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Garden Design 1: Art of Design

A first level design course for OCA written by Peter Boswell & Adrian Tinniswood

The course helps students to:

- understand and use site surveys and consider matters relating to a designated site and its use
- explore aspects of design method, including problem solving and design generation and refinement
- understand design principles including: response to a brief, three-dimensional design, defining space, pattern, planting, colour theory and designing for change through time
- work with the components of gardens including hard and soft elements, level change, water and ornament
- have knowledge of the historical context of garden design as a context to the studies and to generate new ideas
- develop and use the drawing skills required in the course work.

Course content

The course offers the beginner, or partly informed student, a general knowledge of garden design which spans most aspects of the subject. This includes consideration of the site and its intended use, an introduction to problem solving, design generation and refinement. Basic design principles such as 'defining space', three-dimensional design, colour theory and designing for change through time are discussed. The components of the garden,

hard and soft elements, level change, water and ornament are studied. Historical examples give a valuable context to the work and a launchpad for new ideas. The course concludes with the production of a complete design. The drawing skills to do the work can be developed as the work progresses. Horticultural skills are referred to, but the course does not concentrate on them in detail, emphasising the design aspect of the subject.

Teaching methods

The course provides you with a series of projects that are supported by distance learning techniques. At certain points in the course your work will be seen by your tutor, and answers to any specific questions you have.

You can get credits for your course too

If you want to have your work recognised you can gain credits towards a full qualification in art. To do this you present a portfolio of your work on the course, including work on specific projects, for assessment.



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