

Twitter garden wins Gold at Chelsea

May 27 2013



Fresh garden Digital Capabilities responds to live Twitter activity, enabling the public to directly influence how the garden appears at any one time. Created by academics at the University of Lincoln, UK, and designers Harfleet & Harfleet, the garden has been awarded Gold in the Fresh Garden: Scape Design category.

The project is a cross-disciplinary collaboration between [academics](#) from the University of Lincoln's School of Computer Science, School of Psychology and School of Architecture who were all involved in the development of the installation.

Head of Psychology at the University of Lincoln, Professor Harriet Gross, said: "We are absolutely thrilled and the students involved are ecstatic. It is a real testament to what can be achieved when such a talented team comes together to work in collaboration."

The [garden](#) is divided diagonally by an autonomous-panelled screen which separates the planting of two distinct zones.

A tapestry of familiar plants and foliage then greets visitors, with the partially obscured exotic planting behind the partition providing a dramatic contrast. The panelled screen responds in real-time to the 'buzz' of excitement about RHS Chelsea Flower Show, as measured by activity on Twitter using the #rhschelsea tag, with the inner depths of the garden only being seen when public excitement is at its peaks.

Davina McCall and Jack Dee were just two of the celebrities spotted interacting with the garden during the first day of the show.

Shaun Lawson, Professor of Social Computing at the University's School of Computer Science, said: "One of the things we're trying to do through our research is to understand how digital media can be made to meaningfully intersect with the physical world. The garden is an opportunity to explore aspects of how we can interweave social media data with real space, as well as how it is possible to make sense of this data by creating thought-provoking visualisations. When people tweet, the screen activates by opening various panels and permitting selected views of the 'concealed' garden. The planting inside represents the exotic or unknown immaterial world of the internet, moderated and revealed by

our desire for knowledge and interaction."

The impressive structure was constructed by a team of staff and students from the School of Architecture led by Senior Lecturers Richard Wright and Barbara Griffin.

Commissioned to provide the overall design was award-winning design duo Harfleet & Harfleet. Brothers Tom and Paul Harfleet share an interest in modern architecture and design innovation. Their first collaboration won an RHS Gold Medal and 'Best Conceptual Garden' at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show 2010.

[Designers](#) Harfleet & Harfleet said: "The enthusiasm of staff and students at the University of Lincoln to realise this ambitious project has been inspiring. The whole process has been challenging and rewarding and has evolved into a beautiful conceptual garden that represents the innovation in design that we are fascinated in."

Go to the project's website at www.digitalcapabilities.com to find out more, follow the garden on Twitter @digcapabilities or tweet using #rhschelsea to get involved.

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show runs until 25th May 2013.

Provided by University of Lincoln

Citation: Twitter garden wins Gold at Chelsea (2013, May 27) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-05-twitter-garden-gold-chelsea.html>

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