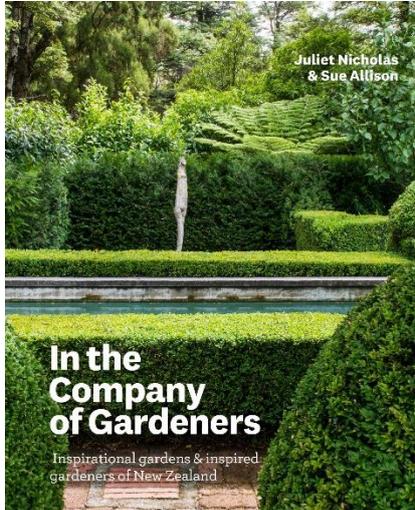


PROFESSIONAL GARDEN PHOTOGRAPHY

NZGT interviews Juliet Nicholas



Most gardeners can take a good picture of their garden, on a good day. We have cameras on phones and we'll use our computers to enhance a basic shot. But if you want to show your garden at its outstanding best and entice visitors to it, our advice is to use a professional garden photographer.

Obviously, images seen in garden books and magazines are the work of professional photographers. These people know about light and how to manipulate it. They use sophisticated equipment (remember the camera?); understand angles; and know where and when to take a photo of a vista, a middle distance or an intimate space. You might think you know your garden's best feature(s) but do not be surprised by what a professional photographer can see in your garden.

NZGT recently spoke to Juliet Nicholas, a Christchurch based garden photographer. She has worked on ten books and has countless magazine photograph credits to her name. She's one of the country's most experienced and qualified garden photographers, with technical training undertaken 35 years ago in Sydney and a Masters in Photography from Auckland University's Elam Art School.

Juliet says a key skill for good garden photography is having a deep understanding of the subject. That skill is honed over time. On a shoot, she'll find out what drives a gardener's passion and expertise. This understanding will inform the subject matter of the photograph. It comes as no surprise that her photographs not only look stunning but also reflect the personality of the garden and the gardener.

Her soon-to-be released book "In the Company of Gardeners" features several of NZGT members' gardens. In fact, the cover photograph is from the garden of NZGT Trustee, Peter Gillies. It's a perfect photograph and captures the essence of this garden. The light is exquisite, details are in sharp focus and there's a dreamy feel to the space, exactly as you might experience when in the garden yourself.

Magical photographs such as this and others in her books, compared to the rather indiscriminating shots we take ourselves, make a difference to how a garden is perceived. If visitors need to be persuaded to visit your garden it's likely to be on the basis of the photographs you've placed on your website or elsewhere.

NZGT encourages its members to think about using a professional photographer. It's not only satisfying having a record of your garden in high quality photographs but these will best promote your garden at the standard it, and your hard work, deserves.

As a post script, Juliet Nicholas regularly travels around New Zealand taking photographs and could be available to take photos of your garden. Contact her on 021 1662630 or email Juliet.nicholas@xtra.co.nz if you are interested in engaging her services.