

SOMERSET DESIGNER'S Garden of the Future

Somerset-based Joshua Parker is co-designing the Garden of the Future at this May's RHS Chelsea Flower Show (20-24 May). Along with his design partner Matthew Butler, Joshua will be exhibiting the Show Garden with support from the Gates Foundation.

The Garden of the Future will spotlight the people and partnerships supporting communities to adapt and thrive in the face of climate change. It will inspire visitors to believe in the power of innovation and collaboration to unlock human potential around the world.

The garden will highlight the lessons that countries like the UK can learn from those living in regions on the frontline of climate change.

Commenting on the context from which the design was conceived Joshua said: 'Our garden is set in the near future in the UK, in a scenario where the climate is continuing to change. Countries all over the world, including the UK, are experiencing higher than average temperatures, more extreme weather, periods of drought and sudden, heavy rainfall. These environmental changes also threaten global food security and nutrition, causing declining global crop productivity and a significant reduction in the nutritional value of key crops leading to food scarcity, malnutrition and hunger.'

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Despite these huge challenges, Matthew and Joshua point out that there are incredible solutions being developed by scientists, innovators and farmers that enable healthier, climate-resilient futures both here in the UK and globally. These solutions include better seeds and tools to grow climate-resilient crops, which can help to make agriculture more both productive and sustainable.

They can also ensure more consistent food production, even in the face of climate shocks like floods or droughts.

At the same time, these solutions give families access to affordable, nutritious food and empower communities, particularly women and girls. Crops like bio-fortified sweet potatoes and climate-resilient chickpeas help households meet their nutritional needs and prevent



Matthew Butler and Josh Parker

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nutrient deficiencies—leading to better health overall.

The Garden of the Future is a demonstration Show Garden which will showcase some of the people and organisations behind these solutions, featuring a wide array of climate-resilient ornamentals and crops, edible plants with multiple uses and properties, and tools that help conserve water and support sustainable planting. These innovations will show how farmers, scientists, and communities are working together to grow healthy, affordable, nutritious food for a warming world.

Visitors both at the show and online will have the opportunity to understand the science and research behind the innovations which are helping communities adapt to climate change. They will see climate-resilient crops that can grow and flourish in the UK, learn about innovative water harvesting and storage systems which support gardeners and farmers in times of unpredictable weather, as well as tools which are already supporting growers globally but which can also be applied in our own backyards.

As well as tools and crops, the garden will introduce some of the inspiring individuals who work on groundbreaking adaptations in this field, both in the UK and globally. For example, the garden will feature Dr. Clare Mukankusi, an agricultural scientist and Global Breeding Lead for the Common Bean at the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture in Kampala, Uganda, who focuses on developing new plant varieties that are more nutritious and easier to grow.

Butler & Parker is an award-winning design partnership with a decade of experience. Their philosophy is to create beautiful and creative spaces that are research-driven, focusing on planting environments and natural environments around us. For more information visit: www.butlerandparker.com.