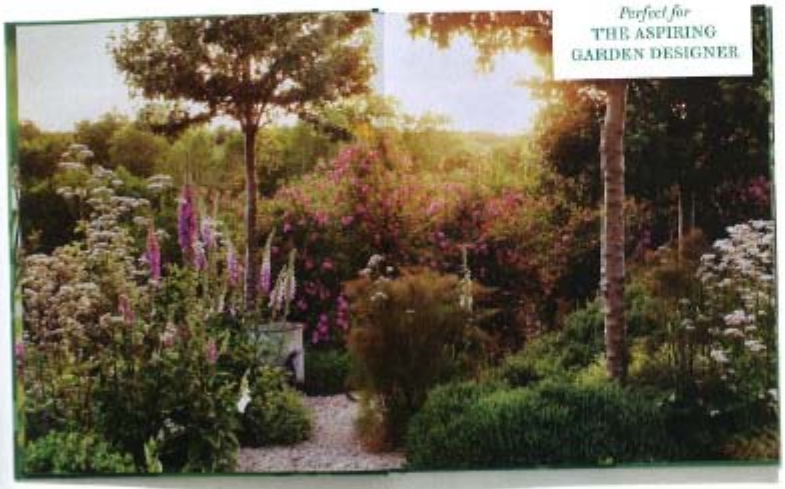
# WORDS AND PICTURES

## What to read: the latest books chosen by ROSE DAHLSEN

*Perfect for*
THE ASPIRING
GARDEN DESIGNER



*THE THOUGHTFUL GARDENER: AN INTELLIGENT APPROACH TO GARDEN DESIGN*
*Jinny Blom (Jacqui Small, £35)*

You must have a combination of tenacity, talent and, of course, a fabulous work ethic to get to the top of your tree in any career, especially when you have reached those heights without any formal training. Jinny Blom has learned the craft of garden design by apprenticeship, by doing her own gardening and by constantly challenging her enquiring mind. In this book, she gives some of that knowledge and experience back, setting out her thoughts on garden design in a highly eloquent way. Interspersed with longer case studies are chapters on the nuts and bolts of design: from ecology and soil to the history and context of a plot; from the underlying structure and layout of a garden to the layers of planting that give a space its beauty and character. Although illustrated throughout with excellent photographs by Andrew Montgomery, this is not a coffee table book – there is more to it than that. Written with wit and insight, it sets out an approach to design that is intuitive, thoughtful and holistic – a philosophy that is clearly successful and clearly manifest in this designer's beautifully executed gardens. It is a book that will make you think about design, about landscape and nature, and about the benefits of engaging with a garden yourself. **Clare Foster**

*TARA BERNERD: PLACE*
*Tara Bernerd, Charlotte Fiell and Peter Fiell (Rizzoli, £42.50)*

The interior designer Tara Bernerd's portfolio spans hotels and restaurants predominantly, as well as two mighty yachts and a peppering of private residences. Tara's first book brings together 18 projects, including Belgraves Hotel in London (now The Hari), Sixty SoHo in New York, Thompson Chicago and Four Seasons Fort Lauderdale. Her projects are infused with a soft edged glamour. Rough, heavy materials – iron, wood and concrete – may be warmed up with seductive low-level lighting: Marco Grill restaurant in London incorporates a shimmering Swarovski crystal column; a penthouse in Hong Kong features a backlit onyx staircase. The book has three sections – Past, Present and Future – each of which includes an interview with the designer. Generously illustrated, the project reports are penned by Charlotte and Peter Fiell, who sensitively and vividly describe the design evolution of each space. **RD**

*MY GARDEN IS A CAR PARK AND OTHER DESIGN DILEMMAS*
*Kendra Wilson (Laurence King, £12.99)*

This charming book takes the form of a compendium of frequently asked questions from those new to – or terrified of – gardening. Kendra Wilson neatly tackles quandaries ranging from 'my garden is like a bog' to 'I'm not really a flower person', presenting them as opportunities for ingenuity. Each question or scenario, and its potential solution, is given a spread, illustrated with two or three images of Kendra's favourite gardens. The book is pitched at those bothered and bewildered by their gardens, but it also includes ideas and humour to delight the most seasoned horticulturalist. The spread entitled 'I loathe orange' is bound to raise a chuckle and is a gentle treatise against endless tasteful pastel hues. The 'useful terms' section at the back of the book is a short and sweet selection of gardening terminology covering essentials such as 'perennial' and others you feel have been included purely for their deliciousness – 'flowery mead' is a case in point. The very scale and format of the book is reassuring – it is portable, accessible and jolly, and all the better for it. **Bonnie Robinson** □