



A florist's perspective

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An evening to remember



Fantasy of Flowers at Christchurch's Mansion House.

ACADEMY New Zealand presents a 'Fantasy of Flowers'. This was the setting for the fundraiser floristry demonstration I attended recently, to raise funds for Worldskills floristry.

Academy New Zealand School of Floristry were the hosts for the evening. The event was in the inspirational Christchurch Mansion House where the Academy New Zealand operate their business, with campuses in Christchurch and Auckland.

Worldskills floristry national champion is Caitlin Thorburn from Flowers Manuela of Wellington.

Caitlin is training with Manuela, who is yet another protégée of academy floristry tutor Jenny Burt.

Manuela has a fashion-focused florist shop in the heart of the Wellington business area and trendy Cuba Street.

Caitlin is indeed fortunate to be training with Flowers Manuela and this will enhance her success as she represents New Zealand at the world competition in Calgary in August.

One of life's pleasures is to receive flowers,

turning any occasion into an event. This is what we achieved at the Fantasy of Flowers event.

The evening started with bubbles and nibbles sponsored by Direct2florist.com and the Academy hospitality course.

Thank you to all the supporters who came along and made the evening such a success – in excess of 60 tickets were sold.

There were three designer florists: Monika Bishof is a tutor at the Academy and works part time for Lily Bud florist in Sumner, Christchurch. Penny Trubshaw is a national floristry assessor, director of FLO-RALANZ, a flower grower and exporter. And of course Caitlin Thorburn.

The choice of materials was sponsored by Magic Moss, Floramax, United Flower Auctions, Joyflora Flowers, Moffatts, FloralanZ and Othmar Kenel. Alternative materials from the bird's nest to the lichen-covered branches were all skillfully used by these ingenious designers.

The time put into preparation, from 6am on the morning of the demonstration, was only surpassed by the passion for the work from Caitlin, Penny and Monika.

The creativity, the positive vibes and the

enthusiasm were catching. The venue was brilliant, as was the architecture of the Academy Mansion house staircase, which we used as extra seating. Construction methods of each design were explained. Professional tips were offered to the enthralled florists, floral artists, and supporters at the event.

From shiny, dramatic Green Anthuriums to intricate weaving, rhythm and visual movement, the designs entranced us all. The vitality of height and the final flourish to the designs was fascinating and almost mesmerizing.

The designers created unique styles. To use the magic moss product to inspire both the grower and the audience to new designs and the opening up new possibilities.

The professional photographer Rodney Love caught the innovative techniques and design styles on camera. For sharing this experience with a wider audience, we thank him.

The evening raised \$2000 which will go towards expenses for the Calgary trip.

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