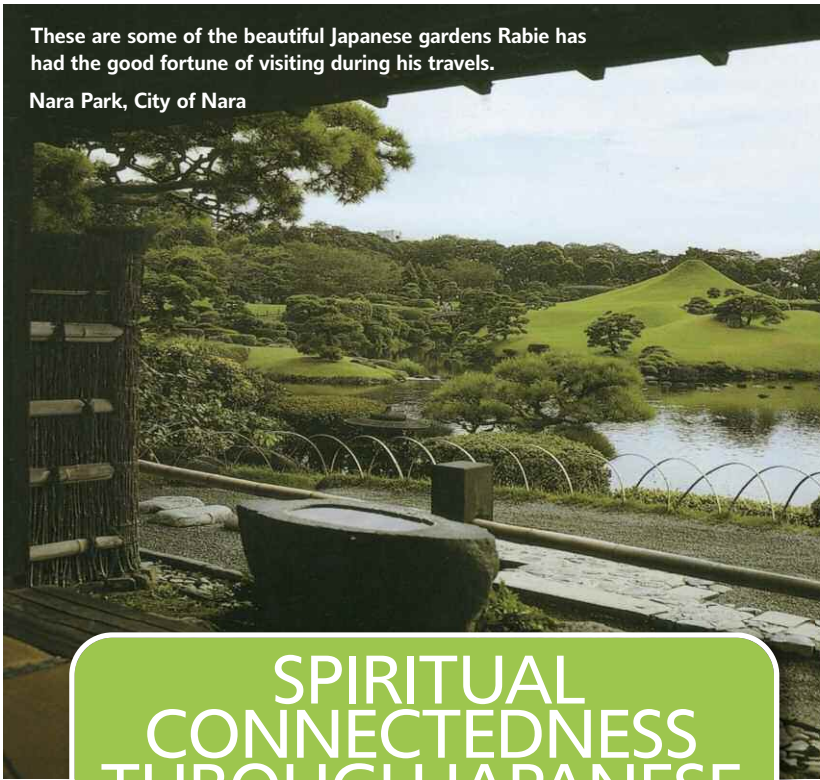


These are some of the beautiful Japanese gardens Rabie has had the good fortune of visiting during his travels.

Nara Park, City of Nara



Katsura-Rikyu Imperial Palace Villa, Kyoto

SPIRITUAL CONNECTEDNESS THROUGH JAPANESE GARDENS



Imperial Palace, Wisteria Courtyard garden, Kyoto

The Chance 2 Advance (C2A) programme ran a workshop with a spiritual difference on 7 March, titled *Japanese gardens: Liminal spaces of extraordinary beauty and spiritual connectedness*.

Facilitating the workshop was Christo Rabie, Head of Education Services at the Voortrekker Monument, who is an avid traveller to Japan and has a passion for the beautiful gardens for which it is famous. Believing that one should not lecture on beautiful things, Rabie instead used the session to get staff in tune with their creative and spiritual sides whilst taking them on a journey of his journeys. Of the Japanese garden, he said, "It's not called a place, it's a space. A space to sit, look and get connected with your own spirituality."

Some of the serene images that Rabie shared included Nagoya Castle gardens in central Japan and the Tenryu-ji Temple, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Rabie illustrated different elements that can be used in gardens. One such is a *tsukubai*, which is a small basin provided in Japanese Buddhist temples for visitors to purify themselves by the

ritual washing of hands and rinsing of the mouth. This leads to the cleansing of words and actions.

With the Japanese concept of beauty perceived as either property of a natural accident or the perfection of a manmade accident, Rabie believes that respect is what brings elements of a garden together. "In a garden, certain things are always used. Always respect the rocks, sand, and grass. Things that have been together should always stay together."

After touching on feng shui, the Chinese system of geomancy believed to use the laws of both heaven and earth to help one improve life by receiving positivity, Rabie then gave staff a practical exercise to conceptualise a small section in their garden using elements and teachings from the workshop.



Pictured at the workshop were Francois Crafford (Business Management), Christo Rabie (Head: Education Services, Voortrekker Monument), and Rose Mashaba (C2A).

About Chance 2 Advance

C2A aims to meet the learning needs of society by providing members of the public, workers and civil society a kaleidoscope of creative and innovative learning opportunities and a range of informal learning initiatives. The programme is a wide selection of customised and relevant learning initiatives that seek to encourage and inspire informal learning. C2A is for members of the public, grassroots communities, businesses, corporates, and educational institutions.

The next revolution in South Africa is going to be a learning revolution. C2A is poised to birth this revolution. *Learn WHOEVER you are* is the undertaking of this special programme. Learning that leads to service and service that leads to transformation is the core of this innovative programme.