

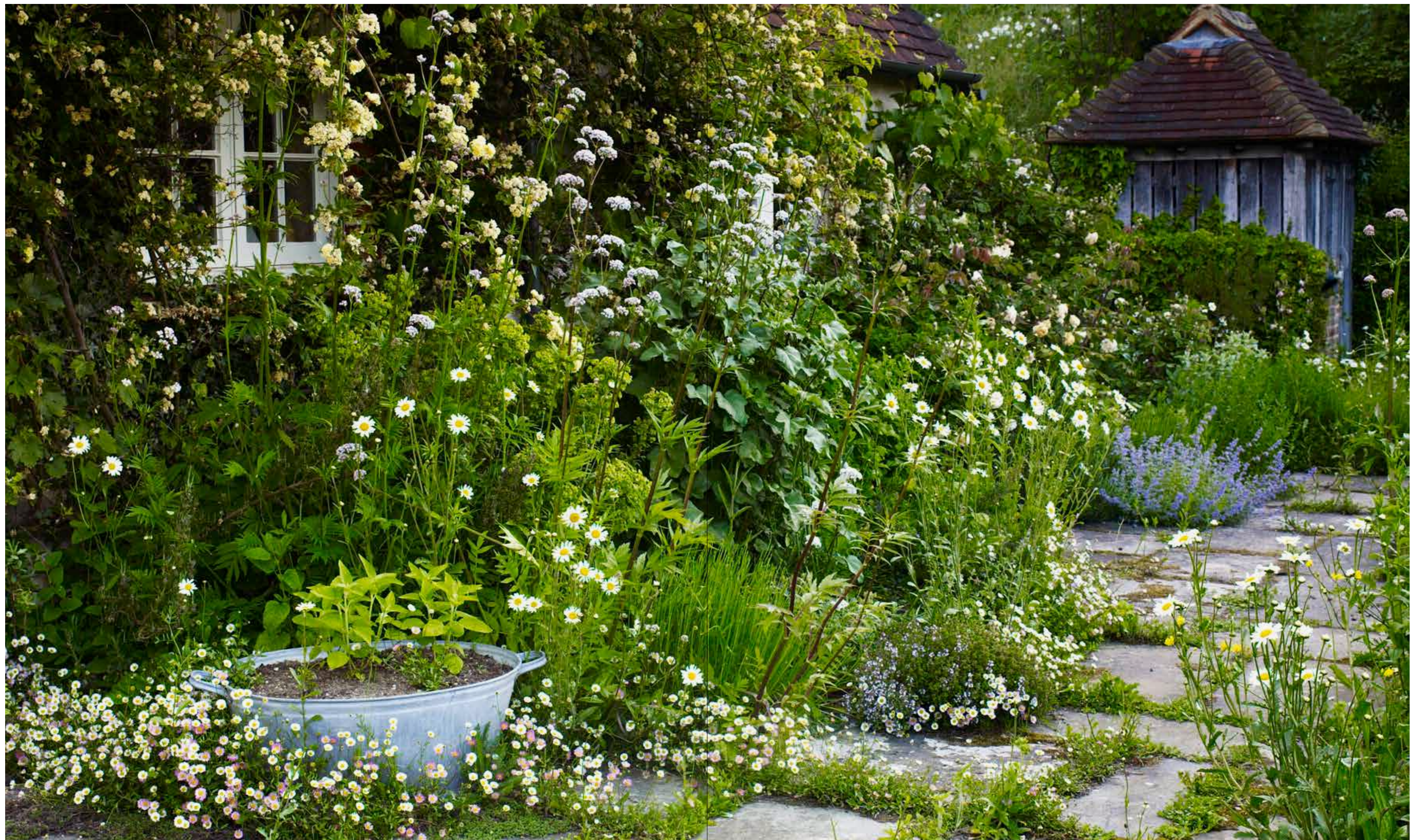


The Thoughtful Gardener

An intelligent approach to garden design

Jinny Blom

"Quote by Piet Oudolf to follow here" *Piet Oudolf*



The anti-garden – *husbandry vs. wildness*

ROLF'S FARM

WHAT IS WILD? For many of us the 'wild' has been reduced to a few dominant species occupying the interstices of our cities wastelands whilst the 'real' wild is accessible via nature programmes on TV and the increasingly rare cultures that survive in direct relationship to the earth. The so called 'wildlife' in my central London garden's environs is predominated by jays, magpies, crows and parakeets (a new introduction and a destructive one) grey squirrels – the best tree slayers we have, mange ridden foxes and nothing but rampant self sown sycamore and elder under scored with dock, nettle and bramble abounding on scraps of waste ground. A grisly collection of pest species and a terrible decline in all the birds and little creatures we used to see not so long ago.

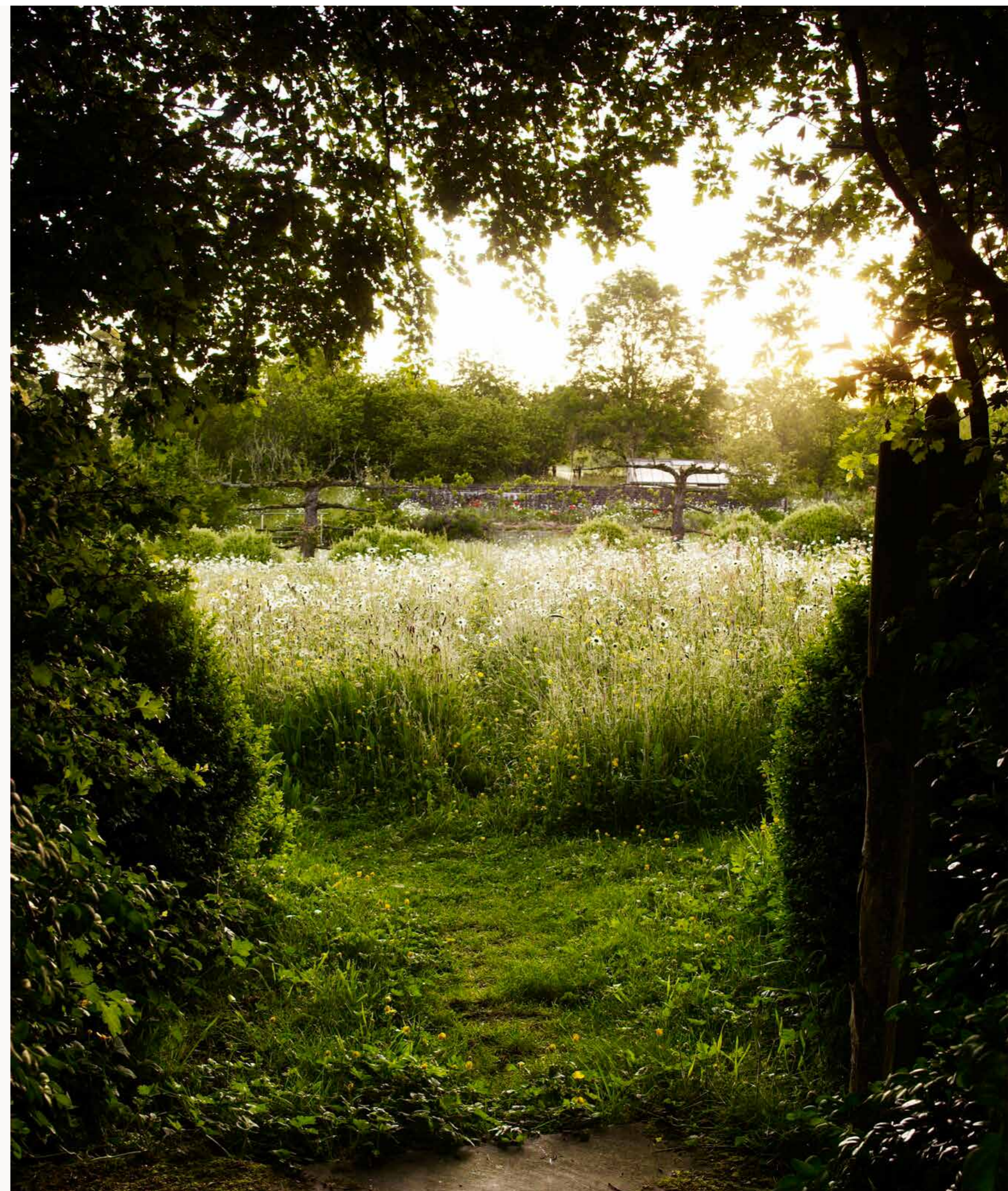
Gardening is on the luxurious fringes where one has tamed the earth and has sufficient spare time to start adorning it. It fascinates me that there is presently a fashion for 'wild' gardening. It's a very strange counter intuitive way of looking at land and I am very much caught up in it. The wilderness that has captured the gardening imagination is a rather Marie Antoinette-ish thing of pretty drifts of winsome wildings. Meadows, for example, are the product of farming and grazing patterns and to now be gripped with the urge to impoverish soil in order to weaken grasses and allow wild flowers to grow seems absolutely mad to me. Resolutely I believe in right plant right place and by all means embrace an aesthetic of disheveled randomness but never make a weak assertion that it is in any way truly wild. Re-wilding is an equally odd concept. We have spent millennia taming nature and have successfully done so in many overpopulated areas. It is rather a pompous idea that we then benevolently allow nature to have some of itself back! I genuinely believe that nature sorts itself out when the pressure of mankind's presence is lifted. In the interim though I'm not sure that the subject holds much depth in gardening. To garden is to create, to envision and to



tinker. However much one wishes to create the wilderness it can only be a construct and is therefore a garden.

I have tried to create a completely untended garden so I feel able to discuss this point from a position of experience. My patron whom is a very free thinking academic wanted to subvert a pleasant and perfectly comprehensible garden that surrounded her Tudor farmhouse in the country into something altogether wilder. Her premise

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Routes & views

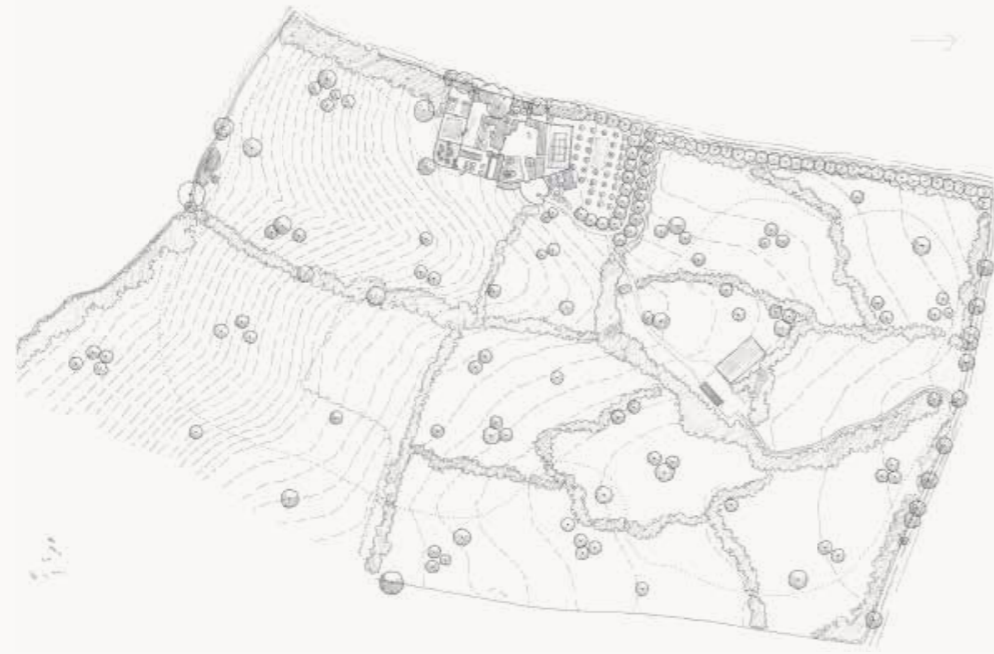
Seduction

I've always enjoyed order and the process of ordering things. Arriving at a new project I can see instinctively what is required to decongest a space and make it breathe freely. I manage the fundamental question of where everything that has been asked for in a brief goes. The lists are extensive and often includes swimming pools, tennis courts, formal gardens and informal gardens, drives, lakes and ponds, formal water, running tracks, garaging, woodsheds, woodchip boilers, chicken runs, cutting gardens, jungle gyms, zip wires... you name it!

My first act when structuring a new garden is always to do with the functionality of the place. I get involved in sizeable projects so this can be akin to Village Planning! Often we are reviving old estates with the accretions of years on them and it is vital to decide what stays and what goes early on. I love this process and it translates down even to smaller gardens such as my own. Where space is at a premium it is really important to make clear judgments about what goes where and why. Every view matters and in a small garden there is no margin for error. Equally this applies to the proportion of space each activity or incident has.

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Water

Light & mutability

Another of the great miracles of unassertive intelligence revealed to me during these sojourns in France and which I still love now is the magnificently clever use of water. On every project I try and use the beautifully synsethised watery thinking even though modern life has taken it and contorted it beyond reach because of the demand. It's obvious to anyone- I hope- that without water, especially clean water, there is no life. So even modestly, it must be considered and treated respectfully.

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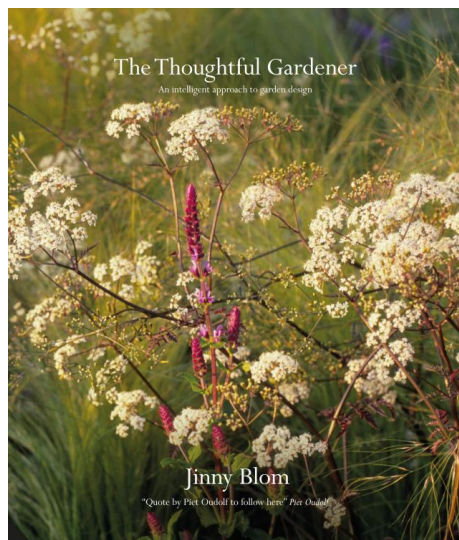
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THE THOUGHTFUL GARDENER AN INTELLIGENT APPROACH TO GARDEN DESIGN

By Jinny Blom

- Jinny is writing a design series for *Gardens Illustrated* and has significant articles in place with *House & Garden* to coincide with the book launch, as well as speaking at the Gardens Illustrated Festival in Gloucestershire in March 2017.
- The book is based on Jinny's personal experience of creating many varied gardens, but the approaches explored could be applied to any garden in any part of the world.
- Jinny Blom is a leading garden designer whose innovative and uniquely thoughtful work has been much lauded and featured in the international press. She has designed more than 250 gardens all over the British Isles, Europe and the United States.
- Jinny was awarded the coveted gold medal at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2007 for her Laurent-Perrier garden. She won a silver-gilt medal at Chelsea in 2002 for her 'Healing Garden', created in collaboration with The Prince of Wales, and at Chelsea in 2013 she created a garden commissioned by Prince Harry's charity, Sentebale.
- Jinny has been nominated Woman of the Year an unprecedented three times for her services to society through her work. Jinny continues her role as Artist in Residence at Chelsea & Westminster Hospital.

A prolific designer, Jinny Blom embraces a wide variety of styles, from formal walled gardens to contemporary installations. What defines her work is her skill with plants and her ability to create a garden that responds to the history of the site and the wider landscape. In this book, Jinny shares her insight into the creative process she has developed while designing more than 250 gardens around the world.

For Jinny, design is more a matter of intelligence and appropriateness than imposing a particular style. As such, her approach can be applied to any garden. You can take inspiration from Jinny's principles and apply them to your own garden, whatever the shape, size of plot or aspect, to make it work for you and for your situation, giving enormous satisfaction for years to come.

Reflecting Jinny's highly individual character, there is plenty of wit and quirkiness alongside the expert knowledge, and it will appeal to the widest audience of garden lovers. Thoughtful and beautiful, yet practical and informative, this book marries artistry with functionality.

Author Information

JINNY BLOM has enjoyed a meteoric rise as a landscape and garden designer since she began her London-based practice in 2000. Jinny works on a wide range of projects, taking her across the UK, Europe, the United States and Africa. She has exhibited at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show four times, collaborating with HRH The Prince of Wales on a Healing Garden in 2002, and designing a garden for HRH Prince Harry for the RHS centenary show in 2013. She won the gold medal at Chelsea in 2007 with a garden for Laurent-Perrier. She has been a columnist for *The Times* and has appeared in a wide range of publications.