



Pure indulgence at Orticolario Show

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ERBA, Italy: The fifth edition of Sunday 6 October saw the conclusion, at Villa Erba on Lake Como, of the fifth edition of Orticolario, an event dedicated to evolved gardening, this year inspired by the sense of taste, with its *I Sinful Indulgences in the Garden* .

Despite the poor weather forecast, over 20,000 visitors attended this edition, braving the cold and rain to explore all the novelties and surprises that Orticolario had in store: not just flowers, plants and gardening-related objects but also six creative gardens in the Villa Erba Park, tasty round tables and the evocative *Wild Greenery+ jungle* created by Rattiflora in the Central Pavilion and decorated with the hyper-realist sculptures by Michele Vitaloni, depicting wild animals such as gorillas, rhinos, snakes, lions and butterflies. The sponsor and guest of honour this year was Laudomia Pucci, Vice President and Image Director of Emilio Pucci.

Over 250 exhibitors attended, originating from all across Italy and from abroad, including some who had attended since the first edition and also some new exhibitors, both nurserymen and craftsmanship producers of garden objects and furniture and products of natural origin. They all had in common and were characterised by the high quality of their offering.

Orticolario has grown steadily over the years and has continuously increased its number of exhibitors, commented Moritz Mantero. However, what we are aiming for is not quantity. even though undoubtedly a more extensive offer of products achieves greater satisfaction among the public. but, rather, quality. Not just curious and original proposals but, in particular, refined products in terms of their aesthetic appearance and presentation. We want to convey the message that attention to beauty can and should also be addressed to the garden, the balcony, our green space. Elegance, excellence and botanical education are the original guidelines traced out by Alfredo Ratti, who recently passed away.

Attention that is also rewarded by the evaluations made by the specially composed juries. On Friday 4 October, before Orticolario was opened to the public, the technical and aesthetic juries and the new gardens jury actually visited all the exhibitors and selected the best proposals.

The aesthetic jury (coordinated by Emilio Trabella and consisting of Lisa White, Paul Boerrigter, Gaetano Zoccali, Ester Maria Negretti and Alberto Grossi) assessed the arrangements of the exhibition spaces and gave awards to the most innovative, harmonious and elegant arrangement.

The winner was *Il Giardino*. Azienda Floricola for its spectacular journey of discovery, albeit prepared in a small space.

Second place went to *AnnaFlowersDesigner*. Aesse Furniture for its harmonious, inviting and interactive composition, expertly combining vegetables and flowers.

In third place, on the other hand, was *Vivai Omezzolli*, jointly with *Carrer Franco e figli Giardini*. Landalab, for the simplicity and elegance of the scenic composition prepared on different levels, combining fruit trees and perennials.

The aesthetic jury awarded three special mentions: to *Arborea Farm S.S. Società Agraria* for the use of wild aquatic plants in a romantic composition; to *Demetra Società Cooperativa Sociale Onlus* for its excellent organic geometric presentation which wonderfully highlighted the product, and to *Arrosoir & Persil* for the poetic and always beautiful collection of small animals in recycled iron which, year after year, gives life to new shapes.

The technical jury (coordinated by Giovanni Ratti and composed of Antonio Perazzi, Valter Pironi, Sophie Agata Ambroise, Anna Maria Botticelli and Pier Giorgio Campodonico) assessed the breadth of the collection, the attention to research and the rarity of the species proposed by the nurserymen.

First prize went to *La Chicca*. Azienda Agricola for the wide collection of minor fruits cultivated with passion and tested personally: in particular, for its collection of *Goji (Lycium barbarum and*

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Lycium chinense) also with black fruit (Lycium ruthenicum).
 Second prize was awarded to Arborea Farm S.S. Soc. Agr. which, starting from work on the land, recovers and preserves riparian varieties (riverbank plants) and selects natural vegetation. It has in its catalogue a huge range of ecological ornamental plants which strongly represents its territory (Veneto).
 Third prize went to Pépinières Braun for the collections of shrubs and climbing plants and in particular for a rare Clerodendrum fragrans.
 The technical jury also awarded four special mentions: to Riboni Alfredo Floricoltura for the vast collection of natural miniature exotic orchids in a wide range of varieties; to Priola Pier Luigi Azienda Agricola for the collection of asters and for various new introductions, including a double-flowering, scented Dianthus; to Vivai delle Commande with, notably, the American herbaceous, pink and yellow, double, scented Sorbet peony and, finally, to Vivai Torre for a new variety of white fruit of the Messina olive (Olea Ggliarola messinese).
 New for this year was the gardens jury (coordinated by Ivan Bellini and consisting of Virgilio Piatti, Maurizio Vegini, Rossana Porta, Emanuela Rosa Clot, Novella Cappelletti, Gildo Spagnolli, Maria Vittoria Bianchini and Pierluigi Ratti) which chose the winner of the international competition . aimed at garden architects and designers, artists and nurserymen . for the creation of spaces and creative gardens in the Villa Erba Park. Winner was Tutti giù per terra (We all fall down!) by Barbara Negretti and Archiverde for the harmony of the installation, for the botanical selection and for its feasibility in a real garden, which was awarded the Lake Como Golden Leaf Prize.
 Designed and created exclusively for Orticolario by Gino Seguso of Archimede Seguso Art Glass, the award is a sinuous vase created on the island of Murano (Venice) on which a large leaf is floating, inside which hints of pure gold (24K) shine through. The Prize is unique. It will be given to the winner who will retain it for a limited period, only then to be displayed in the magnificent Villa Carlotta in Tremezzo on Lake Como, until the next edition.
 The gardens jury also proposed the award of a special price Giardino d'artista (Artist's garden) to Capriccio Italiano by Vittorio Peretto, while the special mention Colpo di cuore (Bolt of the heart) was awarded to Orto è benessere by Carla Testori, for the quality of the plants and for the strong social function of the arrangement.
 The awards were provided by Compo, a German multinational based in Italy which works in the hobby market and offers a complete range of easy to use products meeting all requirements for flowers, plants, vegetable and gardens, from planting at home to nutrition and defence. In addition, it boasts the distribution of brands known at international and national level such as SANA® for soils and Floranid® for lawn fertilisers.
 Do not forget: Orticolario is the brainchild of a group of friends who, as well as being passionate about plants and gardens, wanted to devote special attention to solidarity. Money donated during the events is actually used for charitable purposes in favour of local associations which help disadvantaged people.
 Orticolario 2014 will be held from 3 to 5 October.