

CTC & G

Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

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INNOVATION IN DESIGN AWARDS

Hands on the Land

MEET THIS YEAR'S CTC&G INNOVATOR AWARD RECIPIENT, LANDSCAPE DESIGNER JAMES DOYLE



Your work reflects the “Intersection of Nature and Art” (also the title of your new book). What does that mean? It is often a juxtaposed relationship between the designed (art form) and a natural surround. The designed insertion can sometimes be an art piece in the form of sculpture or sculpted plantings within a garden space.

How did the pandemic influence how people use/view/design their outdoor spaces for the long term? Homesteading became more important to people, and we have seen families adopting a more a self-sufficient lifestyle. Creating a home and landscape for different generations, preserving natural surrounds and even food production have been elevated more in terms of importance.

Climate change and sustainability are front-of-mind these days. Do you think that's the new normal, and how are you tackling it in your work? Yes, and we see the changing weather patterns across the globe. There is no denying this now. Prolonged periods of excessively high temperatures, drought, floods and an increase in the number of heavy rainfall events influence



Flora And Fauna (CLOCKWISE FROM THIS PHOTO) James Doyle has a soft spot for donkey rescue organizations, like thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk. Doyle accepts his award at the IDAs. At Doyle's home, rhododendron flank the property entrance. Doyle restored and reimagined the landscape design at this 1920s Lake Como villa. Nature and art intersect in this formal garden adorned with a textural Chakaia Booker statue. jdda.com.

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: TIMOTHY BURKE MANNIE, NELL LANDINO, JR. AND JAMES DOYLE, NELL LANDINO, JR., THE DONKEY SANCTUARY



the way we design and garden. We are designing with more native plants, managing stormwater and considering more local materials for our projects.

How has your personal history shaped who you are today? Being an immigrant has influenced my drive and ambition. This has given me a perspective that the glass is always half full and that I am appreciative of everything I have achieved. It was serendipitous that I found my initial career as a gardener/horticulturist, and once I put my hands in the earth, it changed my life in the most wonderful way.

What type of garden did you have growing up? I come from terraced housing in Ireland, and the street was our playground. My mother had a small garden patch that I barely noticed, but she loved gardening as much as anyone I've known.

What are your plans for your new property in Ireland? It is a coastal site with the most spectacular views. Joeb Moore and I have designed a small home that will be built, and I think this will be the last opportunity to design a garden for myself. I am very excited about this as the southern coast is subtropical, and I am going to explore and experiment with plantings. My goal is to re-create a coastal landscape, but in a way that people may not have seen before.

How did you get involved with donkey rescue? In a previous life, I had livestock, sheep, pigs, poultry and donkeys. I still have hens at home, but donkeys are dear to my heart. Maybe a love of donkeys is an Irish thing? These animals are mistreated around the globe, and donkey sanctuaries [like thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk] help transform their lives.

Where do you find design inspiration? Everywhere really, but we work with so many great designers from other disciplines that inspire our work.

If you were in a different industry, what would you do? I consider myself to be unemployable. I am a leader by nature, but a romantic notion would have me as a farmer.

What's your personal credo? Work hard and pay it forward!—Catriona Branca