

News release

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QUIRKY COWS SURE TO CATCH THE EYE IN PEAK'S RHS CHATSWORTH SHOW GARDEN

Life-size model cows decorated with a traditional Willow pattern will add a touch of whimsy and humour to official tourist board Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire's imaginative show garden at the forthcoming RHS Chatsworth Flower Show.

Three cows - sprayed in eye-catching metallic colours and 'branded' with a blue and white hand-painted circular motif - will graze in wild flower strewn meadows forming part of the Experience Peak District & Derbyshire garden at the show from June 7 to 11.

RHS Chelsea Flower Show award winning designer Lee Bestall - who has just received a Silver Medal for his first-ever large show garden 500 Years of Covent Garden - was inspired to include the beautiful beasts in his innovative design after reading a comment by Sir George Sitwell* that white cows could be made more interesting if painted with a blue pattern.

"I don't think it actually happened, but it was an interesting idea and it certainly stimulated my imagination as a quirky complement to the overall picture I wanted to create," said Lee, who has focused on the health-promoting and mood-boosting benefits of fresh air and fantastic views in his simple, yet striking design, built by JPH Landscapes of Sheffield.

Rough grass, native trees and the cows - all representing the Peak District and Derbyshire's rural landscapes - lead via a mown path to the clipped topiary and herbaceous planting favoured by the area's great country houses.

The garden also features a ha-ha (a sunken fence traditionally used to keep livestock out of formal gardens without interrupting the view of the landscape beyond) and a 17th century statue and Lutyens-style benches on loan from Renishaw Hall & Gardens, where Lee's business, Bestall & Co, is based.

One cow will be sprayed in copper, another in chrome/silver and the third in gold. Hathersage-based artists Becky Pytches and Rob Hopper, who came up with the

original concept, intend that the mirrored surfaces will reflect the garden, allowing the sculptures to recede back into the landscape and partially disappear.

University intern Marion Leclerc (21), from Nantes in France - currently working with Lee and his team at Bestall & Co – will hand paint a circular Willow pattern 'brand' on the rump of each animal. Each motif is inspired by elements of nature - water, earth and air, as well as wildlife and Chinese-style flowers.

"It's been a wonderful experience to be part of this project from the very beginning, contributing to the initial concept and seeing the garden evolve," said Marion, who is in her fifth year studying landscape design at the Ecole Agrocampus-Ouest at Angers in the Loire Valley. "It's also a first for me to paint on cows!"

Jo Dilley, Managing Director, Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire, added: "We are delighted with the design of our Show Garden - Lee and his team have worked extremely hard to come up with a fabulous design that reflects the huge variety of the area's natural and man-made landscapes in a relatively small space.

"I'm sure both the RHS judges and visitors will be impressed by its elegant combination of informal and formal elements – and we will have an auction book available so that anyone interested in giving the cows a permanent home after the show can register an interest. We'll also be sharing details on digital and social media.

"Any of the three would make a stylish addition to a public or private garden, park or other open space, so we expect interest to be high - and would especially like to hear from anyone wanting to keep them together as a herd!"

Visitors can find the Experience Peak District & Derbyshire show garden at site number 112 on the RHS Chatsworth Showground.

Main show garden sponsors C W Sellors, Derbyshire-based jewellery designers and manufacturers, will be launching their new, floral-inspired Tuberose jewellery collection at the show. Other sponsors are Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire; Hope Cement, A Breendon Group Company; The Camping and Caravanning Club, Peak District Premier Cottages and The Bakewell Bakery.

After the RHS Show has ended, the Experience Peak District & Derbyshire garden will be recreated at Renishaw Hall & Gardens as one of its garden rooms, so that even more visitors to the area can enjoy and appreciate it.

Other highlights to look out for at the RHS Show are five specially-designed displays by Peak District and Derbyshire Well Dressing teams, based on the concept of 'Design Revolutionaries'. They are being created by Ashford Women's Institute, Buxton Well Dressing, Burton Closes Hall & Bakewell AJ Well Dressing, Chesterfield Town Pump Group and Tideswell Well Dressers and will be located at site numbers 30 to 34, near the Dark Peak entrance.

Ends.

For further details, please contact Janette Sykes, PR Manager, Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire, on 07792 924839 or at janette.sykes@marketingpdd.com.

Note to Editors

High resolution digital images featuring an artist's impression of the Experience Peak District & Derbyshire Garden, Lee Bestall and Marion Leclerc are attached for print media and websites.

Reporters, photographers and broadcast media are welcome to attend a traditional English countryside picnic-themed photocall at the Experience Peak District & Derbyshire Show Garden (site number 112) on Tuesday June 6 at 11am. Media attending the show should apply for accreditation in advance at <http://press.rhs.org.uk/RHS-Shows.aspx>

Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire's mission is to develop and grow a successful and sustainable tourism economy, working closely with a wide range of partners to make the Peak District and Derbyshire the destination of choice - regionally, nationally and globally.

For more information about the show, visit: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chatsworth-flower-show>.

Lee Bestall, who is based at Renishaw Hall & Gardens in north Derbyshire, trained at RHS Wisley and was selected by Kevin McCloud as the first-ever Grand Designs 'Garden Designer of the Year'. He designed award-winning gardens at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2015 and 2016, and staged his first-ever large show garden at Chelsea – 500 years of Covent Garden, awarded a Silver Medal - in May 2017. For more details, visit <http://bestall.co/lee-bestall/>.

*Sir George Resesby Sitwell, 4th Baronet (1860 - 1943) was a British antiquarian, writer, politician and garden lover, who studied garden design in Italy. His children Osbert, Edith and Sacheverell all found fame as writers. For further details about Renishaw Hall & Gardens, visit <http://www.renishaw-hall.co.uk/>.