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STYLE + DESIGN

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Frederico Azevedo develops his landscapes like living bouquets, each flower displayed as precisely as one would in an arrangement in a vase.

Photo: Frederico Azevedo

## Discover the Rainbow-Hued Gardens of Landscape Designer



# Frederico Azevedo

The Hamptons garden maestro talks to *Galerie* about his vibrant creations

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"This antique bronze fountain was bought in Vermont," writes Azevedo. "It was such a great find that I designed a small stone pool as its base. The three tiers bring movement and sound to the surrounding gardens, and the stone addition acts as a reflecting pool for the flowers."

Photo: Frederico Azevedo

Over the past 30 years, Brazilian-born landscape designer Frederico Azevedo has made a name for himself by conjuring rainbow-hued gardens in the Hamptons through his firm, Unlimited Earth Care (<https://www.unlimitedearthcare.com/>). Now he has compiled some of his most breathtaking landscapes in a new book, *Bloom: The Luminous Gardens of Frederico Azevedo* (Pointed Leaf Press; (<https://pointedleafpress.com/order/bloom-the-luminous-gardens-of-frederico-azevedo>) \$75).

Known for his sinuous shapes, eco-friendly ethos, and use of native flowers, the award-winning designer was influenced at an early age by Brazilian landscape geniuses Lota de Macedo Soares and Roberto Burle Marx. After studying landscape design in Brazil and at the University of Oxford, Azevedo landed in the United States in the early 1990s. "It was all white everything, and Philippe Starck was the big thing," he recalls in the book.

Determined to buck the trend, he opened his own practice in 1993 and hasn't looked back, even opening a Bridgehampton garden concept store under the same name in 2006. To coincide with the new release, Azevedo will be hosting a book signing at this year's Holiday House Hamptons (<https://holidayhousehamptons.com/>) (90 Wild Goose Lane, Water Mill) on July 27.

*Galerie* caught up with Azevedo to learn more about some of the standout gardens from his book. See the interview below.



Flowers are not the only colorful performers—here, a Japanese maple, Colorado blue spruce, and crepe myrtle bring a strong presence of color to the garden. In the summer, the crepe myrtle blooms in pink and the blues of the spruce come forward, tempering the richness of the red maple. In the spring, the colorful evergreens are joined by white dogwood blooms.

Photo: Frederico Azevedo

***Describe your style in five words or less.***

Colorful, sustainable, never too precious.

*Recommended: See the New Orleans Museum of Art's Expanded Sculpture Garden*  
(<https://www.galeriemagazine.com/noma-sculpture-garden/>)



A rectangular garden planted against the grass lawn highlights the pool and offers views from many angles. Its spiked blooms are grounded by only a suggestion of round blooms and relate to the verticality of the four cryptomeria in the distance.

Photo: Frederico Azevedo

***What are your favorite flowers to work with and why?***

All of them. Masses of flowers, in grand, tumbling heaps and curving borders. Flowers spilling out of urns and neatly planted along walkways. For me, it all begins with flowers.



A low, curving dry stone wall contours a garden of flowers and flowering shrubs. The wall has a more organic profile to avoid stifling the free-form shapes of the garden and to break up the straight line of the hedge behind it.

Photo: Frederico Azevedo

***Do you have a design philosophy as it relates to color?***

My design philosophy *is* color. When I first started working in the Hamptons in the '90s everyone was planting white gardens, and I had visions of designing in full color. I studied in Brazil and England, both of which have a tradition of colorful, natural-feeling landscapes and gardens. So I risked it. My first project was all in red, yellow, and orange, and people loved it—colorful flowers just make people happy.



"Monochromatic gardens require careful planning," writes Azevedo. "Plants bloom at different times, so in addition to thinking about height and color, I have to time each section. Salvia, alliums, and Scabiosa bloom in the spring, so I planted them in the front, middle, and back of the beds. Then Lythrum, Perovskia, and iris were planted along those same areas and blossom in the summer when the salvia and Scabiosa are green and no longer in bloom."

Photo: Frederico Azevedo

***What is your favorite project in the book and why?***

Every project is my favorite, and I truly mean that. Designing gardens means assembling a living, changing environment that is site-specific. I have a distinct style, but each project comes together and blooms in a unique way.

*Recommended: See Kate Middleton's Idyllic Garden at the Chelsea Flower Show*  
(<https://www.galeriemagazine.com/kate-middleton-chelsea-flower-show/>)



Contouring borders bring form and depth to what would otherwise be straight perimeters of the property. These layered borders introduce a presence of color and texture and mix manicured and free-form details to animate the garden, leading the eye through different and inviting areas.

***What has been your biggest challenge professionally?***

Constantly updating. I have to stay in tune with the changing environment and make sure that I'm designing in a way that works with nature. I work sustainably and use native or well-adapted plants that attract butterflies, bees, and birds to encourage a healthy environment. Innovations in sustainable design are happening all the time, and I want to be using the newest materials and keeping up with the latest technology.