Interpretation Australia Awards for Excellence: Arid Garden, RBGV

Part B

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

Come for a stroll through the Arid Garden with us this Spring morning…

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https://vimeo.com/607088169/b2db244b42

Field Notes in action!

A short action video of Fiona Rice trying out the Field Notes rubbing during her first ever visit to the Garden

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https://vimeo.com/606086683/6b9fdaf973

Sonica Botanica: Episode 1 The Arid Garden

The first episode of the four-part audio experience *Sonica Botanica: Sounds and Stories of the Garden* was recorded in the Arid Garden.

Please click on the image below to be taken to the SoundCloud page to listen to Sonica Botanica!

Episode 1: The Arid Garden

This episode features fascinating stories of the provenance and design of the botanical collection that makes up the recently opened Arid Garden.

https://soundcloud.com/user-236560839/sonica-botanica-arid-garden

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A walk through the Arid Garden…

Although the COVID-19 restrictions have made it difficult to run in person events and programs, the digital pivot has allowed the RBGV to share the new Arid Garden with a broader community beyond Melbourne.

These digital events also mean the Interpretation Australia Award judges can easily experience the Arid Garden!

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Be Curious: Your Questions, our Answers in the Arid Garden with Learning Facilitator, Ella Mulvey

As part of our digital pivot, we recorded a live a session with a member of our learning team in the Arid Garden. Ella drew on many of the facts that appear on the interpretation signs

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https://youtu.be/-9KlWO_EtLQ

A live tour of the Arid Garden hosted by RBGV Director Tim Entwisle on Facebook on 8 December 2020

Watch from 11:30 mins to hear Sally McPhee, Creative Producer, Placemaking & Interpretation discuss the interpretation in the Garden. Collaborators and the project team featured…

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UT4BLb_uOT0

Walk through the interpretation concepts and delivered outcomes

Interpretation consultant Fiona Rice and designer Alex Miles designed a suite of interpretive elements in collaboration with RBGV for the new Arid Garden.

Walk through the development of these stunning Cactus inspired illustrations and installation photographs to get a feel for the aesthetic balance struck between engaging interpretation and the eye-catching real life cacti.

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Locations

MP1. Field Collection Story Panels
MP2. Childrens Panel
MP3. Donor Panel

S1. Sculpture (Safe)
S2. Sculpture (Strong)
S3. Sculpture (Beautiful)

Seat curios:
C1. 1400 species
C2. Saguaro cactus
C3. Threatened
C4. Protected
C5. Sleeping aid
C6. Distribution
C7. Harsh conditions
C8. Concentric patterns
C9. Seed spreaders
C10. Cactus fruit
C11. Squirrels
C12. 90% water
C13. Tallest
C14. Tortoise
C15. Seeds
C16. Octopus

Garden curios:
G1. Do cacti die of old age?
G2. Why so hairy?
G3. I flower only at night
G4. Poison or medicine?
G5. How will it cope in Melbourne?
G6. The bloom of death!
G7. A prickly problem
G8. Not a friendly bunny!
G9. Nature's Design
G10. What's the difference?
G11. A Storage Tank
G12. The Birds and the Bees
G13. Climate Change - Garden Change
G14. Start your own collection
G15. Design Inspiration

Pattern inserts:
P1. *Echeveria gibbiflora*
P2. *Crassula perforata*
P3. *Haworthia coarctata*
P4. *Kalanchoe luciae*
P5. *Deleted (damaged in install)*
P6. *Echeveria graptopetalum*
P7. *Echinocactus grusonii*
P8. *Euphorbia resinifera*
P9. *Euphorbia coerulescens*
P10. *Agava macroacantha*

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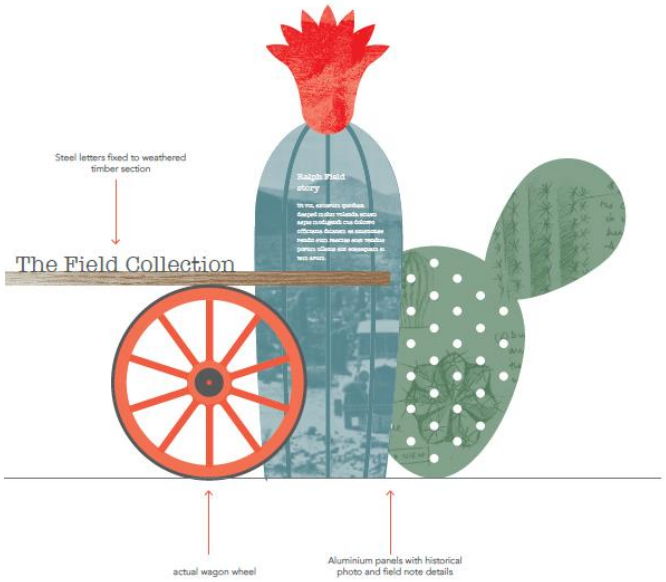
Field Collection Story Panel

Concept: At the Guilfoyle's Volcano entry to the gardens, the wonderfully heart-warming story of Ralph and Robert Field will be told. References the flat top wagon trolley that Ralph piled high with his first collection of succulents: bright red flat bar trim, weathered timbers, wagon wheel

Outcome: The final design for the Field Collection story panel was installed without the wagon wheel, instead celebrating the cactus shapes and focusing on the story.



[photo courtesy of Adrian Vittorio, 2020]

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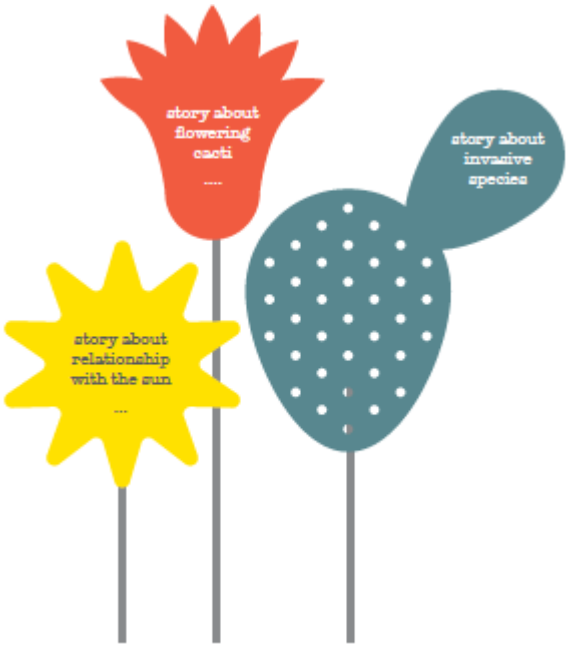
Garden Curios

Concept: Colourful curios, delicate discoveries – of insects, birds, flowers, etc. – that relate to nearby species.

Outcome: A wonderful variety of (moveable) beautiful curios with stories that take you deeper into the intriguing world of cacti.



[photos courtesy of Adrian Vittorio, 2020]

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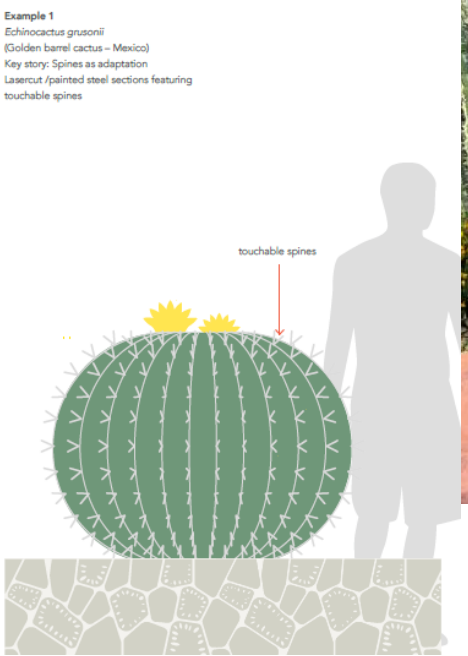
Hero sculptures – safe, strong, beautiful

Concept: striking sculptures designed to be touched that articulate and accentuate key characteristics of cacti and succulents – both the obvious architectural forms, but also the features we may not notice (e.g. inside the plant: water storage, cellular structure), or that are inaccessible (e.g. spines).

Outcome: 3 sculptures — Safe, Strong, Beautiful — which enable safe and close exploration of three key features of cacti and succulents.



[photos courtesy of Adrian Vittorio, 2020]

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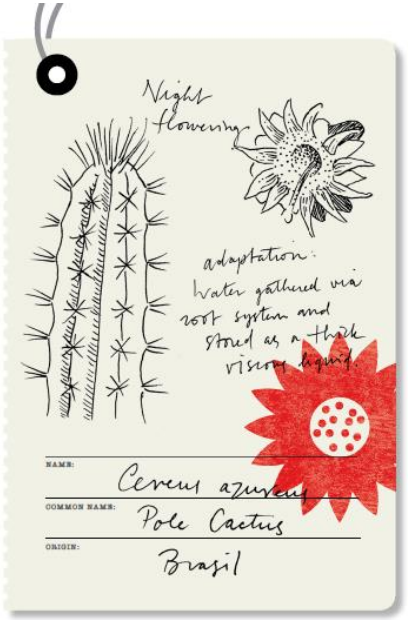
Story Tags

Concept: Each hero sculpture carries a story, via a story tag. Stories of adaptation, resilience, diversity and form will be told in the style of the page of a field naturalist's notebook. A personal, warm touch, referencing collection and passion.

Outcome: Conceptualised as a story tag attached to the sculpture, but developed into the page from a field notebook. This concept was extended with the My Field Notes booklet.



[photo courtesy of Adrian Vittorio, 2020]

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Plant labels

Concept: Designed to replace traditional garden bed plant labels. Inspired by vintage plant labels, with pops of colour. The olde-worlde quality celebrates not only the century-long passion of the Field family, but the antiquity of botanical collection around the world. It also responds to today's present appeal of cacti and succulents.

Outcome: Swinging plant labels to add movement and life (amongst a group of plants that don't move much!), and smaller plant tags for the tinier species in the seat planter beds.

Other Australian arid species

[photos courtesy of Adrian Vittorio, 2020]

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Pattern pavers and Field notebook

Concept: Bluestone pavers (up to 10) set into the concrete aggregate pathway. Feature geometric patterns inspired by garden species. Capture your own collection through the garden, by taking rubbings in your Field Notes booklet

Outcome: 10 stainless steel patterns set into the concrete aggregate pathway. Focuses attention on the great variety of exquisite radial patterns found in cacti and succulents. Fun for all ages to create beautiful rubbings!

[photo courtesy of Adrian Vittorio, 2020]

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Seat curios

Concept: Utilise the printed shapes moulded into seat surfaces to carry brief take home messages.

Outcome: 17 printed plates attached to the moulded concrete seats, which carry fun, quirky take-home messages.

[photos courtesy of Adrian Vittorio, 2020]

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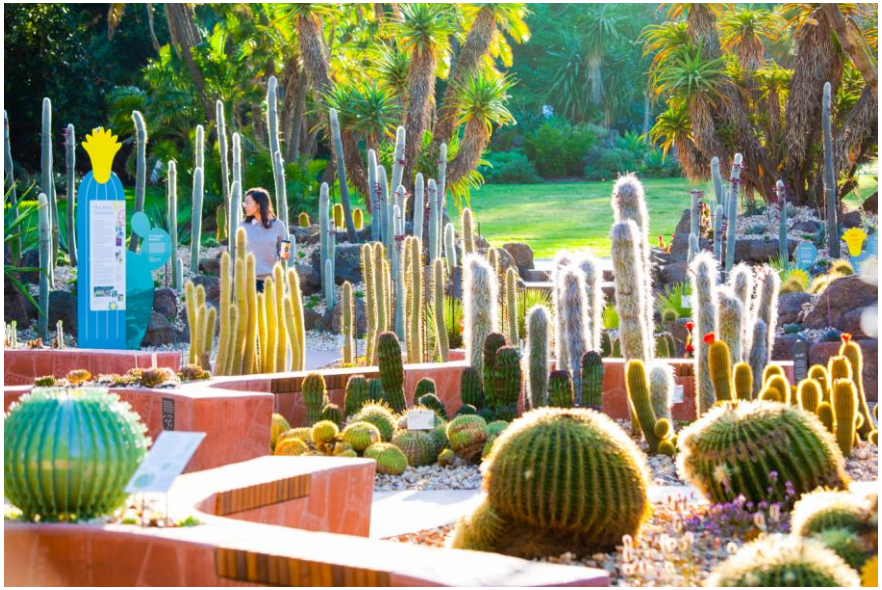

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[photos courtesy of Adrian Vittorio, 2020]

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Thank you!

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