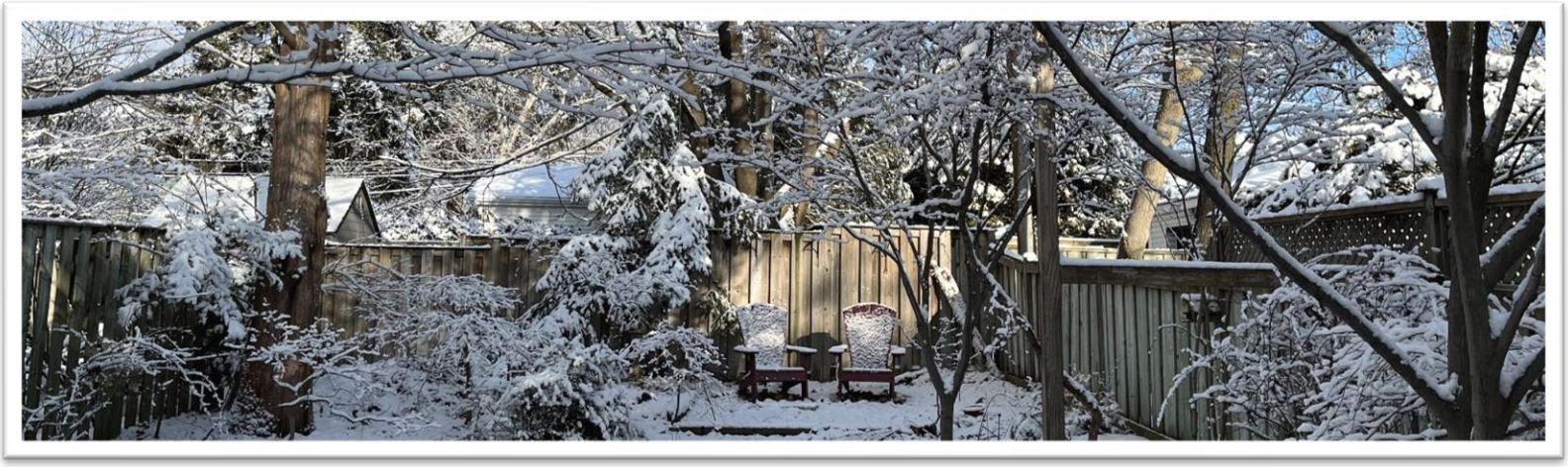
JUDGING MATTERS

Newsletter of the Garden Clubs of Ontario Judges' Council
February 2024



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Who and What are We?

Just a short time prior to Covid hitting our world, several things changed. And under the skilled guidance of the Jeanne Anne Goldrick and her Executive at the time, we survived as so many other organizations did not.

Just before the world had a "time out" there was a new entity formed under the leadership of the then Judges Council chair Heinke Thiessen. We were all so busy navigating the "new normal" that many did not realize that Garden Clubs of Ontario (GCO) Judges' Council became a separate entity. We are neither a club, nor a committee of the GCO but are now legally "*an independent organization within The Garden Clubs of Ontario*". As a result, we have our own "Constitution", as well as "Duties of the Executive" and "Accepted Procedures" documents to guide the Executive in the administration of JC and disbursement of JC funds. Upon request, these documents are available to any member who wishes to obtain a copy.

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Lil Taggart
CHAIR

Marie Decker
SECRETARY

Pat Ware
TREASURER

Ellen Clark
DIRECTOR

Ursula Eley
DIRECTOR

Diana Kennedy
DIRECTOR

What are our Objectives? We:

- provide educational opportunities with lectures, seminars and workshops;
- keep judges up to date on current judging practices;
- maintain the judges registry for accuracy and credentials;
- encourage participation in horticulture and floral arts worldwide;
- nominate potential candidates from Judges Council for judging at World Association of Floral Artists (WAFA) shows;
- arrange schools for the training of judges;
- participate in the revision of the Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards for Horticulture and Floral Design (OJES) as needs dictate.

The world of Zoom has made it easier for judges to participate in the judging of virtual shows, entering such shows, attending educational and information meeting where travel distance is an issue. While sadly, we have lost a number of members over the last couple of years, we have a new horticultural school about to graduate, and there are plans afoot to begin a new design school.

Lil

JUDGING FLORAL DESIGN:

WHAT TO DO WITH THE UNEXPECTED by Ellen Clark

The question was asked: Someone might do a creative design such as reflective, multi-rhythmic, etc. in a class that is filled with traditional entries. How is that entry to be judged?

Judges must remain current to avoid remaining static. Through the international trends we see on social media, and the ease of sending and receiving photos of designs in our local area, we are exposed to many different styles of designs that we may not recognize, may not create, and may not know how to judge. Regardless of design styles, the elements and principles always apply. In order to be open-minded and not static in our approach to judging, we must recognize the design for its own merits, and not discount it just because its not what we're used to. Perhaps this is where those 20 marks for Creativity could be used. Many designers like to challenge themselves (and some like to challenge Judges!), stretching the limits of those elements and principles with new materials and new ways to present them.

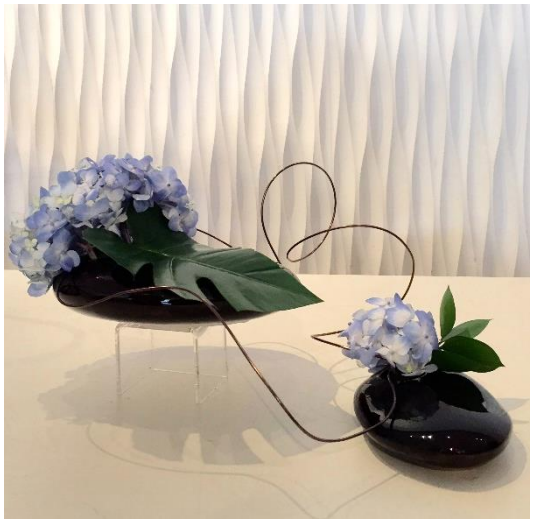
DESIGNS USING MULTIPLE CONTAINERS by Michael Erdman

Why stop at one when you can have more? Besides potato chips, this question can also apply to floral design. The purpose of this article is to explore the two main design types we often include in flower shows that are based on multiple containers: satellite/satellitic and synergistic designs.

a) Satellite Designs

I first encountered the notion of creating designs using more than one container in a Beach Garden Society flower show schedule back in the early 2000's calling for a satellite design. At that time, I knew absolutely nothing about floral design styles, but was intrigued by the double-barreled concept of satellite designs. The OJES description seemed pretty clear to me (at least I thought it was clear), requiring two iterations of the same design – one big, one small, side-by-side in the allotted space. So, I scoured the shops for a pair of big/small vases, and created identical Mama and Daughter traditional mass designs, differing only in size. The individual designs were so large that I couldn't leave any space between them, but "what did I know?" As I was placing my entry, someone whispered, "you need something connecting the two". There were a few strands of another designer's bear grass in the waste bin, so I grabbed them and jammed them in. You could barely (pun) see the grass connectors among the frothy jammed-together flowers. Not surprisingly, there was no ribbon of any sort awaiting me after judging, and a couple of terse comments: "fresh flowers!" and "needs more space between".

Interestingly, back then, apart from the OJES definition, there was precious little information available in print or online about the history and rules for satellite designs to help me. And that is still the issue today, which means we must rely mainly on the received wisdom of judges and designers.



It is very likely that satellite and other multi-container designs emerged as a distinct Western style during the 1950's, inspired by Japanese floral designs that became known and appreciated in the post-war period. In modern ikebana, two-container designs are part of the common repertoire. Because the satellitic technique on the surface appears to be a rather simple two-container idea, it likely began during the transitional period between traditional and modern/creative design periods. In much the same way that early parallel designs used traditional materials in a traditional manner in multiple points of emergence, the early satellite designs likely included traditional approaches (like my initial attempt), which were soon supplanted by creative design concepts, such as incorporating boldness in form and

use of colour, restrained use of plant material, integrating space as part of a design (vs. closed forms of traditional designs), and inclusion of containers as design elements.

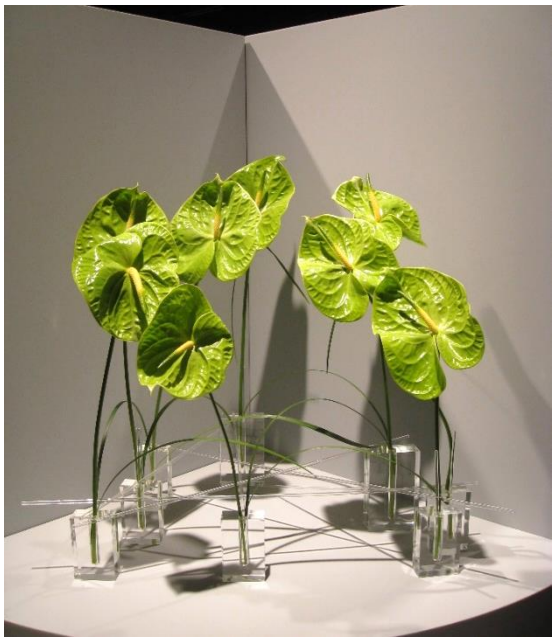
Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards (OJES) 2019 defines a satellite design as "a design with a main unit and a smaller unit of the same colour, form and/or texture that do not touch but have a connective line between the units that becomes a vital part of the rhythmic pattern of the design". The "that do not touch" aspect was added in the 2019 edition of OJES, well after I failed my first test.

What then are the "best practices" we should look for in satellite designs?

- Use of creative techniques – even though the definition doesn't specifically call this a "creative design", these techniques can bring satellite designs to life much more easily and effectively than traditional forms/methods in terms of adding rhythm, line and added space. Besides, having two points of emergence is definitely a creative/modern design concept.
- Visible space between the two main components
- A clear connection between the main and satellite components, reflected in:
    - similar (but not necessarily identical) elements – colours, shapes, textures, plant materials, containers
    - a connecting material that is integral to the design, i.e., a part of one or both sub-designs in addition to being a connector
    - sub-designs may or may not be self-sufficient, but the overall design is evident and integrated across the pair and its connector(s)

b) Synergistic Designs

The multiple container idea evolved through the latter part of the 20th century, including the synergistic design concept. The OJES definition evolved too. In 2003, it read "A contemporary design in which several containers are used in a composition. Each container may hold a complete or a partial arrangement and the combined units create a unified whole."



The 2019 definition is somewhat different: "A design in which at least three containers or units are used in a composition. At least three of the units must include plant material. Each unit may be a complete or a partial design and the combined units create a unified whole. The design may be further unified through the use of connectives". The Wikipedia definition of "synergy" is "an interaction or cooperation giving rise to a whole that is greater than the simple sum of its parts". Implicit in these two definitions is the notion that there are differing parts being used to create a whole.

The basics:

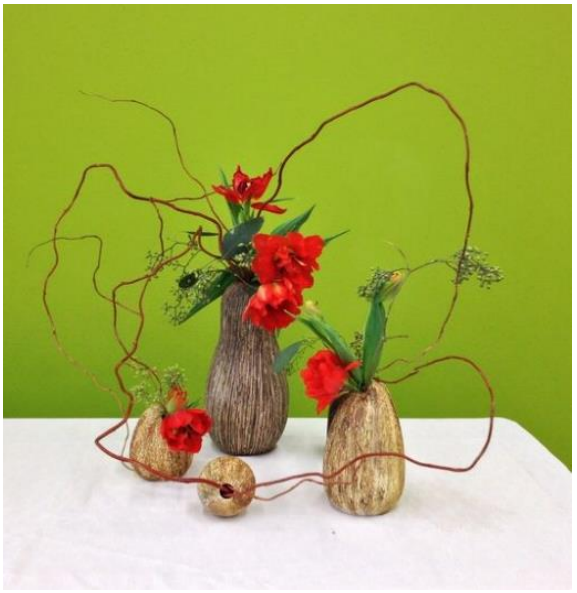
- It is a creative/modern design, and not a traditional design, despite the absence of the "creative" or "contemporary" adjective in the latest OJES.
- You may or may not have containers.
    - Typically, you will see containers made of the same material, in the same colour.
    - Containers usually vary in size and/or shape.
    - As with contemporary designs in general, containers should be part of the design rather than decorative vessels for flowers, meaning that traditional containers are not suitable.
    - You may use other ways of creating/supporting the "units", e.g. armatures
- You must have at least 3 containers or units/
- Each container or unit should contain some plant material, with one exception: you may leave 1 or more containers empty providing you have at least 3 containers with plant material in them
- You must have unity.
    - In practical terms, this means that it is a single design created out of multiple components rather than multiple designs that just happen to be placed together in a group.
    - Unity is mainly created by the elements the various units have in common – colour, form, texture, in repetition.
        - Rhythm is very important.
        - At the same time, each individual design unit should be different, i.e., smaller design units will usually omit selected elements used in the main/largest unit.
            - The individual units would generally not be complete designs on their own.
    - A connecting line or an implied connecting line between the units can help to unify the overall design.

        - The connecting line(s) should all go in the same direction.
    -

- Plant material
    - Simpler, larger forms and strong lines work best.
    - There should not be any transitional material.

What a synergistic design is not:

- it is not a lineup of 3 or more identical designs.



SPOTLIGHT ON INVASIVE PLANTS by Marie Decker

We want to give you more information about some invasive plants that may appear on show tables. As flower show judges, we can play a very important role in educating exhibitors about the detrimental effects of these plants.

Garlic Mustard (Alliaria petiolata) Invasive and Aggressive!
Garlic mustard is an edible herb native to Europe. Since its introduction, garlic mustard has spread throughout Ontario, parts of Quebec, and established populations in western and Atlantic Canada. Garlic mustard is one of Ontario's most aggressive forest invaders, and threatens biodiversity. It **can invade relatively undisturbed forests**. Once established it can displace native wildflowers like trilliums (Trillium sp.) and trout lily (Erythronium americanum).

Garlic mustard grows in a wide range of habitats and spreads quickly along roadsides, trails, and fence lines. Seeds fall close to the parent plants and are rarely dispersed by wind or water. The main pathway for seed spread over long distances is through humans and pets. Within 5-7 years, garlic mustard can enter, establish itself, and become the dominant plant in the forest understory. This is achieved by the roots of the Garlic Mustard plant dispersing toxins in the soil that kill the fungi other plants depend on to survive. Garlic mustard gets its name from the garlic scent the leaves produce when crushed.

Control
Pull plants before or while they are in flower, but before seeds set. This will limit dispersal. Pulled plants which have flowered may still be able to produce seeds, so pulled garlic mustard should be "solarized" to ensure the plant is no longer viable. **Solarize viable plant material by placing it in sealed black plastic bags (e.g. black garbage bags) and leaving them in direct sunlight for 1-3 weeks**. Very small plants can be sprayed with a dilute herbicide and leaves the soil undisturbed.

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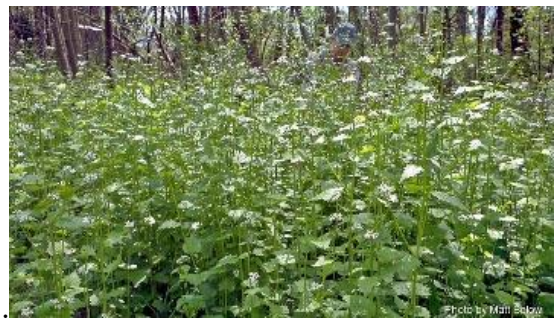
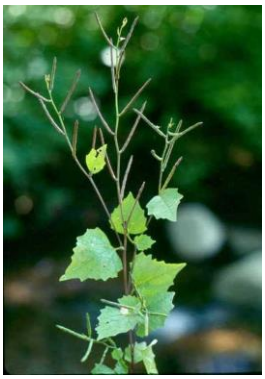
4. 

5. 

First year garlic mustard appears as a small round-shaped emerald green leaf with a deep dip at the base. In its second year it grows up to 3' tall, the leaves become serrated, lose the dip and small 5-pettaled white flowers appear. It then produces seed pods filled with thousands of seeds. At all stages it has a distinctive odor of garlic that intensifies as the plants ages.

English Ivy *Hedera helix* L., Ginseng gamily (Araliaceae)

Background

European colonists introduced English ivy as early as 1727. It is widely planted for its evergreen foliage and dependability as a year-round "carefree" groundcover. Although recognized as a serious threat to natural ecosystems, parks, and landscapes, it continues to be sold and marketed as an ornamental plant in Canada. Vast resources, time and labor are expended attempting to manage infestations on public and private lands.

Distribution and Ecological Threat

English ivy is found throughout eastern Canada. It flourishes under shady to full sun conditions, in soils that are moderately fertile and moist but it is intolerant of drought and salinity. English ivy is an aggressive invader that threatens all vegetation levels of forested and open areas, growing along the ground as well as into the forest canopy. Vines climbing up tree trunks spread out and

envelop branches and twigs, blocking sunlight from reaching the host tree's foliage, thereby impeding photosynthesis. An infested tree will exhibit decline for several to many years before it dies. The added weight of vines also makes trees susceptible to blowing over during storms. English ivy has been confirmed as a reservoir for bacterial leaf scorch (*Xylella fastidiosa*), a harmful plant pathogen that affects a wide variety of native and ornamental trees such as elms, oaks, and maples.

Description and Biology

Plant: evergreen perennial climbing vine that attaches to bark of trees, brickwork and other surfaces by root-like structures that exude a glue-like substance to aid in adherence.

- Leaves: alternate, dark green, waxy, somewhat leathery; extremely variable leaf forms, from unlobed to 3-5 lobed; typically green with whitish veins.
- Flowers, fruits, and seeds: flowering occurs in late summer to early fall, typically under full sun conditions; flowers are small, greenish-yellow and occur in globular starburst type inflorescences at tips of flowering stems; fruits are black with a fleshy outer layer and stone-like seeds.
- Spreads: vegetatively by vigorous growth at tip of stems; and by seed which is consumed by birds and dispersed to new areas; fruits contain glycosides that may be mildly toxic and cause some birds to regurgitate them; new plants grow easily from cuttings or stem fragments that make contact with the soil.
- Look-alikes: Irish ivy (*Hedera hibernica*), Persian ivy (*Hedera colchica*), Boston ivy (*Parthenocissus japonicus*) and Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*). Poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) may sometimes be confused with English ivy because of its hairy stems but because it is deciduous, it will lack leaves in the winter. In summer, poison ivy can be distinguished easily by its compound leaves of three leaflets and its clusters of creamy white fruits.

NOTE: The leaves and berries of English ivy contain the glycoside hederin which may cause toxicosis if ingested. Symptoms include gastrointestinal upset, diarrhea, hyperactivity, breathing difficulty, coma, fever, polydipsia, dilated pupils, muscular weakness, and lack of coordination. This feature also helps ensure effective seed dispersal by birds.

Control

Some use white vinegar as an alternative to herbicides for English ivy removal. Put the vinegar in a sprayer or spray bottle and lather the vine thoroughly – making sure not to squirt any nearby vegetation. Wait roughly a week or so and check treated areas for dead/dying ivy.

For best results, apply glyphosate in the spring when English ivy has 2 to 4 new leaves. Respray about 6 weeks later if you see re-growth. English ivy becomes less and less susceptible to glyphosate as the season progresses. Control in midsummer can be improved by mowing the ivy, then spraying the regrowth.

If ivy covers a large area consider using the "burrito roll" method; starting from the outer edge of the infestation, cut and loosen roots then rolling the mat and disposing properly. If the vines are growing vertically, it is more effective to cut vines at chest height and let it die off.

GCO Judges Council is working on collecting all of the reports issued by our Judging Standards Clarification Committee. These will be organized and distributed in late Spring in printable document or booklet form.

Please let us know topics that you would like to read more about in future newsletters. Any relevant articles, events, suggestions, queries, etc. are welcomed.

Judges' Council

How to Ensure You are Writing a Good Schedule

Session 1 - General Rules and Horticulture Division
Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 7 pm on ZOOM

Session 2 - Special Exhibits and Design Divisions
Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 7 pm on ZOOM

Sessions are open to all judges, schedule writers, exhibitors and anyone interested in schedule writing.

Registration is required to receive the Zoom link and handouts.

*Register with Elizabeth Schleicher at:
roses4me@sympatico.ca to receive the ZOOM link and

copy Marie at ***mardecker12@gmail.com*** to receive the two printed hand-outs that accompany Session 1.