

A LOGO for CAROLINE

Creating an identity for Caroline Hyett Gardens & Design



the Designer

EMMA RICKARDS is a graphic designer who works independently from home on boutique projects, usually for creative clients and small businesses. She is also a teacher and lecturer of design, and is currently studying a PhD (Design) at Swinburne University.

the Client

CAROLINE HYETT is currently studying a Graduate Certificate in Garden Design at Melbourne University, and has recently established her own professional practice *Caroline Hyett Gardens and Design*. Caroline plans to provide clients with sustainable garden design solutions, while offering consultation and coaching services in garden development. These services would most likely appeal to inner city home owners of Melbourne who wish to make the most of their outdoor spaces, but are lacking the time, skills, inspiration or knowledge to do so.

the Design Process

DEFINING THE COMMUNICATION NEED

Emma and Caroline met to discuss the development of a visual identity and promotional material for *Caroline Hyett Gardens and Design*. Caroline requested a clean, uncluttered logo that utilised legible letterforms, while combining both contemporary and traditional elements. She anticipated using the logo as an email signature, on signage, in the title block on working drawings, and on job quote estimates. The design of a business card and letterhead was also requested to promote the business, communicating the nature and breadth of its services while presenting a sense of professionalism and understated style.

In order to develop a clear sense of her client's own stylistic preferences, Emma asked Caroline about her favourite designers, plant and flower varieties, and colour combinations. Caroline preferred a palette of deep red and neutral tones together with black and white, and listed the red flowering gum, protea, magnolia, flannel flower and sedum as amongst her favoured flowers. Garden designers that she found inspiring were Rick Eckersley, Lisa Stafford, Peter Fudge, Fiona Brockhoff and Paul Bangay. Caroline also admired the work of fashion designer Akira Isogawa and textile designers Spacecraft, Nicola Cerini and Florence Broadhurst for their bold application of plant forms and strong shape and colour combinations.

Emma then recorded Caroline's design needs in the form of return brief. This document outlined the job's specific details and presented a proposed approach to the design process. The information was then communicated back to Caroline, who approved the process before idea generation began.

RESEARCH FOR INFORMATION AND IDEAS

Emma used the Internet to familiarise herself with Caroline's favourite plants and flowers, as well as the work of those textile, fashion and garden designers her client had listed as inspiring. Emma has a Spacecraft print in her home, so she spent some time studying its layering of screenprinted plant forms and taking note of the colour combinations. She also collected examples of botanical patterns by American textile designer Amy Butler, and discovered a collection of late 19th century royalty-free botanical illustrations in one of her own books, *The Encyclopaedia of Illustration*.

COMMENCEMENT OF LOGO DEVELOPMENT

The development of Caroline's logo began with the consideration of various typefaces, particularly those that combined traditional and contemporary elements as Caroline had requested. At the same time, plant and flower-inspired imagery was developed: some of these were very structured and stylised, while others were more soft and organic.

Both the letterforms and imagery were created using Adobe Illustrator software, a vector based drawing program where images won't lose their clarity or pixelate when altered in scale or proportion. Type can also be adjusted and manipulated in ways that aren't possible in standard word processing software. Imagery was drawn using the mouse and pen tool, with plant and flower pictures used as a reference. To create the flower silhouettes, a photograph was traced using the pen tool, then deleted.

Combinations of letterform and imagery were considered before it was decided that the serif typefaces appeared too classic and formal, suggesting that Caroline's gardens were only traditional in style. The typeface Calibri was chosen instead for its clean lines and softly rounded stems and corners, resulting in letters that appear warm and friendly. When written in bold uppercase letters, the consistent letter gave Caroline's name an authoritative air, but the words also appeared quite dense and heavy. This was solved by increasing the space between each letter (called tracking) which gave the type a light, gentle rhythm. The stroke of the 'O' was also made lighter in weight for extra movement.

The font Linotype Syntax was chosen for the 'gardens and design' strapline. It is another clean, contemporary typeface but unlike Calibri, its character set includes non-lining numerals and an extensive collection of weights, which would make it a perfect choice for additional written information appearing on the business cards and letterhead. A little touch of elegance and tradition was added with the inclusion of an ampersand and swash in the typeface of Garamond.