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Colourful National Trust garden wins people's choice award at Chelsea Flower Show

The Octavia Hill Garden won in a public vote despite not scoring top with the judges

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24 May 2024 • 8:55pm



A National Trust garden filled with colourful plants has won the people's choice award at [the Chelsea Flower Show](#), despite not getting top scores from the judges.

The Octavia Hill Garden, designed by Ann-Marie Powell, has a broad use of colour that bucked the trend at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) of gardens that focused on

foliage and ferns over flowers.

The garden, which came top in a public vote organised by the BBC, includes raspberry foxglove and orange and scarlet geums.

Mrs Powell said she believed the garden had proven popular with the public because of the “colour and the plants, and the fact that they can imagine themselves in it. It’s a relatable garden.”



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The garden includes raspberry foxglove and orange and scarlet geums | CREDIT: Paul Grover for the Telegraph

The garden also won the first Children's Choice Award, but missed out on gold from the RHS judges, scoring silver-gilt.

Mrs Powell said that although she had been surprised and disappointed to miss out on gold, she had been "most sad for my husband", Jules, who is ill with terminal cancer.

"I really wanted to get a gold while he was alive," she said. "So this People's Choice Award has meant an awful lot to me."

She added that winning the public vote "means more than any medal, that accolade from the children and the people".

She said: "My husband has supported my career for decades and I am just thrilled that although he is very ill he is still around to see me win this award, I know he will be very proud and I couldn't have done this without him."



The garden was inspired by Octavia Hill, one of the National Trust founders, who first called for a green belt in the 19th century
| CREDIT: Paul Grover for the Telegraph

The garden is based on an urban brownfield site, and was inspired by Octavia Hill, one of the founders of the National Trust, who first called for a green belt in the 19th century.

Mrs Powell said she had “never really cared about being trendy”.

She added: “I’ve always loved colour, so I’ve always been slightly unfashionable, I suppose.”

“We’ve mixed it up with a lot of texture as well, so that it still feels quite restful, even though towards the end of the garden we’ve got a lot of pinks and blues,” she said.

“People feel like they can relate to this and potentially they can do it. And I’ve always advocated for that because I love what I do so if I can spread a bit of joy and know-how, then I’m dead happy.”

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