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DESIGN DEBUTANTS

One pair of designers will be flying in the face of received wisdom at RHS Chelsea this year. Nicole Fischer and Daniel Auderset (*left*) have created a show garden for Main Avenue without a main sponsor. 'We didn't know whether our design would succeed with the RHS jury, and as we knew that we were completely unknown, we didn't even try to get a sponsor at first,' says Nicole, who grew up in Germany. She said they couldn't believe it as they passed each stage, and they only learned they were successful in November.

Their design draws inspiration from the Pfyn Forest National Park in Switzerland.

They came up with the concept last June and have been working on it ever since. 'Although we heard that it's a lot of work, and a garden could basically fill an entire year, we didn't believe it before - but it's true. We have planned it meticulously, but as we have no prior show garden experience, we have very good people we work with, so it's a pool of experience we can rely on. We just hope it will be a beautiful garden.'

Nicole is still hopeful of getting some financial assistance, but many of the people she had spoken to said it was too late. Her advice to anyone trying to do the same? 'Just expect to have to work really hard and not be able to do much besides that. It's taken over my life, but in a good way. It's a great project.'

FIRST-TIMERS AT CHELSEA



Nicole Fischer and Daniel Auderset's RHS Chelsea show garden is called 'The Extending Space'.



SHOW MANAGER SAUL WALKER'S ADVICE ON MAKING A SHOW GARDEN

- **Plan in detail.** When the RHS panels are looking through applications, the gardens with hardly any information - a brief design or just a concept - are much harder for us to allocate or appreciate. Detail is quite important, because our selection panel can spot things that are not feasible.
- **Start small.** A lot of the smaller show gardens (costing between £20,000 and £30,000) can be self-financed by designers showcasing themselves, whereas the bigger gardens are more sponsored promotional gardens or charity gardens.
- **Try RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show** or RHS Tatton Park Flower Show first. There are show gardens there that receive a small RHS grant towards the cost, so these can be quite popular with people starting out.
- **Think about design.** Budget changes according to design. You can design a garden to be cheaper but still have impact. It depends on what you're doing with the garden itself. A well-designed garden can reduce costs.

Turn to pg 130 to find out more about creating an RHS Chelsea Flower Show garden...