the flamboyant designer James Alexander-Sinclair. He is the chairman of the RHS Gardens Committee and a member of the RHS Council, and he writes and lectures about gardens, yet still finds time to add to his extensive portfolio. This includes gardens for a hospice in Norwich and a Lutyens-designed house in the Home Counties. James has kept his practice small and remains hands-on. jamesalexandersinclair.com



JANE BROCKBANK

Known for her London gardens, Jane Brockbank brings a sense of the countryside to the urban environment. With a background in fine art, she combines a painter's eye for planting with a love of modern design and craft, and mixes native wildflowers with more cultivated varieties. 'I think long term and ask myself, will this material age well? Will the planting get better with time?' janebrockbank.com