



Enlightened **ENTERTAINING**

Sky Entertaining, Kensington, London
Maitanne Hunt Gardens & Landscapes

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1



Project details
Project value: £31,870
 (cost of lighting design and installation)
Build time: 4 months
Size of project: 96m²
Awards: Supreme Winner at the Pro Landscaper Project Awards 2023

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This project served up an impressive, intimate outdoor area that makes bold visual statements in the evening

Two keen art lovers, who are partial to a very busy social life, were looking to revive their terrace into an inviting space which embraced their far-reaching city views, whilst providing an intimate and exceptional setting for memorable parties both by day and by night.

Inspired by the clients' bold art collection including two uniquely sculptural trees, to provide the link between the interior artworks

and the outdoor terrace, Maitanne Hunt Gardens & Landscapes carefully chose to display two statement Torc pots housing evergreen trees to divide the terrace into three zones for dining, entertaining and relaxation.

Cleverly considered lighting is key to the design, both for viewing of the garden from within the apartment and for use of the space at night. A fire bowl and discreet heaters in the seating area add light and warmth. The use of skilful lighting design creates an extra dimension to the terrace by night, emphasising the play of light and shadows on key features, which become works of art in their own right.

The clients' apartment opens out onto the exposed roof terrace from two points and is located on the seventh floor of a Victorian red-brick building in London. It also consists of two sections linked by a narrow walkway, added by a previous developer when converting the current property from two flats into a single unit around fifteen years ago; when traversing the walkway, one could not avoid seeing the vertiginous seven-storey drop.

The exposed terrace and its components were largely grey and seemed to merge with the grey London skies, which created a sense of unease and discomfort. In combination

with the vertigo-inducing walkway, the lack of shelter from the elements, and the tired Mediterranean planting in mismatched containers, the terrace was neither welcoming nor beautiful. Worse still, the decking was irreparably damaged and hazardous in places, several items of furniture were broken, including the wall mirrors and wall lights.

Challenges arose upon stripping back the old decking. It was discovered that both the roof surface below and the parapet walls were seriously damaged. This damage, along with the need for new lead coping and other urgent repairs which emerged, had to be addressed

prior to any design works. Permissions for lift use by the team to access the terrace were also not granted, requiring a long walk up and down the metal fire escape several times a day, often with heavy materials or items of furniture. As the use of a crane was also not possible, they successfully negotiated raising an existing scaffolding tower plus hoist to the terrace level for transport of trees, materials, and waste.

Since Maitanne Hunt's intervention, the terrace has been completely transformed from a dull, windswept, and sun-scorched platform into a truly verdant oasis, with coherently links areas where people can relax in comfort, connect with others, and enjoy the spectacular views.

Careful positioning of trees and lighting, including using evergreen climbing jasmine to screen the steep drop from the walkway, helps to lead the eye away from the seven-storey void. Even up on the seventh floor, the drought and wind tolerant planting is attracting all sorts of wildlife.

Lighting is a fantastic design tool and one that Hunt exploited throughout this project. It can be used to highlight specific plants or features, whilst drawing the eye away from those with less visual appeal. It elicits a totally

1. Seating area with its comfortable seating and welcoming lighting
2. An intermediary/transition zone
3. Backlit mirror reflecting the seating area



3

PORTFOLIO

different mood in a garden after dark, so that one experiences the space in a whole new light.

In this project, the lighting design makes the terrace metamorphose into an entertainment setting at night which enhances the clients' sophisticated style. Each zone has its own distinctive mood now, yet forms part of a harmonious whole, where design features and striking trees are displayed to their best advantage and late-night entertainment, complemented by the glow from the fire bowl and discreet heaters, is the source of many compliments.

Maitanne Hunt used John Cullen's award-winning range of exterior light fittings for this project. Hunt also ensured that where possible, existing planters, mirrors, furniture, and the BBQ were reused or repurposed and that local suppliers and those with good sustainability credentials were sourced. In addition, the team shared existing scaffolding/hoist infrastructure to reduce its resource use. Introduction of trees, shrubs, climbers, and perennials suitable for the challenging environment of a roof terrace ensures longevity of the scheme, as well improving biodiversity, heat absorption, and contributing to a reduction in the urban heat island effect.

After four months of hard work, the clients were thrilled with the result. They were particularly pleased by the strong link now evident between the two terraces and the significant difference Hunt's intervention made to the atmosphere of the space.

4. Two statuesque juniper trees offer dappled shade during the day
5. Subtle lighting emphasises the planting and Torc pots



About

Maitanne Hunt Gardens & Landscapes creates gardens where clients can relax, entertain and have fun whilst benefitting from being surrounded by plants rich in scent, colour, and seasonal interest. From urban commercial or residential roof terraces to country gardens, its vision is to translate its clients' wishes into timeless, practical and magical settings, regardless of location or size.

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References

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Heat Outdoors
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Trees
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Decking
Envirobuild
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