

GARDENING

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Bunny Guinness

Portrait of a garden

Picture perfect Somerleyton Hall main picture, Stoke Priory, far left, Greggarth Hall, above, and Lanfendigaïd, below left, all by Jonathan Myles-Lea. One of Neil Gower's garden plans, below right.

What about commissioning an artist to paint the garden?

I am lucky enough to have had mine drawn up for inclusion in a magazine. Neil Gower, a graphic artist, who works for many magazines, has done it beautifully. He charges between £400 and £1,200 (www.neilgower.com; 01273 479649). At the more expensive end of the scale Jonathan Myles-Lea paints amazing oil pictures with a flavour of the 17th and 18th centuries, including a 'biographical portrait' of the property, and often involves miniature portraits of the owners, the pets, the gardeners and himself working on the painting (020 7284 1815, www.myles-lea.com; prices on application). They usually take three to six months to work on and all parties get enormous fun from it and find it highly satisfying. They are basically bird's eye views; Jonathan does all the surveying and framing too. He started in 1992 by painting a friend's house while he helped her renovate it, and now works for the National Trust among others.

And a map?

I would get an Ordnance Survey site-centred plan (ie with your garden at the centre), from your OS centre (01223 568417; www.maps.blackwell.co.uk) and have it beautifully framed. Ordnance Survey does a range of site centred plans, including Superplans, Selectplan and Landplan, in a variety of scales, starting at 1:200, coloured or black and white, and even historical maps. They will provide this service by mail order too and will supply folding customised versions with titles such as "Bertie's favourite walks" – a stocking filler for the dog perhaps!

Landscape Graphics by Grant W Reid (Watson-Guption Publications) is available for £14.99 (mp £16.99) + £1.25 p&p. To order call Telegraph Books on 0870 428 4115.

Any suggestions for an unusual present to give a gardening friend for Christmas?

A punchy and accurate garden plan is a great present. Eye-catching enough to be framed and embellish a kitchen or loo wall, it can also be photocopied, laminated and used outside as well. Contact several garden designers in your area, have them show you some of their presentation plans, get fixed costs and choose the one that fits the bill the best. Their price should include surveying the site and drawing the plan. Barry Kellington MSGD, a garden designer who is based in Yorkshire, draws up plans with his wife who is an artist. See www.lifestylegardens.co.uk; tel 01484 660783 or e-mail barrykellington@aol.com.



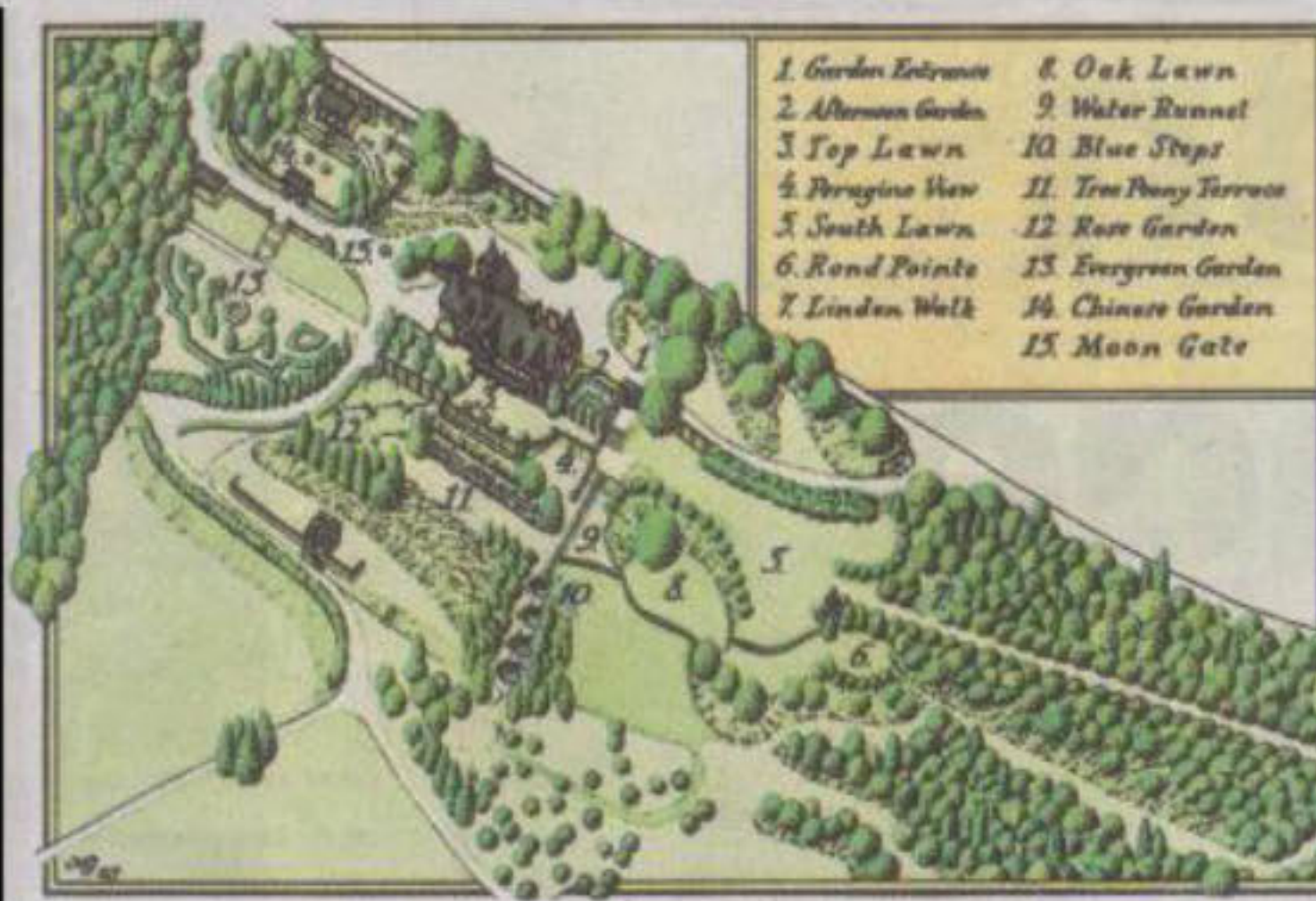
effects expert (07899 721753), to colour and shadow them for me. This costs from £200, and when framed looks fabulous. He can draw the whole scheme too, but it costs more.

What other styles are there?

'Birds Eye Views' are exactly what they say. That is, with everything shown in 3D, they can be drawn with a distorted scale making the buildings bigger so they have more impact, and are often drawn in a naïve artistic manner – an ideal fun present. Kevin Hart, (07989 380271; kevinhart@hotmail.com)

produced several for my first book and has a lively and slightly whimsical style. You have input from stage one, checking roughs as they progress. His charges are extremely reasonable, from £150. Check out the Association of Illustrators website (www.theaoi.com) for others.

Alternatively, 'axonometrics' are accurately drawn geometrical drawings to scale often with the angle set at 45 or 60 degrees. These are more time-consuming, but I have commissioned these and perspectives for high profile schemes and used



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| 1. Garden Entrance | 8. Oak Lawn |
| 2. Allotment Garden | 9. Water Runnel |
| 3. Top Lawn | 10. Blue Steps |
| 4. Pergola View | 11. Tree Pony Terrace |
| 5. South Lawn | 12. Rose Garden |
| 6. Rond Pointe | 13. Evergreen Garden |
| 7. Linden Walk | 14. Chinese Garden |
| | 15. Moon Gate |

John Kingsley-Dobson (01425 674319 www.jkd-art.com) who is more familiar with plants than the more architectural graphics firm.

How can I draw up a plan of my own garden, to frame and mount myself?

Assuming you have an accurate survey at a manageable size (obtainable from Robotic Surveys on 01743 242 873; www.roboticsurveys.co.uk), use tracing paper to trace the outlines, using bold graphics to represent the paths, buildings, planting and trees.

A graphics book such as *Landscape Graphics* by Grant W. Reid, shows simple but effective techniques that do not require artist skills, just reasonable hand control.

The colouring of your printed plan (I find Dyleline print machines using high quality paper work well) can make or break it, so get some cheap copies and practise. Soft crayons that will smudge with cotton wool to produce subtle tones are the most foolproof but are slow; painting with water colours can be both atmospheric and quick.