



RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2024

Burma Skincare Initiative Spirit of Partnership Garden

Designed by Helen Olney

A celebration of extraordinary people coming
together to do extraordinary work.

Sanctuary Garden 282



Our story

The Burma Skincare Initiative (BSI) is a registered charity in England and Wales (1187197), co-founded by London-based dermatologists, Su Lwin and Chris Griffiths in 2019 with the vision of creating equal access to quality skincare for the people of Myanmar.

Chris and Su visited the 2021 RHS Chelsea Flower Show and were struck by the global publicity that could be achieved for the charity by showcasing its work through the narrative of a Chelsea Garden. They then sought advice from Professor John Frater (University of Oxford), a creator of a medical charity garden at

the show. John was enthusiastic about the idea and introduced them to Andrew Fisher-Tomlin of the London College of Garden Design (LCGD). With Andrew's help, the BSI commissioned a competition for LCGD graduates to design a BSI garden for the 2024 RHS Chelsea Flower Show. Shortlisted candidates were interviewed at Kew Gardens in 2022 and Helen Olney was selected for her Spirit of Partnership Garden. Replete with symbolism, the garden tells the story of the BSI, the lived experience of people with skin disease and the importance of partnership in its management; ultimately, putting Myanmar and skin health on the world stage.

The Legacy Site: Dulwich College

The permanent home for the BSI Garden is Dulwich College, a school in Southeast London. Chris Griffiths (a previous pupil of the school) and Su Lwin donated the Garden to the College with the aim of encouraging present and future pupils to enjoy and appreciate nature, gardening and sustainability. Jane Scott, Head of Communications for the College said: *"the BSI Garden will enrich the campus. A tranquil space in a busy school, it will be a feature enjoyed by the community and visitors alike."* The imminent arrival of the BSI Garden at Dulwich has generated excitement amongst the pupils, parents,



staff and local community. Furthermore, this has stimulated the team at Dulwich to reflect on medical, environmental, historical and social issues in new and deeper ways.

The Design Team



Designed by: Helen Olney



With over 20 years' experience in digital design, in 2020, Helen decided to combine her passion for design with her love of plants and nature. She studied Planting Design at the London College of Garden Design – graduating with distinction. She loves creating beautiful, immersive spaces that are teeming with wildlife. Her ideal garden is naturalistic – bordering on wild. It should be energising and restorative – alive with the dances of butterflies, the buzz of bees and the chattering of birds.

Built by: Ross Conquest



Ross is the director of Conquest Spaces – a multi-award winning design & build landscape company that has built over 10 RHS show gardens including gold & silver gilt medal winners. Ross has also received many personal awards in the industry such as the Matthew Bradley Memorial Cup for excellence in Landscape Construction, HTA Benevolent Fund and ProLandscape's 30 under 30. Being a committee board member for the Association of Professional Landscapers, Ross is committed to moving the industry forward, pushing the boundaries of landscape construction and inspiring the next generation.

The Garden

Bench

The friendship between the British and the Burmese communities is celebrated in a shady glade. The S-shaped seating, inspired by a character in the Burmese alphabet, la, is made from reclaimed stone.



Stupa

The stupa – part-ruined in nature – represents the challenging environment in which the BSI operates; recapitulates the 14th century stupas in eastern Myanmar and contributes to the Burmese character of the garden.

Textures

Layers of texture represent damaged skin and are created through reclaimed timber, limestone and brick as well as bark and plant textures, moss and lichen.

Stilt house

Sitting above the water, the stilt house represents the sanctuary the charity provides for people with skin disease. It also frames the view towards the waterfall.

Plants

All plants are found in Myanmar and grow happily in the UK.

Paths

Boardwalk paths connect at a focal meeting point – representing the coming together of people and the different journeys they have taken.

Key plants list

Acer davidii – known as snakebark maple, this Burmese native tree has striking snakeskin-like bark. It has been selected as its bark is reminiscent of some of the skin diseases affecting people supported by the Burma Skincare Initiative.



Nymphaea alba – known as 'water lily' in the UK and 'Kya' in Burma, is found in many British gardens and parks and in many ponds and lakes in Burma. It is revered for its beauty across the world – emerging from the muddy depths to burst into full bloom, creating a spectacular display.



Adiantum pedatum L. is a small, deciduous fern with a wide native range spanning the Himalayas, far East Russian, Japan, Subarctic America and east US. Its common name – maidenhair – refers to the slender, shining black stripes. In the wild it grows in both soil and on rock faces so is ideal for tucking in cracks and crevices.



Mentha aquatica – or water mint – can be used as an edible herb and to make herbal tea. It likes to grow in shallow waters and is loved by a range of pollinators including butterflies, bees and hoverflies.



Selinum wallichianum or Wallich milk parsley grows on the open, sunny slopes of the Himalayas. Reliable and hardy in the UK, it provides a long season of interest with fern-like foliage, clouds of delicate white flowers held on red-tinged stems, and beautiful seed heads later in the year.



The vast majority of plants will be sourced in the UK and grown using peat-free compost in recycled and recyclable pots.

For the full plant list, please visit:
www.burmaskincare.org/rhs-chelsea

Sustainability

By using recycled and reclaimed materials, the cement-free garden is sensitive to both the current economic climate and the increasing need for sustainability. The garden includes many wildlife-friendly plants that provide food

and shelter for birds, bees, and insects. Sustainable building techniques will include the use of dry bed foundations, dry stone walling, and the efficiency of construction and breakdown are considered in the design.

Skin Disease

There are more than 2500 skin diseases worldwide. The breadth is enormous ranging from acne and skin cancer to infections such as scabies and leprosy, all of which produce significant physical and psychosocial burden for those affected. Despite advances in the management of skin diseases, access to dermatological care and recognition of its importance is

highly variable, particularly in low-middle income countries such as Myanmar with a scarcity of trained dermatologists and appropriate medicines. The BSI is an exemplar of promoting access to quality skincare through education, training and collaborative working between medical professionals and the international dermatology community.

British Dermatological Nursing Group

The British Dermatological Nursing Group (BDNG) was established in 1989 to offer an independent speciality group for nurses and healthcare professionals with an interest in dermatology. It is the world's second largest dermatological nursing organisation.



Our aims include:

- Promoting the development of the highest standard of care for patients receiving dermatological care;
- Promoting the development and recognition of the nurse's role in dermatology
- Supporting education of nurses in dermatology;
- Supporting research into all aspects of dermatology nursing

We are delighted to continue our close relationship with the Burma Skincare Initiative by sponsoring the Spirit of Partnership garden.

The BSI Team

Su Mar Lwin Co-Founder and Trustee



Su trained in medicine and dermatology in London, fostering a strong foundation in both fields. A serendipitous move from Burma (Myanmar) to the UK alone at the age of 15 gave her a unique perspective in life and a deep appreciation of life opportunities. As a dedicated dermatologist and an academic, she is passionate about creating equal opportunities in education and research to promote equal access to quality skincare for the people of Myanmar and beyond. Su feels immensely proud and privileged that the BSI is used as an exemplar in promoting sustainable and equitable skincare partnerships globally.

Stephen Lue Trustee



Stephen, a barrister, holds a steadfast dedication to advocating for human rights and ensuring universal access to healthcare for all.

Chris Griffiths Co-Founder and Trustee



Chris completed his medical and dermatology training in London and Michigan before appointment as Foundation Professor of Dermatology at the University of Manchester. His research has contributed to advancing knowledge about, and enhancing care for, people with skin disease worldwide. His work in global health is realised through his passion for and commitment to the BSI's vision to improve access to skincare for the people of Myanmar.

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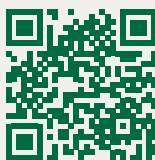


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