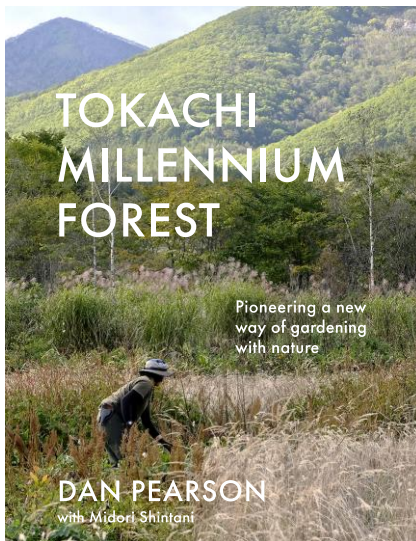




Exploring a new strand of naturalistic gardening that brings people closer to the land:



TOKACHI MILLENNIUM FOREST

Pioneering a new way of gardening with nature

By Dan Pearson

With Midori Shintani

Photographs by Kiichi Noro and Syogo Oizumi

Thirty years ago, in an extraordinarily progressive move, Japanese media entrepreneur, Mitsushige Hayashi, bought 400 hectares of land in the Tokachi region of Hokkaido, the northernmost island of the archipelago, with the aim of off-setting the carbon footprint of his national newspaper business.

Ten years later, after an intensive period of forest management and long-term planning, he invited the internationally respected British landscape designer, Dan Pearson, to help design an ecological public park on the site, the purpose of which was to entice town and city dwellers to reconnect with nature and to preserve and improve a piece of land that had been lost to intensive forestry and agriculture.

As a means of capturing the imagination and setting out his aspirations for this piece of land Mr. Hayashi named it the Millennium Forest, a garden for a thousand years.

Tokachi Millennium Forest describes Dan's involvement with the project focussing on his design process, from the big thinking required to engage with such a large and unfamiliar site to a detailed examination of each of the designed and cultivated areas at the forest.

It also includes insights into the day to day management of the forest and its gardens as well as explanation of the particularities of the Japanese approach to landscapes and gardens written by Head Gardener, Midori Shintani.

Dan explains the way differing maintenance regimes have been used to increase floral diversity and encourage wildlife within the forest, the making of a huge sculptural landform to excite visitors, and the overall educational aims of the project.

At the heart of the book is a close consideration of the Meadow Garden, the central focus of Dan's work here, including a detailed explanation of the nineteen perennial plant mixes he designed specifically for it.

Anyone who wants to make a garden that is in balance with nature and feels uniquely right for the place in which it is situated will relish the detailed insight into the working process of one of the world's best landscape designers.

Visitors to the Forest, whether gardeners or not, often find their senses reawakened as they become immersed in the natural world.

This important book allows everyone to experience something of the Tokachi effect and discover rejuvenating ways to reconnect with the land, plants and wildlife around them.

- A unique project, twenty years in the making, which engages with the real Japanese landscape in all its wildness and reconsiders it as an inspiration for a new way of gardening with nature.
- Explores the Japanese respect and reverence for nature, the importance of landscape and plants and the marking of small seasonal changes.
- The specially created perennial plant mixes draw on a palette of plants, of which the majority are familiar to temperate-zone gardeners around the world. Each mix rewards careful scrutiny. The plants are all listed in the book along with Dan and Midori's observations on their performance and key management challenges over the years.
- With invaluable contributions by Midori Shintani, Head Gardener at Tokachi Millennium Forest.

Dan Pearson trained at the RHS Gardens, Wisley and at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Two years spent working at the botanic gardens of Jerusalem and Edinburgh gave him an innate understanding of plant ecology which along with an appreciation for natural landscapes inspires his garden design today.

His international work for public and private clients is widely celebrated and he has received numerous accolades including Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Royal Designer for Industry in 2012, and Society of Garden Designers awards.

He has designed five award-winning Chelsea Flower Show gardens including Best in Show in 2015, writes a weekly gardening journal DIGDELVE and lectures widely.

Midori Shintani trained in horticulture and landscape architecture at Minami Kyushu University, Japan.

In 2002 she moved to Sweden and trained to become a gardener at Millesgården and Rosendals Trädgård.

In 2004 she moved back to Japan and worked at a garden design company and perennial nursery gaining experience in both traditional and modern styles.

Since 2008 she has been the head gardener of Tokachi Millennium Forest, merging 'new Japanese horticulture' into wild nature. She writes and lectures throughout Asia.