

# CURRICULUM VITAE

## Per Benjamin

### Vision

#### EMOTIONS, HONESTY, CURIOSITY AND JOY!

We all have an emotional relationship with flowers and with nature itself. Flowers are emotions! Being privileged as we are working with flowers every day, we get to interpret and convey these feelings in our work. This I find the most intriguing part of my job as a florist, the connection between flowers and people. Like translating one person's feelings for another in flowers, so I become the emotional link between the two. Flowers say so much more than you can put down in words, and sometimes more than you dare to say.

Life is getting more and more artificial, but today we can already see a reaction against this. The need for honesty not only between people but also in materials have created a movement that is only at its beginning. The more our cities grow the more the dream of nature and flowers will come to people. Floristry as a profession or more correctly as a handicraft is, in most aspects, something honest. We keep honest handicraft traditions alive. This is very important, because hand made products will always be appreciated. We work with honest, natural materials, this during a time of growing environmental awareness.

My driving force as a person and as a florist is my curiosity. My curiosity towards life, people, emotions and, of course, flowers. To be able to assume new challenges every day, in fulfilling my customers' needs, in finding new ways to work and to see new possibilities in the everyday material we work with. For me the challenge is not to find the most beautiful and rare flowers but to find new ways to use the ordinary ones and show their beauty. A beauty that passes so many people by if not presented in a special way. This is often times achieved by working with the flowers or colours that you like the least, to challenge your own prejudices and creativity. Not to see limits and old traditions as obstacles; on the contrary, to see them as possibilities and inspiration to new ideas. The classic saying, "To take the road less travelled." makes more than sense!

#### CREATIVITY WITH FLOWERS AND MONEY

Yes you did read that correctly!

Being creative and artistic does not always combine naturally with being organized, economical and structured! This fact becomes a problem when many of us realize the dream of owning our own shop.

I have seen, for many years, the struggle many of my friends and colleagues fought with their shops – long working days, a lot of hard work and very little, if any, profit.

I saw a need for knowledge of sales, economy and product assortment as well as presentation and an understanding of the unique conditions, problems and possibilities within a flower shop. Never had a well-known designer combined these topics as a course for fellow professionals!

This started a thought process within me that led to the industry's first educational programs custom made for us, on money management, shop economy, sales knowledge, managing and organizing, product assortment, presentation and general coaching of shops with the focus; "Creativity with flowers and money"

Since the start in 2004 with Floristic Dialogue, Shop Dialogue, my annual Gran Canary seminar, special programs for Interflora Norway and other teaching programs in both Sweden and Norway, several thousands have been inspired and learnt how to both make good money, get a better "shop life" and lifting the level of their actual craft.

At this experience and knowledge has now been put together in the new "Floristisk Coaching", Floristic Coaching, ready to be launched all around the world.

# Biography

Per Benjamin

Born in Stockholm, Sweden 1970 on 18th of August.

Flowers have always taken an important place in my life, and today one can even say they have become my life.

To have ones passion and main interest as a full time job is a privilege.

My driving force in life and career is the sheer fun and happiness I find in working with flowers and people. I find the connection between people and flowers being the most interesting aspect of this profession. How we, in different situations, can explain our feelings, or project them, telling things without words, but with flowers. To be this person is a true joy!

Today I work in my own company, "Benjamin's Botaniska" (Benjamin's Botanicals) and with Life3 together with Max and Tomas. Both being consultancy companies, not ordinary flower shops.

I have the opportunity to work on a wide field covering most of the floral industry. My work ranges from demonstrations, workshops, seminars, school teaching, shop make-overs, economy and sales knowledge, team and leaderships courses, shop coaching, bigger events and party decorations and the occasional day in a flower shop.

I have, over the last 10 years, since my World Cup victory, had the opportunity to work all around the world with companies, organizations and associations of all sizes and range. I have learnt and gathered experience both in life and within the profession that cannot have a value placed on it - a true gift! I would like to thank everyone I have worked with around the flower globe!

All of this started with my interest in flowers as a child and at the age of 16 my luck to find a flower shop to work in for holidays and weekends. This led the way to a growing interest, learning over the years, a full time job after high school where I studied natural science, and eventually my Craftsmanship diploma with a silver medal in 1994. After that I have worked in several shops and competed in plenty of competitions. Competitions, I have to say, are one of the best of ways to challenge your self and your creativity and an optimal way to grow as designer; I recommend them.

Apart from this I have, for three years, been responsible for a Florist education in Stockholm. I think this has been the job that has given me the most, to be able to show and give my inspiration and passion for my work to others, to provide them with the necessary knowledge and then see how they translate it into their own ideas.

Teaching of all kinds is my strongest passion. Combining flowers, design, expression and people - it is a perfect combination!

And from the summer of 2002 (after the World Cup in Holland) I have been a member of LIFE3, a cooperation between the European top 3 florists, Max van der Sluis from Holland, Tomas de Bruyne from Belgium and me. LIFE3 is an international company that offers demonstrations, shows, books, workshops, seminars, teaching, trend views, and lots more within the flower industry and beyond that. We have over, the past soon to be 10 years, experienced and changed a lot, always a true pleasure working in a group. Challenging as well as truly developing as both a person and a professional.

I have, both on my own and together as a part of Life3, been fortunate enough to do the most fascinating assignments over these years, none of which I will ever forget. This experience has made me grow as a person and a designer. Most valuable for me have been all the personal contacts, all these creative and social people, fellow designers I have had the pleasure of meeting. See under "Worldwide" for further information.

My warmest thanks and gratitude to all former and new colleagues in this fantastic profession!

## Competitions

1996: Stockholm Open, 2:a

1997: Swedish championships, winner.

Stockholm Open, 2.a

Assistant to the Swedish participant, Nicklas Jensen in the World Cup in Amsterdam.

1998: Stockholm Open, Winner.

Scandinavian Championships in Finland, 4:th.

Skånska Open Championships, 2:a

1999: Stockholm Open, 2:a

Swedish Championships

Europa Cup in Linz, Austria, 7:th

2000: Scandinavia Championships, Winner.

Stockholm Open

2001: Stockholm Open, 2:a

2002: Fleurop Interflora World Cup, winner.

Stockholm Open, Winner.

2003: Scandinavian Championships in Norway, winner!

2004: Assistant for the Swedish participant, Tomas Kallin, in World Cup in Melbourne.

2010: Assistant for the Swedish participant, Johan Pettersson, in World Cup in Shanghai

## Worldwide

1986: Extra job in a flower shop.

1988: First full-time job as a florist.

1994: Craftsmanship diploma, silver medal.

1997:

Head teacher at Flower academy in Stockholm

Interflora Universitetet as teacher / coach.

1998:

First ever own exhibition at Ingvar Strands Blomsterskola

Starts Benjamins Botaniska (Benjamin's Botanicals)

2000:

Demonstration in Holland for IBC.

Started working for BGR and Flower Council of Holland.

Demonstration at Horti fair, RAI, in Amsterdam.

2001:

Certified judge in Sweden and internationally.

Taiwan, first visit as teacher and demonstrator.

2002:

Florist of the year in Sweden

Exhibition at Arvsfurstens palace in Stockholm

Part organizer of Swedish championships.

Sayang Exhibit, Koppartälten in Stockholm

LIFE<sup>3</sup>, member and part owner of this unique collaboration.

2003:

Demonstration as World Champion at IPM, Germany

Demonstration in Japan, Kyrashiki

Travelled round the world giving exhibitions and demonstrations.

Project in Africa, Zambia education/ aid together with Oasis to support local florists.

2004:

Starts Floristisk Dialogue, Educational program in Sweden

Demonstration with Life<sup>3</sup>, IFLO, Germany.

2005: Demonstration tour in Australia.

Floristisk Dialogue tour in Sweden

Special exhibition in Temple, Nagano, Japan.

Judge and demonstrator at national championships in Japan and Korea

Wedding exhibition in Tokyo Japan

2006: Floristisk Dialog tour in Sweden

Judge and wedding show at Asia Cup, China.

Decorates Raffles hotel in Singapore

Starts the annual Gran Canary Interflora Norway week

Main exhibit at Philadelphia Flower Show, USA with Life<sup>3</sup>.

2007:

Decorating Raffles hotel in Singapore  
Starts "Shop Dialogue" in Sweden, shop coaching program  
Flowers in Bloom at Boston Arts Museum  
Decorating 6 star Crown hotel in Macau  
Pandoras Box at Azores islands  
AIFD convention Palm Dessert, demo and workshop with Life3  
Decorating Stockholm City hall

2008:

Demos and workshops in Spain, Vigo, Bilbao, Barcelona and Galicia  
Florissima demo and workshop in Mexico  
"Floristic Dialogue" tour in Sweden  
Starts also special "School Dialogue" in Sweden  
Demos in Moscow and St Petersburg with Life3

2009:

Decorating at Christmas World in Frankfurt with Life3  
Wedding seminar in Barcelona  
Demo at San Remo flower festival with Life3  
"Floristic Dialogue" tour in Sweden  
Starts co-operation with Interflora Norway with, sales, display and economy courses

2010:

Received my Coaching certificate  
Special workshops in Toronto, Canada  
Land Art exhibition in Norway  
The "Norwegian-year" Interflora and shop-coaching program. Creativity in both flowers and money!

2011:

Wedding show in Toronto  
Judging and seminar at ...in Bucharest  
First ever big Wedding show in Bucharest at ROMEXPO  
Tour of Australia and New Zealand