



## The Netherlands/Russia Russian actor Fyodor Dobronravov names his own tulip

**On Maundy Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup>, the Russian actor, Fyodor Dobronravov named his own tulip in the well-known windmill village of Schermerhorn.**

Organised by the Dutch bulb supplier VWS, the name-giving ceremony recognised the outstanding keeping qualities of the 40 to 50 cm tall Tulipa 'Dobronravov', whose performance throughout the entire supply chain is highly applauded.

The Dobronravov tulip has been bought by one of VWS' major customers in Russia while breeder Jan Lighthart granted VWS the exclusive rights to market and distribute the new tulip variety in the Russian marketplace.

Mr. Dobronravov was delighted by having a tulip with creamy yellow flowers named after him. "It's a real honour for me that this beautiful tulip bears my name," enthused the Russian actor, who received Russia's highest artistic honour - the title of People's Artist of Russia - in 2002.

Fyodor Dobronravov was born in the city of Taganrog on September 11, 1961. Since his childhood, Dobronravov's dream was to become a circus clown, and while he was a student he worked at the open-air summer theater in Gorky Park (Taganrog). After school, since 1978 he made several attempts to enter the State University of Circus and Variety Arts (better known as Moscow Circus School), but without success. After military service Dobronravov returned to Taganrog and worked as metalworker, furniture moulder, electrician, etc. In 1984 he successfully entered the art college in the city of Voronezh, which he graduated from in 1988. In 1988-1990 he worked at the Voronezh Youth Theater. In 1990 he was invited by Konstantin Raikin to work at the Satyricon Theatre in Moscow, which he left in 2000. Since 2003, he has been acting with the Moscow Satire Theatre.

Both sons of Fyodor Dobronravov, Viktor Dobronravov and Ivan Dobronravov are famous Russian actors. III

# Happy Gardening

by Anthony Tesselaar

## Stop looking and feel the inside!



This shot was taken inside the Mini Brand Store in Amsterdam. I took it to remind myself of a valuable thought that hit me hard while I was standing in this remarkable retail space. And to understand what had triggered this idea in the first place. I give you a hint - I'd just walked in from having visited the Apple Store, a short distance along the street (Leidseplein, if you're interested). Here's that thought...

Sometimes when we see a single example of something, we don't really notice it. But when we see more than one, it tends to leap out to make us pay attention. And that's exactly what happened to me while visiting both stores, one after the other.

Most people are familiar with the Apple Store approach. It's not that new now, but it remains distinctly 'Apple'. It's based on encouraging everyone to come into a safe and welcoming space, to touch and familiarised themselves with the stuff on offer. There is no pressure to buy; everyone is welcome. Pleasant, informed staff stand around in case anyone should need them.

And then a few steps away the Apple model was being beautifully applied to a completely different product - a car. As I wandered around, I could feel that it was a very different environment from the car showrooms I am familiar with. Just like the Apple Store down the road, staff at the Mini Store were pleasant, informed and happy to stand around until anyone should need them. There were clearly no sales incentives involved, which meant the space felt safe and welcoming. I watched and it was working. Everyone felt happy to come inside and touch and sit in the show cars. The buzz was honest and fabulous. I'm guessing that the talk on the street about the Minis, produced by these Mini Stores, was marketing 'gold'.

Does my observation have any immediate and direct application to my business or the horticulture industry generally? Probably not instantly. But it is a great example of something I feel everyone should be building into their periodic business reviews. Here's what I suggest...

Clearly there are benefits from being aware of trends. Not just those within your own industry, but in those peripheral or allied. Perhaps even those ideas completely outside the box. I feel that it never hurts to cultivate a genuine interest in what's happening around you. What you notice may feed creative business planning at some point in the future. Being aware can build flexibility and adaptation. Exposure to new trends may also give confidence should we ever face making a decision to follow what may be an unfamiliar path. Being open and aware is the best way to be. But you need to actively find ways to expose yourself to the great ideas and innovations that are out there. Happy hunting.

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