



# Wirtz International, creating 'strong character gardens'

TEXT: XANDRA BOERSMA | PHOTOS: WIRTZ INTERNATIONAL

**The Jardin du Carrousel in the Louvre Museum, the garden at the University of Antwerp, Jubilee Park in London's Canary Wharf and Dior's runway. These are big names you have probably seen or heard about at least once. But did you know they originated in Belgium? They were designed by Wirtz International.**

These are just a small selection of the projects Martin Wirtz, his brother Peter and their team have in their portfolio. "We do lots of private gardens as well," Wirtz explains. "That's our core business, they're secret treasures." Though each garden is different and there's no typical Wirtz garden, you will definitely always recognise them. "We love to work with big movements, making big gestures in small and large gardens. Gardens need to express a strong character."

Gardens are important these days, explains Wirtz: "In this world filled with stress it's important to have as much public greenery as possible. I really think trees are the answer to a lot of problems we deal with in the 21st century."

There are many things to take into account when designing a garden, Wirtz explains: "What kind of garden is it, city park or private ground? What's the climate? A garden in Northern Europe requires different kinds of plants to one in the South. Are there buildings surrounding the garden that need to be covered up? Does it need to be low maintenance or not? What type of soil is it? And most importantly: what does the client want?"

One of those clients was Raf Simons, former creative director of fashion label Dior. The request? Create a garden

for his fashion show in Paris, one of the most talked about events in the industry. "It was an amazing experience! Stressful, but worth it. We had to find the exact right trees, nine hazelnuts and 6,000 buxus." Not your everyday assignment. The results were amazing, and the international press agreed. "The moment we saw the models walking through our garden was super! Really intense."

But it is not just these high-end assignments that make Wirtz love his work. "Not at all. I always love looking for the perfect composition, to make every garden beautiful. It's a stressful job. But in the end the creativity and positive responses we get from our clients make it worth it."

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