

A photograph of a garden featuring a wooden plank path that leads from the foreground into a dense thicket of green plants. To the right of the path, there is a large, dark, bowl-shaped planter containing a plant with bright red flowers. In the foreground, a low, dark stone wall borders a patch of green grass and a small, conical evergreen tree. The background shows a modern building with large glass windows and a dark wooden frame structure. The overall scene is vibrant and well-maintained.

# Artistic LICENCE

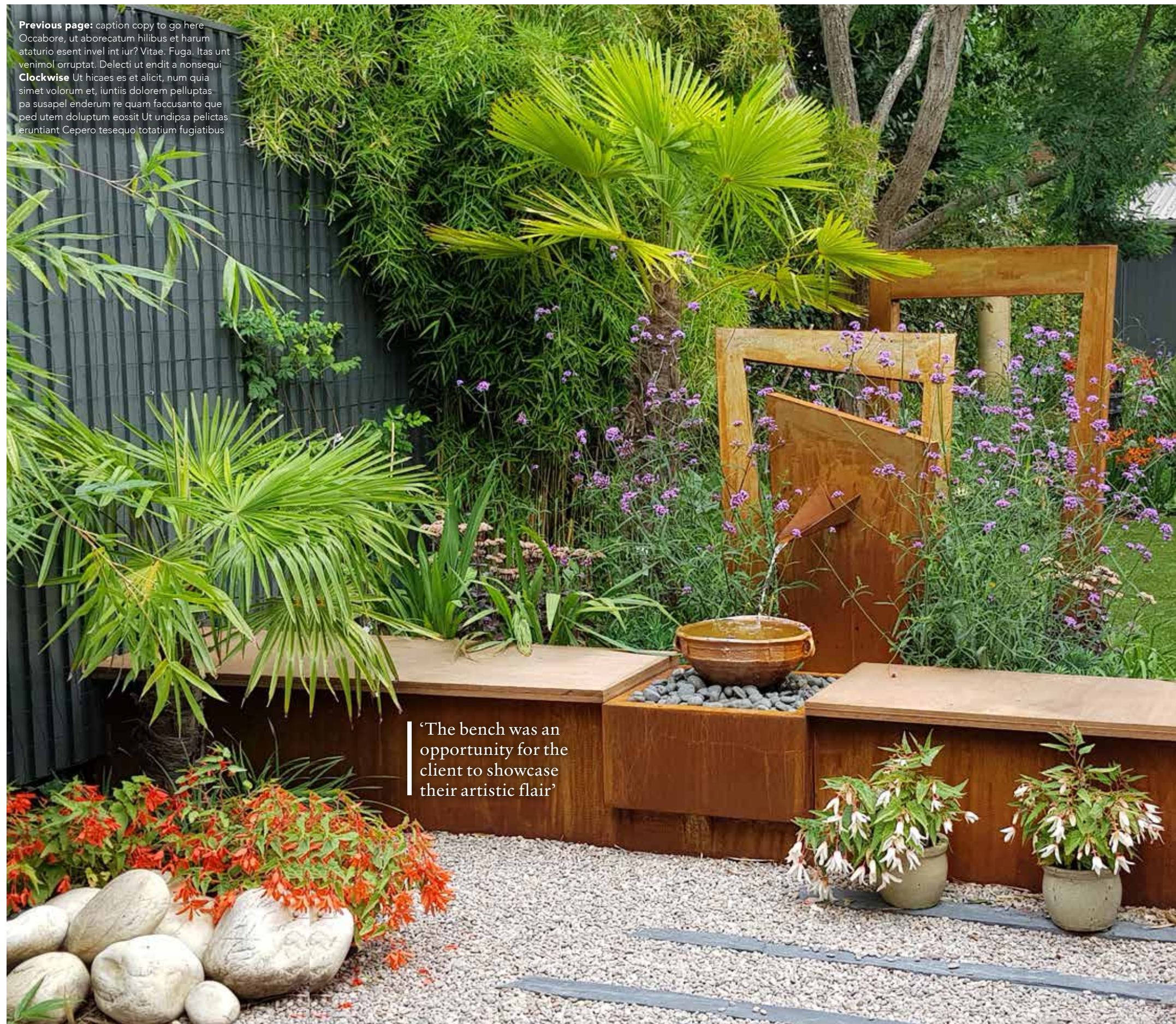
DESIGN: ROBERTO SILVA

PHOTOGRAPHY: XXXXX XXXXXX





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After being sought out from an inspirational feature in a garden magazine, Roberto Silva created a space for the owners looking to achieve a Japanese theme

**W**hen the owners of this garden decided on a redesign, they contacted garden designer Roberto Silva after saving an article from a magazine they had read some years before.

The inspiration for the garden was a modern Japanese design with a long wall dividing the garden in three spaces. A long path was created with strips of slate palisades that travel the garden in a sinuous way. Three separate areas were designed for the space; a gravel area next to house, the lawn in the middle and the final area being a zen garden.

The clients gave Roberto full reign on his ideas for the space and wanted to interfere as little as possible in the design process. However, there were some key requests such as: it should be modern, a place to display their artistic creations, an artificial lawn as they spent long periods of time in Mauritius so needed something low maintenance, some privacy from the neighbours, and a mix of

imaginative planting with colour and architectural plants.

In the gravel area with palisades, the garden was sunken to create a bench that would separate it from the lawn. The bench was an opportunity for the client to showcase their artistic flair and a model was created and passed on to Arthur Francis Sculpture to make it work as a water feature in Corten steel.

The second (lawned) area was kept circular with the slate palisade winding sinuously towards the edge on the right, turning into a modern zig-zag path leading to another Japanese-inspired gravel area.

#### PROJECT DETAILS

**Total value:** £45,000

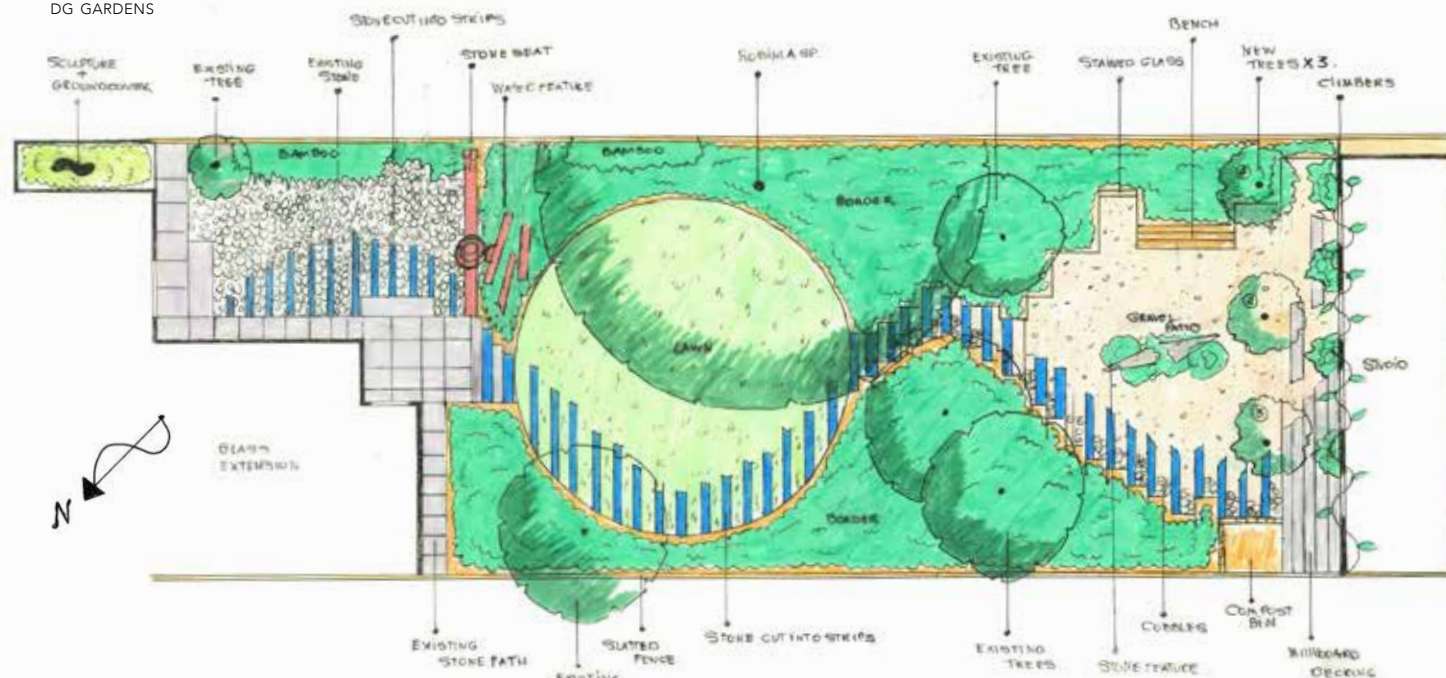
**Size of project:** 225m<sup>2</sup>

**Build time:** 3 months

**Designer:** Roberto Silva, Roberto Silva Landscape and Garden Design, [silvalandscapes.com](http://silvalandscapes.com)

‘The bench was an opportunity for the client to showcase their artistic flair’





#### MATERIALS USED

**Gravel, boulders, self-binding gravel and slate palisade:** CED, [cedstone.co.uk](http://cedstone.co.uk)

**Corten water feature and sculpture:** Arthur Francis Sculpture, [afsculpture.uk](http://afsculpture.uk)

**Plants:** Evergreen Exterior Services, [evergreenext.co.uk](http://evergreenext.co.uk)

The Japanese-themed part of the garden was made using self-binding gravel and two large boulders which were placed against each other in the centre and surrounded with the planting of irises, moss, pines and rhododendron.

The path ends at the steps of the pottery shed where the clients enjoy creating beautiful ceramics that are displayed everywhere in the garden.

The planting is very architectural; bamboos are used in abundance around the entrance and pots added to bring in some seasonal colour. Additionally, *Crocsmia* 'Lucifer', *Euphorbia characias*, *Hemerocallis*, *Verbena bonariensis*, and *Cynara cardunculus* (artichoke thistle) are planted round the water feature, as this is the corner the clients wanted to be more colourful.

Around the lawn planting included ferns, *Zantedeschia* (Calla lily), *Euphorbia*, *Liriope muscari*, *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Firetail' and *Miscanthus sinensis*. To provide privacy from neighbours, a large *Acacia dealbata* was placed next to the existing *Pyrus salicifolia* 'Pendula' which also strengthens the path between the lawn and the gravel area.

Towards the end of the garden, tree ferns were planted on the right side next to the path that leads to the pottery. On the opposite side there are strawberry trees and *Echium pininana*, lavanders, *Erysimum* 'Bowles Mauve' and more *Crocsmia*. This creates a beautiful backdrop for the ceramics and minimalist bird bath. Three *Amelanchier lamarckii* were planted in front of the pottery which are underlit for dramatic effect during the evening. All fences and pottery were painted graffiti grey to give a more modern atmosphere.

This garden is now a place where the clients can relax and enjoy the company of their visitors. **DG**



'Roberto Silva is a landscape designer of great flare and originality. His hard landscaping unified three distinctive garden rooms using a flowing line of slate palisades. His planting plan was most imaginative, particularly with the use of architectural plants in difficult areas of shade. We are thrilled with the results.' – client testimonial



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