

Hybrid of the Year 2011

Paphiopedilum Wössner Vietnam Love 'Pink Passion' AM/SAOC 84%

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We both love slipper orchids, it is one of our favourite groups of orchid.

So, when we have the opportunity (and the money available), we try and get new species and hybrids from the various international suppliers. *Paphiopedilum vietnamense* and *P. hangianum* caused such a stir when first discovered, and even more so when some of the first images of their hybrids surfaced, that we just had to get some of these plants. Hybrids were also expensive, but some were more affordable than others and at least these plants were stronger and much bigger. This particular plant came in as part of a shipment from one of our European suppliers. We imported a few plants with the idea of selling some at the national show in Durban. Some of these plants came with buds and these were sold at the show. We decided to keep three. The first one to flower proved to be a really good one, and the timing was perfect, coinciding with the W.O.S. autumn show. It seemed that the judges liked the plant just as much as we did, and the plant was awarded at the show.

Paphiopedilum Wössner Vietnam Love was registered by Frans Glanz in 2003 as a cross between the elegant *P. micranthum* and the fairly 'new' *P. vietnamense*. This seems a logical cross to make as *P. Magic Lantern* was such a big success. *P. Magic Lantern*, which is of course the combination of *P. micranthum* and *P. delenatii*, is a highly awarded grex with over 80 American Orchid Society quality awards. In some ways, *P. vietnamense* can be seen as a superior *P. delenatii*, and the hybrid with *P. vietnamense* instead of



Photographer: Nollie Cilliers

using *P. delenatii* turned out to be like a really good *P. Magic Lantern*.

All our slippers are grown in a bark based mixture. Three parts fine bark, combined with one part silica sand and one part Canadian peat, is our standard mix. This is sometimes altered slightly for some plants which we feel need more drainage, or better moisture retention. Some limestone chips as well as diatomaceous earth is added to the mix for the *Parvisepalum* species and hybrids. Most of the *paphiopedilum*s in the *Parvisepalum* group tend to be slightly fussy with their growing conditions, but we have found that the hybrids are easier to grow. They are truly worth the effort with such amazing flowers! *