

NOVEMBER 2025

TEXAS

in Bloom



SEASONAL FLORALS BRIGHTEN BREAKFAST AND THE TSFA ANNUAL MEETING

Former TSFA Retail Director Iuliia Prokhorova AIFD, CFD, TMF set the table with florals to brighten the day during the TSFA Annual Meeting in June.

Color Palette. The color palette was inspired by the serenity of morning and the comfort of coffee. The breakfast atmosphere should feel peaceful, grounded and welcoming – never overpowering. The earthy neutrals and soft whites created balance and harmony, while the golden undertones echoed Pantone's Color of the Year, adding a subtle glow of optimism and warmth to reflect the spirit of community at Texas State Florists' Association.

Design Style. Designer Iuliia Prokhorova AIFD, CFD, TMF, selected a refined, modern garden style that is graceful, airy and deeply intentional. The style feels like a quiet conversation between structure and softness. The loose asymmetry, gentle stem movement and natural layering of blooms gives it an effortless garden quality, while the elevated vessel and controlled negative space add sophistication and modernity.

Styled Characteristics. Loose yet intentional composition, air movement, asymmetrical balance and natural stem flow are the characteristics of this style of design. The inspiration reinterprets English garden traditions with modern restraint and fine-art sensibility. A vintage-inspired glass "Amelia" compote from Silver Level Texas Floral Education Underwriter Syndicate Sales was selected to add formality without heaviness. The overall impression was organic, elegant and serene, bridging the line between classic and contemporary.

Design Process. Have you ever stopped to wonder about the process to select specific florals when an abundance of choices are available? In this case Prokhorova determined the color



Photography Credit | Shy Laurel Photography

palette and then focused on creating depth through a variety of bloom scales and textures. "Since the palette is nearly monochromatic, contrast comes from form rather than color," shared Prokhorova. "Thus, pairing airy elements with structured blooms and velvety petals with crisp foliage keeps the composition visually engaging."

Gentle Variation. It is often most interesting when designs complement one another rather than being identical. Prokhorova went on to explain, "Beauty is often found in gentle variation; when every design looks the same, something in the story feels still. By letting each design breathe in its own way while staying within the same palette, the collection feels more natural – like harmony with movement rather than repetition."

The Mechanics. When asked about the preferred mechanics for this design, Prokhorova explained that "A chicken-wire bubble allows stems to move naturally and water to circulate freely. I find this method to support a lighter, airier composition and align with more sustainable design practices."

Perceived Value. Perceived value is enhanced when a design expands visual space. This intentional use of space is a strength of Prokhorova's. "I work with open, airy spacing and natural stem movement, letting the negative space become part of the design," said Prokhorova. "By avoiding crowding and allowing flowers to breathe, the composition feels lighter, larger and more inviting to the eye."

Texas in Bloom

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FROM THE *President*



TSFA President
Marisa Guerrero
AIFD, CFD, TMF

Fall has been a vibrant season for the Texas State Florists' Association (TSFA), highlighted by our Texas Floral Showcase in Tyler! Brandy Ferrer AIFD, CFD, TMF, chaired an event that was full of creativity and inspiration. Deborah De La Flor AIFD, CFD, PFCI, led a sold-out hands-on workshop and then showed that "Everything Is Coming Up Roses" with imaginative uses for these beautiful flowers. Texas Floral Events Coordinator Lynn Lary McLean, AAF, AIFD, CFD, PFCI, TMF, provided invaluable support throughout.

TSFA is grateful to generous underwriters – Silver Level Zoom Roses and Bronze Level Alexandra Farms, Porch View Home and Smithers-Oasis – who each contributed flowers or containers and supplies to make the event exquisite. Additional contributors include Fern Trust, Kirksey Gregg Productions and Schusters of Texas. We appreciate their continued support.

Congratulations to the Madly Marvelous Tablescape competition winners. First Place went to Alan Masters AIFD, CFD, PFCI; Second Place and Royal Court Favorite went to Fabian Salcedo; and Third Place was awarded to Beth O'Reilly AIFD, CFD, TMF. Mary McCarthy AIFD, CFD, TMF, and Norman Northen, TMFA, also created beautiful tablescape that were enjoyed by all present. Thank you to all participants for your artistry!

The TSFA School of Floral Design hosted a successful Winter Wonderland Workshop in Leander on Oct. 25. Attendees created holiday designs in glass, evergreen centerpieces, classic faux wreaths and multi-layered bows, and they also gained valuable care and handling tips. Registration is open for the popular Fundamental Elements and Principles of Floral Design course in January. It's sure to sell out, so register now if you are interested in attending!

If you are looking for education closer to home, log in to the TSFA Info Hub, where you can view on-demand videos from top floral educators and download additional educational resources. Members can access this exclusive content by pressing the Members Log-in button at the top of tsfa.org, then clicking on the Resources section.

Finally, thank you to Cassie Sanders AIFD, CFD, TMF, and Susan Piland AIFD, CFD, TMF, for leading Level 1 and 2 Floral Certification workshops for teachers in Lubbock and Huntsville, respectively. Your dedication equips teachers and their students to succeed, ensuring the future of floral education in Texas remains strong.

Thank you to all members, contributors and volunteers who help TSFA continue to bloom! We're wishing you a Thanksgiving that is as sweet as pumpkin pie!

Marisa Guerrero AIFD, CFD, TMF

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P.O. Box 859 | Leander, Texas 78646 | 512.528.0806 | tsfa.org | mkarns@tsfa.org | tsfaadmin@tsfa.org

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Contributing Writers | Brandy Ferrer AIFD, CFD, TMF; Hitomi Gilliam AIFD; Charlie Groppetti AIFD; Marisa Guerrero AIFD, CFD, TMF; Iuliia Prokhorova AIFD, CFD, TMF; Brenna Quan AIFD; Renato Sogueco, AAF, PFCI; J. Keith White AIFD; Marcia Wilson, AAF; Tricia Won AIFD, CFD, EMC, IMF.

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THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSES

Written by Brandy Ferrer AIFD, CFD, TMF



Deborah De La Flor AIFD, CFD, PFCI, offers hands-on guidance during her sold-out workshop, inspiring florists to explore structure, texture and the natural rhythm of floral design. Her presentation confirmed that Everything is Coming Up Roses!

INSPIRATION BLOOMS AT THE 2025 TEXAS FLORAL SHOWCASE

The Texas State Florists' Association brought florists, students and flower lovers together at the Tyler Rose Garden for an unforgettable day of creativity and connection during the 2025 Texas Floral Showcase in Tyler.

More than 80 attendees filled the Rose Garden Center for a day celebrating artistry, imagination and community, with 28 designers participating in the sold-out hands-on workshop led by internationally acclaimed floral artist Deborah De La Flor AIFD, CFD, PFCI, assisted by Kailey Dixon, whose support helped bring De La Flor's vision to life.

Under the direction of Showcase Chair Brandy Ferrer AIFD, CFD, TMF, the event offered an immersive floral experience, where education met imagination and every detail celebrated the beauty of roses and the creativity of florists.

In the afternoon workshop, participants designed lush, vertical, garden-style arrangements in De La Flor's signature style of texture and movement. Roses and soft greenery paired with wheat and birch—provided through the support of Zoom Roses, FernTrust and Schusters of Texas — came together as De La Flor guided attendees to transform simple stems into expressive compositions.

That evening, she took the stage for her "Everything's Coming Up Roses" presentation, captivating the audience with designs that ranged from romantic to sculptural. From a blush hand-tied bouquet of roses and grapevine to an autumn

centerpiece rich with garden roses and foliage, each design showcased harmony, color and creative mechanics.

Her program — supported by the Texas Floral Education Underwriters — featured vibrant blooms from Zoom Roses, exquisite garden roses from Alexandra Farms, elegant containers from Porch View Home, dried botanicals from Schusters of Texas and precision-crafted materials from Smithers-Oasis, ensuring every detail reflected artistry and technical excellence.

For De La Flor, artistry and retail success are inseparable. "Artistry doesn't have to be complicated," she said. "Sometimes it's just about color and balance — and letting the flowers speak." Her approach throughout the day reflected her heartfelt teaching philosophy: meeting florists where they are and helping them rediscover the joy of creating. "If they can take anything I've shown or said and make it their own — to be inspired to enjoy creating with flowers — that's the greatest reward," said De La Flor.

A DAY OF WONDER AND WHIMSY

Chair Ferrer envisioned the showcase as an interactive celebration of creativity, where attendees could observe design and experience it. That vision came to life from the moment guests entered the Tyler Rose Garden Center, greeted by breathtaking floral installations designed and donated by Dawson Clark, TMF, of HighPointe Estate and Patty Fair of Simply Beautiful Floral Company.

The Whimsy Bar, hosted by Alan Masters AIFD, CFD, PFCI, was a constant hub of laughter and color as guests created floral headpieces and wearable designs bursting with personality. Nearby, the Mad



Designers construct contemporary vertical arrangements featuring roses, wheat and airy foliage, blending natural movement with structure.



A vibrant foyer arrangement by Dawson Clark, TMF, of HighPointe Estate, welcomed attendees with a burst of color and texture inspired by the rose garden setting.

Hatter's Elegant Tea Party offered an afternoon of charm and conversation, complete with beautifully curated tea boxes and whimsical floral décor.

Throughout the day, attendees strolled the Tyler Rose Gardens and explored the Tyler Rose Museum, immersing themselves in the beauty, artistry and floral heritage that define Texas floristry.

A COMMUNITY OF LEARNING AND GROWTH

TSFA President Marisa Guerrero AIFD, CFD, TMF, described the showcase as a perfect reflection of TSFA's mission to educate, inspire and elevate. "Events like this bring our mission to life," she shared. "They offer hands-on learning, spark creativity and connect florists in an environment that encourages collaboration and growth."

From seasoned professionals to first-time attendees, the energy in the room was undeniable. "Everyone left the Rose Garden Center feeling refreshed, motivated and proud to be part of such a vibrant floral community," Guerrero said.

She added that "showcases like this mark the future of TSFA education – immersive experiences that blend artistry, business, and innovation while meeting florists, where they are, through hands-on learning and statewide connection."

A CELEBRATION OF CREATIVITY AND CONNECTION

The showcase also celebrated a moment of friendly competition as the Madly Marvelous Tablescape Competition reunited former Texas Designers of the Year in a dazzling

display of creativity and craftsmanship. Alan Masters earned top honors for his imaginative design, while Fabian Salcedo captured the crowd's heart as fan favorite with his expressive, color-filled tablescape. Readers can discover more of these remarkable creations in the companion feature within this issue.

For Chair Ferrer, seeing the showcase come to life was deeply rewarding. "It's about creating experiences that reignite our love for design and connect us as a community," she shared. "When florists leave feeling inspired and proud to be part of something bigger, that's when we've done our job."

As the sun set over the Tyler Rose Garden, the 2025 Texas Floral Showcase stood as a vivid reminder of what makes the Texas floral community extraordinary – its artistry, generosity and unshakable spirit of collaboration. Through flowers, fellowship and a touch of whimsy, this event truly proved that everything's coming up roses.



The Mad Hatter's Elegant Tea Party, catered by Azalea Catering Company, offered guests whimsical tea boxes and sweet treats in true Through the Looking Glass style.



Guests enjoyed beautifully curated tea boxes, featuring themed sandwiches along with desserts that added a delightful touch of whimsy to the afternoon.



Patty Fair, Simply Beautiful Floral Company, designed a lush floral installation that beautifully framed the entrance and captured the spirit of the showcase.



The Whimsy Bar, hosted by Alan Masters, buzzed with creativity as guests crafted floral headpieces and wearable designs – a highlight of the afternoon and a favorite among attendees.

HIGHLIGHTING THE FIRST ALL-STAR DESIGN COMPETITION DURING THE TEXAS FLORAL SHOWCASE

Written by Brandy Ferrer AIFD, CFD, TMF

Texas State Florists' Association Madly Marvelous Tablescape Competition brought together former Texas Designers of the Year for a unique celebration of creativity. Inspired by the Through the Looking Glass theme, each designer turned their table into a colorful, lively scene that showed just how imaginative Texas florists can be.

Five extraordinary talents – Alan Masters AIFD, CFD, PFCI; Fabian Salcedo; Beth O'Reilly AIFD, CFD, TMF; Mary McCarthy AIFD, CFD, TMFA, and Norman Northen TMFA, – stepped back into the spotlight, showcasing experience, style and innovation in a dazzling display of floral excellence.

Masters captured First Place with a towering, steampunk-inspired creation that seemed straight out of Wonderland itself. Anchored by golden tones, deep reds and touches of copper, his design featured cascading amaranthus, roses, keys, gears and clock parts – a dramatic interpretation of time slipping away.

"My inspiration was actually a phrase from the original Alice in Wonderland – 'I'm late, I'm late, for a very important date,'" Masters shared. "The clock was such a central image, and I tried to think more like Tim Burton to get into that Through the Looking Glass mindset. My son and I love steampunk, so disassembling the clock just fit perfectly."



Alan Masters AIFD, CFD, PFCI, winner of the Madly Marvelous Tablescape Competition, is pictured at left with TSFA President Marisa Guerrero AIFD, CFD, TMF, and Showcase Chair Brandy Ferrer AIFD, CFD, TMF, following the announcement of his award-winning design.

He said that competing with other former winners was both exciting and humbling. "It was exhilarating – it pushed me more than ever before. Competition is always fun, but going up against proven winners is next level."

His design wasn't without its challenges. Covering mechanics proved tricky, and Masters admitted that creative problem-solving became part of the process. "I almost didn't have enough product to cover the backs of cages and zip ties," he said with a laugh. "I had to take a step back, rethink my foliage, and even dig through my trash box for scraps to make it work."

In the end, his persistence paid off – and his creation stole the show. "I've always been a romantic designer at heart, but for competition, I lean more architectural. Over time, my understanding of the elements and principles of design has grown stronger and clearer."

In the all-star design competition Fabian Salcedo earned Second Place and the fan favorite award for his ethereal design in tones of lavender, burgundy and plum. The cascading amaranthus, sculptural anthuriums, and layered textural blooms created an atmosphere of mystery and movement that enchanted every viewer.

Beth O'Reilly AIFD, CFD, TMF, took Third Place with a towering "floral tree" overflowing with color, texture and balloon accents – a whimsical nod to Wonderland's joyful chaos and imaginative spirit. Mary McCarthy AIFD, CFD, TMFA, charmed attendees with her clever take on the Queen of Hearts, using red and white roses accented with hand-painted petals, while Norman Northen, TMFA, presented a dramatic red-and-white tablescape filled with roses, carnations and delicate details that celebrated classic elegance.

Reflecting on the event, Masters offered advice to florists considering competition: "Just do it. Use each competition as a chance to learn and grow. Attend workshops, take one new idea from each and practice it. And most importantly, accept critiques graciously. No one's trying to be mean – they just want to help you be better at your craft."

From steampunk clocks to painted roses, and from theatrical trees to romantic red blooms, each design reflected the heart of Texas floristry – bold, inventive and beautifully

unrestrained. Yet beyond the flowers and fanfare, the Madly Marvelous Tablescape Competition stood as a tribute to the enduring legacy of TSFA's most accomplished designers. Their creativity, camaraderie and shared passion for education and excellence continue to shape the future of Texas floristry – reminding us all that imagination never fades, it simply blooms anew.



Fabian Salcedo



Beth O'Reilly AIFD, CFD, TMF



Mary McCarthy AIFD, CFD, TMFA



Norman Northen, TMFA



HITOMI GILLIAM AIFD ELEVATES DESIGN STYLES FOR EVERY DAY

Written by Hitomi Gilliam AIFD

I was thrilled to be invited to style and present unique, everyday florals – and, of course, to be sponsored by Teleflora! I am rarely asked to present on this topic, so I loved bringing my former retail self to speak out. It has always been important to me that everything I share is applicable to the most creative experienced designer, as well as to a new retail flower shop employee. The main message I carry is for all – and it is no different for any demographic.

My designs were scaled down to think and make small, affordable, yet creative designs in the everyday containers by Teleflora. These containers are most often used in their brand designs found in the selection guide, but that does not have to be so. Your creativity needs to be on display, no matter the budget. The only difference in the way I think today vs. when I was in retail is, then I felt that each and every design I put out needed to be creative and different. I did not realize then, that the efficiency

of coming up with a prototype creative design and multiplying it by 10 to 20 times or more was okay. You don't have to reinvent with each design you create. A good, creative design should be duplicated and sold as unique to your shop, as the week's special or in a multitude of other compelling ways.

The main variable is to create an unexpected difference to brand your shop as "not your ordinary florist". That was my tag line for Satsuki's Florist for 26 years!!

Being DIFFERENT makes your shop stand out, and customers will want to associate themselves with your brand. Whatever the occasion for giving flowers may be, your customers can identify with the flowers sent or received as a mark of excellence and creativity.

I wanted to show to the audience that my designs in Teleflora containers were

definitely different than as seen on the poster. I also wanted to share a few of my special techniques and decorative elements that I create to add to designs.

I am always looking forward to what's next, and sustainability catches all my attention today. Students want what's new and more sustainable. I choose not to use anything that's classified as single-use plastic. I don't want to contribute to that mountain of waste at the landfill. I prefer to use and show things that fall under the category of REUSE to REDUCE. As a more circular system of waste management, this makes me appreciate quality to keep, rather than buy cheap to throw away. I enjoy showing ways to save dollars, being more frugal in the ways we use materials, taking care of what we have and what we have created that's worth saving, instead of throwing away and replacing. Saving time and money are two things that florists need most.

teleflora.

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The Teleflora bamboo rectangle container is one of my favorites. It feels Japanese, clean and austere. I created a wire mesh roll structure that lies horizontal and bongo-tied it to the container to provide the mechanics for this design. Wire extenders add flow to the structure, and flowers are simply dropped in to create a low centerpiece – a less-is-more concept of flowering. The structure is for REUSE to REDUCE category of design components useful for weekly installs and for event rentals.



A Teleflora mercury glass compote holds a Tropical Nouveau design. This style features a combination of tropicals and temperate flowers, including Anthurium 'Hitomi Gilliam', my namesake, bred at the University of Hawaii by Dr. Tessie Amore and grown by Green Point Nursery in Hilo, Hawaii. To create extra interest in flower blending, show that you can indeed mix the two distinctly different groups of flowers from different climate zones by color bridging or textural contrast, adding a touch of intrigue to the design.



A Teleflora Gemstone Art Vase with Tropical Nouveau blending of flowers in a REUSE to REDUCE wire structure. This stunning combination of Choco Anthuriums adds intrigue, with hellebores, grasses and talinum – my favorite transparent filler of the moment. It definitely looks far from ordinary. This was my favorite design of the program. I love this shape!

Photography Credit | Shy Laurel Photography





This was a large-scale design concept built as an example of how to artfully brand your business. The structure was built on an IKEA coat rack and is intended to be an upright funnel shape art piece. It was built with yarn covered wire extenders in orange, peach and red. This design represents one of my signatures – artwork that functions as a design structure to place water tube encased blooms for an event, such as an open house.

This design can hold your permanent botanical collection as a sales fixture. It can serve as an upside down Christmas tree to decorate. It is unique art that represents my business. I created it to be the inspiration for that special spirit that represents all the creative works sent out from your shop. Every florist should have a design that represents YOUR ART.

I placed this creation prominently on stage at the program and the workshop to represent the spirit of my style of work. It had water tubed flowers left over from my procurement in colors that suited and punctuated the very special, unusual, stunning Anthurium Waroquianum – the giant foliage that catches everyone's eye.

This exemplifies that something DIFFERENT ... that unexpected quality that every shop needs.

A Teleflora Artisan Pitcher with a tatami reed circle structure adds extra craftsmanship and emphasis to the design. In this Tropical Nouveau garden design, tropicals are blended with temperates to soften hard edges by gentrifying them by using color and texture. It's using the solid knowledge of how to work the elements of design to create unity in various ways. The tatami reed circle presents the design, bringing its specialness as a work of art.





INTERNATIONAL INSIGHTS OPENED WITH BRENNA QUAN AIFD

Written by Brenna Quan AIFD

I love themes, so when I can focus on a program topic, whether of my own creation or a given suggestion, the fun part is building a story or a collection of stories to share! As a forever student of floristry, I am always keen on gaining new techniques to try out, so some designs are created based on those I have seen while applying my sense of design style to each. I also like to share my own discoveries and hope that others can take away and be motivated to apply what is learned to their own creations.

I always want to leave the audience with a sense of excitement and a spark of inspiration to go and create! It's important to share a positive outlook on our art form, and hopefully this will lead all to light more candles of inspiration for others. It's the stories that each design expresses that I want people to ponder. Creation is full of wonderment, and the way to truly connect through flowers is to succeed in bringing out the emotional aspects that flowers and art can provide.

I was absolutely thrilled to be invited to the famous Texas Floral Expo. Those attending were some of the kindest, most hospitable and fun individuals that I have had the privilege of working with! Namely, my steadfast and talented assistants, Gaby Ponsaerts, TMF, and Teia Bennett AIFD, CFD, PFCI, TMF!



Session underwritten by BloomNet
Texas Floral Education Partner
Founding Silver Level Texas Floral
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About the Cover

This whimsical take on Sue McLeary's wire headdress forms was styled to adorn the "floral sorceress" for Brenna Quan's International Insights Presentation, titled "Floral Sorcery: Transforming Ideas into Art".

"Our inspiration comes from a number of sources, and I believe that it is important to acknowledge who inspires us. Passionflower Sue is an innovative and forward-thinking educator and is one of my absolute favorites." – Brenna Quan AIFD

Photography Credit | Shy Laurel Photography

This design opened “Floral Sorcery: Transforming Ideas Into Art”, to represent the “Idea Seeds” for the upcoming designs. The white phalaenopsis blooms were being incubated within an egg-like branch sculpture that would eventually hatch into a blooming creation. As I love forms found in nature, these rest atop some fallen wood, nestled within a few plants and small flowers “growing” on the earth’s surface.



Photography Credit | Shy Laurel Photography

My moody “floralabra” stood about 6’ tall and came together magically! It was like a puzzle that was pre-determined by Alan Masters AIFD, CFD, PFCI, and his kind donation of driftwood! Every piece seemed to just click together – real floral sorcery at play! This was a perfect example of seizing a moment of creativity with the materials provided and making something really special. This was my favorite design of the collection!





This was my "Wicked" movie themed design with the colors representing the two witches, along with black to ground them. I love illusions and my goal was to "Defy Gravity" with flowers and foliage in a bit of a swirling motion. Looking back, I see that adding flowers to the design would have made a difference. It remains interesting to me that sometimes we do not see that detail until the design is reflected in a photograph that is viewed later. There's a lesson there! Oftentimes, it pays to "picture this" and then return to add details for perfection.

Photography Credit | Shy Laurel Photography



I wanted to create something sorcerers may have in their mysterious collections. This was my "Shelf of Potions" created with handcrafted woven "bottles" made of 18-gauge florist wire and Smithers-Oasis bind wire. A touch of yarn was added for a variation in color and texture. Flowers were selected to compliment the sculptured forms.

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CHRISTMAS SECRETS REVEALED IN CHARLIE GROPPETTI STYLE



Incorporate found objects for visual impact and to help your holiday budget. These tree trunks were fallen tree limbs after a storm. A few added faux “one stems” and larger scale containers make these an impactful display, as well as a way to showcase ornaments.

“When invited to present, I usually select a program topic that is of personal interest and then expand it by covering related trends, color interpretations and related product information. However, the most important factor is how to translate these ideas into sales. It is important that attendees take home a sense of inspiration and are motivated to experience the components and make the most of the tips and techniques. Emphasizing the specifics being taught can expand attendees’ experiences and add to their overall knowledge of design.” – Charlie Groppetti AIFD

Holiday greens are reimagined in blue-greens and turquoise greens. To help sell these trendy color directions, the designs are more grounded with warm browns and the natural textures of tree trunks and pine cones.



Grouping by theme with specific color blocking will keep your store from appearing visually distracting for the holidays. Customers will easily and quickly be drawn to what appeals to them.



Here's another example of a smaller vignette, showing customers how to combine different categories of merchandise inspiring multiple gift purchases to achieve the look.

Photography Credit | Shy Laurel Photography



KISS (Keep it simple, stupid)! Oftentimes, instead of elaborate designs, a simple design sells the best. A simple design is easy to mass produce, faster to make and more efficient to create. Simpler designs are usually more affordable and easier to place because of their modest size. This design of paperwhites features a realistic, fresh appearance with the added sparkle of mercury glass.



White color palettes are dependably pleasing. Try to incorporate new, non-traditional Christmas flowers, such as orchids. They add a touch of lux and elevate the look. Currently, there is a trend to create unexpected botanicals — a trend that should be taken into holiday designs as well.

A special thank you to Porch View Home for the generous product donation to raise funds for floral education in Texas through TSFA and the Texas Floral Endowment.



When it comes to merchandising, presentation is everything. Create interesting combinations of different categories of merchandise. Here, ornaments, ribbon and a permanent botanical design are featured on an old silver tray. Sometimes smaller vignettes are as powerful as full-blown displays.



A featured item, such as the angel in this design, instantly creates impact. The draping design is one half of a pair used to create a garland effect. Colors, inspired by fresco paintings of the nativity, give an old-world appearance.



A large, shallow basket is used primarily to display ornaments, enabling them to be piled without damaging them. Through this approach, the ornaments are easily linked into the vignette with coordinating items.



Session underwritten by
Texas Floral Education Partners
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Holiday product provided by Bronze
Level Texas Floral Education Underwriter
Porch View Home

“I AM ALWAYS INSPIRED BY
THE NATURE OF DESIGN.
MY SENSES ARE CONTINUOUSLY
AWARE AND ABSORBING MY SITES
AND SURROUNDINGS.
IF YOU OBSERVE WITH AN
EYE FOR DESIGN, LITTLE DETAILS
APPEAR EVERYWHERE IN SIGHT,
SOUND, TOUCH AND FRAGRANCE.
KEEPING YOUR SENSES OPEN
IS SO IMPORTANT TO
REMAIN INSPIRED.”

— CHARLIE GROPPETTI AIFD



Photography Credit | Shy Laurel Photography



Start with traditional Christmas colors and move them in different directions based on current trends or customers' requests. In this example, traditional holiday green is replaced with crisp apple green and red is expanded to include orange. Materials are grouped to maximize the visual impact of each, while creating an overall harmony.



Many people feel nostalgic about Christmas. To spark sales, motivate your customers by reminding them of the “good ole’ days”. Ignite those memories using color, texture and fragrance. Mix fresh materials, as seen in the orange and clove pomanders. Feature bulk spices with permanent botanicals in varying colors and textures to create a wonderful experience as each plays off the other.



Utilize everyday merchandise, such as the woven door basket, wooden stool, pottery and Bells of Ireland, along with your merchandise purchased specifically for the holidays. You will not only create some interesting new combinations, but you will help move inventory that would normally sit around until after the holidays.

FLORAL DESIGNS STYLED TO COMPLIMENT THE HOLIDAY PRESENTATION

A special thank you to Marcia Wilson, AAF, and Breen's Florist for these exquisite designs.

For the Porch View Home holiday presentation, we selected floral designs that blend classic holiday charm with understated elegance, reflecting the cozy yet elevated atmosphere the brand embodies. The arrangements incorporated winter greens interwoven with soft white blooms, and fresh apple accents for subtle color. Each element was thoughtfully placed to create an inviting environment that reflects the warmth and authenticity of holidays at home and the brand's timeless aesthetic.



STEPS TO EASILY CREATE A DESIGN PERFECT FOR A BOWL, COMPOTE OR URN TYPE CONTAINER

- Two containers were selected, offering a varying style while providing the ease of the same design being produced.
- Floral foam or wire mesh may be used as mechanics to secure placements.
- Height of placement is best above the rim of the compote.
- Stem insertions are integrated over radial placements.
- Groupings of small apples added interest. Wood picks were used to easily insert.
- Hydrangea was featured with groupings of white carnations for texture to fill space.

STEPS TO MAKE THE RIGHT DESIGN DECISIONS

1. **Celebrates the Season Naturally:** The use of seasonal foliage and winter-inspired blooms captures the essence of the holidays without resorting to overly traditional or commercial decor.
2. **Enhances the Brand's Aesthetic:** Natural floral arrangements, in organic vessels, perfectly reflect rustic sensibility.
3. **Creates an Inviting Atmosphere:** Fresh florals evoke the feeling of a well-loved home during the holidays – welcoming, cozy and curated.
4. **Balances Elegance and Simplicity:** The style of the arrangements feels thoughtful and intentional, mirroring the brand's philosophy of beauty in simplicity.
5. **Supports a Cohesive Visual Story:** From table settings to the vignettes, florals create visual interest while drawing attention to key areas.



STEPS TO EASILY CREATE A WREATH STYLE DESIGN WITH CANDLELIGHT

- Oasis Designer Ring in midnight foam was used for the base mechanics.
- The simplicity of a Lomey tray or the addition of a decorative tray may be used to protect the table setting.
- Floral materials were placed with color blocking.
- Hydrangea was cut in pieces for insertion to complement the scale of the foam ring.
- Two different varieties of apples were wood picked into floral foam for overall size and scale of design.
- A glass cylinder was placed in the center of the ring with a remote operated candle.
- Open flames should always be contained for an event.
- The use of a flicker flame wax candle, in glass, adds to the illusion of a real flame candle.

Meet Tricia Won AIFD, CFD, EMC, IMF

What event or experience led to your interest in the floral industry?

In 2011, my husband was laid off, which was not an abnormal occurrence, since he is an engineer in the technology industry. Our children were both in homeschool and I wanted to return to some type of professional work. Prior to having children, I worked in advertising and marketing in San Francisco, California. My sister was a florist in the Washington, D.C., area in a studio focused on weddings. She encouraged me to do the same. I had always been creative. I wanted to own a business and have work-life balance, so I opened Romantic Florals in 2021. My wedding floral studio is still in operation today.

What brings you the most joy?

I find joy in doing good with my business while bringing happiness and inspiration to others. Encouraging others to reach for their dreams, knowing that nothing is impossible, is joyful. Everything is achievable. It does not matter how old you are, how much money you have or how talented you are. I want others to see that in the ways I run my business and live my life.

How do you best relax?

I love to spend time outdoors with my family. We enjoy hiking when the weather is good. I love to travel, visit museums and learn about history. I love hanging out with my friends, listening to music and eating good food.

What's your favorite color and why?

I have always loved the color blue. It is peaceful to see the vastness of space when I look at the sky,



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experiencing the feeling that the Earth goes on forever when I am gazing at the ocean. I am reminded that I am but a small part of this enormous universe.

What's been your favorite trip to date?

This year I have had the opportunity to create floral installations at two festivals in Europe. In June in Leverano, Italy, and in September at Hoogstraten, Belgium. Many florists and volunteers came together from all over the world to create art in support of the local area. Thousands of people attend these festivals and spend money in the towns, which helps the local businesses prosper.

Is there a "dream trip" and, if so, where does the "dream trip" take you?

I would love to return to Asia. I was fortunate to demonstrate at the Singapore Garden Festival in August 2024. I would love to go to China one day and participate in a floral show.

Do you have a favorite food?

Anything with potatoes! I am Irish!

Do you prefer to cook or dine out?

I like both, but the benefit of dining out is that I don't have to clean up. The only challenge with dining out is finding a really good place. There is nothing more disappointing than going to a restaurant and being dissatisfied.

What is your favorite flower?

This changes monthly – for now, I love cosmos, especially ones grown locally in Texas. They are so pretty and delicate, and it appears as if each blossom is floating.

What is your favorite design style?

European design and minimalistic structures are my favorites, but I also love garden-styled florals.

What are your thoughts about design?

Being creative is a start. Knowing who you are and what you want to convey when you design is also important, because every arrangement tells a story and shares a vision or an inspired thought with others.

If you could design for anyone in the world, who would it be and why?

It would have been Iris Apfel, but she passed away last year. She was not afraid to be herself. If I could design for her, I would create a bold, structural, funky arrangement with lots of color and statement flowers like anthuriums, Vanda orchids and pincushion protea, to name a few.

Overall Education

I graduated from San Jose State University in 1995 with a Bachelor of Science degree in advertising and a minor in psychology.

Design Education

Professional development includes a basic class and advanced classes at the Benz School at Texas A&M University, an advanced course at Floral Design Institute and the PFDE Prep and Competition class at Floriology Institute. I completed the European Masters Certification (EMC) in September 2021 and the International Master Florist (IMF) with Gregor Lersch at Boerma Institute in 2022/2023.

Industry Employment

I own Romantic Florals, a floral studio, in Round Rock, Texas. I have also worked as a freelance designer over the years.

What do you like best about owning a floral studio?

At Romantic Florals, I am the owner and head designer, overseeing everything. I like that I can have a work-life balance. I can take on new projects, new clients and grow my business how I prefer. The business provides me with work that I love, money to travel and a number of ways to seek educational and professional opportunities.

What are your industry affiliations?

I have been a member of Texas State Florists' Association since 2018. I was inducted into the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD) in 2020. I received my EMC in 2021 and IMF in 2022/2023.

Who is your greatest supporter?

My greatest supporter is my husband, Raymond. He works hard at our business and cheers me on to accomplish my dreams and goals. He serves alongside me when he can at industry events and in our business.

What areas of association involvement and leadership opportunities have you taken part in?

Since 2020, I have been an AIFD South Central Regional Chapter Board of Directors member, and I am currently serving a second term as Secretary. I was an AIFD Industry Partners Committee Co-chair for two years and am currently in my second year as AIFD Marketing Committee Co-chair. In the summer of 2025, I chaired Blooms Over Palm Springs during AIFD Symposium. Blooms is an AIFD service project, in which bouquets are created from any remaining Symposium flowers and distributed to charities. Over 1,500 bouquets were delivered to senior centers in the Palm Springs area!

I have served TSFA on the Communications Committee and as a Design Assistant at numerous Texas Floral Expos. I designed the breakfast centerpieces in 2023 and created the presentation bouquets with Ellie Grande AIFD, EMC, in 2025. The highlight was being elected to the TSFA Board of Directors as a Retail Director in 2025.

What have been the highlights you have experienced, to date, in the floral industry?

In 2023 and 2024 I taught four professional workshops for florists based on European design and was asked to be a demonstrator at the Singapore Garden Festival in August 2024.



Singapore Garden
Festival Demonstration
August 2024.



Bouquet for a client in 2018.

In June 2025, I designed a large-scale street installation for Leverano in Fiore in Leverano, Italy. I designed two large-scale street installations, showcasing vegetables and flowers, in September 2025 at the Festival Hoogstraten in Hoogstraten, Belgium. Tom DeHouwer is the Creative Director for the Festival Hoogstraten. I assisted DeHouwer when he presented at the AIFD Symposium in Orlando in 2024. It was an amazing experience to be a part of this festival.

Several designs have been published in Florist Review Magazine. I won the Florist Review contest Best in Bloom in November 2024. Also in 2024, I had the joy to design a very special bridal bouquet that a very special floral designer carried in her July wedding.

What are your goals?

I would love to expand my involvement in floral demonstrations and large-scale installations all around the world. It would mean a great deal to me to present main stage at a Texas Floral Expo and AIFD Symposium. To go for the win in competitions is certainly of interest. I would love to design a couture line of bridal bouquets for American clients, as well as floral jewelry. I would love the opportunity to organize a floral festival in America, that features floral artists designing large-scale artistic installations.

What does participation on the TSFA Board of Directors mean to you?

Simply stated, it is an honor. I look forward to serving the organization and its members. I will work hard to grow our community through positive communication and fostering a welcoming spirit to all.

What role do you have in the process?

As a member of the TSFA Board of Directors, I will have the opportunity to discuss and vote on important matters. I hope to become more active in listening to what the members want and working to support their goals.

What is your perspective of the overall process?

I am a servant. I work to ensure that members have opportunities for education, inspiration and community.

It appears that you truly love the art of competition. What intrigues you about the process?

Competition is exciting and scary. It provides a chance to grow, learn and push past fear. When you compete, you are only

competing against yourself. It is an opportunity to work on skills, techniques and communication – and it can help advance your education.

What was your inspiration behind the designs you created during the Sylvia Cup and Mid-America Cup?

My inspiration came from color and a desire to push the envelope. For example, in the Sylvia Cup, with an out of this world galaxy theme, the sympathy design was a play on balance. I designed a stacked arrangement that was purposely off-balance. The design was mechanically strong and in line with the brief that said to focus on the relationship of balance.

In the Mid-America Cup, we were focused on designing for the 80's innovative bride and styling florals representative of Andy Warhol. It was all about creativity with color for that competition.

What is the thought process that follows the inspiration?

There is not much time to think during competitions. I continue to work to find that time, relax myself and focus on the best possible creative choices. What I do well is read. I make sure to read all the directions several times and try to really understand the tasks involved. I look

over my hard goods and flower selections. This helps me gather ideas to create. I focus on tasks that are easy for me and accomplish those first.

The takeaway must be much more than the win. What did you take away from these experiences?

I walk away having learned how much I still have to learn as a floral artist. I know that continuing my studies and communicating my knowledge to others is most important. I also take away pride in knowing that I am better than before, continuing to meet my goals and growing with each competition.

What else would you like the world to know?

After I opened my floral studio, I was surprised by how quickly I fell in love with flowers. I am obsessed with floral design. I love every aspect of the creative process. I am never tired and always passionate. I am always learning and growing. I am excited to be a floral designer, business owner and artist, with flowers as my medium.



Installation Leverano en Fiore designed with Jackie Smith Johns AIFD in June 2025.



Floral Rhapsody - Installation Hoogstraten in Groenten en Bloemen 2025.

UNLOCKING SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES FOR TODAY'S FLORIST

Written by Renato Cruz Sogueco, AAF, PFCI
BloomNet Vice President Digital Strategy & Education

Photography Credit | Shy Laurel Photography



Social media has become one of the most powerful tools florists can use to connect with customers, showcase their artistry and grow sales. But with so many platforms, and trends to keep up with, it can feel overwhelming to decide where to start or how to stand out.

During the Texas Floral Expo, I shared strategies designed to help florists take a more strategic, practical approach to social media. From photography and video tips to using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as your creative assistant, the goal was clear: Make your posts more engaging, authentic and effective at driving business. Here are some key takeaways you can begin using right away to strengthen your social presence.



SCAN THE QR CODE TO
VIEW THE SLIDES FROM
THE PRESENTATION

PHOTOGRAPHY STILL MATTERS MOST

We are a visual industry, and nothing showcases flowers better than great photography. On Instagram alone, photo posts remain the most common type of content, and over 80% of people use the platform to research services and products.

The quality of your photo matters! Google data shows that larger, high-resolution images convert better. Whether you're setting up a small home studio with fixed lighting or capturing lifestyle photos with natural light, the goal is the same: Present flowers in their best light – literally.

VIDEO: THE NEW ENGAGEMENT DRIVER

If photos attract, videos engage. Video posts can boost social media engagement up to 12 times more than static posts, and product pages with videos can see conversion rates jump by more than 25%.

The good news? You don't need a Hollywood budget. Use the same smartphone, tripod and lighting needed to capture photos, and simply add a wireless mic. Voila, you are ready to create compelling Reels, TikToks or YouTube Shorts. For longer videos – like shop tours, how-to demos or livestreams – Facebook and YouTube are great platforms.

The key is to match your video style to your audience. Segment efforts to produce short, fun clips for younger buyers and more detailed, informative videos for Gen X and Boomers. Next, let's talk more about demographics and the use of social media.

PLATFORM STRATEGY: CHOOSE WISELY

Not every platform is right for every florist. At the Expo, I encouraged shops to focus their energy where their customers already are:

- **Facebook:** Still powerful for local, community-driven updates and ads to women ages 35–64.
- **Instagram:** Best for visual-first branding, behind-the-scenes content and Reels.
- **TikTok:** Growing quickly among younger buyers – perfect for creative, trending videos.
- **YouTube:** Ideal for tutorials and floral storytelling.

The point isn't to be everywhere, it's to be effective where you are. The government has information on your local demographics at data.census.gov/. Punch in your delivery Zip codes and get the basic demographics, as well as who went to college, income levels and more.

AI IS YOUR SOCIAL ASSISTANT

Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing the way florists approach content. Use AI to help build a 12-month content calendar, draft blog posts and generate social media captions. I also stressed the golden rule: Always edit AI's work. AI can do the heavy lifting – something that would normally take hours to research and write can be provided by AI within seconds. Take a few minutes to read the results and add your shop's voice to authenticate your posts.

ENGAGEMENT BOOSTERS: HASHTAGS, TAGS AND TIMING

Use three to five targeted hashtags, not 10 or more (which can now look spammy). Include local, branded and niche tags that fit your shop.

On Facebook, – tag people, pages and places to expand your reach. Remember that timing matters. Aim for weekday mornings and early afternoons, while avoiding late evenings and Sundays.

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

Social media doesn't replace your website – it amplifies it. Think of it as your digital voice and personality. When paired with a strong website, social media becomes a powerful engine for awareness, engagement and sales.

Florists don't have to do everything, but you do have to do something. Start with one or two strategies – maybe tightening up your photography or experimenting with short-form video – and build from there.

At the end of the day, social media isn't just about pretty posts. It's about telling your story, connecting with your community and, ultimately, bringing more customers through your digital and physical doors.



Session underwritten by BloomNet
Texas Floral Education Partner
Founding Silver Level Texas Floral
Education Underwriter

UNLOCKING WEBSITE TIPS, TRICKS AND TRENDS TO BOOST FLORAL SALES

Written by Renato Cruz Sogueco, AAF, PFCI
BloomNet Vice President Digital Strategy & Education

I had the privilege of sharing a session on one of my favorite topics during the Texas Floral Expo: helping florists optimize their websites to grow sales. The lively conversation and the feedback reminded me that while we may all know websites are important, there's still a lot of mystery around how to truly make them work to continue building local retail sales.

For those of you who couldn't make it – or for those who did and want a quick refresher – here's a taste of what we covered. Think of this as the highlight reel of website strategies every florist should be putting into practice right now.



SCAN THE QR CODE TO
VIEW THE SLIDES FROM
THE PRESENTATION

WHY WEBSITES STILL MATTER IN 2025

Even with all the changes in digital marketing, your website remains your digital storefront. It's where customers ultimately decide to place their orders. A well-built site builds trust, shows off your brand and style, and converts browsing into buying.

Even if your social media is off the charts, or you continue to invest in traditional local community marketing – print, radio or TV – all these channels usually share your website URL where you close the sale.

Regarding traditional search, there is a growing challenge. In 2025, Google reports that over 58% of searches result in “zero-click” outcomes – meaning customers often get their answers directly on search results without ever visiting a site. That's why it's more important than ever that your site and your Google Business Profile are accurate, fast and compelling.

A COMBO THAT WORKS: SEO BASICS + GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

We spent a lot of time on SEO – Search Engine Optimization – because rank equals dollars. The data is clear – being in Google's top three positions can mean hundreds more orders per month compared to being buried on page two.

Keywords like “florist near me,” “same-day flower delivery” and “birthday flowers” are still powerful drivers. Be sure to grab a copy of the presentation slides. They have a complete listing of the most effective keywords to include in SEO.

The formula is simple but not easy: Pick the right keywords; use them in your titles, descriptions, headlines and product pages; and publish fresh content (blogs, FAQs, seasonal pages) regularly. Google loves structure and context – and your customers love finding what they need quickly.

If SEO is the engine, your Google Business Profile (GBP) is the turbocharger. Treat it like social media. Keep it updated with

photos, specials and reviews. It shows up prominently in searches and on maps, and now it integrates product previews, appointment booking and even ordering.

Don't forget to sync your information to Apple Business Connect, Bing, Yelp and Facebook. The goal: consistent, correct information everywhere your customers might look.

SITE SPEED, IMAGES AND USER EXPERIENCE

We love to showcase our talent and product through beautiful photos, but if your images slow down your site, you'll lose customers before they see your designs. Remember, most of your customers are browsing on their phone. If your site isn't fast and mobile-friendly, you're leaving money on the table.

Tools like tinypng.com and imageoptim.com can help compress images without losing quality... and if your website platform is outdated, consider upgrading. Look at your hosting plan first to see if they provide more bandwidth, then consider updating to a new, modern website. This may be one of the best investments you can make to improve conversions.

FAQS ARE SECRET SEO GOLD AND THE SCOOP ON PAID SEARCH

One of the easiest ways to improve both customer service and SEO is to publish a robust FAQ page. Every time your staff answers a common question – “Can you deliver to a funeral home?”, “Will my flowers look like the photo?” – that's content you should post online. Customers love it, and so does Google.

Finally, we talked about Search Engine Marketing (SEM) – buying Google Ads. If done right, it's not just an expense, it's an investment. Start by protecting your brand (bid on your own shop name), then build campaigns that deliver a strong return on investment (ROI). The rule of thumb: A good campaign should bring back \$2 in revenue for every \$1 spent –and it only gets better over time.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

At the Expo, I ended with this thought: SEO and SEM don't have to be overwhelming or expensive. They do, however, require commitment. Updating your website regularly, keeping your Google Business Profile fresh and making small technical improvements can pay off big – because at the end of the day, every click matters, and every position higher on Google is another potential order in your register.

For those who joined me at the Expo, thank you again for your enthusiasm and great questions. For those who couldn't make it, I hope this article gives you a glimpse of what you missed and inspires you to put these strategies into practice. Your website is not just a digital business card; it's the most important sales channel you own. Treat it with the same care you give your floral designs, and watch your online orders bloom.



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TSFA Calendar of Events

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NOVEMBER

- 1 All Saints Day
- 2 Board of Directors Meeting
Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 4 Election Day
- 11 Veterans Day
- 13 World Kindness Day
- 27 Thanksgiving



DECEMBER

- 2 Giving Tuesday
- 12 Poinsettia Day
- 14 Hanukkah (Chanukah) begins
- 25 Christmas Day
- 26 Kwanzaa begins
- 31 New Year's Eve



JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day
- 9-11 Fundamental Elements and
Principles of Floral Design in Leander
- 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 28 2025-2026 In-Person High School
Certification Testing Cycle Begins
See tsfa.org/events.

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Texas State Florists' Association expresses appreciation to the companies that made a world of difference in the Texas Floral Showcase in Tyler through their product donations!

SILVER LEVEL TEXAS FLORAL EDUCATION UNDERWRITER
Zoom Roses for countless roses and specialty florals featured in the presentation, hands-on workshop and the Floral Whimsy Bar.

BRONZE LEVEL TEXAS FLORAL EDUCATION UNDERWRITERS
Alexandra Farms for featured garden roses highlighting the David Austin brand.

Porch View Home for decorative containers perfect to style flowers for the interior setting.

Smithers - Oasis for foam and numerous supplies to guarantee secure mechanics.

TEXAS FLORAL CONTRIBUTORS
FernTrust for countless foliages to support featured florals in the presentation and workshop.

Schusters of Texas for dried materials to feature during the presentation and workshop.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO
 TSFA Past President Kirksey Gregg, AAF, AIFD, TM, and Kirksey Gregg Productions for the fabulous linens used throughout the event.



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