

STUDENT STARS



STORY BY CATHERINE STEWART FAILDM

AILDM NATIONAL STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION 2007

FIRST PRIZE	Denise Smallwood of North Melbourne Institute of TAFE, Victoria
Second prize	Dennis Cochrane - Ryde TAFE, Sydney
Highly Commended	Andrei Kozyrev - University of Canberra
	Genevieve Corish - Ryde TAFE Sydney
	Yen Ong - NMIT Melbourne

Good landscape designers focus on three main points to be successful:

- listening skills that help them really understand their clients needs and wishes,
- making every design specific to its site, reflecting its topography, climate, soils and streetscape
- communicating their design solutions in plans, sections and perspectives so clients can easily imagine their new garden

Students at TAFEs and universities throughout Australia are being trained in these principles and the Australian Institute of Landscape Designers and Managers (AILDM) went looking for the best with a national competition in 2007. A brief told them about their clients – a young couple (and maybe some kids in the future) in their first home, planning their back garden for the next ten years. Although new to gardening, they want a garden designed on environmentally sustainable principles, with room to entertain outdoors, an interesting variety of plants and somewhere for a bit of golf practice. The garden measures 15m wide by 12m deep, with north to the rear and the land falls about a metre from the house to the back right corner. The area near the house needs summer shade and there's a lovely bushland view out over the back boundary.


Their local council has imposed several restrictions on the landscaping, such as a limit of 25% hard surface area (paving and decking) and a requirement for one third of the plants to be native, including a tree which grows to at least 8 metres. Installed water tanks must store at least 4000 litres. Students could choose the climate and soils of their local area as a basis for plant selection.



DENISE SMALLWOOD'S DESIGN

Sweeping, sensuous curves define the main spaces of this deceptively simple garden. Separate areas are created by barrier plantings, bringing a sense of enclosure but not fragmenting the garden. Generous swathes of dense shrubs encircle the lawn, with deep garden beds giving ample room for layered planting and form and foliage contrast. Selected plants are all good performers in the chosen location of Templestowe, Victoria with an interesting mix of native and exotic plants providing seasonal variety. Hard surface areas have been kept to a minimum, reflecting the clients' desire for an environmentally friendly and sustainable garden but there is still room for a spacious deck alongside a paved area for entertaining and outdoor cooking and dining. Judicious use of just a few focal points (a grass tree in a raised bed and a sculpture set amid foliage) create both internal



garden views and draw the eye to the distant views beyond. Well chosen elevation drawings, excellent graphics and beautiful colouring make these plans easy for a client to interpret and understand. 

North facing perspective (above left)
Concept plan (below left)
Sectional elevation 'B' (above)
Sectional elevation 'A' (left)