

OCTOBER 2020

TEXAS

in Bloom





Making Texas Floral Education Possible

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FROM THE *President*



TSFA President
Gina Waters AAF TMFA

We all must welcome change from time to time. It seems that, recently, changes have repeatedly knocked on our door! There simply is no better time than when fall is in the air to welcome change as well as the hope for cooler temperatures. The lovely fall colors, whether it is outside our doors or within the doors to our floral cooler, provide inspiration. The season brings much joy and happiness, as well as opportunities to all of us to make the most of our business. I get so excited when the fall color florals arrive. The seasonal products stimulate creativity and bring a new excitement to floral design. Let these products energize you so that you may bring the beauty of the season to the homes of your customers!

Fall also brings the same excitement in TSFA with numerous projects and meetings. The TSFA Fall Board Meeting is scheduled with a lot of ideas and plans in place for our committees to execute an amazing year with in-person events in 2021 and so much more. The year 2020 is kind of a blur and has seemed to come and go quickly. Reflecting back at the days of the pandemic, I do feel that it brought forward some points of consideration to our industry. Many have been reminded of the effects of sending and receiving flowers. The service that we provide has been most appreciated by our customers and seen us through these times. I feel so blessed to be in the flower business and be able to help my customer's express their feelings in flowers.

Whether you are new to TSFA or have been a member for many years, our association wants to hear from you. I am an email or a phone call away! Visit tsfa.org and get involved! There is so much offered through our association. Watch for the in-person events coming soon and plan to attend. It is truly an amazing time to be in the floral industry. TSFA encourages you to get involved!

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples." - Mother Teresa

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of *TEXAS in Bloom* for complete information!

Ian Prosser

AAF AIFD PFCI NDSF

Queen Elizabeth. Grace Ormonde. Tom Cruise. Katie Holmes. John Lynch. Kirstie Alley. Ian Prosser's list of accolades and achievements, as well as the list of celebrities he counts as clients, runs long. Ian approaches each event with the utmost creativity and care, making him one of the most sought-after floral designers in the world.

Ian began his career more than 30 years ago and he has owned successful floral shops in both Scotland and Tampa, Florida. His current business, Botanica International Design & Décor Studio in Tampa, Florida, designs events on the international stage. In 2012, he established Ian Prosser Productions, expanding his design division for creative events.

Ian's most recent achievements include being named the recipient of the 2012 Paul Ecke Jr. Award by the Society of American Florists (SAF) and receiving the 2011 Wedding

Innovator of the Year Award by Rockstar Wedding Planner. In 2010, Ian was awarded Designer of the Year at the Event Solutions Spotlight Awards and he won the prestigious Sylvia Cup at the 2007 SAF Convention. Also in 2007, Ian was inducted into the Professional Floral Communicators - International (PFCI). Ian's most prized successes include invitations by SAF to serve as the Floral Design Chairperson for the second inauguration of President George W. Bush and to design the inaugural decorations for President Bill Clinton.

Ian was inducted into the American Academy of Floriculture (AAF) in 1994 and the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD) in 1992. He has also been a featured presenter at AIFD National Symposia. Ian earned his National Diploma of the Society of Floristry, the highest European honor in floral design, and was the youngest person to receive the honor of Floral Designer of the Year in Scotland.

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Texas Floral Education Underwriters

FTD provides additional funding to launch the
first Signature Statement in this Extensive Series of Study.



Bronze level Texas Floral Education Underwriter Alexandra Farms has held their third Garden Rose Design Contest and the winners have been selected! Entries were received between May 1st and June 28th at www.alexandrafarms.com

This year, the contest was held with only one category: Beautiful designs with Garden Roses! Bridal bouquets, vase arrangements and large installations were all accepted. Over 100 entries were received and the quality of entries was superb. Rather than having a panel of judges as has been done in previous years, the winners were selected by a public online vote. Also new to the 2020 contest, worldwide entries were all reviewed together. In previous years several different contests were held for different places around the world.

Over 2,800 online votes were counted to produce the results!

First Place

Winner received an all expense paid Trip for Two to Alexandra Farms in Bogotá, Colombia!

Second Place

Winner received 500 stems of Alexandra Farms Garden Roses!

Third Place

Winner received 250 stems of Alexandra Farms Garden Roses!

TEXAS in Bloom is thrilled to feature the three winning designs as well as The Inspiration, The Design Process, Garden Rose Varieties, Floral Product to Complement and The Steps to How-To shared by each of these award winning designers!



Garden Roses TAKE CENTER STAGE



Photographer Credit | Freire Photography

First Place

NICOLE EICHENWALD BRAGHIN | MIAMI, FLORIDA

THE INSPIRATION

I wanted to create something soft and lovely just like a blushing bride.

THE DESIGN PROCESS

The garden roses were the star but they needed a supporting cast. I picked flowers that would make the roses shine. It was important to have a pop of color so the flowers would not blend.

GARDEN ROSE VARIETIES

Juliet (Ausjameson) and Keira (Ausboxer)

FLORAL PRODUCT TO COMPLEMENT

Peonies Ball of Cream, Cappuccino Rose,

Tweedia blue, Saponaria pink, Poppies Hybrid

THE STEPS TO HOW-TO

The trick is holding the bouquet very softly so that you can most easily fit in the selected flowers. I first cleaned the flowers. Starting with the garden roses, I added larger filler flowers like the cappuccino roses and the peonies. To complete, added color was softly placed between the stems. I then tweaked the overall design until it had just the perfect shape. Tied with tape, the bouquet was secure and ready to be finished with my favorite raw silk ribbon in a color to complement the gown.

Second Place

KATHERINE TAYLOR | FAIR HOPE, ALABAMA

THE INSPIRATION

Having completed all of the designs for the wedding of the day, I had several garden roses remaining and thought, why not, a fall inspired design would be a design worth entering. I reached out to my favorite photographer to be certain that she was available. I love Garden Roses! We so often have a selection for our weddings and I was quite pleased to make the most of these!

THE DESIGN PROCESS

Color led my decision just as it does when I paint. My art background, combined with my understanding of the garden guides my design process throughout all that I do.

GARDEN ROSE VARIETIES

Juliet, Darcey, Romantic Antike, Precious Moments and Princess Charlene of Monaco

FLORAL PRODUCT TO COMPLEMENT

Dahlias, Queen Anne's Lace, Rex Begonia, Nandina Berries, Ranunculus, Seeded Eucalyptus

THE STEPS TO HOW-TO

I first selected the container keeping in mind that I wanted to create the design foam free. Creating a chicken wire nest and adding a dome of additional chicken wire on top provided the needed security. The roses were placed first. This is most important in order to give plenty of space. I then extended the design with Nandina berries and enhanced the focal with Rex Begonia to emphasize the statement. Blossoms from my garden were added to complete the design. An understanding of the garden has long been most important to me. I learned so much about gardening and design from my mom and for that, I am most grateful.

Alexandra Farms is a boutique grower specializing in nostalgic, romantic, fresh cut garden roses. Our farm is located in the incredibly fertile savanna of Bogotá, high in the Andes Mountains of Colombia. The warm days and cool nights are perfect for growing roses. Our garden roses are hand-cut, hand-graded and hand-packed by caring, rose-loving people.

Garden roses have long been popular with both gardeners and floral designers. In the past, breeders focused on traits that were important to florists: longevity and vase life. Some of the garden rose's most special characteristics, including fragrance, were lost in the breeding process.

It wasn't until David Austin began breeding garden roses for the fresh-cut flower market that things began to change. Austin, the world's best-known garden rose breeder, focused on the flower's most famous characteristics – the old-fashioned cup shape and irresistible fragrance and



Photographer Credit | Lacey McLaughlin

bred varieties that combined these important traits with longevity and vase life.

That was the tipping point. Austin's new varieties introduced modern garden roses to the cut flower industry. This sparked a trend that's been strong ever since, with breeders developing and launching new and unique garden rose varieties each year.

We are proud to grow more than 60 varieties of garden roses at our farm in Colombia, offering florists and designers around the world a wide range of colors, shapes and fragrances to choose from. Every wholesale florist in Texas has access to our roses via Miami importers. Our varieties are bred by the top breeders in the world including: David Austin, Wabara, Tantau, Kordes, De Ruiter, Meiland and Delbard.

Texas State Florists' Association appreciates Alexandra Farms support as a Bronze Level Texas Floral Education Underwriter.

Third Place

CHARLIE GROPPETTI AIFD | VILONIA, ARKANSAS

THE INSPIRATION

I did not know about the contest until my good friend Judy Janzen called it to my attention. In a message, she said, "it is perfect for you!" I was just beginning to return my focus to floral design so I had some catching up to do! When the boxes of Alexandra Farms Garden Roses arrived at my door, I was simply inspired by what came out of each box! I had never seen such incredible roses - I should know because I grow them or at least I attempt to do so!

THE PROCESS

I had received a random assortment of available garden roses - all stunning. I first started the design process by blocking out the overall color palette with what I had received. The combination of deep red, coral pink transitioning to pink made up most of what I had. Since the colors were so rich, multilayered and deep, I cut berries and foliages to complement from the landscape. Each selection was placed to enhance the rich colors with additional texture while keeping with a classic design theme.

GARDEN ROSE VARIETIES

Romantic Antike

FLORAL PRODUCT TO COMPLEMENT

The selected garden roses were accompanied by ripening blackberries and blackberry foliage, little gem magnolia foliage, bronze dill, bronze loropetalum, queen lime red zinnias and apples, all cut from our farm.

THE STEPS TO HOW-TO

I started with a general outline of foliages trailing out from the container to establish the overall size of the design. I then placed the roses. The roses were so large and quite beautiful and needed to go in before I added any more foliage. Honestly, not a lot of foliage was necessary. The size of the roses covered so much space. Layering the blossoms created amazing depth. After placing most of the roses, I added accents such as the apples and berries.



How To Use Instagram's New Reels For Business

By Ashley DeFranco | ashley@simplifiedsocialmedia.com

Reels could be considered a direct response to the growing popularity of TikTok - which has surged significantly over the last 12 months. TikTok generated "the most downloads for any app ever in a quarter" in Q1 2020, according to Adweek. TikTok's core demographic is rapidly changing. While once dominated by Gen-Z users, Millennials now make up a greater share of TikTok's user base - making the platform a more attractive proposition for advertisers. Reels' positioning on the already popular Instagram app means it is primed for huge success. You can find it by opening Instagram stories camera and choosing the reels icon, from there you can choose the size and speed of your video as well as music.

Reels provides a new way to build your community and grow your reach on Instagram. It's a fun and engaging way to share viral and creative content with your audience. In its early stages, Reels is already proving to be a space where businesses can make waves and

increase engagement. Reels are designed to be fast and fun, packed full of special effects that make creating captivating content easy. This offers a great opportunity for businesses to show a more human side which can be great for building meaningful relationships within your community. It is important to use hashtags the same way you are accustomed to doing on Instagram so you can be found on the Reels explore page by other users. The explore page is also a great place for you to find Reels inspiration for your own content.

Give Reels a try and tag us @txflorist to share how you are using Reels for your business!



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Artistic Floral Design

By Lynn Lary McLean AIFD

Please join me as we go behind the scenes with one of the designers who submitted images to AIFD for consideration to include in AIFD's new publication *Artistic Floral Design*. Not only were all six of the designs included in the book, one was the selected for the cover! Congratulations Charlie Groppetti AIFD!

Charlie took time to visit with me sharing the processes that he put in place to experience the joy of design hoping to encourage others to grasp these opportunities when presented! Let's take a look at Charlie's designs, available to this publication with permission from the American Institute of Floral Designers.



Summer Citrus

A diverse group of botanical gatherings make up this design in warm citrus-inspired colors including some immature oranges. The found object constructed container echoes the colors selected as well as the shape by the branching overlay. While most of the materials are garden-themed, once combined, they take on a more exotic, almost subtropical appearance.



"Inspiration came from the oblong, elevated farm-crafted metal container. It is very rural rustic yet modern in shape. That struck me. The rust color of the container seemed to need brightness starting with a selection of orange florals. The elevation of the container made for an interesting opportunity to place contrasting materials. Color is the most important element in this design. It is bright and aggressive, but kept in control by grouping. However, I did not add the arching crepe myrtle branch until the last minute. It changed everything about this design. I carefully worked at shaping it to reflect the shape of the container. Interestingly, the only purchased materials are the roses and the deep blue contrasting Ligustrum berries. I love the fact that this doesn't look like it came from a farm, but it did!" – Charlie Groppetti AIFD

Photographer Credit | Nancy Nolan

Were you given any guidelines as to the process?

The guidelines were in general to show your floral artistry. Included were some categories with Botanical being of most interest to me.

What was the established criteria?

The criteria was to submit 6-8 designs that best showed your work, basically a portfolio of your designs. We were also asked to give a close up, detailed photo of the design.

What amount of time was given to complete the process from the time you were aware of the offering until the deadline?

There was plenty of time to create for this opportunity. I procrastinated for weeks before actually deciding to enter and still had two weeks before the deadline! I created all of the designs in one day and then photographed each the following day.

With all of the product that is available and with the abundance of knowledge that you have, how did you determine the concepts of the designs that you chose to submit?

I began the process cutting from my landscape. Looking at the beautiful materials and interesting shapes, lines and form inspired me. This process allowed me to walk, contemplate, and then cut. This is also my comfort zone – where I feel at home and familiar – which also eases any nerves. You have to do what you know. I harvested a lot of beautiful options from home and divided them up into groups and then visited my local wholesaler, Southern Wholesale Florists in Little Rock,

Arkansas to find material that I did not have that would add coordinating textures and colors. I let the materials tell me what was the absolute best way to highlight their natural features.

Was it by chance that all coordinated in color?

I tend to prefer muted color palettes and lots of textures in layers that are carefully constructed to prevent an overly busy look. I think that the colors all worked together because they are natural, tonal and most originated from one place.

What led you to the overall color palette?

I try not to overly plan or over process. I do my best when I see everything I have available in front of me and then start to sort it out. Like walking into a newly stocked flower cooler and thinking "what do I want to make?"

Did you determine all six designs and then begin to determine selections for each?

I pulled containers I had around and liked, paired with what I cut from the landscape and with purchased flowers.

What was your thought process as to staging?

For staging, I used what was available since I had to work this in-between our annual catalog shoots. Our office wall, at the time, was this warm gray color that was a contemporary neutral. The prop tables of reclaimed wood gave warmth and simple texture that complimented the gathered nature of the materials.

Permanent Botanical Urn

The permanent materials are carefully shaped to create movement with curved lines to envelope and frame the focal point.

"Inspiration was to give movement and a life like style to stiff permanent materials by literally curving them into this curvilinear design that still maintains an overall classic form. Fall colors and textures were an inspiration as well as the desire to use permanent materials to create moving lines. The focal point definitely dominates with the larger scale of the pumpkin. The form, the color and the fact that all the lines frame the pumpkin truly feature it and strengthen the focal. The trend we see in permanent botanicals is to use these designs for seasonal placement. This opens tremendous opportunity for those who choose to offer permanent botanicals in their product mix." – Charlie Groppetti AIFD



Autumn Water Garden

An Ikebana inspired design with framing lines of fall-colored botanical materials, this design is set in a bowl to create a water reservoir to view floating leaves. In a design with minimal content it is important to search for and select materials with interesting lines that have been formed by nature not commercial cultivation.



Photographer Credit | Nancy Nolan

"The design, I titled Autumn Winter Garden, was inspired by this beautiful hand-crafted bowl from China that I had just recovered from storage. The glaze is achieved only by time. It has a very wide opening and it was just as beautiful glazed on the inside – so why cover it up?! There was a time that I made numerous water gardens in Lomey containers. This was a time to revisit the past. I think the bold shaped, fall colored leaves of the oak leaf hydrangea were the most important element. Most of us think of hydrangeas only for the flowers. When I placed these leaves next to the color of the bowl that was it! Add to it the bright orange persimmon leaves and the reflection of the water and I was on my way! This design is more simplistic and was created with less content than my other designs. I wanted to feature the perfect balance of botanicals and the bowl. All of these elements are captured in time. The coloring of the leaves and the puddled water seemed appropriate in featuring this fleeting moment in nature with dropped leaves floating in the water. As to the mechanics, the materials are supported by a small as possible piece of floral form mounted on a needle point holder. As to elements and principles, line and color are most important here. You know, simplicity takes confidence. Confidence to know when enough is enough to make the design and to stop. I love it, but I wondered if others would. I decided to take the approach that it is simply environmental and everyone can relate to that. I'm so glad I did!" – Charlie Groppetti AIFD



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Botanical Bridge

This design uses a strong horizontal branching material to create this dynamic form. Create the outermost lines as a framework for additional materials to be featured within.

"Inspired by the branches of my sycamore and old crepe myrtle trees. I always think of linear elements when wanting to be artistic. The materials are all fresh selections. I removed some of the leaves from the crepe myrtle to feature the line of the branch more. The orange berries are actually unripened 'Nelly Stevens' holly berries with all of the green leaves removed. I love that

this changes holly from an exclusively Christmas material to be used during the Fall. I like the turning of the sycamore leaves with the brown texture. This is totally contrary to having all perfect leaves, but it works here adding color, texture and a natural changing element. A 'Botanical Bridge' so to speak."

— Charlie Groppetti AIFD



French Yellow Permanent Botanical

This classic design is set into a network of curly willow inside the container — no foam used, with minimal cutting of stems. Permanent materials are curved and shaped to create soft and natural looking lines.

"This botanical design was inspired by classical French design and the classic French colors of blue and yellow. Giving the appearance of a full romantic mass of roses, while also giving depth and textural interest was my goal for this arrangement. If you study the overall, it is a mass design, but as you review detail, you can also find lines of materials moving throughout the overall statement. I must say that texture is the most important element in this design. The mostly monochromatic colors need the textural interest and actually call interest to them instead of competing with them. Staging this on a table with simple lines and the classic styling of added urns and candlesticks sets an overall statement with French styled influence." — Charlie Groppetti AIFD



THE BUSINESS OF *Flowers*

Jodi McShan AAF AIFD PFCI TMF

DEVELOPING A REWARDS PROGRAM

Everyone seems to have a rewards program, but is it really worth it? The truly lawyer answer (because you asked one!) Is “it depends”. Rewards or loyalty programs can be a great way to encourage repeat customers and thank them for coming back. It is also a great way to obtain information for marketing. There are a few major considerations when implementing a rewards program.

PROFITS. You must make the program profitable for you and enticing for the customer. This can be done in a number of ways: rewards with deadlines, special days, special sales, awarding points or offering a credit. There is truly no limit to the things you can think of to reward. However, keep in mind the cost to you. Yes, a birthday bouquet to reward members would be amazing, but can you afford it? Would a customer who spends an average of \$250 per order appreciate a \$35 birthday arrangement from you? Also consider how you plan to follow through on your rewards. Mailing certificates, emailing and creating an app are certainly worthwhile approaches to consider. For those of you who do not currently have an established program, take time to examine the costs in order to determine whether it is a wise business decision to establish a loyalty program. For those of you that have one, is it wise to continue or do changes need to be made?

LOGISTICS. What are you rewarding customers for? You must decide if it is per purchase or store visit or something else. It may only relate to one thing, for example plants. Be specific when communicating with customers and help them understand how they can maximize the program (once you ensured that it is profitable for you!). I would encourage you to have a deadline on your rewards. You don’t want a customer stacking up hundreds of dollars in credits or 20 free plants to then order 20 poinsettias for Christmas. This can be communicated in a variety of ways. “Come by and get your free roses before the end of the month” or “Once you accrue \$10 in rewards, we will send out a digital certificate that must be used within 60 days”. Give the needed time to develop what works best for you and your clientele.

ACCOUNTING. Speak with your accountant about the details of your rewards program. This may sound silly at first, but if you are offering credits, you must note on the books somehow. Outstanding gift certificates on the books should be noted, as well. Make sure your accountant understands your rewards to best help you maintain your books properly.

COMMUNICATION. A lot of the above speaks about communication with the customer. The biggest failure for any rewards program is a customer feeling like you did a bait-and-switch on them. Your best customer comes in to get her reward after saving up for a few months only to find that the reward expired. Clearly communicate with your customers about what qualifies and how to redeem. Not only does this communication help the customer understand exactly what you are offering, it also gives you another opportunity to come to the front of your customer’s mind! Embrace these opportunities.

RELIABILITY. Once you create a program, you must maintain it. You do not want customers thinking they are earning points or receiving an item in the near future to only later discover that the program is discontinued. A poorly planned program can lead to distrust. You and your staff know that this was not your intent, and that the rewards program dissolved for other reasons, but you must consider how the customer will interpret your actions. If you choose to implement a loyalty program, be prepared to keep it around long term.

There is still time to create a program to launch prior to the major holidays!

REMEMBER TO:

- Maintain Profitability
- Determine Logistics
- Track Accounting
- Staff Communication
- Launch Plan
- Reliable and Long Term
- Customer Communication
- Award!

BENEFITS. Customers love rewards. From discounts to “free” gifts, today’s buyers love to find a good deal. Loyalty programs are a great way to provide that. Additionally, you can more easily track customer buying behavior. A well-run loyalty program is a great marketing tool and a money-maker for your shop. If you are struggling with ideas or logistics, reach out to a fellow florist (or even a business owner in an other field) and talk it through. Do not try to reinvent the wheel when you can use your time showcasing your customer rewards program and spreading the joy of flowers!

Step out and try new ways to market your business. Make sure that you have a solid plan and the support to create the best possible effort. Thanking your customers with a reward can create loyalty in that everyone loves a good deal. Your customers can be your best spokesperson for your business. Encourage their loyalty and thank them for their business.

TSFA Calendar of Events

Photography Credit | Lacey McLaughlin



Photography Credit | Freire Photography



Photography Credit | Brandy Howard



OCTOBER

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Stacey Bal AIFD EMC | 3 PM CST
- 26 Thanksgiving Day

DECEMBER

- 4 TSFA *Virtual Learning* LIVE
Holiday Gatherings
Charlie Groppetti AIFD | 3 PM CST
- 6 TSFA Board of Directors Meeting
Location: TBD
- 25 Christmas Day
- 31 New Year's Eve

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- 8 McShan Florist | 800.331.3349 | www.mcshanflorist.com
- 8 Rio Roses | 866.746.7673 | www.rioroses.com | www.riocorazon.com
- 8 The Flower Forrest | 210.822.6766 | www.flowerforrest.com
- 8 The Florist, LTD | 940.483.1800 | www.thefloristltd.net
- 8 Tubbs of Flowers | 800.288.1978 | www.tubbsofflowers.com
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