



DESIGN FILE *James Basson*

One of the gardens to look out for in the 'Fresh' category at Chelsea is *After the Fire* by James Basson, a British garden designer based in the South of France. Since moving there in 2000, he and his wife, Helen, have built a reputation for ecologically driven gardens with naturalistic planting designed to cope with the dry climate. 'So many people in the Côte d'Azur want emerald-green lawns so it's a matter of talking them round to something more sustainable,' says James. His Chelsea garden is inspired by the process of fire and the regeneration that comes afterwards – 'that intense burst of green that comes from the blackened landscape'. Using plants native to his area such as cistus, lavender, asphodel, wild mint and thyme, which stand out against a black charcoal mulch, he adds sculptural elements such as terracotta boulders, a stream, and the twisted branches of burnt trees. www.scapedesign.com