

## GARDEN NOTES

### KINKORA

The garden design for 57 Kinkora Road responded to the client's brief which was largely oriented towards family experience, but with a strong focus on 'plants for all seasons' and the desire for their children to connect to nature through the garden. The other strong motivation was to make sure the garden respected and complemented the house and streetscape but also embraced a sense of contemporary design. I worked closely with Martin Hook, the architect, to get the best results, and there was considerable crossover on elements such as the pergola, upstairs terrace and pool.

The garden comprises four distinct outdoor spaces. The front garden was designed to create a framework for the house, but where the drive, fence and planting all merged into a single sculptural form. The main thrust for the front garden was to present a 'non-conventional Hawthorn garden' which focused on soft landscaping elements and low water use plants. The two advanced *Brachychiton rupestris* with the oval mounded lawns enliven the front yard and pay homage to the simple symmetry of the house. The strong paving line radiating from the front door provides an axial focal point with a low profile sculptural piece. The remainder of the planting wraps around the house and focuses on texture, colour and form to provide all year-round effect.

The small children's garden provides a safe well-hidden space for the kids to really engage in imaginative play. Bamboo, grasses, crepe myrtles and a range of other plants all combine to provide a small wild garden that provides protection from the outside world but gives a secret/'messed-up' feel within, which is important in a children's space. The trampoline, swing, sand pit and monkey bars are all well hidden amongst the plants but provide important activities for the children. Plants were used here for their sensory values: smells, sound and bright colours are all features of the plant palette. Finally, the small water feature is connected to an underground water tank that allows the children to switch a small tap on to enjoy and experience water play. The water simply runs out through an agricultural pipe that helps water the front garden.

The rear garden sits comfortably with the more contemporary architecture of the rear of the house and provides a simple family garden with pool, lawns and outside sitting and eating areas. The three large *Aloe bainesii* (Tree Aloe) underplanted with *Carex testacea* and Sea Squill (*Urginea maritima*) are used as a strong focal point from the living room windows. A small herb and citrus area blends in with the rest of the garden planting while *Euphorbia lambii*, *Choisya 'Aztec Pearl'* and *Carpenteria californica* provide a strong evergreen shrub mass to the rear. A bold copse of *Brachychiton acerifolius* is also used to provide screening from the neighbours.

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The final garden sits along the west side of the house and was designed as a foliage garden to be enjoyed from within the house. Here a range of intriguing foliage plants have been used to create interest all year round - the main focal point being five large *Alcantarea rubra* (bromeliad) which are supported by *Mahonia japonica*, *Asparagus meyersii*, *Acer* 'Osakazuki' and a range of other shade loving plants.

*Andrew Laidlaw, Landscape Architect*

***Kinkora is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri people. Open Gardens Victoria wishes to acknowledge the Traditional custodians and we pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.***



### ABOUT GLOBAL GARDENS OF PEACE

Creating living landscapes as a foundation to support vulnerable communities, families and individuals of all abilities to heal, restore and grow.

[Global Gardens of Peace](#) is an Australian charity founded by Moira Kelly AO in 2013. Our mission is to create accessible and inclusive living landscapes, which support vulnerable communities, families and individuals of all abilities and provide people with inspiration, healing and growth.

What our landscapes have in common is the recognition of the power of plants to change lives, whether it is through the enhancement of wellbeing through designed gardens, promotion of natural play spaces for children, or landscapes that use plants for reinforcing cultural practices. Our gardens will be designed to provide benefits to diverse populations with different needs and focus on both promoting healing and personal development of individuals and families. In project development, gardens might be overlooked for other important elements, however they should be viewed as living infrastructure and a critical part of a complex matrix that integrates a range of humanitarian benefits to rebuild vulnerable communities.

Global Gardens of Peace is an apolitical, non-religious organisation.

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[www.opengardensvictoria.org.au](http://www.opengardensvictoria.org.au)