



**Top right:** Spring in bloom at the Philadelphia Flower Show. **Above, top to bottom:** Garden art on display in Philly. Patty Craft, Kathleen Norris Brenzel, and Rebecca Sweet. The Recycled Garden by Darjit, winner of the People's Choice Award at the San Francisco Flower Show.



## March Madness

Team Horticulture went from sea to shining sea covering garden shows in March

by *Patty Craft, Jenny Koester & Rebecca Sweet*  
photography by *Jenny Koester & Woodside Images*

**FLOWER SHOWS, HARBINGERS OF SPRING**, make us ever more eager to get outside and play in the dirt. We marked one show off our bucket list last month when we visited the Philadelphia Flower Show. Traveling to the City of Brotherly Love were Patty Craft, Jenny Koester and Jamie Markle (group publisher). We knew it would be over-the-top; Philadelphia's is the largest indoor flower show in the world. We weren't disappointed. With the theme being "Hawaii: Islands of Aloha," there was a 25-foot-tall waterfall, waves and waves of orchids, volcanoes, beaches and island-inspired designs for the 250,000 attendees to enjoy. There were also displays for the more practical gardener, with ideas most could incorporate into their home gardens, including an abundance of terrariums, but the overall feel of the show was sensational bliss. The 2013 theme is "Brilliant!" and will feature a British Invasion of plant delights. Mark your calendar now for March 3, 2013. (See more here.)

From Philly we flew west to the San Francisco Flower & Garden Show, where Patty Craft connected with regular *Horticulture* contributor Rebecca Sweet in Rebecca's hometown. Photographing in the convention-center lighting posed a challenge, but you get a good feel here for what we saw. The show gardens featured native plants for greater sustainability and an abundance of container ideas, including sleek metal pots and recycled materials like graffiti-painted dumpsters. Patty's favorite garden, which was awarded a Gold Award and the People's Choice Award, was The Recycled Garden, designed by Darjit, a family-owned business based in New Zealand. The primary designer was Brent Sumner. The lifesize dragon daintily holding calla lilies in her hand was outrageously wonderful, and all the garden's

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containers were constructed from recycled materials. Click the link at the lower right to see more photos of the amazing pieces in the garden.

We closed out the month by heading south to the Ball Horticultural Company in Santa Paula, Calif. Rebecca Sweet hopped a plane south to visit Ball on Team Horticulture's behalf. She visited with Anna Ball and toured the facilities where she saw so many exciting annuals, perennials and veggies that it was hard for us to decide which ones to feature here! We love the 3D series of African daisies (*Osteospermum*) Ball is debuting in 2012. These are the only double osteospermums on the market today and not only that, but their flowers don't close up on cloudy days or in the evenings! The series includes solid and two-tone varieties. They work well in containers or planted directly in the ground and bloom best in the cooler temperatures of spring and fall. Cut them back gently after the blooms fade in early summer to encourage autumn rebloom. Hardy to USDA Zone 9, these are best treated as an annual. \*

**Top right:** The entry to the Ball Horticultural facility in Santa Paula, Calif. **Bottom right:** '3D Purple' African daisy, one in a line of impressive new osteos from Ball.



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