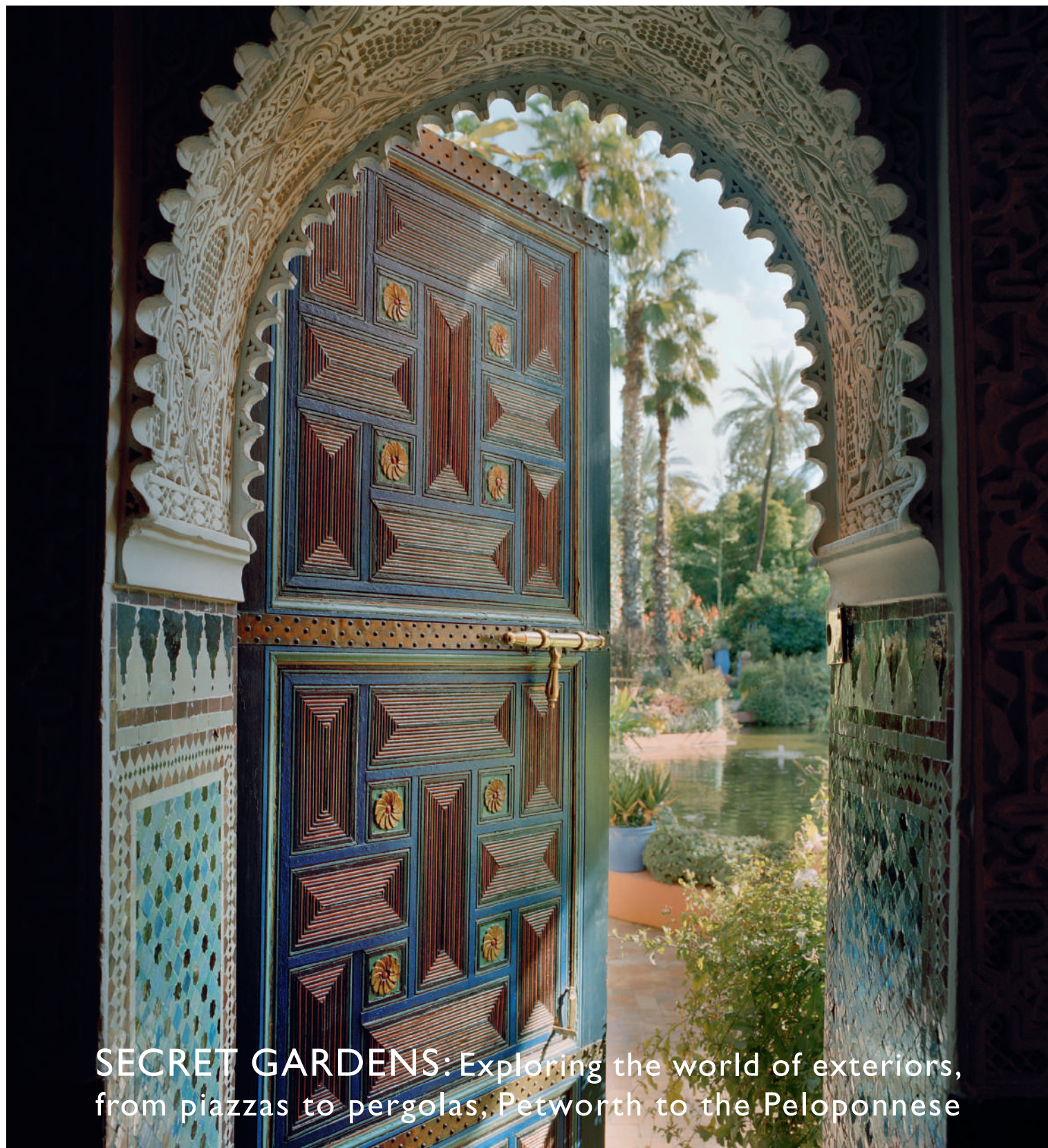


JULY 2022

# THE WORLD OF INTERIORS



**SECRET GARDENS:** Exploring the world of exteriors, from piazzas to pergolas, Petworth to the Peloponnese



# FAUX-LIAGE

Whoever said nature can't be improved on clearly wasn't au fait with the exacting bunch of artisans around the world who craft flowers in everything from feathers to clay. Text: Amy Sherlock. Photography: Ngoc Minh Ngo and Oskar Proctor



This page: **VLADIMIR KANEVSKY**, LILAC BRANCH, 2022 The lilacs were blooming this spring in Kharkiv, the Ukrainian city where Vladimir grew up, even as the bombs fell. They bloomed just as they did when he was a young boy stealing clusters of fragrant branches from in front of the city's KGB building. Trained as an architect, Kanevsky started to work with porcelain when he emigrated to New York more than 30 years ago. Inspired by the decorative flowers adorning 18th-century French porcelain found in museum display cabinets, and driven by a curiosity about the construction of plants, he sees his exquisitely detailed botanical forms, which are coloured by applications of glaze fired many times in the kiln, as architecture in miniature. Visit [thevladimircollection.com](http://thevladimircollection.com)

Opposite: **MAISON LEMARIE**, IRIS, 2022 Since its founding in 1880, the Parisian *plumassière* Maison Lemarié has created feathered adornments for the great and good of French couture, Balenciaga, Givenchy and Dior included. Chanel, another of its clients, purchased the atelier in 2002 as part of its Paraffection scheme to safeguard the highly specialised artisanship that has long defined the house. In Lemarié's completely draught-free workshops, flowers are smoothed, curled, sewn and woven together to create botanical wonders that retain the magic of birds on the wing. Visit [lemarie-paris.com](http://lemarie-paris.com)













Opposite: **CHRISTOPHER THOMPSON ROYDS**, CORNFLOWERS, 2019 Trained as a goldsmith, London-based Christopher Thompson Royds makes objects/jewels/ sculptures that hark back to our earliest and simplest forms of floral adornment: plucking a bloom and sticking it behind the ear; making a daisy chain. During a period living in Amsterdam, he was inspired by the wildflowers that made driving along Dutch highways an aesthetic delight, and his 18ct-gold pieces celebrate the resilience and brilliant geometries of varieties that, in some contexts, might be called weeds. Sculptures when mounted in their base, his pieces become abstracted, firework-like explosions when their detached heads are worn as earrings or brooches. Visit [christophertompsonroyds.com](http://christophertompsonroyds.com)

This page: **KIRK MAXSON**, OAK BRANCH, 2021 During a visit to the Getty Museum, soon after moving to Los Angeles from his native Oregon, Kirk Maxson found himself captivated by an ancient Greek laurel wreath. Crafted from hammered gold, it would influence his own shimmering arboreal creations: delicate brass-sheet leaves that are folded and lined to give a naturalistic texture and attached to stems with twisting brass ribbon. These draw from a similar wellspring of Hellenic myth and symbolism – olive branches for peace and friendship; laurel for victory; oak as the sacred tree of Zeus, the god of the sky – while being based on species native to San Francisco, where he has a studio, and the state of California. Visit Instagram [@kirkmaxson](https://www.instagram.com/kirkmaxson)





This page: **CARMEN ALMON**, STRAWBERRIES WITH MYRMELEON, 2018 When she was growing up in Washington DC, Carmen Almon's family travelled around a lot; she never had a garden. Flowers have always appeared to her as strange beings in whose struggle for survival with the elements she detects a parallel to human experience. Having started out as a botanical illustrator, she began working in metal as a way to use her hands more extensively: the pliable copper she deploys for her petals and leaves can be worked with the fingers and scored with nails. Although the results are quite spectacular, it's important to Bordeaux-based Almon that they are never perfect: to help retain a sense of the mystery – and strangeness – of these natural wonders, she will often amplify a dark spot on a leaf or petal to stop it becoming so easily pretty that the eye simply glides over it. *Visit [carmenalmon.com](http://carmenalmon.com)*

Opposite: **ANNETTE TOWNSEND**, LIFE SUPPORT, MARCH 2020: PRIMROSE, PRIMULA VULGARIS The making of wax botanical sculptures was a popular practice in Victorian Britain, part of that age's great drive to catalogue the natural world. It is a technique that has largely been lost, except in the work of certain exceptional individuals, such as Cardiff-based artist Annette Townsend, who taught herself the process when she began working as a scientific artist at the National Museum of Wales in the mid-1990s. Her 'Life Support' series documents early spring during the UK's first Covid-19 lockdown: hauntingly beautiful reminders of a shared moment in which the fragility of life was newly, brutally, laid bare. *Visit [annettemarietownsend.co.uk](http://annettemarietownsend.co.uk)*













Opposite: **ANNE TOMLIN**, PEONY CORAL CHARM, 2021 Milliner Anne Tomlin began her transition to flower-making when Deborah Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire, asked her to make a silk rose some 30 years ago. (An article in *The World of Interiors* on Maison Légeron's silk flowers was also an early inspiration.) Her wondrously lifelike creations are the result of careful study: she typically takes apart a flower to understand its mechanics in detail, before using templates to cut out each component from stiffened silk. Petals are hand-coloured and shaped using special heated tools, while structural elements are made from paper clay. Her wildlife garden in West Sussex is a continual source of artistic inspiration. Visit [annetomlin.com](http://annetomlin.com)

This page: **SOURABH GUPTA**, THE ENGLISH DREAM, 2020 For his last project while studying a never-to-be-completed master's programme at New York's Parsons School of Design, Sourabh Gupta was tasked with designing a flower shop. He spent a lot of time trying to understand why it was that a rose would be sold in such an establishment while a dandelion never could be – a rabbit hole that eventually led the architect and landscape designer to begin modelling flowers in cheap, easily available materials, namely paper and wire. After Tory Burch commissioned him to make 300 paper daisies for her 2019 Met Gala gown, his fate as a paper flower artist was sealed. This densely budded camellia is the prototype for a contribution to the *Constance Spry and the Fashion for Flowers* exhibition at London's Garden Museum last year. Visit [sourabhguptadesign.com](http://sourabhguptadesign.com)





This page: **SOURABH GUPTA**, FROM NIGHT TO DAWN, 2021 Often drawn to the wild quality of plants, Sourabh Gupta was inspired to create this richly hued clematis by the sight of a similar specimen that brightened his daily journey to his Brooklyn studio last year. Pushing through the gaps in someone's fence, it came to symbolise beauty and resilience during the bleakest days of the coronavirus pandemic. Visit [sourabhguptadesign.com](http://sourabhguptadesign.com)

Opposite: **KAORI TATEBAYASHI**, MAGNOLIA SOULANGEANA, 2022 Ceramicist Kaori Tatebayashi makes work that aims to freeze time. Her *Magnolia soulangeana* captures this short-bloom tree at its most geometrically picturesque, immortalising the brief moment before droop and decay. The pale, bone-like colour and heightened material delicacy of the unglazed clay emphasise the memento mori aspect of Tatebayashi's flowers, which grew out of a period producing old-master-style ceramic still lives. Painstakingly hand-modelled at her studio in south London, each is the poetic result of a meticulous technical process honed over more than three decades of working in clay. Visit [kaoriceramics.com](http://kaoriceramics.com) ■



