



Photo: Marian Boswall



Photo: Katie Spicer

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT COMMISSIONING PHOTOGRAPHY

Marian Boswall MSGD explains why having professional images of your designs is worthwhile

Gardens are such an immersive experience, it's hard to explain the feeling of being there; hearing and smelling and feeling the site. A good photograph goes a long way towards conveying some of that sense of place, however, through sensitive capture of light and shadow at the best time of day for the site, clever framing of views, colour and depth of field.

Vibrant photographs help to sell our work to prospective clients and collaborators in a portfolio, website, print and digital platforms and via awards and accreditations. From the Instagram algorithm, allegedly favouring a bright, sharp photo, to a beautiful image that convinces a panel of judges to visit, it pays to pay a professional.

When choosing a photographer for the first time, it's worth looking in magazines and online at how their storytelling style resonates with your own style and your target audience. The top photographers tend to be busy and may ask for some shots of a garden before taking on a project, since they will hope to sell the photographs to magazines. This is great publicity for you too, of course, and a good photographer can be your best PR.

For awards submissions it pays to plan ahead at the beginning of a project and take your own 'before' shots of where you think the key 'after' views will be, to describe the context for the judges. It is also worth having a diary to book shoots through the seasons to catch your planting year-round.

The most experienced photographers will know the views to capture, but a shoot list should include wide shots and views through, mood images, plus details of hard landscaping as well as planting. Landscape format is better for awards, and portrait is usually better for Instagram.

Photographers usually charge a fixed fee for the shoot and images. Some include use for all media in that fee, some for a bundle for social media, and some charge per image used, so it is worth being clear before you begin, and always credit their work when you use it.

Make sure that the gardeners as well as owners know the photographer is coming, so lawns will be mown and planting in tip-top condition. A few days before, go to check all is well, and on the day go to help out, and enjoy.

marianboswall.com



MEDIA OF THE MONTH

THE PLANTHUNTER WEBSITE

Australian horticulturalist, plant lover and writer Georgina Reid founded The Planthunter website in 2013. "As a garden designer and writer, I realised I was more interested in exploring the 'why' than the 'how' of gardening, and at that time there were very few sources of writing around this topic. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, I wanted to create a platform that highlighted the importance and value of plants in our lives. I wanted, and still want, to seduce people into falling in love with the natural world through falling in love with plants. In a time of climate emergency, this feels increasingly urgent and important. It is the publication's guiding principle," Reid explains.

For Reid the accessibility of an online publication has been crucial. "I wanted to reach a younger demographic, and I wanted to reach as many people as possible. I've been able to do that via The Planthunter digital platform and social media channels in a way I don't think would have been possible via print."

Using a stylish format and top-notch photography, Reid has created a sumptuous format, but there's substance too, with interesting content from a selection of contributors. Monthly issues consist of six or more articles based around a particular theme such as Earthy Delights, Nostalgia and Over the Fence, and features range from interviews with designers and artists, to subjects such as how Australian plants use the soil for shelter and Georgina's own journey as she creates a riverside garden.

The Planthunter is a window into the vibrant, exciting, thought-provoking garden scene that's evolving in Australia and further afield, and scouring its pages is food for the creative mind.

theplanthunter.com.au