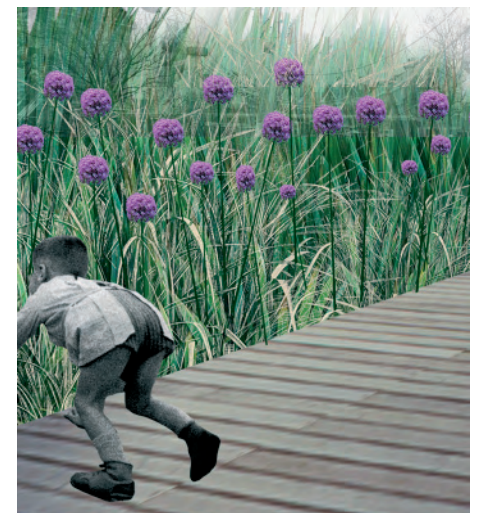


jubilee **gardens**

GROSS . MAX.

Landscape Architects



1.0 APPROACH + VISION

Q: You once, rather cheekily, referred to Jubilee Gardens as the Bermuda Triangle of British architecture where proposals mysteriously disappeared without trace.....

A: You could argue that this has been Jubilee Garden's saving grace; after all those years the garden is no longer considered as a mere excuse for built development, but as an important cultural and recreational facility in its own right.

Q: In a city defined by its parks how would you envisage Jubilee Gardens?

A: Size does matter and therefore Jubilee Gardens, as its name implies, is not so much a park but rather a public garden. While many of the large parks struggle due to lack of both funding and programme there is a renewed interest in the role of the garden to provide intense experiences of both nature and recreation right in the very centre of the city.

Q: A green spot on a red stain?

A: It would be a mistake to look at Jubilee Gardens in isolation; it is part of a network of public open space not only along, but also perpendicular to the River Thames.

Q: You often state that you like to reveal the different layers of the landscape not unlike the sensuous act of striptease?

A: For us as landscape architects it is important to design for each specific location; this involves careful research in each site history and its wider urban context. Equally important is to understand the fabric of the city as a direct result of its natural substrate.

Q: How does such approach influence your design for Jubilee Gardens?

A: This whole area is formerly known as Lambeth Marsh. This specific condition was detrimental for urban expansion and allowed for other, more rural and extensive land-uses close to the very heart of London. As result you found a lot of gardens, in the first instance nurseries to supply the ever growing desire for plants, often exotic species collected from Britain's ever expanding colonies. Many of those nurseries developed into pleasure gardens. We like both to represent the various soil types originally found in this river Thames floodplain landscape as well to reinterpret the notion of the pleasure garden as source of inspiration.



Q: Some of the pleasure gardens became of ill repute....

A: Well that's what pleasure does to you...., but seriously, during their heydays they provided a marvelous combination of entertainment such as music, fireworks, illumination against the backdrop of foliage, flowers and walkways.

Q: The name Belvedere Road itself seems to suggest a direct link with the notion of the pleasure garden?

A: Indeed; it was the name of an estate strategically positioned in the bend of the River Thames; the present location of the Royal Festival Hall. From historic maps we also learned that the shoreline here at the South Bank was occupied by timber wharfs and sawmills. We reflect upon this in our design by our proposed wooden boardwalks.

Q: On first impression your design for Jubilee Gardens is based on a strong contrast between a series of intimate stroll gardens and a large field for events?

A: We believe this contrast works well in answer to the brief. High quality landscapes often have a certain tension between opposites such as open / enclosed, extrovert / introvert, bold / delicate, high culture / low cultureIn other words: ZEN + XTC = JUBILEE



Q: Your design seems to ignore the diagonal desire lines across the sites?

A: We consciously wanted to filter people through the site in a more subtle way. This allows for the gardens to become more than just a short cut and a through route. It also allows for an uninterrupted event field of considerable size.

Q: Like Nigel Kennedy your whole career seems to be based on an endless interpretation of the four seasons?

A: Aha... you try to suggest we're a one trick pony! Yes true, to be landscape architects means that we have rather limited means and interpreting the seasons is a powerful one. Just a wide expanse of grass would not have done the trick. It is important to experience nature right in the very heart of a metropolis like London. We looked for a mixture of plants to express all seasons, not just spring and summer.

Q: But you hardly strike me to be closet naturalists?

A: Oh no, we like to manipulate and extrapolate; after all we're horticulturists. We create certain condi-

tions for plants to thrive, as you can see we introduce mist gardens, trellises, floating gardens and even a heated garden wall for the growth of lush tropical plants.....

Q: No water feature?

A: Our first proposals contained an elongated water feature, but we all know about the “Diana Effect” and we decided that we can look for other attractions with less health and safety problems such as our proposed mist gardens. Everybody can now experience the famous “Foggy London” regardless of the actual weather!

Q: You're not replacing the “Diana Effect” with the “Camilla Effect”

A: You are cheeky!

Q: What will happen in the garden at night?

A: Like the original pleasure gardens illumination can create a most wonderful experience....We even thinking about creating a nocturnal garden with plants which smell and flower at night.... We actively like to promote the idea of evening use. Of course you could not do this anywhere, but here at the South Bank, in a relative small and well controlled space with potentially large flow of people, we think we can.

Q: Some people will regard Jubilee Gardens as the doormat to the wheel...

A: The wheel has become an amazing success story in its own right. Many people would recognise it now as London’s one and foremost landmarks. It shows the omnipotence of architecture and engineering. Jubilee Gardens should not compete but complement. In order to avoid becoming a ‘doormat’ it is important where you locate the actual door; in our case we avoided a too obvious access route directly focussed on the wheel. We believe this for operational matters for both the London Eye and Jubilee Gardens itself.

Q: What about the future relation of Jubilee Gardens with the Hungerford car park site...?

A: I thought you never dare to ask. In any family there is the one uncle never mentioned. ...We can be frank and we believe the site can do with a new cultural building alongside the elevated railway track. Such a building would complement the new Royal Festival Hall extension building on the other side. The same pattern of the language of linear strips introduced in the gardens can be extended in a newly designed elongated plaza. Steps and ramps will negotiate the level difference. It will be important to have



cafés and restaurants facing the public plaza and the gardens beyond on the ground floor. The boundary hedge as shown on our drawing could be reconsidered as part of such development.

Q: Events, no doubt, will be the one issue of controversy....

A: It's a matter of balance. Of course being part of the South Bank creates this great potential for the most amazing outdoor cultural events. We acknowledge this and cater for such events including a well considered stage as part of the overall scheme. Equally important is not to overwhelm Jubilee Gardens with events which are simply too large to handle. Like any garden party at the end of the day; you need a garden as well as a party...

Actually the idea of programming the park is an interesting one.

Q: How would you service the events?

A: The stage is carefully located so that we can provide back stage service access from Belvedere Road. In order to avoid conflict we provided a special service entry into the gardens which allows for heavy vehicle access.

For occasional use there is the possibility to allow the same service entrance to provide access from Belvedere Road to Queens Walk as well. Obviously we will accommodate facilities to allow events such as additional sewer connections, water and electricity points. We tried however to let the park not to be dominated by this infrastructure in order to allow occasional events; nothing as sad as an empty stage or empty amphitheatre.....

Q: We understand your concept of filtering people through the park, but where can we actually sit and relax?

A: The gardens will provide a whole range of seating arrangements; from scattered seats and benches along the boardwalks to a series of very intimate gravel gardens with elongated benches located within the actual planting strips. The events field is framed with a timber edge detail on both sides of the hedge which will act as an XXL seat.

Q: To our surprise the main orientation of the gardens is towards Belvedere Road instead of the river Thames?

A: The relation between Jubilee Garden and Belvedere Road is critical. Since we create a public garden it should connect to the surrounding residential areas. We create a clear frontage to the park along Belvedere Road with a series of steps and ramps and these can easily be extended towards the newly proposed plaza in front of the Royal Festival Hall. Don't forget the whole refurbishment of the Shell Centre entails retail and other activities on the ground floor as well. We predict Belvedere Road will become



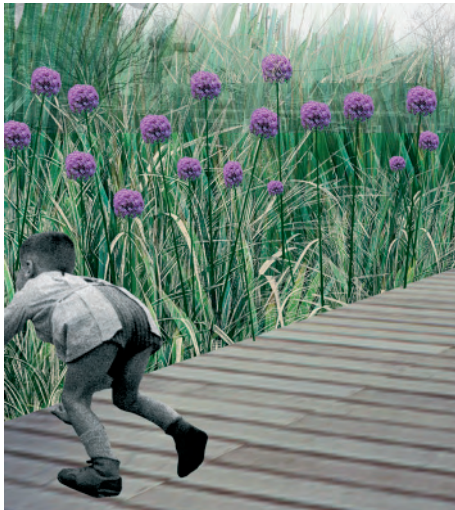
an important promenade; we therefore propose to change its width and overall appearance.

Q: What about play...

A: The existing play ground happens to be well used; not to reinstate a playground in the refurbished Jubilee Gardens would be a mistake. The location of our suggested playground allows it also to be used for people visiting the wheel. Throughout the park there would be clusters of toddler play opportunities as well. Of course the big events field invites for all kind of play such as ball games; we came to the conclusion that a flat field is actually the most versatile for a whole wide range of use.

Q: Some people, mostly retired architects, propose to reinstate the Skylon

A: Interesting how the Modernists of yesterday have become the Conservationist of today! Well that is what progress does to you. Don't hope it will ever happen to us. As much as we love the Skylon we believe re-erection would be a flat tonic for the nation for the very simple reason that now we have the London Eye instead. Both structures would compete for attention and create an overly too complex skyline.



Q: Compared to some of the other competition entries your design looks rather restrained?

A: You mean we don't have large landforms, amphitheatres and other gimmicks. We promote a new sense and sensitivity... We're not particular interested in one-liners. We prefer to whisper sweet garden verses in your ear instead. We like the idea to invite contemporary composers to create ambient sound-tracks for the garden. The garden should be regarded as a cultural event in its own right.

Q: We've always stated that we're looking for the right design team rather than the right design.

A: Aha...this could be the beginning of a beautiful friendship. Our attitude always has been to work in close collaboration with all people involved. We will commit ourselves to an extensive process of public consultation. Not by hiring specialist consultation consultants, but hands on with us a designers around the table. The South Bank can not afford yet another miraculous design disappearance.....Our current design proposal is a statement of intent; an open invitation to further exploration.

2.0 KEY OBJECTIVES

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AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- 1 JUBILEE GARDENS AS A SUSTAINABLE GREEN OPEN SPACE
- 2 A WORLD CLASS GARDEN CAPABLE OF MATURING AND EVOLVING OVER TIME, CHANGING WITH THE SEASONS AND PASSING HOURS IN THE DAY
- 3 A SAFE, CLEAN, FRIENDLY GARDEN THAT PROVIDES ACCESS FOR ALL
- 4 AN INTERESTING AND INTERACTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL AGES AND USERS, WHICH PROMOTES DISCOVERY AND INTERACTION
- 5 A PLACE FOR PUBLIC EVENTS AND PRIVATE CONTEMPLATION
- 6 A PLACE FOR RESIDENTS, WORKERS, VISITORS AND TOURISTS
- 7 A PLACE FOR BIO DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY
- 8 A GARDEN THAT REFLECTS UPON ITS OWN DISTINCTIVE LOCAL HISTORY
- 9 A GARDEN WITH CLEAR ACCESS AND THROUGH ROUTES FRAMING VIEWS AND SIGHTLINES AND WELL LIT AT NIGHT
- 10 A GARDEN AS A WORK OF ART; A CREATIVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN DESIGNERS, ARTISTS AND ENGINEERS

3.0 METHODOLOGY

We will ensure that the Jubilee Gardens project will be of the highest quality in terms of its thought, design, production and management. To reflect the strategic importance of the project all of the three partners of GROSS. MAX. will contribute their specialized skills. As such the running of the project will be carefully overseen and backed up by the appropriate programming and administration.

Our fee proposal is based on analysis of all the elemental stages of development as outlined in the Master Programme. For each stage we set out resource cost, time period and action to be achieved and compared this with our office programming in order to ensure the resources available to achieve it.

The project will be covered, besides the team of the three partners, by a dedicated project team of senior landscape architect combined with project architects and technicians to allow continuity throughout period of the project.

Monthly internal office reviews throughout the duration of the project will monitor progress made against a clear programme of critical dates.

While we can confirm that we can deliver the completion dates of the target programme we are aware that working with a multi-headed client team and commitment to public consultation can cause delay in decision making progress. Obvious the target programme is tight and allows for no slippage.

4.0 COMMUNICATION

GROSS. MAX. has been involved in many projects where inclusion and co-ordination of a wide variety of partners, stakeholders and user groups was of paramount importance. Over the years we have learned to appreciate the subtle but important culture of consensus between all parties involved. We believe this demands a clear, open and well structured design process. To achieve high quality public open space means to raise the aspiration of all involved. It is important to create an atmosphere in which people become truly involved and start to believe in creative ideas.

The Jubilee Gardens project comprises of a variety of partners, stakeholders and users groups. The process to create Jubilee Gardens has already started including initial consultation and it will be important to build upon the achievements reached so far. We would propose to have structured programme of regular Steering Group meetings and a series of design workshops.

Focussed discussion in design workshops allowed for participation and sense of ownership of the projects outcome. Direct debate between designers and stakeholders /residents allows for a dialectic process in which knowledge is shared and solutions tested.

Regular steering group meetings will allow for continuous feedback, advice and endorsement. While design workshops focused upon what should happen; the steering group meetings concentrated upon how to make it happen.

The size of the steering group means that more regular, fortnightly, meetings with a more streamlined stakeholder group could be considered.

We also would welcome meetings with the additional stakeholders groups and representations of access groups to ensure inclusive design will become an integral part of the proposed scheme.

We propose an open public meeting as part of the strategic brief development followed by a series of two design workshops during the scheme design process at stage C. These design workshops should be based on open invitation of all interested parties. Subsequently stage C can be presented for final endorsement to the public at large as conclusion of the stage C design.

5.0 DESIGN TEAM MEMBERS

DESIGN TEAM

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GROSS . MAX .

STRUCTURE FOR JUBILEE GARDENS

