

SINGAPORE GARDEN FESTIVAL 2010

Daintree

This show garden is inspired by my year working in Cairns, Australia in 1995. Cairns is the jewel of Australia's tropical far north; the gateway to the barrier reef and also to one of Australia's most pristine environments; the Daintree Rainforest. The World Heritage Listed Daintree Rainforest in Far North Queensland is over one hundred and thirty-five million years old. Said to be the oldest in the world, it covers 1200 square kilometers and is the home to the world's highest diversity of plant life.

The 1990's saw rapid development of the Cairns region and an explosion in population, putting pressure on the fringes of the rainforest areas, and raising debate regarding development of freehold rainforest land. The lesson learnt was that we must preserve rainforest areas and educate and inspire younger generations to appreciate the role that rainforests play in the global environment so that we protect them for the future.

This garden is modern in style, appealing to the Y Generation who will be the future custodians of our rainforests. A module inspired shade structure sits at the front right of the garden. The shadows cast by the roof, the shape of the stepping-stones, the viewing holes on the left boundary wall (note the large viewing hole for the parent, and the smaller viewing hole for the child), the feature rocks, and the back wall sculptures are reflective of the soft river worn rocks so famous at Mossman Gorge (Far North Queensland). The vertical black timber blades are symbolic of tree trunks in the rainforest.

The pond is a contemplative feature, with a custom designed water sculpture depicting rainforest lianas reaching up to the sky, which have been chopped by deforestation, and are bleeding their watery interiors down into the pond below. Inside the pond are hundreds of small pebbles inscribed with messages of hope for the environment, written by the youth of Singapore.

The plants include a variety of rainforest and tropical species popular in tropical Australian gardens. Plants include both Australian and exotic species.

This show garden aims to educate and inspire younger generations that modern homes and gardens can still allow for revegetation of rainforest and domestic tropical gardens to accommodate 'connectivity' of rainforest zones, aiding in the survival of our endangered plant and animal species.

Jim Fogarty