



ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE DESIGNERS

the designer

Fall 2020

2020

APLD
INTERNATIONAL
LANDSCAPE
DESIGN AWARDS

Designer of the Year Colin Miller
of Envision Landscape Studio's
Via Hermosa in Orinda, CA

The Day After

The day after the photographs were taken of this year's APLD International Design Award's winning entries, students perched atop benches with books open and discarded on their laps as they chatted with friends.

The day after, the pool vacuum was replaced, along with the huge unicorn floatie, and bicycles leaned up against the garage doors waiting to be hopped on at a moment's notice.

The day after, friends visited, stopping along the entrance path to admire some flowers or an artfully pruned shrub.

The day after, it rained, and that rain was captured by a green roof and soaked up by plants. It rained and the water flowed into a carefully constructed and hidden drain or into a natural pool, where it was filtered, waiting for the owners and their friends to enjoy it.

The day after, the fire pits jumped to life and marshmallows were roasted and cocktails (or mocktails) were clinked in celebration of being together in such a beautiful space.

I always wait until I've paged through the magnificent page spreads designed by *The Designer's* Art Director Marti Golon to write my Editor's Letter for the awards issue because I want to soak in the beauty and intelligence and listening and planning that go into the

winning designs. I wait to see if there's a theme or a trend — some unseen thread linking them all together, a prevailing aesthetic emerging from dozens of designers around the world, at once. Sometimes, something new jumps out.

This year, what I see when I look at these gorgeous, functional, inspiring designs is the importance of your work in the everyday lives of your clients. The names of your entries say it all, "Sanctuary," "Oasis," "Retreat," "Haven." Your work creates places of respite — public and private. Your gardens are, in effect, recharging stations for people, and our batteries are all running a little low right now.

Congratulations to all of the winners, and thank you for sharing your designs with us. May they spark inspiration in everyone who reads this issue, encouraging us to keep powering through.

Katie

KATIE ELZER-PETERS
EDITOR@APLD.ORG



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2020 APLD International Landscape Design Awards

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ON THE COVER AND THIS SPREAD:
DESIGNER OF THE YEAR COLIN MILLER
OF ENVISION LANDSCAPE STUDIO'S
VIA HERMOSA IN ORINDA, CALIFORNIA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOE DODD

This meditation garden, which evokes feelings of being at a yoga sanctuary surrounded by nature in the designer of the year, is Colin Miller's of Envision Landscape Studio Designs' project in Orinda, California.

Awards

Autumn—my favorite season! I've always loved it for its cooler weather, harvest foods grown from the garden, and colorful displays in the landscape. Now I love it even more because it means the awards issue of *The Designer* is out! APLD has no shortage of amazing talent, and we're fortunate to highlight the best of the best in this annual issue.

The stunning projects within the pages of this issue take on immense site challenges, diverse client needs, and tricky budgets—all while creating that beauty and connection with nature that underscore the reasons for our passion and work as landscape professionals.

As design professionals, seeking the feedback and constructive critique from your peers that come from entering your best work into a competition are keys to staying relevant and maturing in your craft. From selecting your featured project and its drawings and photographs to writing your project description, your entry into *The Designer's* award issue marks you as a leader and committed businessperson as well as an inspiration to your fellow designers. And if you've never entered a project into APLD's awards competition, I invite you to set your goal for next year—the application process as well as the invaluable feedback from accomplished judges make it a rewarding experience both for you and your team.

Whether you are a fellow designer looking to be inspired by new-to-you ideas, a potential client of one of our members, or perhaps a member of the media, we welcome you to enjoy this award issue of *The Designer*. I'm so proud of the professional design and coordination work our members provide, and though we cannot showcase every member's work, we trust you will find inspiration for your next project, glimpse industry-leading trends, and confirm that APLD is the home for hundreds of professionals seeking to provide design excellence to each of their clients.

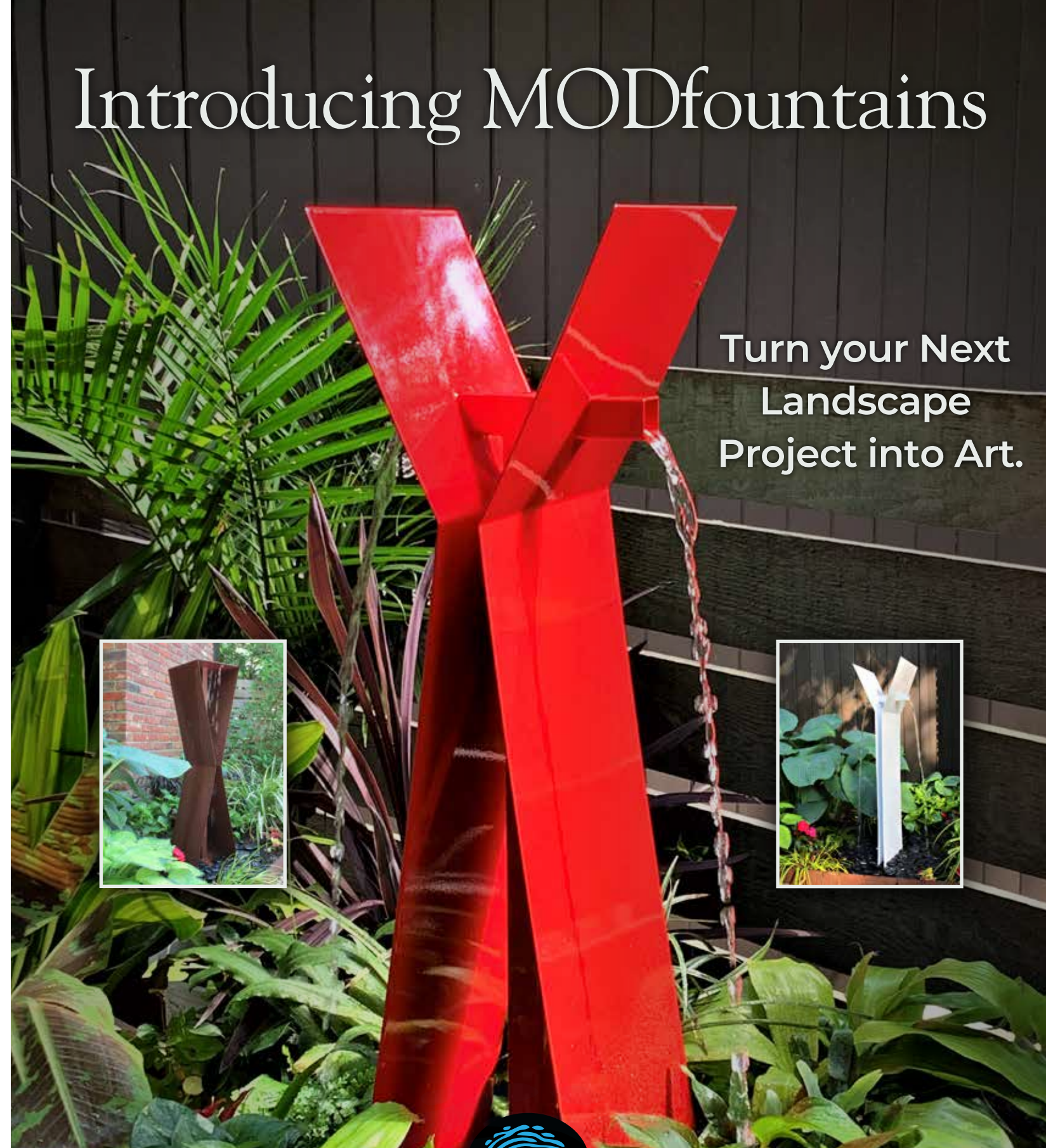


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2020 Planting Design
Gold Award winner
Donald Pell Gardens'
Kempton, PA, Garden

PHOTOGRAPH BY
ROB CARDILLO

thedesigner wants you!

The only magazine written by designers for designers, *The Designer* is looking for talented members like you to share your stories, teach new techniques, and inspire with your designs.

All submissions from APLD members are considered, but *The Designer* is particularly interested in articles that fit the issue's editorial theme or are appropriate for one of the magazine's regular columns spotlighting technology or business strategies.

Seeking pitches for articles. We're always looking for writers for regular features including Wander.Lust., Travel Inspiration, Plant App(lication)s, Design 101, and Design Masterclass articles.

Not sure if your story is a good fit? As Editor in Chief for 2020 Katie Elzer-Peters is happy to discuss your idea with you. Reach her at editor@apld.org.



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Color Field Landscape
by Jennifer Horn
Landscape Architecture
in Bethesda, Maryland
PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLEN RUSS

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2020 APLD
INTERNATIONAL
LANDSCAPE

COLIN MILLER

ENVISION LANDSCAPE STUDIO

Via Hermosa, Orinda, CA

Designer of the Year

A fire pit seating area adjacent to the pool allows visitors to enjoy the garden throughout the day and night. The pool and spa push out to the horizon, helping lead the eye out toward the scenic mountain views.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE DODD

PHOTOGRAPH BY JUDE PARKINSON-MORGAN

The hillside plantings soften the stairs by taking advantage of elevation changes. The cascading steps, perennials, and grasses unfold from the street creating a soft transition to the front door.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE DODD

VIA HERMOSA

Residential Category Over \$100,000

Project Location: Orinda, CA

Envision Landscape Studio, Colin Miller

envisionlandscapestudio.com

Firm Location: Walnut Creek, CA

Zone: 9b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

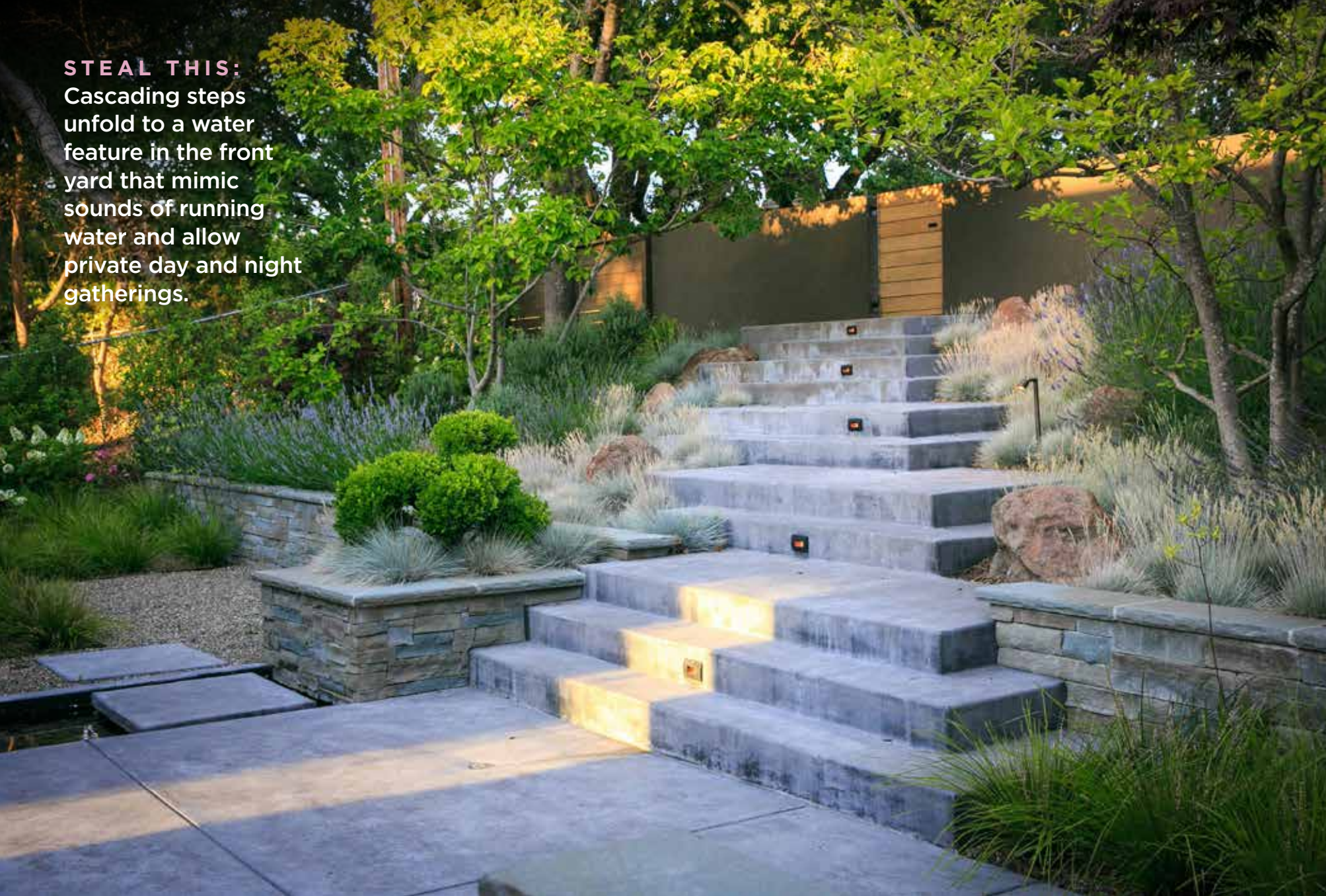
This is a beautiful garden! It's very well-designed regarding site spaces and places, and the landscape connects the home to its surroundings. The intimate front entrance sequence upon entering from the street is great. The enclosed feeling of the front is such a drastic difference from the very open feeling of the back. The water features and their resulting sounds must be fantastic! This is a wonderful example of an edited planting plan—but still lush, full, beautiful, meditative, and simple. There's nice restraint in the back with a simple planting palette; the line of *Calamagrostis* works very well. Materials are used very creatively. What an excellent space and place to live, entertain, and reflect—superior!!

Low planting areas subtly define the front courtyard from the entry. A central focal point water feature greets guests upon arrival and acts as a backdrop to the private meditation courtyard.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE DODD

STEAL THIS: Cascading steps unfold to a water feature in the front yard that mimic sounds of running water and allow private day and night gatherings.



designeroftheyear

The linear geometry of the concrete stairs is softened by the grasses and perennials, a blend of natural and man-made. A bonus—there is ample extra seating (left).

Repetition in this planting scheme creates a calming backdrop to the meditation garden. Drought-tolerant and California native plants were used to reduce water consumption (below).



“When [the clients] came to us, they needed a new entry experience. They were going to remodel the house built into the 60s and turn it into a new, modern home,” begins Colin Miller, Owner/Principal of Envision Landscape Studio and APLD’s Landscape Designer of the Year about his winning entry.

Miller, who studied Landscape Architecture at Cal Poly, got into the industry right after graduation in 2006. He founded Envision Landscape Studio in 2011 and has been going strong ever since. The award-winning design incorporates many of the firm’s trademark practices and was very much a collaboration between Miller and the firm’s Design Director, Melissa Lee.

The site presented plenty of challenges, most notably a small amount of flat space on which to develop gathering spaces. A 5-foot

elevation change between the street level and the front door, with all visitor parking on the street, created the first challenge — how to safely and comfortably get guests from their cars to the home entrance. Viewed as an opportunity, one of the most striking features of the redesign emerged, the staircase, which looks a bit like a cascading waterfall tumbling into a water feature close to the house.

“Five feet is a pretty drastic change, and we wanted to develop an entrance experience as opposed to a hazard.” They solved the problem by inserting a larger landing

between every two steps to allow guests to rest and take in their surroundings.

Creating an enjoyable, private area in the front yard can be difficult for any landscape design. And in hilly terrain, any flat area is valuable “real estate.” So taking advantage of the front yard to create a tranquil courtyard space for the family to enjoy made perfect sense. The water feature, initially began as a backdrop to the courtyard space but through innovative design (including a short run under the entrance pathway), it became a unifying element throughout the front ➡



of the property. It's a wonderful addition for visitors coming and going, as well as a focal point for viewing from the family room, which opens into the courtyard.

Overall, the hardscape (including the stairs) is very organized, with clean, hard lines to counterbalance the plantings that have a looser or more chaotic massed effect. This balance helps make the space more comfortable; plants aren't in rigid rows, so the overall feel is more natural. The closer you get to the house, the more organized the hardscape is to naturally draw your eye to the entrances. A mix of fence materials—horizontal cedar wood with the home's smooth stucco—complement each other. The pedestrian gate is stained with a warmer tone to draw one's eye to exit when walking back up the stairs.

Challenges created by hilly terrain extend to the back yard. The compromise for Via Hermosa was to position the pool as far out as possible. What would have been a 3-foot drop-off on the backside of the pool was transformed into a safer alternative. A lower retaining wall with a built-in planter means there is only an 18-inch drop-off instead of three feet. Tall grasses were installed as a visual (and subtle) stopping point. *Calamagrostis* 'Karl Foerster', neatly planted behind the pool, blurs the line between the built landscape and the borrowed view, allowing the viewer's gaze to continue toward the horizon.

The result of careful planning at Via Hermosa is a spectacular—and gorgeous—home that's welcoming both for guests and the homeowners alike. 🌿



Repetition of plantings provides uniformity while still maintaining a natural feel (above).

Water and stone—two of the basic elements of nature—combine to create a tranquil meditation area (left).

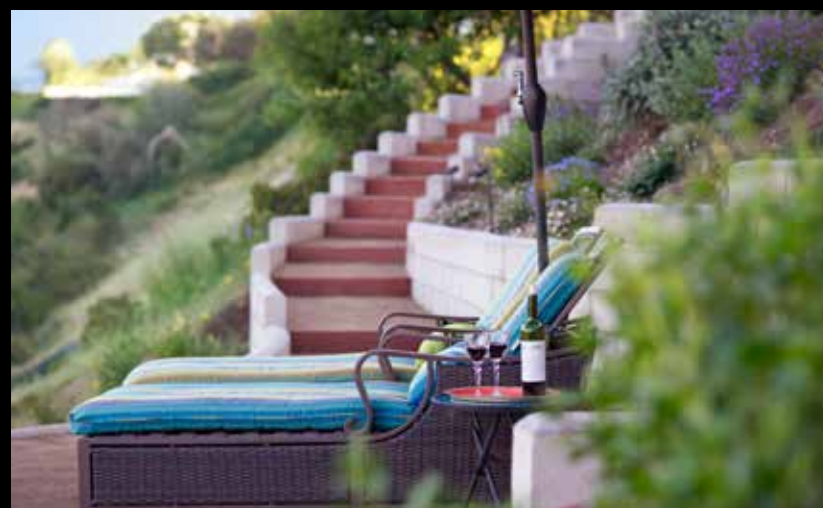
In the back yard, the clean lines of the concrete patio are wrapped in plantings extending toward the pool. Both contribute to the calming space that overlooks the oak woodlands (right).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOE DODD

2020 APLD
INTERNATIONAL
LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Residential Gold Awards



LINCOLN ESTATE

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Lincoln, MA

a Blade of Grass, Jim Douthit

abladeofgrass.com

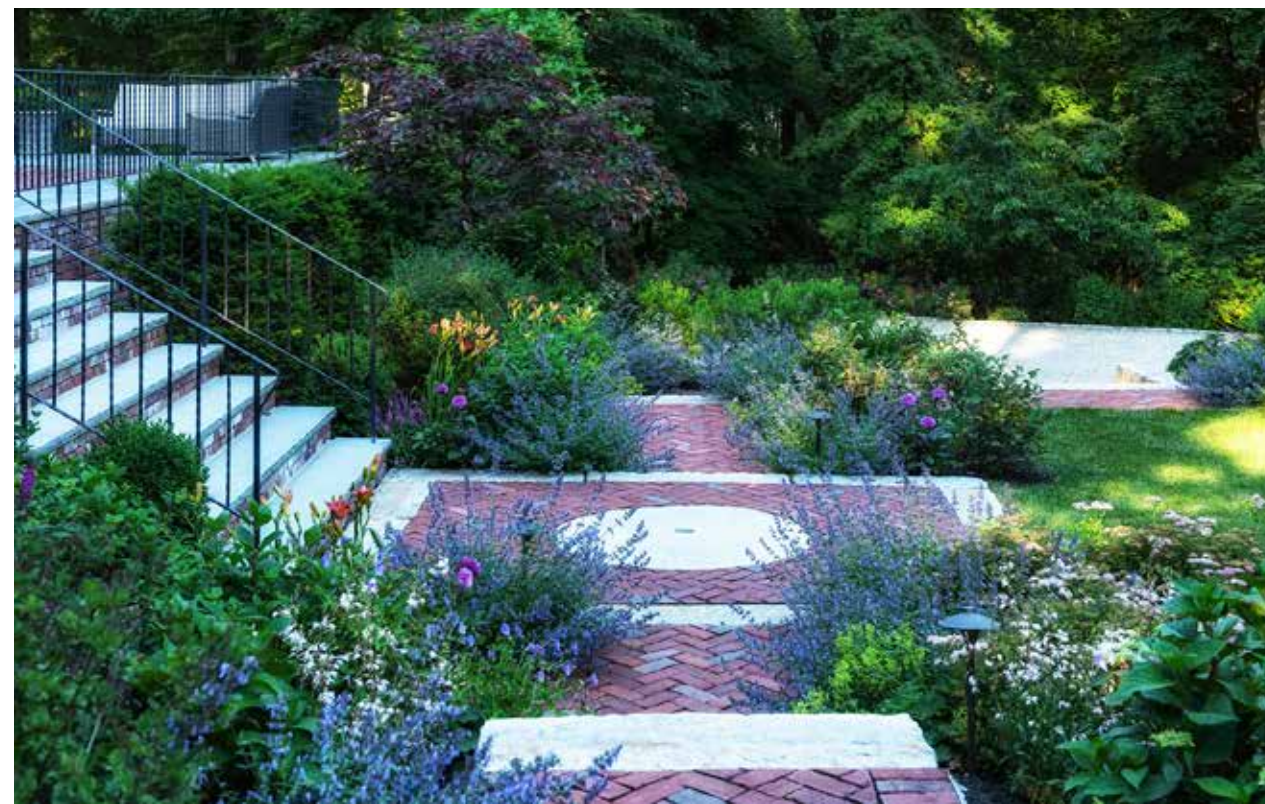
Firm Location: Sudbury, MA

Zone: 6b



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This project is beautiful. The materials—brick, bluestone, wallstone, and granite—all work together to pull this project together. It's a good use of materials, forms, and alignments of the hardscapes. The plantings, especially in the back of the house, are colorful and lush. Repetition and symmetry were both used well; repeating the square pattern with the central circle in the front and back of the house is a nice touch. The use of granite for the steps as well as mixed with the brick in the paving details give the project a sense of the time period. The service areas and guest parking areas are nicely distinguished. It's a great overall site plan and landscape design whose photos illustrate an established and well managed garden and site.



The family is away for most of the summer so ornamental plants are weighted toward spring flowering and fall interest (above).

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETE CADIEUX

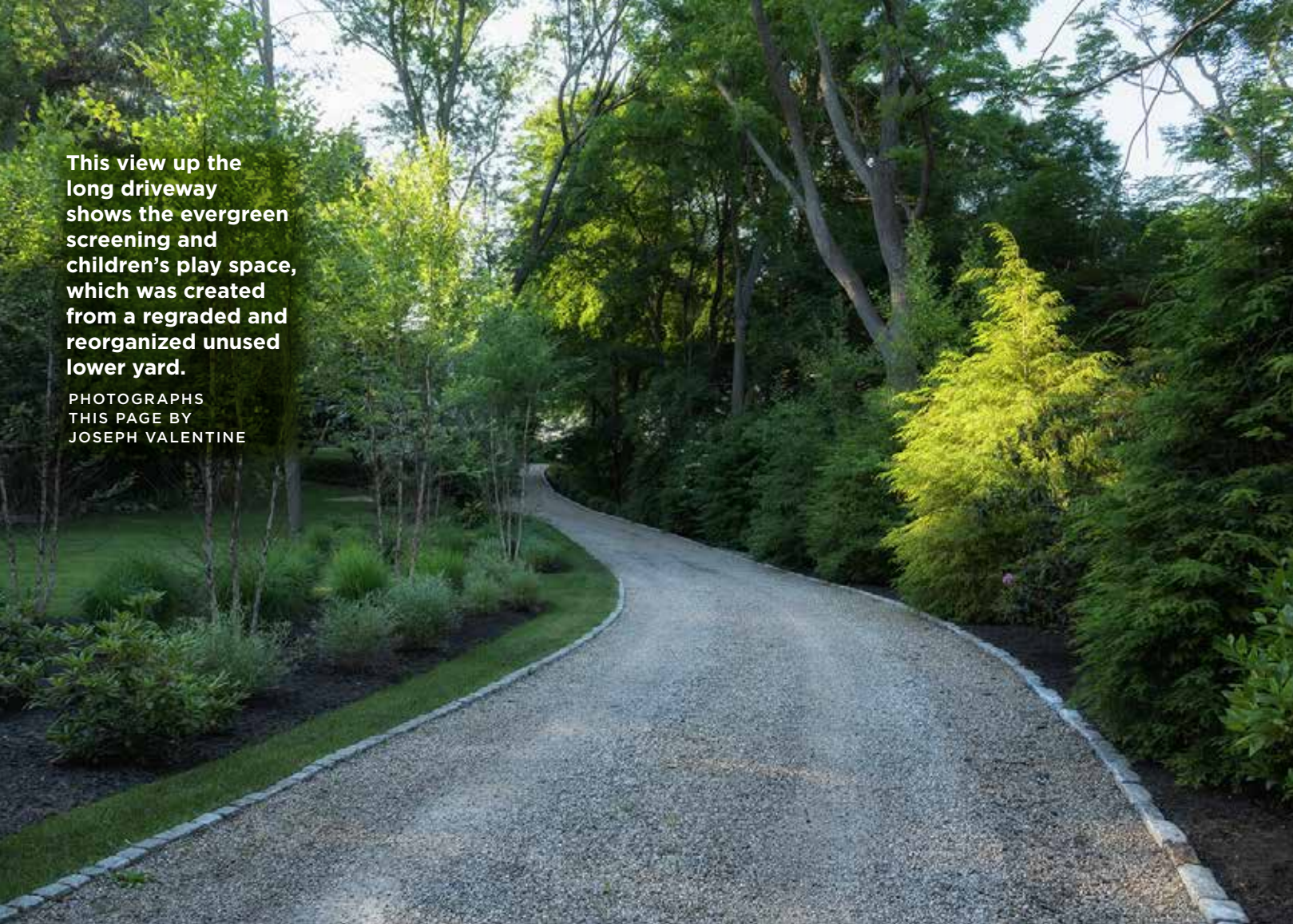
This view is from the picket garden down the front walk. Locally sourced, reclaimed brick and granite were used for hardscapes (left).

Reclaimed brick and reclaimed granite were used in the pathways that connect the driveway, house, and garden spaces (far left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSEPH VALENTINE

This view up the long driveway shows the evergreen screening and children's play space, which was created from a regraded and reorganized unused lower yard.

PHOTOGRAPHS
THIS PAGE BY
JOSEPH VALENTINE



STEAL THIS:

Replacing the existing Mediterranean-style tiles with weathered materials was a more natural match for the age and more formal Georgian style of the house and helped give the landscape an established feel.

The driveway close to the house was enlarged to add guest parking by the front door, but a permeable gravel surface was used (left).



BEFORE: The Mediterranean-style tile on the garage roof terrace (left).

The garage roof terrace shows how different the mix of reclaimed brick and bluestone can make this space feel. The brick defines locations for seating groups as well (above).

PHOTOGRAPHS
THIS PAGE BY
PETE CADIEUX



SCANDINAVIAN FARMHOUSE

Residential Category Over \$100,000

Project Location: Cohasset, MA

Amy Martin Landscape Design, Amy Martin

amymartinlandscape.com

Firm Location: Cohasset, MA

Zone: 6b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The overall design is fantastic. A dramatic before/after of landscapes and views with great vision and added value to the residence. The plan illustrates the layers and thought of the space and the final project is a tremendous example of site planning and landscape design. The large, flowing masses in this plan carry through in the installation. The overall look is beautiful, as are the details including the way the storage "shed" is tucked into the wall and the fantastic shower "bench."

Granite steps lead from the lawn down to a grouping of three rough-hewn granite benches, which reflect the naturalistic setting. Surrounding them are bright green masses of native *Carex* and Ostrich Fern along with native plants suited to a woodland edge (above).

PHOTOGRAPH BY
MILLCENT HARVEY



The site is home to a native wetland at the far edge of the property, which is now a wetland "meadow" full of native plantings for pollinators.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
AMY MARTIN



STEAL THIS:

The modern Scandinavian farmhouse architecture set the tone for a clean, minimalist landscape design. The house, being white inside and out, inspired the choice of salt-and-pepper granite from a local quarry.



The simple plant palette focuses on textures and forms, rather than bloom colors, using mostly native plants along the woodland's edge to support the delicate ecosystem. Here, lush grass, Hydrangeas, and Ferns offer textural interest (top left).

A tall hedge of mature 'Emerald Green' *Arborvitae* creates a wall of lush green, with nearby tall grasses and Hydrangeas offsetting the formality with their loose and flowing shapes (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JAIME NOVAK



The primary outdoor living space took shape behind the house as a granite patio bordered by single-stem River Birch trees and two large, precision-cut granite benches (above).

PHOTOGRAPH BY
JAIME NOVAK

Turf paths weave through the plantings as visitors progress down the land to direct pedestrians to functional areas such as a stone terrace and fire pit (left).

PHOTOGRAPH BY
AMY MARTIN



This welcoming path beckons visitors to explore this secluded retreat. Plantings throughout the landscape provide a wide variety of structure, perpetual bloom cycles, and colorful foliage through all the seasons and are strategically placed to create an appealing garden anytime of the year (above).

BEFORE: The cold and desolate courtyard had a compacted pea stone surface (right).

The former pea stone parking area was transformed into a serene garden surrounded by original stone walls and custom fencing that highlight a magnificent, cascading water feature and fire ring. This courtyard garden is a glorious extension of the home when the French doors are open (top right).



TREE TOPS

Residential Category Over \$100,000

Project Location: Bernardsville, NJ

Cedarwood Landscaping Inc.

cedarwoodlandscaping.com

Firm Location: Mendham, NJ

Zone: 6b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This former parking area was transformed into a very serene, beautiful, and comfortable garden space, with a very attractive gate and fencing. The wall fountain water feature was a very nice touch, as is the fireplace by the pool. The arbor in the back very nicely brings the architecture out into the garden. Though the large existing trees and walls help, the designer did a super job laying in the modern improvements! Love the trefoil gate detail—beautiful! The simple planting palette is beautiful. Rich materials and planted masses work in the understory of the treetops, yielding structured and established plantings within the tree canopy. The amendments added into the landscape spaces and places are scaled well with good details.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. SCOTT MORTENSEN



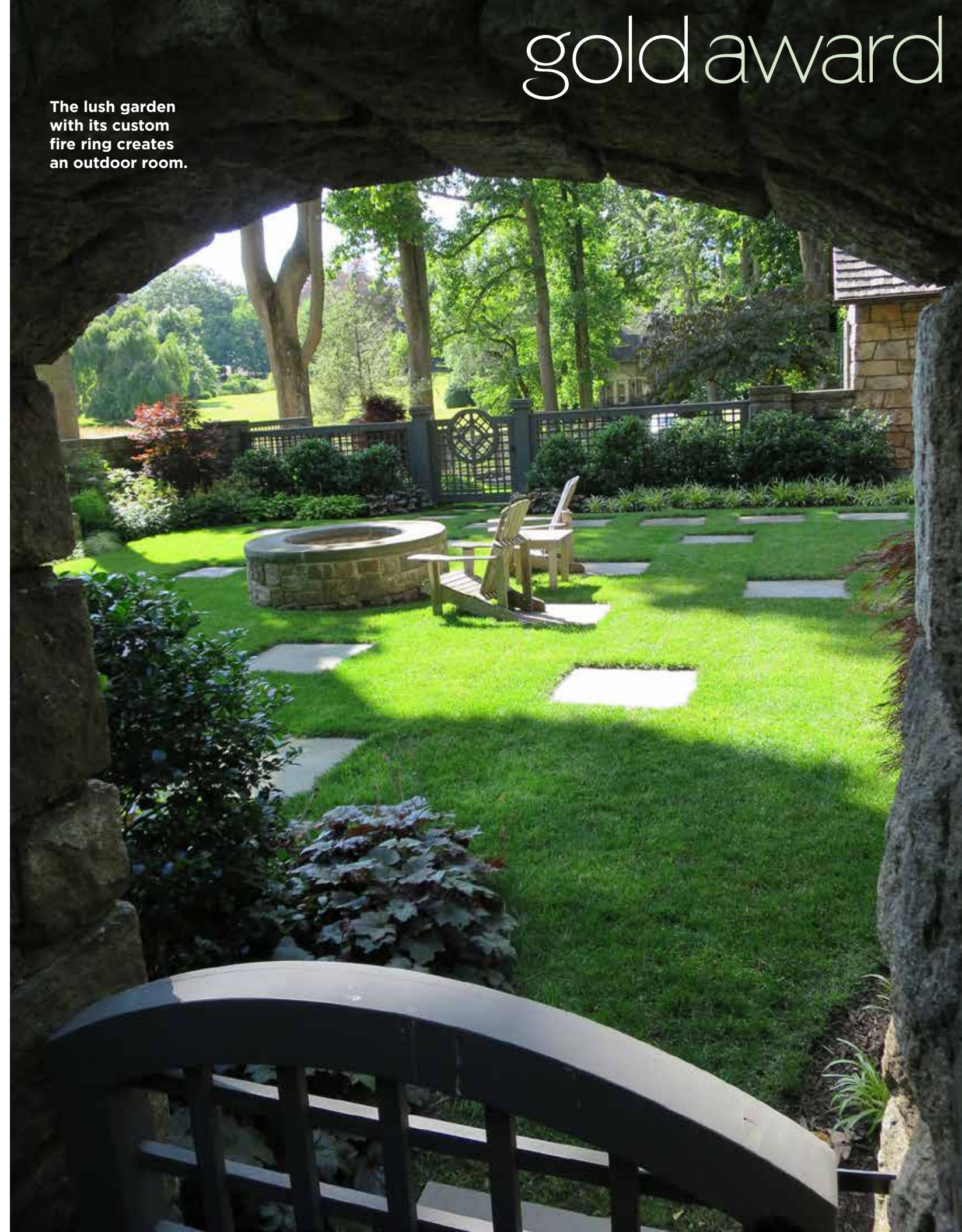
BEFORE: The original Old World stone wall defined the barren courtyard (right).

This enchanting cascading waterfall provides alluring beauty and meditative tranquility (above).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
J. SCOTT MORTENSEN



The lush garden with its custom fire ring creates an outdoor room.



gold award

A massive, free-standing, custom-built pergola was designed to complement the unique beauty and structure of the home. It frames the perfect outdoor dining experience (below).



An enchantingly magnetic outdoor entertainment destination was created. Pool equipment and a private outdoor shower are neatly hidden away in a custom-built structure (bottom).



Adjacent to the pool and spa is a stone fireplace with a flat screen television concealed behind wooden doors. The centrally located cozy seating area offers a scenic, panoramic view.

STEAL THIS:

Plant material was selected based on its ability to closely match the given plants native habitat, ensuring minimal environmental impact along with relative ease of sustainability. Biodiversity was paramount to promote a natural habitat for beneficial insects and pest predators.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. SCOTT MORTENSEN

TRANQUIL WATER-SIDE SANCTUARY

Residential Category \$25,000 – \$100,000

Project Location: Novato, CA

Dig Your Garden Landscape Design, Eileen Kelly

digyourgarden.com

Firm Location: San Anselmo, CA

Zone: 10a



Textural and colorful plants and modern hardscape replaced the tired lawn.

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is a striking landscape that connects the house to the water, even creating a water view. Materials—plants and hardscape—work well together. The beautiful plant textures, good use of foliage, delightful waterside sitting area (and draping plants over the back edge really finishes this nicely), and excellent positioning of focal points are well done. By repeating colors and textures, as well as key plants, this really works. The straight lines punctuated by the circular sitting area is an especially nice touch. The “Before” and “After” are—wow! All now feels calm and beautiful, with functional entertaining spaces and individual spaces. One can appreciate the subtle diagonal axis that was used to instill a sense of movement and visually expand the space. The small space has really been made to live large. Well done—this is a *fabulous* transformation!



BEFORE: The property before replacing the water-thirsty lawn with a serene new landscape (left).

A circular sitting patio was positioned lower and closer to the water's edge to gather at sunset and watch the wildlife. The partial circular retaining wall, surrounded by cascading plants and flowing grasses, provides some shelter from the wind (far left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EILEEN KELLY, DIG YOUR GARDEN LANDSCAPE DESIGN



The design included a large deck with ample room for dining/entertaining, and modern clean-lined, functional pathways throughout. This view from the new deck highlights the modern pavers and site-appropriate garden.



STEAL THIS:

Camaru wood is a sustainable Brazilian teak alternative to the overly harvested hardwoods.

A Buddha statue provides a tranquil focal point positioned within the garden that can be viewed from all vantage points (including neighbors as they kayak by from the lagoon). The clients' dock is just steps away (right).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY EILEEN KELLY, DIG YOUR GARDEN LANDSCAPE DESIGN



The lovely, serene garden setting with its walkable groundcover path allows visitors to approach the Buddha statue (above).

Sustainable Camaru wood deck, built-in benches, and planters are part of the hardscape. The large planters were chosen for placement between the built-in benches and along the deck edges and are filled with architectural plants, some with herbs (left).



The pedestrian entrance directs visitors down redwood steps through the established, mature, but-once-forsaken redwood tree grove.



Industrial board from the concrete walls is softened by the horizontal redwood gates. Both provide privacy and security (above).

A structured concrete pathway meanders through the meadow plantings while beckoning visitors to the sounds of water by the front door (top).

BERRYHILL

Residential Category Over \$100,000

Project Location: Orinda, CA

Envision Landscape Studio, Colin Miller

envisionlandscapestudio.com

Firm Location: Walnut Creek, CA

Zone: 9b

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOE DODD



JUDGES’ FEEDBACK:

This is a very nice and cozy design. One can imagine how the sounds from the fountain by the door echo off the walls of the house, making the entire front yard very relaxing. The tall trees by the entry to the drive add a nice sense of depth. The tall fescue “turf” and the back yard work very nicely too. The details are terrific starting from the front gate to the way the concrete pattern piers line up with the fence. The scale is good, as is the simplicity of the planting palette. This is a great entryway plus outdoor living spaces, and its good lines connect the slope to the entry. There’s a good use of materials, such as the concrete that matches the board fence. It’s a simple, yet elegant, garden.

Bluestone paving distinguishes the front entry and provides a foreshadow to the back yard’s paving. The bluestone paving unfolds on the ground plane to create dining, lounge, and outdoor kitchen spaces (middle below).

The water feature, a client request to drown out street noises and to greet visitors upon arrival and departure, is a constant source of soothing sounds (below).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOE DODD

The front pathway of linear concrete pads encourages interaction between a visitor and the front garden (above).

Once the entry gates are opened, they reveal a lush and lively front yard garden (right).





STEAL THIS:

Lush, flowing plantings along the slopes call to the untouched native hillsides to create a juxtaposition with the modern outdoor kitchen and allow the design to circle back into the hardscape of the entertaining space.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOE DODD



The outdoor kitchen nestles into the hillside, providing wonderful views for guests. It was another client request to accommodate entertaining (above left).

The back yard's elevation change allows additional viewing points. Drought-tolerant and California native plants were used to reduce water consumption, while crushed rock and permeable hardscape surfaces were used to reduce the amount of surface water runoff (above).

Ipe decking extends the interior hardwood spaces to the exterior by blurring any boundaries. A spa is located to the side, off the master bedroom (left).

BLACK MOUNTAIN LODGE

Residential Category

\$25,000-\$100,000

Project Location: Hillsborough, CA

Floradora Garden Design, Kelly Kilpatrick

floradorgardens.com

Firm Location: Oakland, CA

Zone: 10a



The outdoor dining area is one of several spaces for entertaining (left).

The gorgeous back yard entertaining space is quite open, allowing large groups to attend. All pathways and most entertainment spaces are permeable (above).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
BLAKE MARVIN PHOTOGRAPHY

JUDGES' FEEDBACK:

This design is beautiful in so many ways; it feels natural in a “high end” way. The superb planting design (the plant forms and textures are striking) and incorporation of drought-tolerant plants and permeable floorscapes are so lovely. The design has significant negative space yet still finds a way to balance that with a tapestry of densely planted borders. The smaller details, such as the juxtaposition of a circular table against rectilinear design elements, are much appreciated. The inclusion of standing stones is a creative way to bring in the homeowner’s heritage, and the lighting on the step risers keep the space safe, especially important for large gatherings. This beautiful design showing the dramatic “Before” and “After” has been well executed and established. There are great layers within the views and a simple elegance that’s enduring. Well done!

A special space was created around the standing stones, reminiscent of ancient Irish standing stones, which the client holds in fond memories. A low, walkable groundcover was used to allow visitors to go up to the stones and touch them.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
BLAKE MARVIN
PHOTOGRAPHY



STEAL THIS:

The overall plant selection is foliage-focused with minimal flowers. Interest is created with contrasting foliage textures and a variety of shades of green. Many shrubs were selected for their mounding form to give the space a calm air, allowing the garden to feel settled into the space and blend with the existing trees.

All plantings are drought tolerant to grow well with the limited water in a Mediterranean climate. All irrigation is drip for maximum water efficiency (above).

PHOTOGRAPH BY BLAKE MARVIN PHOTOGRAPHY

BEFORE: This shows the site construction of the rebuilt home, which compacted the soil, making another design challenge (right).

PHOTOGRAPHS RIGHT AND FAR RIGHT BY KELLY KILPATRICK



Imagine taking a walk on this path through the serene redwoods. Unobtrusive lighting allows one to walk at night too.

gold award

The house emerges gracefully from the landscape, giving glimpses of the terrace to the left and around the bend, the courtyard, and drive court.

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S GARDEN

Residential Category Over \$100,000

Project Location: Winnetka, IL

**Hoerr Schaudt
Landscape Architects**

hoerschaudt.com

Firm Location: Chicago, IL

Zone: 5b

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT SHIGLEY

BEFORE: Although the clients had owned the site for many years, they decided to rebuild a new home on the same site. This allowed a unique experience to unite the landscape with the architecture of the home, resulting in coordinated views between the interiors and exteriors (right).

PHOTO BY HOERR
SCHAUDT LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS



Two entrances at either end of the property allow one to be used as a “summer” entrance, which showcases the garden as one drives along a gravel two-track. This view looking toward the front entrance illustrates how completely screened the property is from the road, giving it an almost rural feel (left).

JUDGES’ FEEDBACK:

Love this project—the simple entry wood piers, beautiful stone walls, and all the other materials. It could easily have become too much, but it all works because of its simplicity. There’s great overall composition and the elegance of the curves shows. This nice use of curving walls provides an “interlocking” feel and the location of the patio provides a very nice view. It’s a great example of a reasonable scale for a residential site. A landscape site and garden that matches its title—a photographer’s garden. It’s well established and maintained as well.



gold award



The front entrance introduces a hardscape and plant palette of masonry stone walls, gravel, masses of naturalistic plantings, and Eden stone paving (above).

A path between front drive and lawn rambles past spreading Juniper, Russian Sage, and Lady’s Mantle (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT SHIGLEY

STEAL THIS:

The front of this new house is almost entirely glass, which meant the view of the garden from inside the house would function as an art wall within the home. The landscape design needed to meet this artistic role.



An elevated terrace and walls create the illusion of more depth as one looks from the terrace into the garden. The design creatively met municipal requirements for stormwater storage capacity by creating a signature sunken lawn shape defined by curving masonry walls (above).

The back entrance to the property remains open year-round. Functional and neat, the design maximizes ease of access (below).

Walls extend into the landscape, moving the eye through the site and making it feel larger. The irregular herringbone provides an engaging, interesting structure (below middle).

Rather than closing off the courtyard with walls at the edge of the house, the landscape extends the experience of the courtyard by locating the fourth “wall” along the eastern edge of the property. This creates a seamless transition between the courtyard and drive court.

A custom-designed, contemporary fire feature functions as the hub of the dining terrace and complements the architecture and styling of the house (right).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
SCOTT SHIGLEY



**MODERN TUDOR
COURTYARD GARDEN**

Residential Category

\$25,000 – \$100,000

Project Location: Santa Barbara, CA

**Isa Bird
Landscape
Design,
Isa Hendry
Eaton**

isabird.com

Firm Location: Santa Barbara, CA

Zone: 10a



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

Great design! Not only is this a remarkable transformation, it's a really well executed artistic design. It's beautifully simple and elegant and looks as if it has been there for many years. It fits the architecture and site well. The way the home has been framed, both for color and plant palettes, is lovely. There is good framing from the road and walk, and the separation from the drive is accomplished. The *Lomandra* perfectly connects the home to the landscape and adds necessary movement. The multi-functional front courtyard is well thought out, secluded yet not hidden. The "Before" and "After" images are dramatic, as if they're from another era of plantings. There are good textures and colors; it works and fits the situation in function and form. Even the containers are perfectly understated yet textural art installations. There's a nice use of quality and sustainable materials. Well done!



The clients desired a beautiful, inviting, and functional garden for relaxing, talking with neighbors, reading the mail, drinking coffee, and hanging out while their boys honed their soccer skills on a small play area.

BEFORE: The original street-facing garden consisted of a dead lawn, structurally unstable stucco wall that blocked the home's front, a dangerously uneven flagstone path, and a step-down patio that was never used. Plantings were overgrown, high-water Camellias, Boxwood, and a mishmash of struggling plants.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEELA CYD



The plant palette includes shade-friendly plants against the north-facing home, ornamental grasses for softness and movement, Aloes for winter interest, a *Feijoa* hedge, and Agaves for structural interest.

STEAL THIS:

The home is located in a friendly neighborhood where neighbors chat, walk their dogs, and kids walk to school. The design intent included creating a sense of enclosure for the house and a buffer from the street while keeping the overall design open, welcoming, and allowing useable space in the front.



A newly installed Olive tree anchors a corner of the garden.



The all-new planting design included a low streetside buffer to complement the other high-contrast, textural plantings.



The four focal point container plantings include this one, whose cascading plant evokes a fountain feel (far left).

The totally new hardscape included a larger stone porch and stairs, an L-shaped custom sandstone seat wall with integrated LED lighting, flagstone walkway, and sandstone curbing along the street to help direct runoff, as well as new house numbers and sconces (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEEA CYD



Bluestone walls and steps create a field of gray. Copper scuppers blend with the stonework.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
ALLEN RUSS



Arcs of wall, terrace, gravel, and edging complement the architectural additions. A water feature reflects water on the addition's ceiling and obscures the paving of an outer terrace (above).

PHOTOGRAPH BY
ALLEN RUSS

COLOR FIELD LANDSCAPE

Residential Category \$25,000 - \$100,000

Project Location: Bethesda, MD

Jennifer Horn Landscape Architecture

jh-la.com

Firm Location: Arlington, VA

Zone: 7a

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This design is stunning! The transformation of what is a very common landscape in most neighborhoods to an amazing contemporary design is awe-inspiring. Love the color fields concept with its concentric garden of arcs and asymmetry. The simple forms, strong materials, and elegant planting design are all well done! It's an interesting idea to tie in block plantings to interior artwork and yet balance that restraint with the organic driftwood sculpture. Adding these spot sculptural elements enhances the personality of the design. This is a very well implemented concept to design.



STEAL THIS:

The design was built off two ideas: one, create concentric circles of paving, planting, and water to continue out from the rounded lines of the home's architectural additions. Two, establish large plant masses that varied in texture or color to reference the client's art collection, which largely consisted large format, color field paintings.



Terraced steps create a cohesive visual connect between the driveway and a garden planted with *Amsonia*, *Muhly Grass*, and *Beautyberry* (left).

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLEN RUSS

BEFORE: The steps leading to the front door were dark and narrow, providing little connection to the upper garden (above).

PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNIFER HORN



The architectural and landscape design re-set opportunities for the best views within and from the garden. Corten chairs complement the copper detailing on the house and *Arborvitae* create a soothing background for all other plants (top).

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLEN RUSS

BEFORE: The arrangement of the rear doors and deck created an emphasis on views to the larger homes that were more visually apparent (above).

PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNIFER HORN

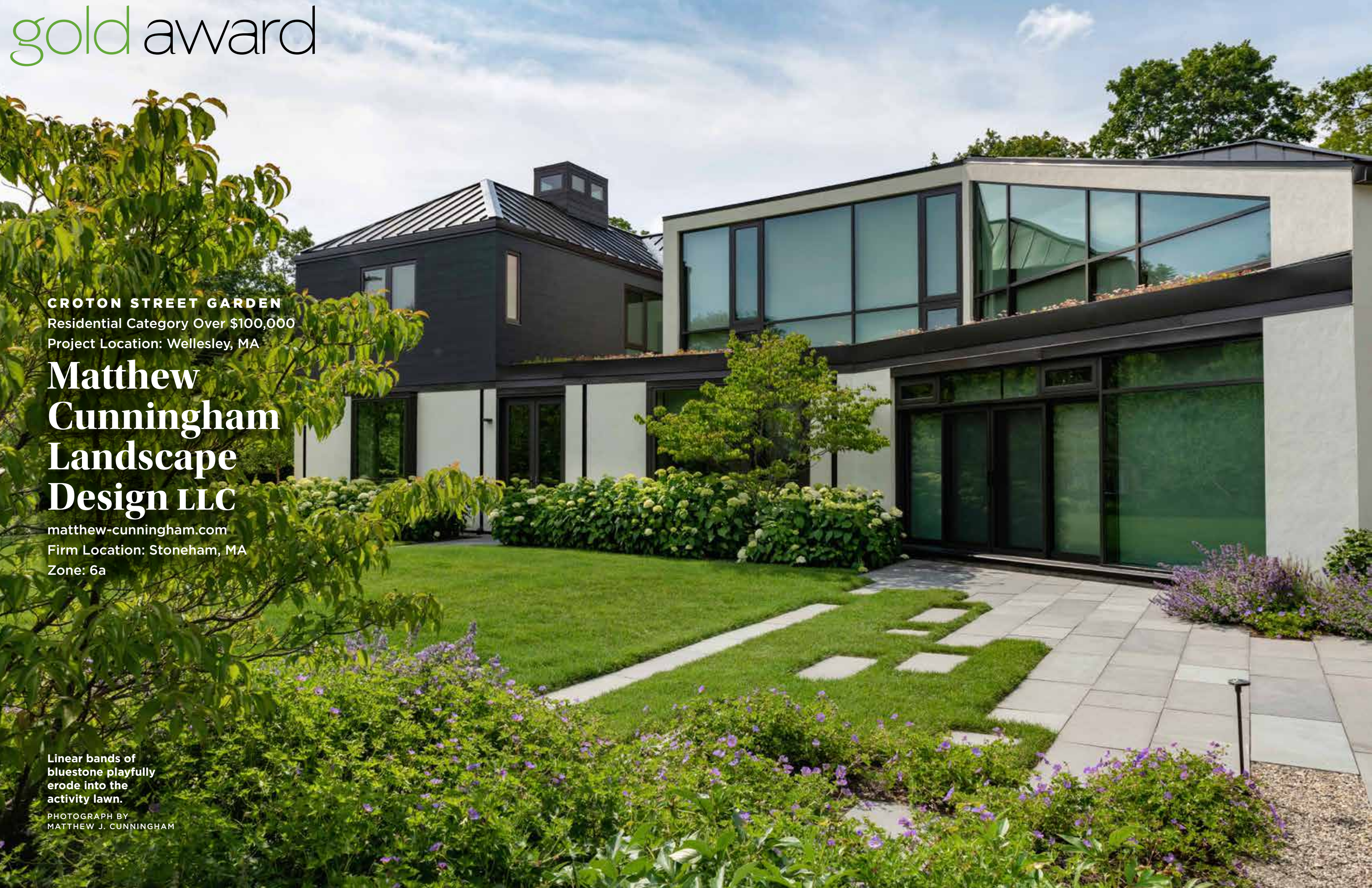
CROTON STREET GARDEN
Residential Category Over \$100,000
Project Location: Wellesley, MA

Matthew Cunningham Landscape Design LLC

matthew-cunningham.com
Firm Location: Stoneham, MA
Zone: 6a

Linear bands of
bluestone playfully
erode into the
activity lawn.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
MATTHEW J. CUNNINGHAM





JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The River Birch allée of single-trunk specimens is awesome! It's smartly planted with large masses of low-maintenance (mostly) natives. The repetition of plantings is good, and their fullness helps keep it low maintenance too. The stone mowing strip along the allée in the side yard is helpful for reducing long-term maintenance needs as well. The scale of the front is perfect, while the back patio works well. The mural on the back of the sports barn is quite fun. This is a well-designed and implemented infill site and new construction. There's great composition among the home, site spaces, and things—it's a living, functioning composition.

The new River Birch allée defines the elegant threshold between the street and the home and buffers the yard from traffic (above).

Lush plantings create scale for the modern new architecture. Masses of Hydrangea and Lilac, the client's favorites, soften the building's edges as well (right).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
MATTHEW J. CUNNINGHAM



The sports barn (featuring a whimsical mural) forms an internal courtyard at the heart of the property, where the terrace with eroding edges incorporates a gas fire table, a grill, and ample room for gatherings.



The restrained planting design complements the bold new architectural forms.



STEAL THIS:

Despite the existing yard's limited character, the property was perfect for this family—it was minutes from school and it was large enough for them to create their ultimate dream home. They desired a lifestyle that blurred the boundaries between indoor and outdoor living, and gardens that felt artful and alive.



Native and drought-resistant plantings surround the activity lawn. The family spends hours outdoors (above).

A crisp stucco number pier punctuates this vibrant vegetative tapestry (right).



The shade beneath the River Birch canopies created the perfect environment for a graphic, textural garden of robust colonies of *Viburnum*, *Fothergilla*, and Fragrant Sumac, underplanted by textured carpets of *Carex*, *Hakonechloa*, and *Tiarella* (above right).



BEFORE:
The spacious, flat, empty lot proved to be the perfect blank canvas (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATTHEW J. CUNNINGHAM



STONE HOUSE

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Scarsdale, NY

Rosalia Sanni Design LLC

rosaliasanni.com

Firm Location: Old Greenwich, CT

Zone: 7b



A view of the pool, lounging pads, and rear elevated path and stone walls against the rear of house inspire thoughts of relaxation (above).

The calm blue, green, and white color scheme of the pool area sets the tone for a sun-soaked leisure zone. Restrained plantings consist of mixed evergreen screening trees, Hydrangeas, and Boxwoods, leaving room for air, light, and people to fill the space (right).

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

Overall, this classic site home and landscape is complete and elegant. The wonderful creation of classic and formal outdoor rooms was “bound” with hedges. The workmanship and materials are nice, and the planting palette is good. The pavilion is beautiful, as are the small patios beneath the lounges by the pool. Its simplicity should be applauded—this is beautiful.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEIL LANDINO JR.



A new front entry to the house welcomes guests and passersby in this open, friendly neighborhood. The stone path is flanked by sculpted Boxwoods and fastigate Hornbeams for structure and is softened by seasonal blooms of *Astilbe*, Catmint, and Lady's Mantle.



This bench provides a quiet spot in the play lawn to sit and relax by Rhododendron and Bridal Wreath Spirea in the shade of Hornbeams.

STEAL THIS:

Woven into the design are various outdoor scenarios to view from inside the home that draw people outside. Each outdoor space creates a unique destination scaled for its intended use that is coordinated with the home's layout.

Front yard plantings were designed around a mature Ash tree and wrapped in carpets of lawn. The continuity of the planting palette of Boxwoods, Hornbeams, and perennials as repeating elements anchors the home to its setting (right).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEIL LANDINO JR.





HILLSIDE HAVEN

Residential Category \$25,000 – \$100,000

Project Location: Berkeley, CA

Sarah Herman Landscape Design

sarahscapedesign.com

Firm Location: Berkeley, CA

Zone: 10a

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

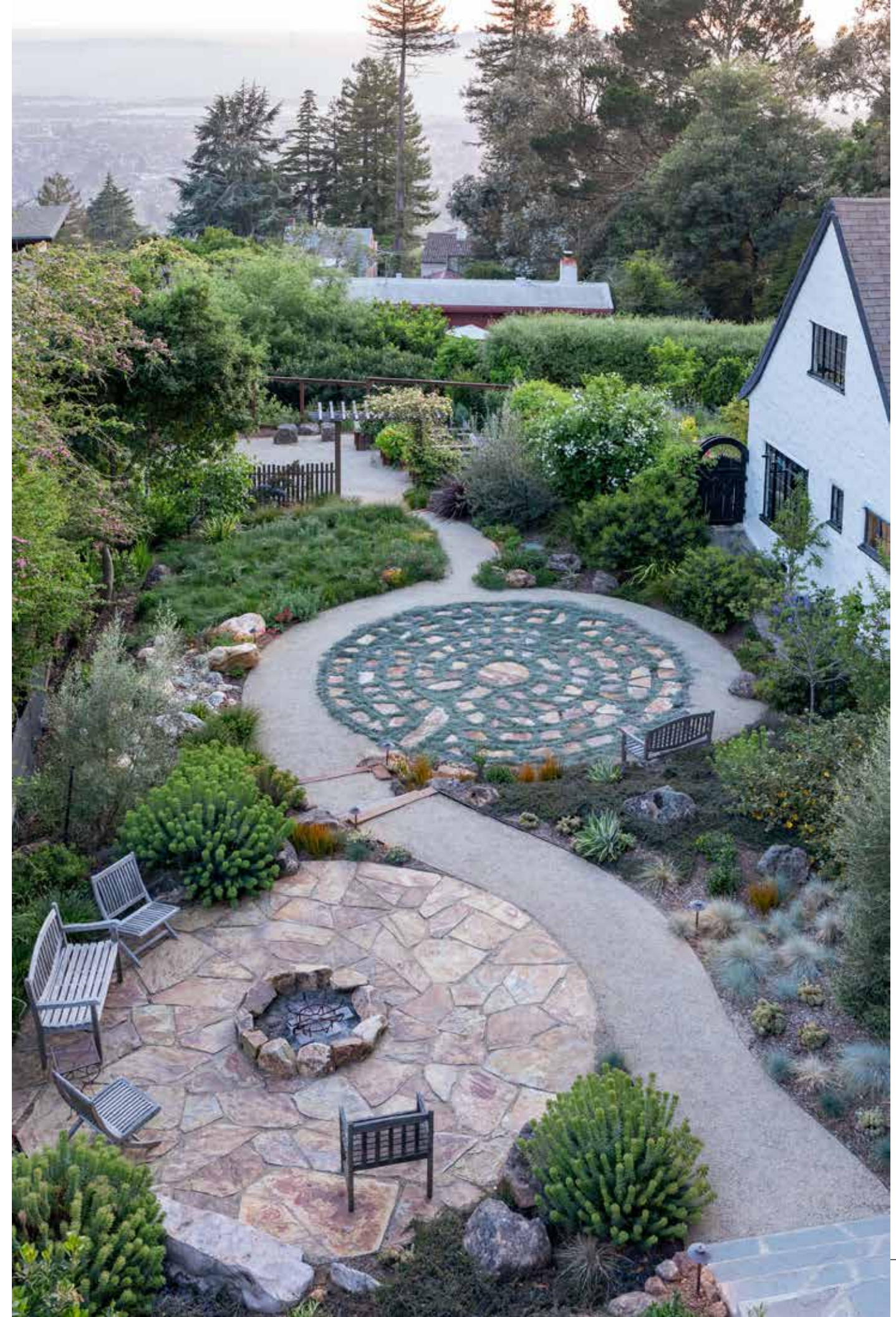
The “Before” and “After” photos evoke exclamations of “Wow!” This is a challenging site, but it was such a beautiful transformation full of strong spaces and sustainable elements. It’s simply elegant. One cannot fault this wonderful concept—it’s well executed, the scale is spot on, there’s an excellent understanding of perspective, the exciting plant selections have a healthy foliage/flower balance, and it displays a strong color palette. Elements of special note include: the juxtaposition of the wispy meadow with the finely clipped labyrinth, the way the wide path wraps around the labyrinth to the bench, the graceful curves, the subtle sense of meandering by offsetting the two circles, the promise of “more” beyond the fence, and the diagonal axis.

BEFORE: The 5,000-square-foot site facing southwest toward the San Francisco Bay. The Berkeley, CA, hillside back yard in full sun has a 15-degree downslope away from the house (above).

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH HERMAN

The site’s long and narrow shape required a creative approach to integrating the various garden components. Here are two of the interwoven circles that lead to the glorious Bay view (right).

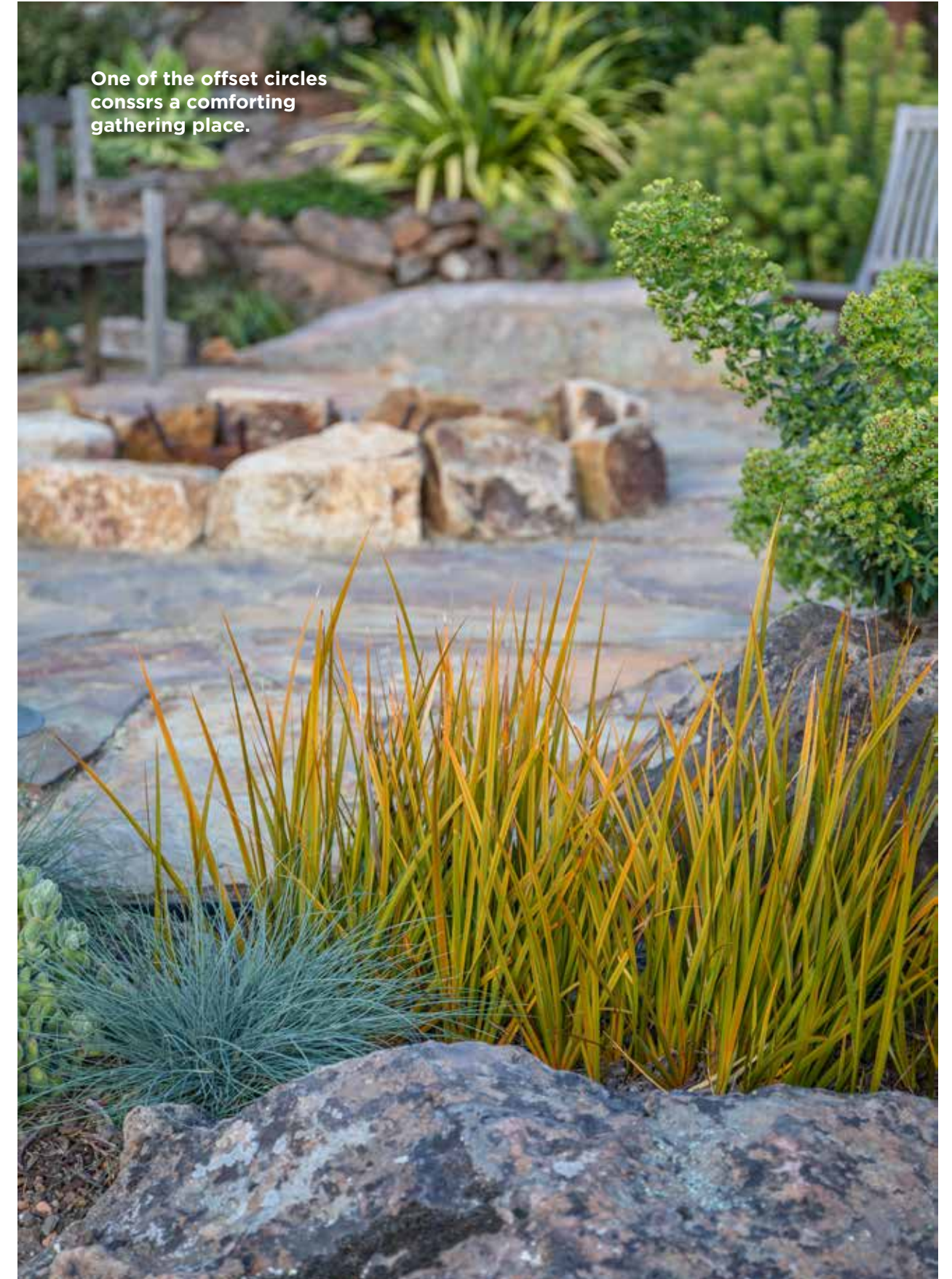
PHOTOGRAPH BY
JUDE PARKINSON-MORGAN



A flagstone patio and fire circle host group gatherings.



One of the offset circles consrs a comforting gathering place.



Douglas Iris and *Blechnum spicant* happily reside in the dry riverbed. Although drip irrigation is used throughout, ornamental plantings are drought-resistant, low-maintenance, and include many California natives (far left).

The garden's path terminates in a rectilinear edible garden, framed by a welcoming redwood arbor and rustic grape stake fencing (left).

STEAL THIS: Because the home's primary living area lies thirty feet above the backyard, compelling garden views were an essential design consideration. A beautiful garden pastiche to spark inspiration and then draw the clients to venture down into the landscape with the added promise of enjoyable activities was needed.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUDE PARKINSON-MORGAN

CANYON VIEW TERRACE

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Bel Air Crest in Los Angeles, CA

Urban Oasis Landscape Design

urbanoasis-la.com

Firm Location: Los Angeles, CA

Zone: 10b

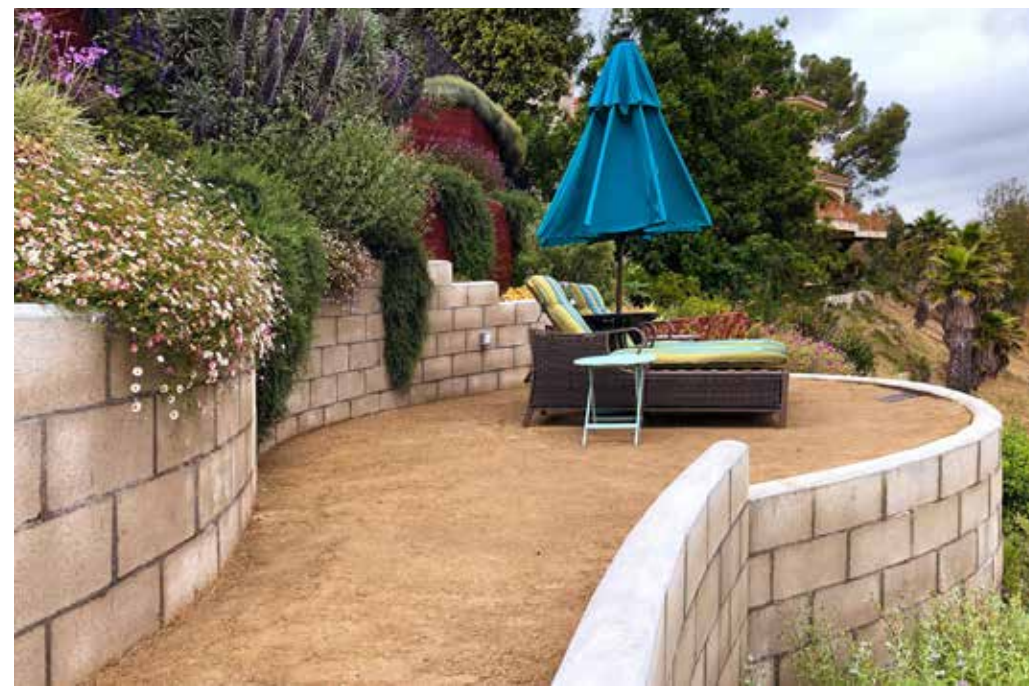


Eighteen-inch-tall raised planters with deep ledges break up the expanse of the bluestone patio. The ledges can be used as overflow seating for large parties, and the planters also create intimate areas while still allowing plenty of room to circulate (left).

PHOTOGRAPH BY DEBORAH GLIKSMAN

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

What a dramatic and tight site to design and implement, but there's a good blend of hardscapes and planted areas that are both functional and attractive. Several details are outstanding: the bench and fire pit detailing are great; the built-in patio planters are well done and a good idea, the planting palette is beautiful, with nice color and repetition. The spaces feel very livable, with a nice color palette on the slope down to the lower patio. The plantings look to be such that they'll prevent erosion during occasional heavy rains.



There are two patios on different levels: a formal upper, paved terrace off the house and a lower, naturalistic lower patio below in the canyon (above).

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCUS TEPLY

The teardrop-shaped, less formal lower patio is surrounded by California native plants (left).

PHOTOGRAPH BY DEBORAH GLIKSMAN

gold award

Retaining the canyon allowed the patio to be built into the hillside. The hillside, planted with California native plants, is a magnet for wildlife (right).



STEAL THIS:

The custom bench and fire pit were designed to sit at the edge of the deck to create the sense that one was immersed in nature with the focus outward toward the canyon.

A Mediterranean garden path is a gentle transition to the bluestone terrace. A rich palette of purples and yellows reign in the garden (left).



The expansive upper bluestone terrace from the jacuzzi has a gorgeous view over the canyon (top).

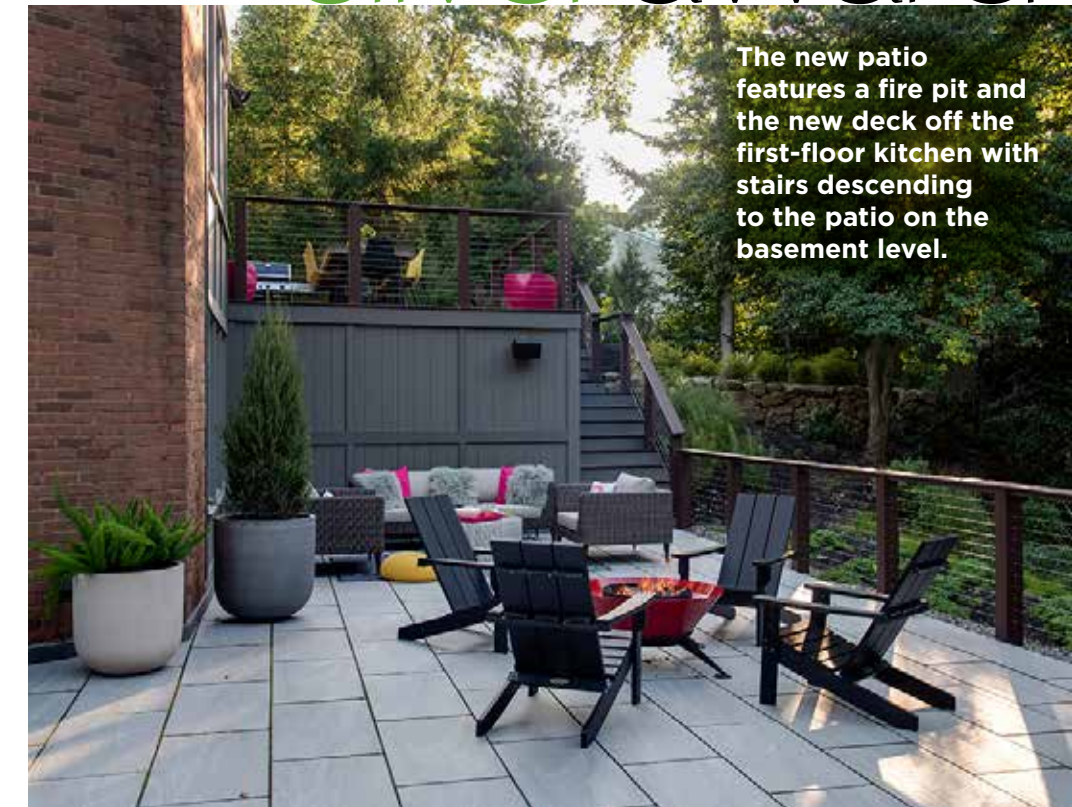
The focus of the bespoke seating area is the canyon view as visitors are warmed by the fire pit (above).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARCUS TEPLY

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Residential Silver Awards





The new patio features a fire pit and the new deck off the first-floor kitchen with stairs descending to the patio on the basement level.

MID-CENTURY MODERN

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Hingham, MA

Amy Martin Landscape Design, Tish Campbell

amymartinlandscape.com

Firm Location: Cohasset, MA

Zone: 6b



This “After” shot shows the redesigned patio design solution with its porcelain pavers and modern cable railings (top).

The entire family enjoys the fire pit (left).

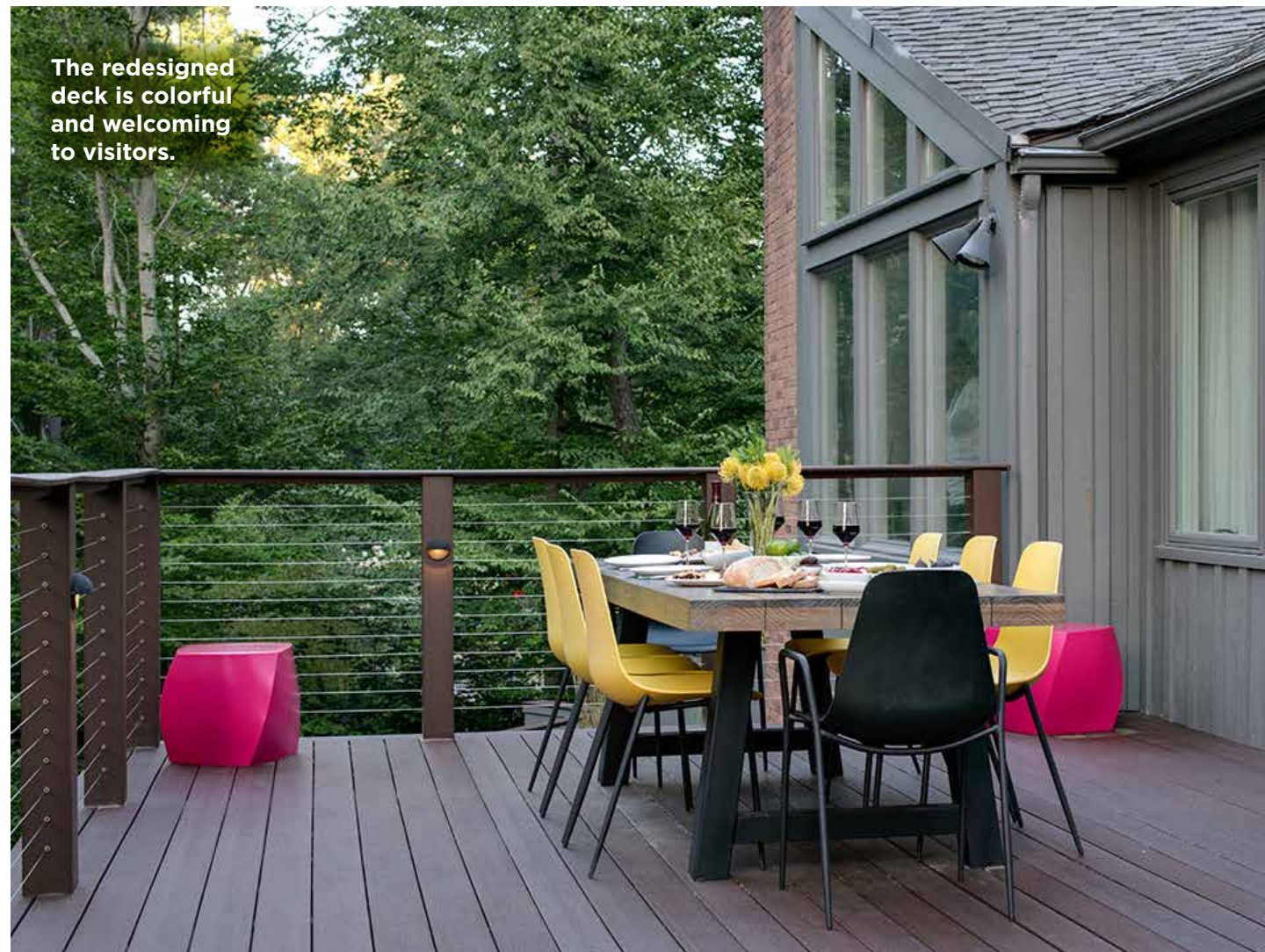
Retaining walls, covered by wood/composite panels to match the opposite side of the patio, were built under the new deck and along the edge of the stairs (right).



JUDGES’ PERSPECTIVE:

The multilevel back yard works well, and the handrail is attractive yet functional. There’s a nice selection of plant material and the rear slope is nicely planted in a natural pattern. Using *Spirea* ‘Ogon’ to pick up the color of the front door is a nice touch. The hardscaping is great; the patio material and pattern are especially lovely. And the way the upper deck is enclosed with material that matches the house perfectly is noteworthy.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIELLE ROBERTSON



The redesigned deck is colorful and welcoming to visitors.

STEAL THIS:

Porcelain pavers in light gray and a deck with sleek cable railings brought the patio back to life, providing safety and a clean look to complement the home's mid-century modern architecture.

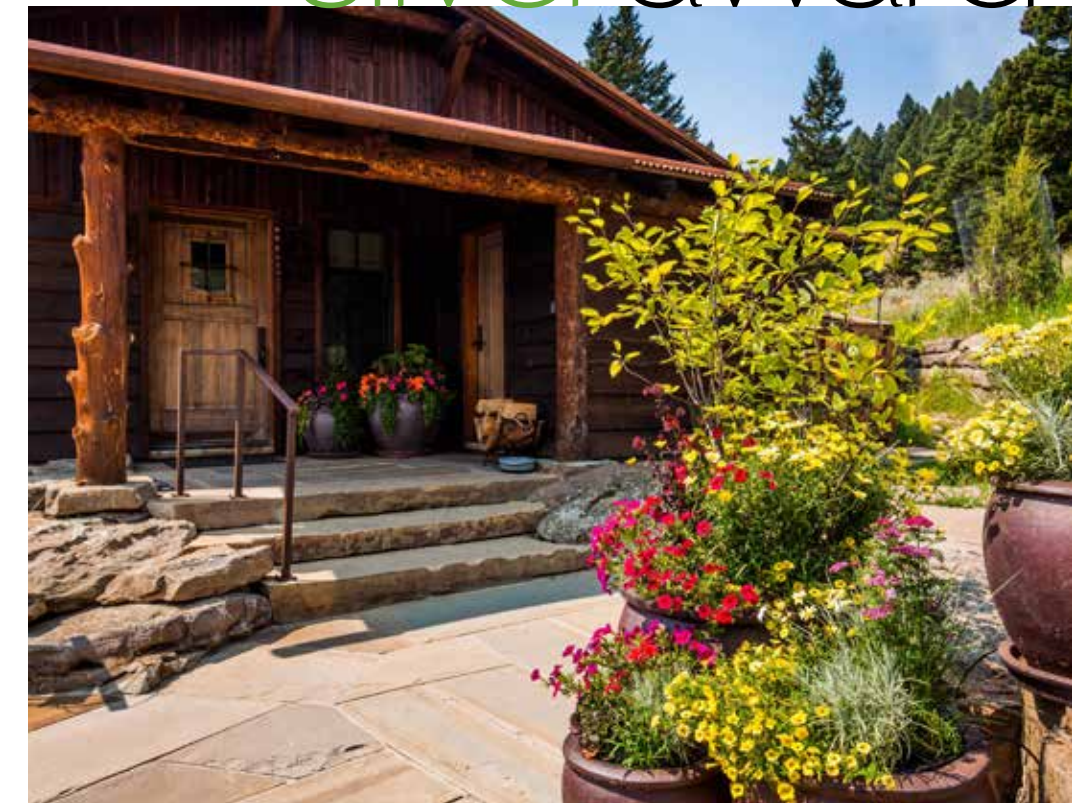
Masses of native *Carex*, Hay-scented Fern, and *Clethra alnifolia* hold the slope and filter stormwater before it enters the wetland below. This slope is also planted with Switchgrass (right).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIELLE ROBERTSON
EXCEPT RIGHT BY AMY MARTIN



The redesigned space has multiple areas for children's play and adult gatherings.



GROUNDLED PROMINENCE

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Bozeman, MT

Blanchford Landscape Group, Mason Shaffer

blanchfordlandscape.com

Firm Location: Bozeman, MT

Zone: 4a

BEFORE: The entry had safety issues, not to mention its scale was not appropriate. Also, one can barely find the front door (right).

This dramatic “After” shot shows how the solution for the completed front entry works (above).

Since ornamental beds and lawn areas were minimized, containers lend vivid color. This view of the front door is from the front gathering patio (top right).



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This design shows good macro and micro details for the site, client, and context. The steps and patio very nicely complement the building and its surroundings. In addition, the shade structure off the back of the house not only shades the window, it softens the architecture. The fire pit and its rock are very cool. The terraces nestle nicely into the landscape, and the planters are quite nice. These great “Before” and “After” images reflect the construction and plantings that were implemented.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAUL CREATIVE
(EXCEPT BEFORE PHOTO)





This “After” shot demonstrates the solution of a shade pergola in the home’s back. Also note the “boulder” fire feature.



STEAL THIS:

Outdoor living spaces should appropriately respond to lifestyle needs of the client, a home’s architecture, and the immediate environment of the site.

BEFORE: This shows how the underwhelming lawn area was running right up to the house in back (right).



The pergola maintains the home’s spectacular view from the great room to the southwest while still providing needed shade (above).

The clients requested spaces that could accommodate up to 20 people (and 2 dogs). The clients’ existing tables work perfectly in the new space (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAUL CREATIVE



ALHAMBRA VALLEY

Residential Category Over \$100,000

Project Location: Martinez, CA

Envision Landscape Studio, Colin Miller

envisionlandscapestudio.com

Firm Location: Walnut Creek, CA

Zone: 9b



Thermory decking, ending at the fire feature wall, was used as the threshold for entering and exiting the house as well as the ground plane material for the outdoor dining area (top left).

Long, offset, linear concrete pads were used to create patio spaces adjacent to the pool connecting the destination seating area (left).

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

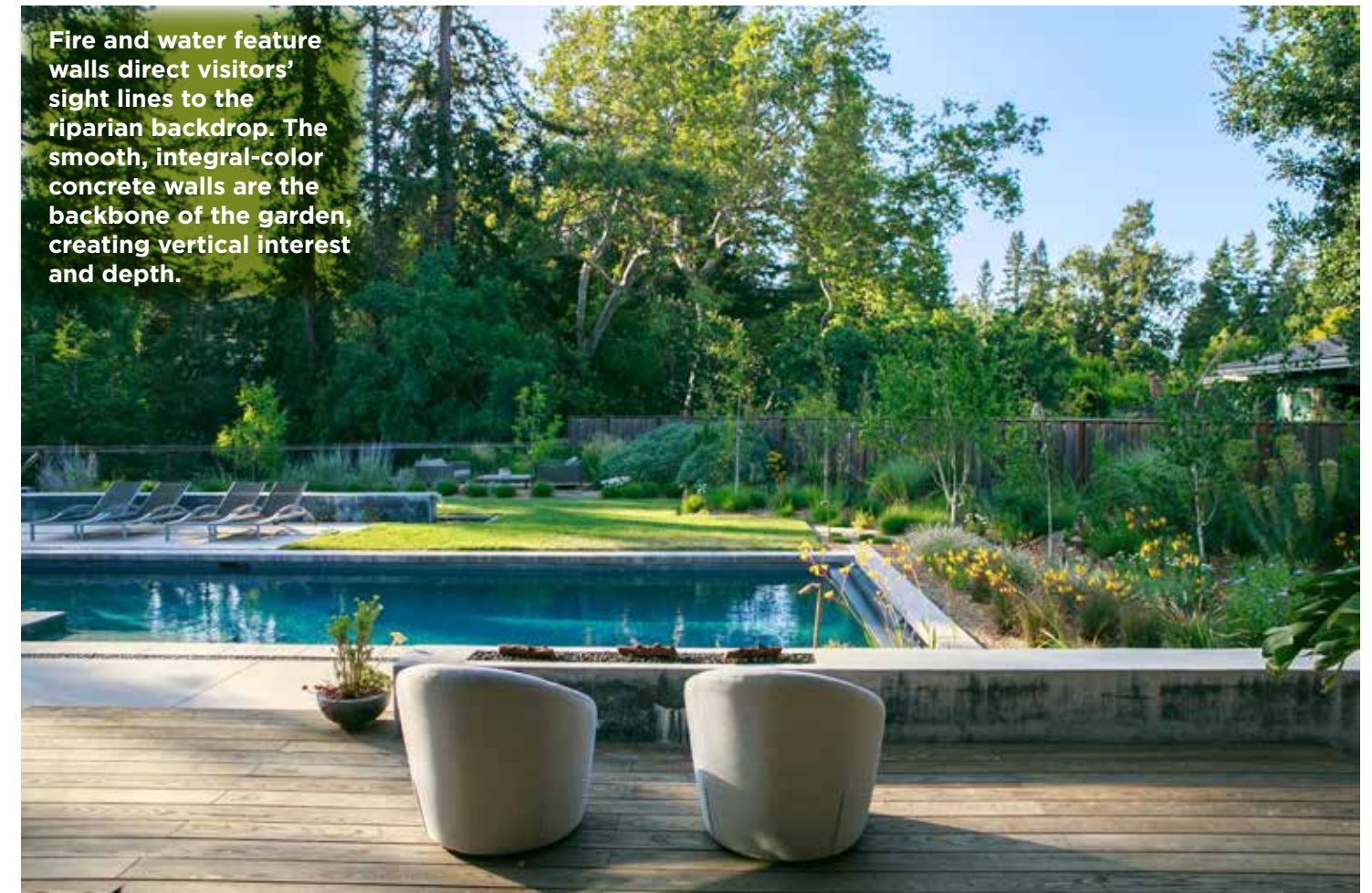
This project is beautifully executed and uses nice materials. It already looks established and will look even better as the plantings mature. This is a great, well-designed, functioning garden composition. The structure and lines serve well for the needs of the client. Spatially, the garden is broken up very nicely into smaller pockets, which, in turn, make the garden appear larger than it is. The repetition of seat walls, with the back wall including a fountain, is enjoyable.

The meandering pathway cuts across the yard to the destination patio, which is in close proximity to the adjacent seasonal creek.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JOE DODD



The water feature, a client request, mimics and echoes the seasonal creek sounds amid the creek setting throughout the year.



Fire and water feature walls direct visitors' sight lines to the riparian backdrop. The smooth, integral-color concrete walls are the backbone of the garden, creating vertical interest and depth.



The plant palette references the creek with species and forms typically found around local water sources. Positioning water at multiple points throughout the project creates a constant repetition of materials from the natural world being used in the modern setting.



In addition to the flagstone walkway, crushed rock and permeable hardscape surfaces were used to reduce the amount of surface water runoff as well as the number of impermeable surfaces. Drought-tolerant and California native plants were used to reduce water consumption.



STEAL THIS:
Pebbles break up the hardscapes and tie back to the seasonal creek through repetition of material.

The Thermory decking warms and softens the poolside lounge area.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JOE DODD

MASTERFUL MCDONALD

Residential Category \$25,000 - \$100,000

Project Location: Racine, WI

Ginkgo Leaf Studio, LLC, James M. Drzewiecki, APLD

ginkgoleafstudio.net

Firm Location: Cedarburg, WI

Zone: 5b



Shifting wedge-shaped panels (separated by beach pebble runnels) mimic the home's roofline. They are filled with Autumn Moor Grass, mixed perennials, and shrubs (left).

PHOTOGRAPH BY
RENN KUHNEN PHOTOGRAPHY

BEFORE: This photo clearly shows how the front walk was an unsafe mixture of materials that dipped and wandered (below).

PHOTOGRAPH BY
GINKGO LEAF STUDIO



This "After" photo shows the new entrance of this historically significant home designed by the architect John Randal McDonald.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
RENN KUHNEN PHOTOGRAPHY



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is a dramatic transformation of a "Before" and "After" regarding the entry. The designer did a great job transforming the entry into a mid-century modern style with plants and hardscape. The repetition of the wedge motif throughout is especially interesting, and the layered pebble mulch is a nice detail. The front yard is the star of this design.



STEAL THIS:

A semi-circular cut-out along the edge of the patio pays homage to a shallow pond formed into the original patio's surface while the band of bluestone on the patio's edge mimics the slate floor immediately inside the home.

The roofline also influenced the wedge-shaped patio and plant beds. This continues the theme of wedge shapes from the front walk (right).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
RENN KUHNEN PHOTOGRAPHY

A garden "sprite" stands where the original concrete "pond" existed. The wall replaced a rubble "wall" and was constructed with matching Tennessee stone; it ties into an existing wing wall on the house (above).

Beach pebbles and slate chip mulch provide textural contrast (right).



BACK YARD WOODLAND HAVEN

Residential Category \$25,000 – \$100,000

Project Location: Bloomfield Hills, MI

Great Oaks Landscape Design, Geoffrey Fornari, FAPLD

greatoakslandscape.com

Firm Location: Novi, MI

Zone: 5b



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This functional and beautiful example shows what can be accomplished in an existing situation—well done! The way the long, horizontal lines of the glass doors/windows are emphasized by the wide, generous steps is good. There's also a nice transition from home to woodland both with choice of materials and design elements (dimensional to irregular). The generous plant groups help reduce the busyness of the flagstone. The irregular width of the wide stone steps flanked by boulders is a really good detail! The wood and stone hardscape materials not only work beautifully together, they also link the formality of the home to the informality of the landscape.



Guests can now step from the home's kitchen through the sliding glass doors onto the Ipe wood deck to use the built-in outdoor grill, have breakfast, or descend the steps to venture into the yard (left).

The new irregular bluestone patio is designed to entertain 4 to 10 people. It sits at the top of the slope, nestled between the wooded lawn the new Ipe transition deck (far left).

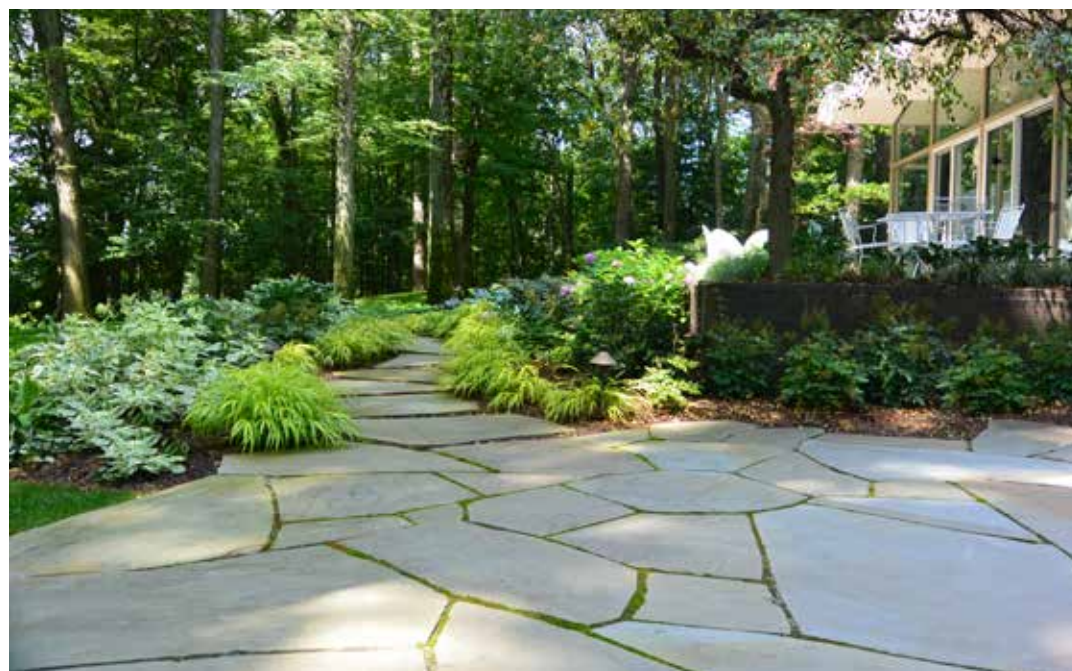
The site is an existing woodland with landscaping surrounding the home. Until this project, it had not been upgraded for 35 years (above).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
GREAT OAKS LANDSCAPE,
ASHLEY ROHRS



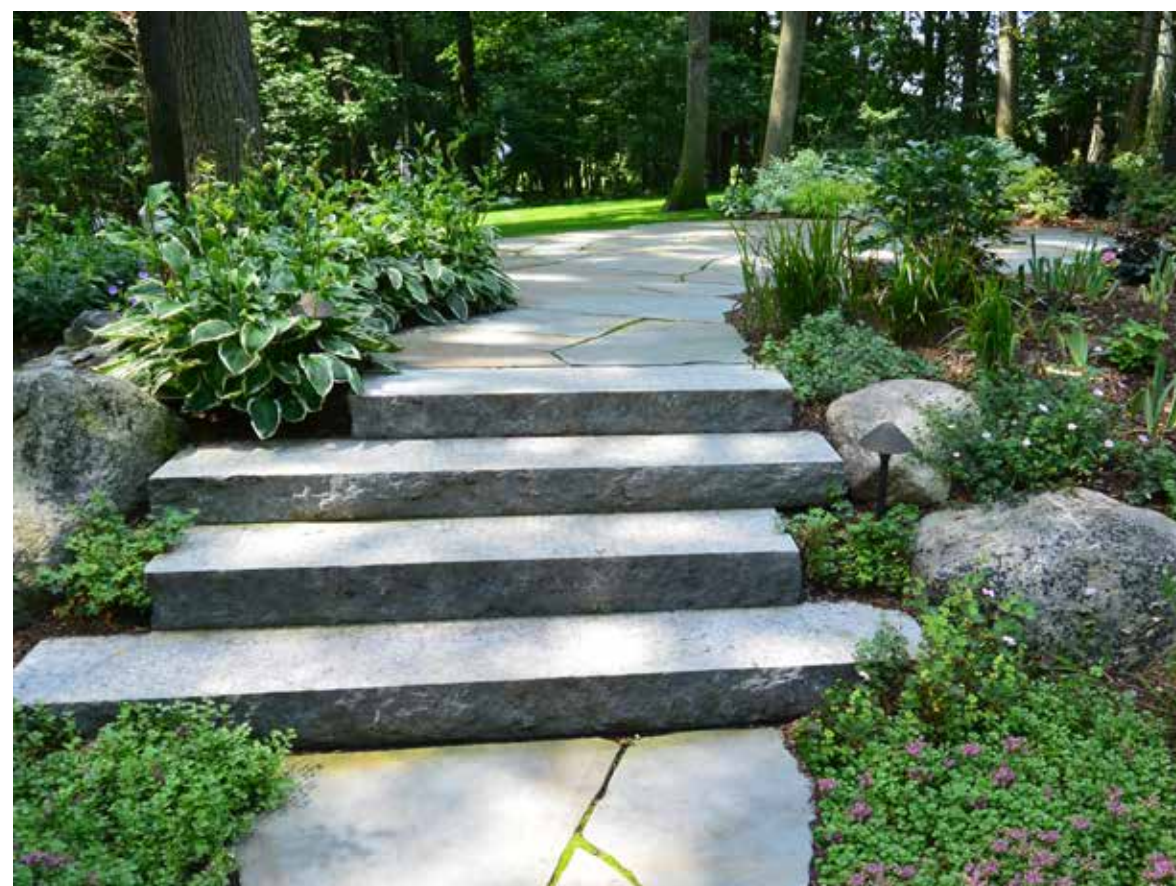
STEAL THIS:

As visitors are drawn up from the driveway into the main space, the chiseled limestone steps gradually become less structured and start to relax into their natural surroundings, assisting the overall transition.



The deck holds a small bistro table and chairs for entertaining 2 to 3 people. It has a set of wide steps that have an irregular design connecting the deck to the patio. Off to the side of the deck sits the new built-in grill (above).

The tiered limestone retaining walls hold back masses of lush green plantings (top).



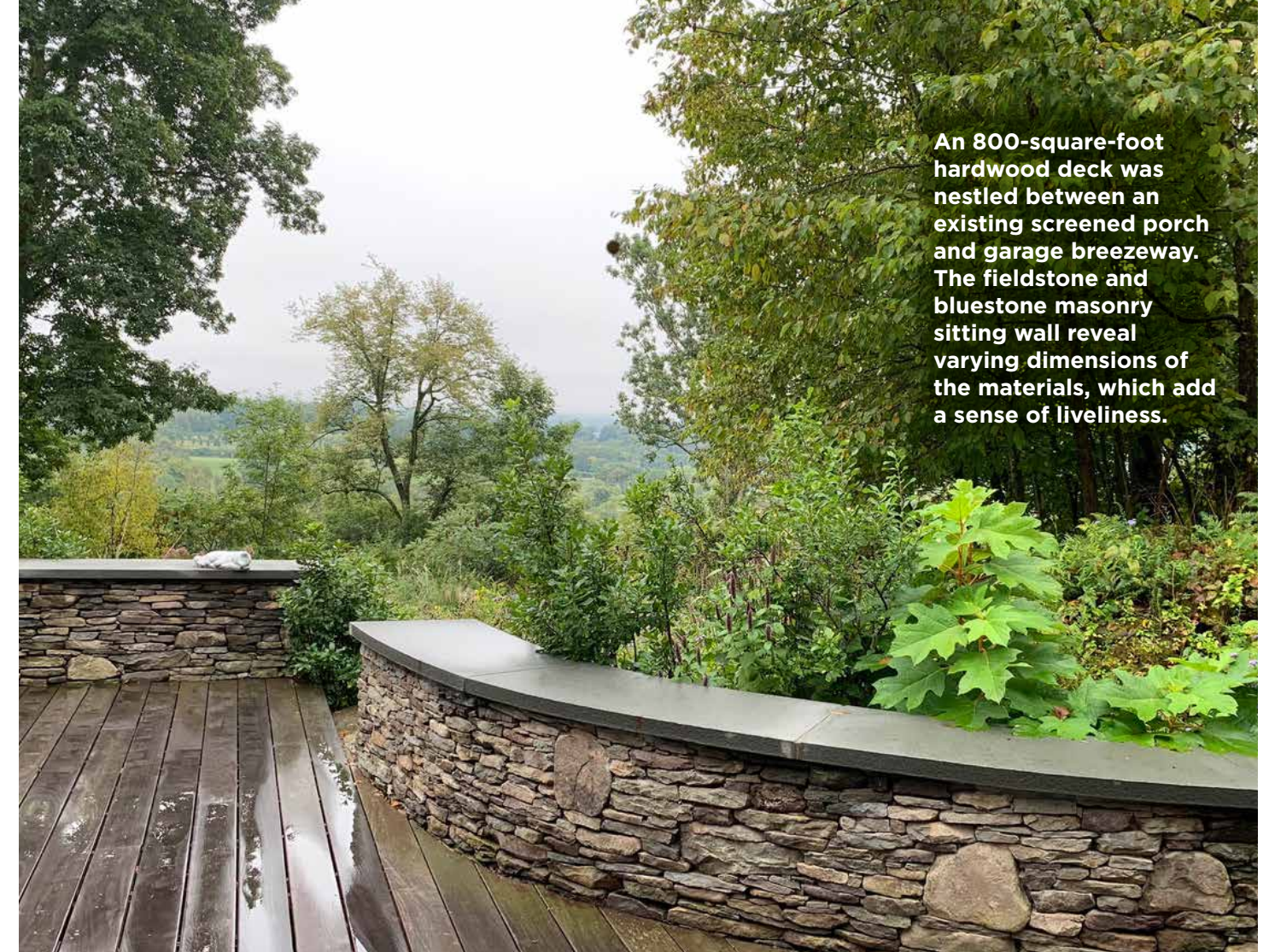
Plant material selection had to take challenging soil conditions and shade into consideration. The irregular bluestone stepping path is complemented by Japanese Forest Grass and other shade-loving perennials that cascade over the pathway (above).

The project's goal was to provide two usable outdoor living spaces and blend the home's mid-nineteenth-century modern architecture with the surrounding shaded woodland (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
GREAT OAKS LANDSCAPE,
ASHLEY ROHRS



The meditation “spiral” in summer capitalizes on one of the borrowed views.



An 800-square-foot hardwood deck was nestled between an existing screened porch and garage breezeway. The fieldstone and bluestone masonry sitting wall reveal varying dimensions of the materials, which add a sense of liveliness.

RAMBUNCTIOUS GARDEN

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Copake, NY

Hortulus Animae - Mindful Garden Design, Jean-Marc Flack

hortulusanimae.info

Firm Location: Round Top, NY

Zone: 5b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The rustic stonework looks very natural and fits well with the terrain, and the labyrinth was a very nice touch. The hardscape is beautiful, with the walls being especially well done. The premise of the naturalistic planting with natural boulders and stones is great; in fact, it's almost perfect. The plant selection is great too. Overall, this design is a good transformation of an open site. Design facilitates function and good form.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEAN-MARC FLACK



The casual and naturalistic native plantings focus mostly on Northeastern native plants, which were chosen to suit the site conditions: no irrigation, drought-tolerant, and low maintenance.

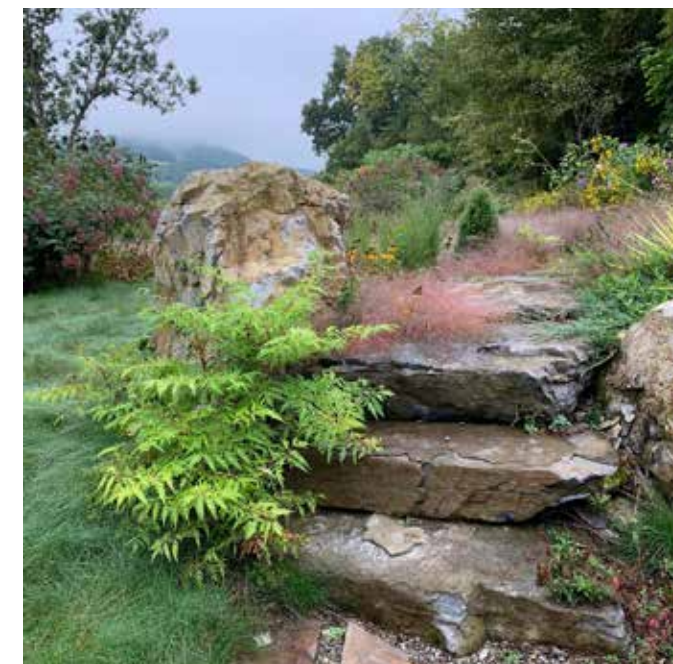


STEAL THIS:

Casual, rambunctious, and naturalistic native planting design is inspired by Jens Jensen's iconic design style and Darrel Morrison's native planting approach to curate durable swaths of deer-resistant native plants that explode with color throughout the seasons.

The garden entrance to the deck and "sitting" wall, which adds valuable seating space for visitors.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JEAN-MARC FLACK



The grading and excavation used over 90 tons of carefully positioned local boulders that were reclaimed and repositioned from the site.



The spiral garden as well as other hardscapes repeat circular elements to echo the round window motif of the residence.

RAIN GARDEN REIMAGINED

Residential Category \$25,000 - \$100,000

Project Location: Los Angeles, CA

InSite Landscape Design, Jonathan Harnish

insitelandscapedesign.com

Firm Location: Los Angeles, CA

Zone: 10b



This “After” shot shows how the combination of varying textures and forms of flagstone, boulders, and herbaceous plants beautifully unify the redesigned space (above).

BEFORE: Bland, boring, and not attractive. Much of the driveway concrete was later repurposed in the patio area (right).



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

Overall, this is a good approach to the environmental challenges. It's such a lovely way to collect/conservate water on a site! This designer really thought about different ways in terms of function and beauty with regard to water conservation. The “Before” and “After” shots are visually and physically dramatic—a great job!

A bioswale anchors the interconnected spaces in this waterwise native garden (above).



The angular boundaries of the functional (lawn, defined paths, and edible garden) balance the naturalistic and sustainable elements (native plants, bioswale, repurposed concrete patio) of the garden to create a complete outdoor living space (left).

Perennials in full bloom capture the dramatic late afternoon backlighting. The multitude of California native plants help conserve water and provide habitat (right).



STEAL THIS: Lighter-colored and reflective hardscape materials such as pea gravel, decomposed granite, repurposed concrete, and flagstone combat the urban heat island effect in this zone 10b garden.

Light-colored pea gravel effectively transitions to lush planting space in the redesigned garden (above).

The vibrant new rain garden is a harmonious confluence of ornamental grasses, pollinator plants, woody shrubs, and succulents (right).





TERRACE POOL GARDEN

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Santa Barbara, CA

Isa Bird Landscape Design, Isa Hendry Eaton

isabird.com

Firm Location: Santa Barbara, CA

Zone: 10a

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is great division of space while still tying together similar uses on the same levels (such as the BBQ/dining area with the fire pit). The use of plants to soften the hardscape but still keeping water conservation in mind is well done. The curved wall bench by the fire pit is a notable feature, as is the very nicely designed stone wall that works with the rounded stones. One can appreciate the difficult site that still features a nicely intimate and active back yard. The upper terrace area works as it looks down to the pool. Overall, it's a good project.

The clients wanted to be a home base for neighborhood kids as well as extended family without sacrificing style or adult spaces to work from home, entertain, and host workshop business events.



The custom gas fire pit is constructed from locally sourced sandstone.

Drought-tolerant plantings, including 10 olive trees, lush groundcovers, blooming vines, and a lemon tree row to soften new fencing, focus on blooms and soft colors.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENNIFER YAU PHOTOGRAPHY



The entire site was re-graded to create three level terraced areas for a dynamic garden with great connection, flow, and function (left).

Creeping groundcovers and trailing plants nestle in the artistic terrace stonework (below).



The extensive hardscape design included: terraced dry-stack boulder retaining walls, gravel dining/BBQ area, built-in bench, custom sandstone gas fire pit, swimming pool, galvanized horse trough veggie bed, outdoor shower, and artificial turf.



STEAL THIS:
The wood from the existing ramshackle chicken coop was repurposed to become a rustic enclosure for the pool pump.

The client built the cabana (herself!) with her contractor-father and chose the furniture/finish details.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENNIFER YAU PHOTOGRAPHY



This loose, open native grass is low maintenance and low water use and is effective for the sloped ground. The wild border echoes this feeling and contrasts beautifully with the home's heavy Tudor architecture.

BEVERLY HILLS MANOR

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Beverly Hills, CA

Laura Morton Design

Lauramortondesign.com

Firm Location: West Hollywood, CA

Zone: 10b

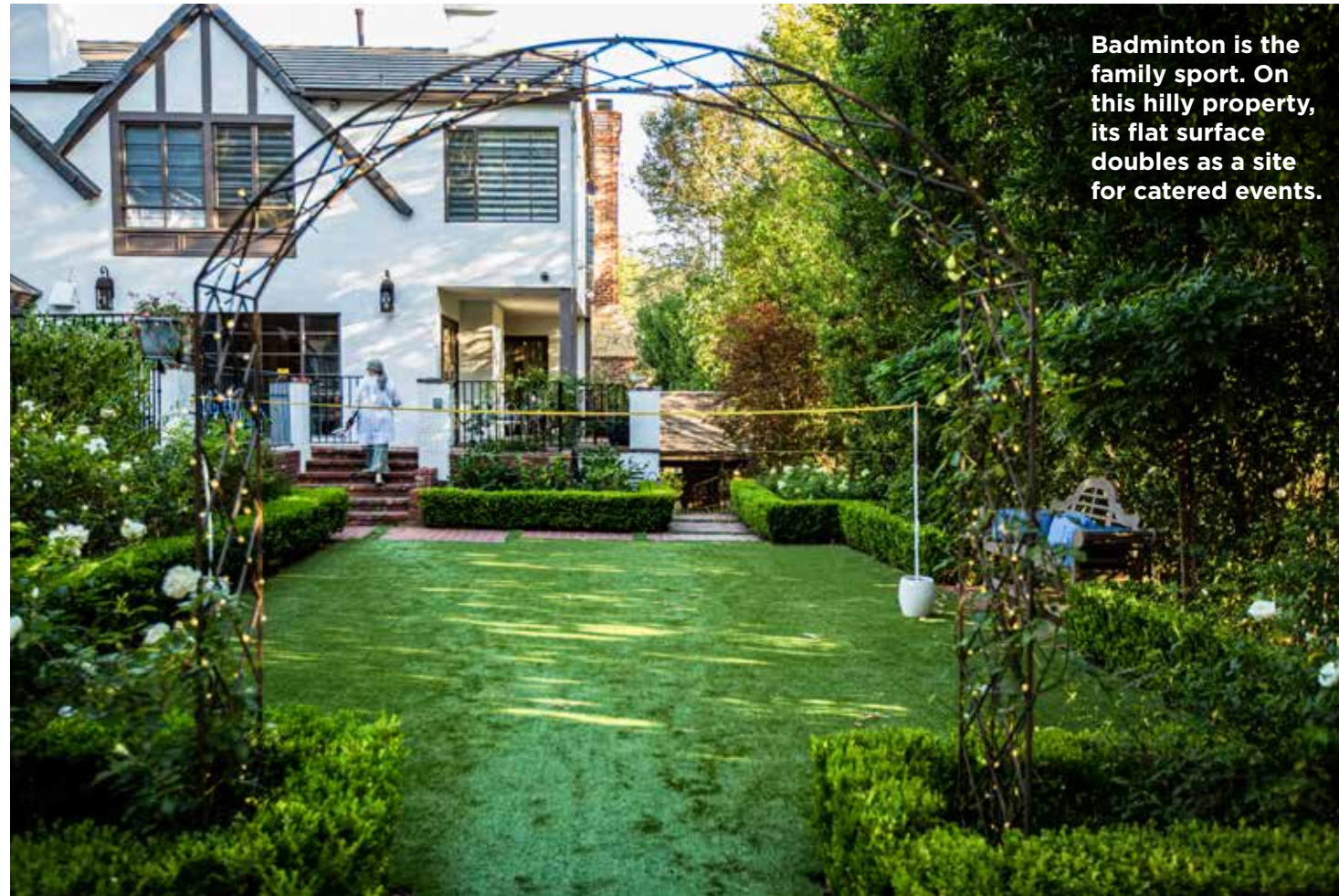
JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This garden definitely works well with the house. There's a very nice extension of the pool with a covered seating area that blends nicely with the home's architecture. The topiary in the front yard with the *Nepeta* is playful—this looks like a fun garden to explore! The beautiful railings and the front plantings are both nice touches. The way the back slope was reforested with native plants in a natural way is lovely. This is a nice example of an old garden renovation where the plantings still look established and managed.

As visitors approach the oxblood red main door, new broad steps invite the eyes for a stroll through a seasonally changing loose romantic border with flowering perennials, *Iris*, and topiary (top right).

Clipped topiary forms provide an evergreen structure in a sea of perennials (right).





Badminton is the family sport. On this hilly property, its flat surface doubles as a site for catered events.



This handwrought custom railing adds whimsical elegance to the entry experience.

The original size of the faux turf was reduced to allow existing Boxwood to grow wider and healthier. A new brick pad was cut into that hedge to accommodate the quintessential English bench. It is flanked by two Wisteria that have been trained as trees (left).



STEAL THIS:

The previously inaccessible hillside “back slope” was reinforced and made accessible using landscape timbers & felled tree branches for steps and trail edges. A natural trail now loops with a couple of seating areas that were eased into clearings.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JEFF DUNAS PHOTOGRAPHY



The restored brick set off the pool pavilion whose coordinating folly is crowned by a rooster weathervane. Pots on the pillars add color (top).

The custom built-in seating, upholstery, and white terrazzo tabletop maintain the fresh, clean spirit (above).

MORGAN RIDGE

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Bennington, NE

Marti Neely Design and Associates, Marti Neely, FAPLD

martineely.com

Firm Location: Omaha, NE

Zone: 5b



BEFORE: This shot shows the original pool, which had to be completely renovated and modernized (right).

This “After” shot offers a panoramic view of the gorgeous reconstructed pool and back yard (above).



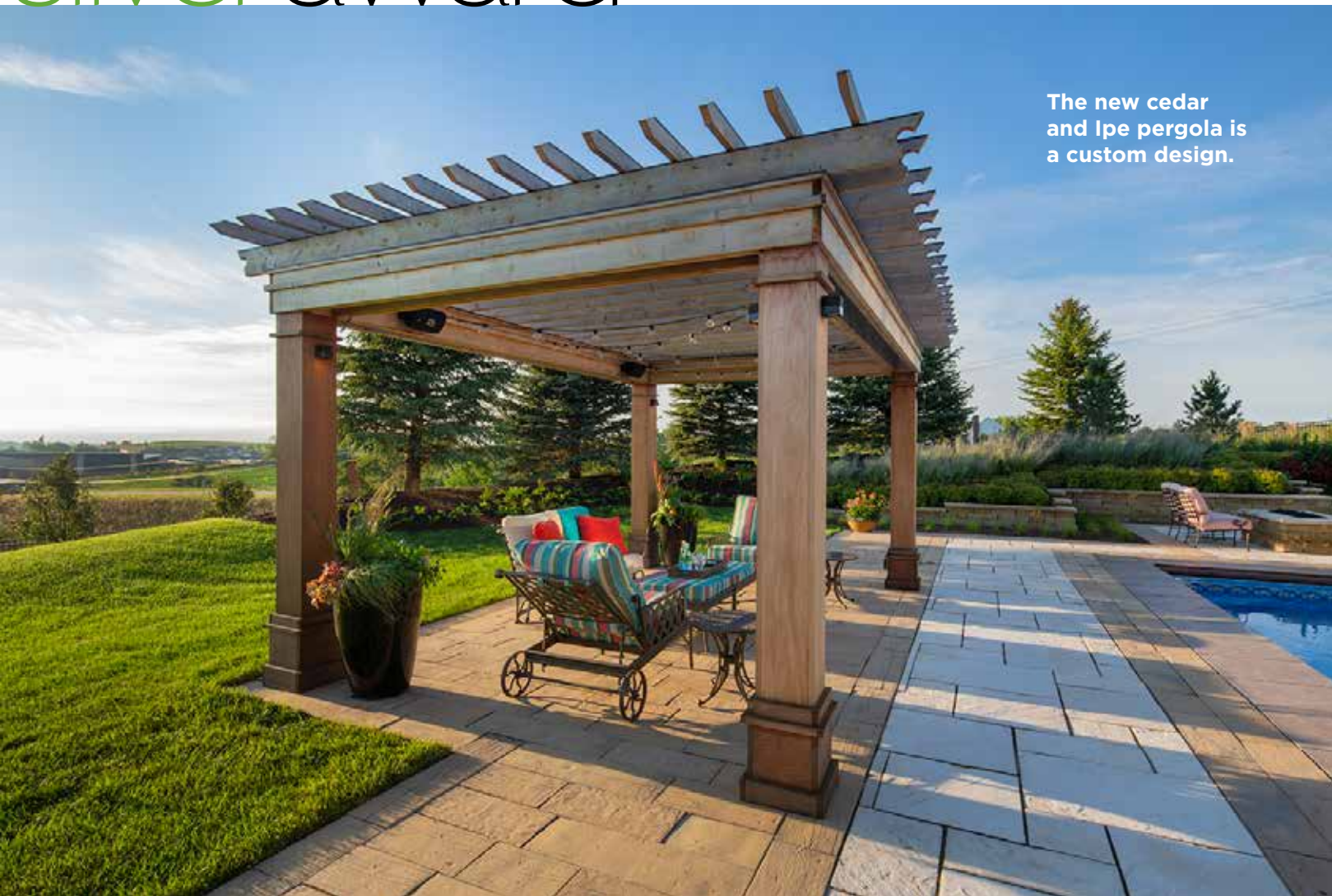
Large conifers were used to provide year-round privacy, wind and noise protection, and wildlife habitat (above).



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This project is a great improvement over the previous design (with some nice updating of the house too). The summer pavilion/pergola is a nice touch, as is its detailing. The line of the walkway down to the pool, which picks up the light gray paving around the pool, is very nice. The deck railings are great additions, and the simple plantings offer good selection and effective use of repetition. This project has great overall construction and fabrication. There are good hardscapes and construction of the pergola side planting frame to anchor the site and views.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KURT JOHNSON
EXCEPT AT LEFT BY MARTI NEELY, FAPLD



The new cedar and Ipe pergola is a custom design.

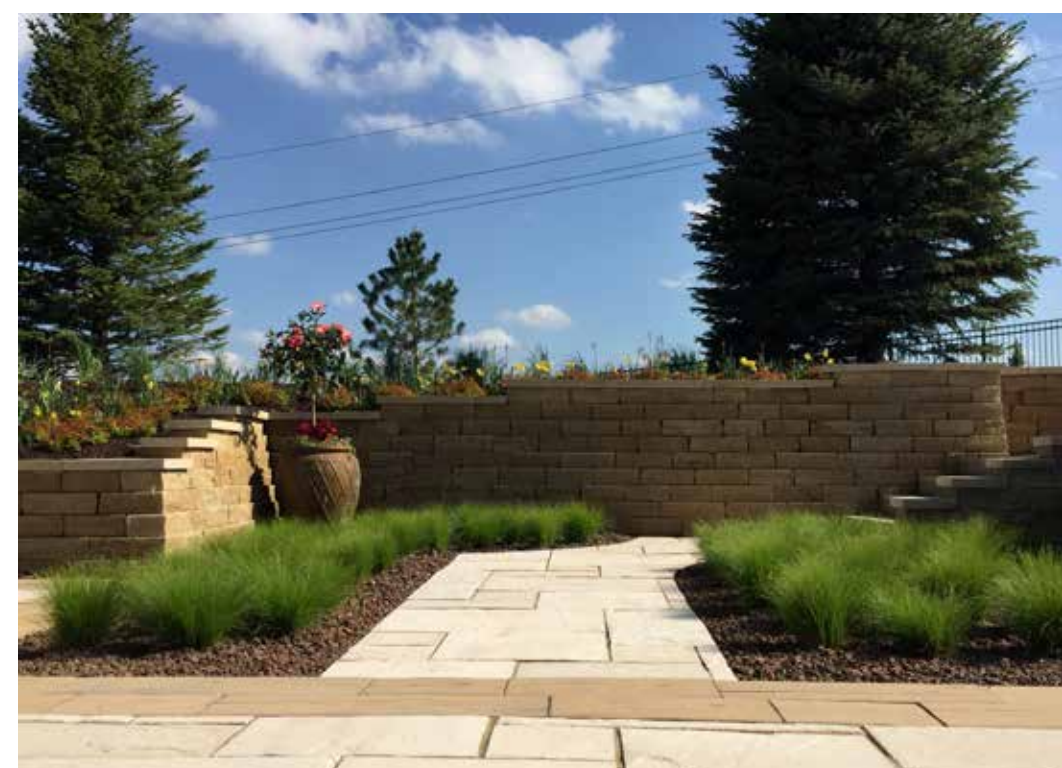


STEAL THIS:

A crisp geometric design creates a more dynamic space and allows niches for steps, architectural features, and equipment storage.

Large format concrete pavers are easy to maintain and reflect heat in this zone 5b garden (right).

PHOTOGRAPHS THIS PAGE
BY KURT JOHNSON



Elevating the ground suppressed noise from a nearby school and traffic while providing a higher base for plantings to create more privacy (above).

Blocks of texturally interesting plants provide seasonal interest without extensive maintenance. Here, stone, pavers, colors, and geometry complement the architectural forms of *Carex* (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS THIS PAGE
BY MARTI NEELY, FAPLD

BERKELEY TERRACE

Residential Category \$25,000 – \$100,000

Project Location: Berkeley, CA

Mullen Designs

mulldesigns.net

Firm Location: Berkeley, CA

Zone: 10a



Decomposed granite walkways connect the mid-terrace, featuring comfortable chairs for relaxing, and the lower terrace with its ping pong table, focal point bird bath, raised edible bed, and composting bins (above).

A rich variety of plants is used throughout the garden to provide interesting textures, foliage, and flower colors. The palette includes drought-tolerant California natives and Mediterranean species including *Arctostaphylos*, *Salvia*, *Dudleya*, *Euphorbia*, and *Heuchera* (right).



Lush plantings of waterwise perennials flourish in dappled sunlight. Utilizing plants with low water needs was of utmost importance, and the design includes succulents and spreading groundcovers (above right).

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

To sum up in two words: simple elegance. These are good small spaces that work with the topography and views. The deck expansion was a good idea; it invites visitors farther into the garden. The beautiful sweeping curves creatively contain the small, quaint rooms. There's a nice use of stone plus Corten steel walls; both "pull" the eye through the space. There's also lovely asymmetry to edging the path with steel/stone. It's nice that the pavers are permeable, and that the plant choices are low maintenance.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUDE PARKINSON-MORGAN



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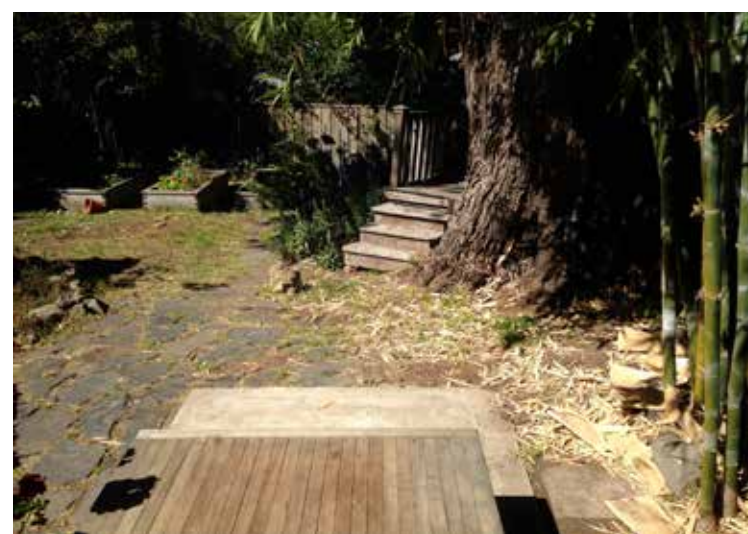


STEAL THIS:

A sinuous wall of earthy brown Napa basalt provides visual structure throughout and is designed for the clients' children's contemplative meandering. Larger boulders provide seating opportunities.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUDE PARKINSON-MORGAN

This overview of the completed garden shows how the home's "Berkeley Rustic" feel was retained while still allowing spaces including entertaining, quiet retreat, teenager activities, and edible gardening (above).



BEFORE: An overview of the garden prior to the landscape design work (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NINA MULLEN

The curving Corten steel retaining wall, a sculptural "ribbon" connecting the dining deck off the house to the edible beds while edging the DG terraces, provides beauty as well as anchors planting beds (above).

The family of four wanted a back yard to meet the long-term needs of the family as the children grew including room for a ping pong table as well as an edible bed (top).



silver award

The completed design has almost a movie-set quality to it.

L REFLECTION

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Irvine, CA

Realm Design, Justin Fox

RealmDesign.com

Firm Location: Irvine, CA

Zone: 10a

PHOTOGRAPH BY JERI KOEGEL



The unique oval firewall gives the overall space a very customized feel and is in tune with the clients' modern taste (left).

With the pool being a strong focal point, these unique cascading steps draw attention to the front of the pool (bottom left).

STEAL THIS:

Creating colorful walls in line with the house gave it a backdrop to a Zen-like look and made the yard feel more linear.



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is a phenomenal job with the pool and hardscape; they work beautifully with the site. This project's execution is great. There are fantastic elements, such as the fire wall and the decorative colored walls in the distance. It's a great constructed landscape.

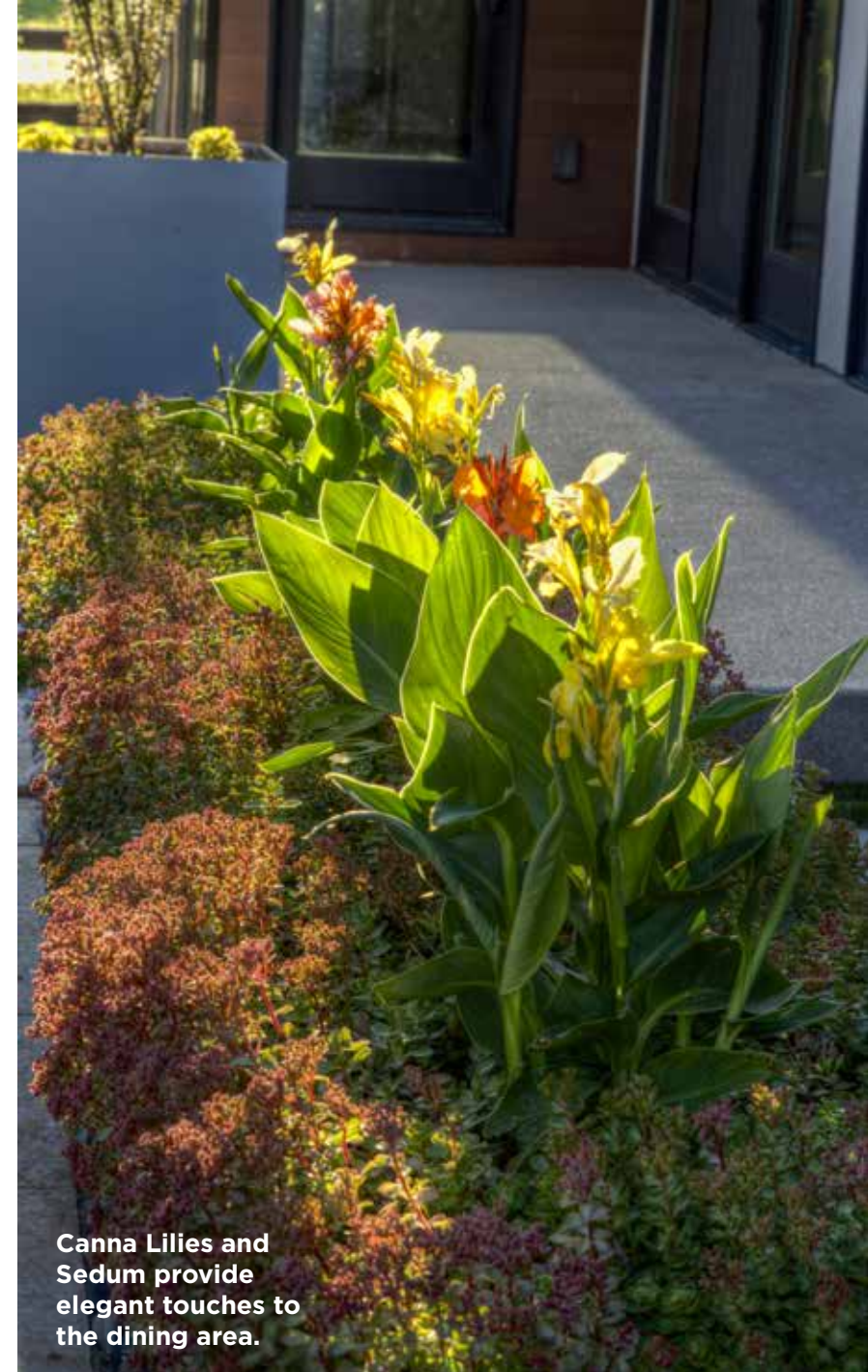


A true design challenge was the pie-shaped lot. However, using the owners' request to create a modern masterpiece, the shape was ultimately used to advantage (above).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JERI KOEGEL



Contra Verde is a modern design build that aligns the architectural style and framework of the home with outdoor spaces of functionality and artistry. This wide shot looks back at the house from the northwest.



Canna Lilies and Sedum provide elegant touches to the dining area.

CONTRA VERDE

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Longmont, CO

TLC Gardens LLC

tlcgardens.com

Firm Location: Longmont, CO

Zone: 5a

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID WINGER



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

Overall, this is a great transformation of the site and home; there are some really nice elements happening here. The materials work well with the home's exterior and the architecture is beautiful. There is good overall design structure and plant masses.

Exposed aggregate interrupted by polished beach pebbles form the entrance (left).



STEAL THIS:

Berms in the back landscape enhanced privacy and brought the expansive landscape in toward the home.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
DAVID WINGER

The custom fire element was designed to integrate the lines off the home's back façade. It visually connects the outdoor spaces, including the native meadow in the backdrop (above).

Ornamental grasses and columnar 'Crimson Sentry' Norway Maple soften the back fire element space (right).



Outside the master bedroom, Ipe and mesh screens are highlighted by landscape lighting for privacy (top).

Local dimensional flagstone forms the modern pattern for the dining patio and accents the home's colors. The patio provides a practical area for living in the outdoors (above).



CLARK RESIDENCE

Residential Category \$25,000 – \$100,000

Project Location: Los Altos, CA

Zacate Landscape Design, Mario Herrada

zacld.com

Firm Location: San Francisco, CA

Zone: 9b

BEFORE: The ranch house that was demolished to make way for the clients' dream home, a modern house with a "butterfly" roof (right).

What a difference! The new home's architecture, shown in this "After" photo, greatly influenced the garden design (above).



In addition to serving as a "veil" to the front of the house, the ornamental grasses provide movement with every breeze (above).

Dwarf English Boxwoods play a key role in this garden design. The front walkway is lined with Boxwood "spheres" and Dymondias (top).

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The "Before" and "After" photos are dramatic. It is a well-ordered space and place that work with the renovation and location. The brief called for a modern yet Asian feel; most of the plant selection did this beautifully—great conifer choices, for example. Also, the front garden is beautiful. There are some nice elements to this design in terms of material choices, and the simple areas and materials work in this composition.



STEAL THIS:

The clients wanted plantings to screen the front of the house but not completely cover the view of the house from the street. Swaths of ornamental grasses and *Leucadendron* were used, and these two plantings act as a “veil.”

The back yard plantings include a Japanese Black Pine and two Japanese Maples as accents, while *Podocarpus* and Timber Bamboo provide screening (above).

In addition to the front walkway, a variety of sizes shaped into spheres is repeated in the backyard (right).



The synthetic sod lawn and sports court are ideal for this sports-minded family (above).

The garden materials feature elements key to an Asian garden including $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch gravel patios, moss-rock boulders, and Connecticut bluestone stepping stones. These materials were used throughout the property, thereby visually tying front, back, and side yards together (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIO HERRADA



The large area surrounding the swimming pool is planned to capture the sun, with dedicated areas for dining, relaxation, and play.

ROSUNDA

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Stockholm, Sweden

Zetterman Garden Design, Annika Zetterman

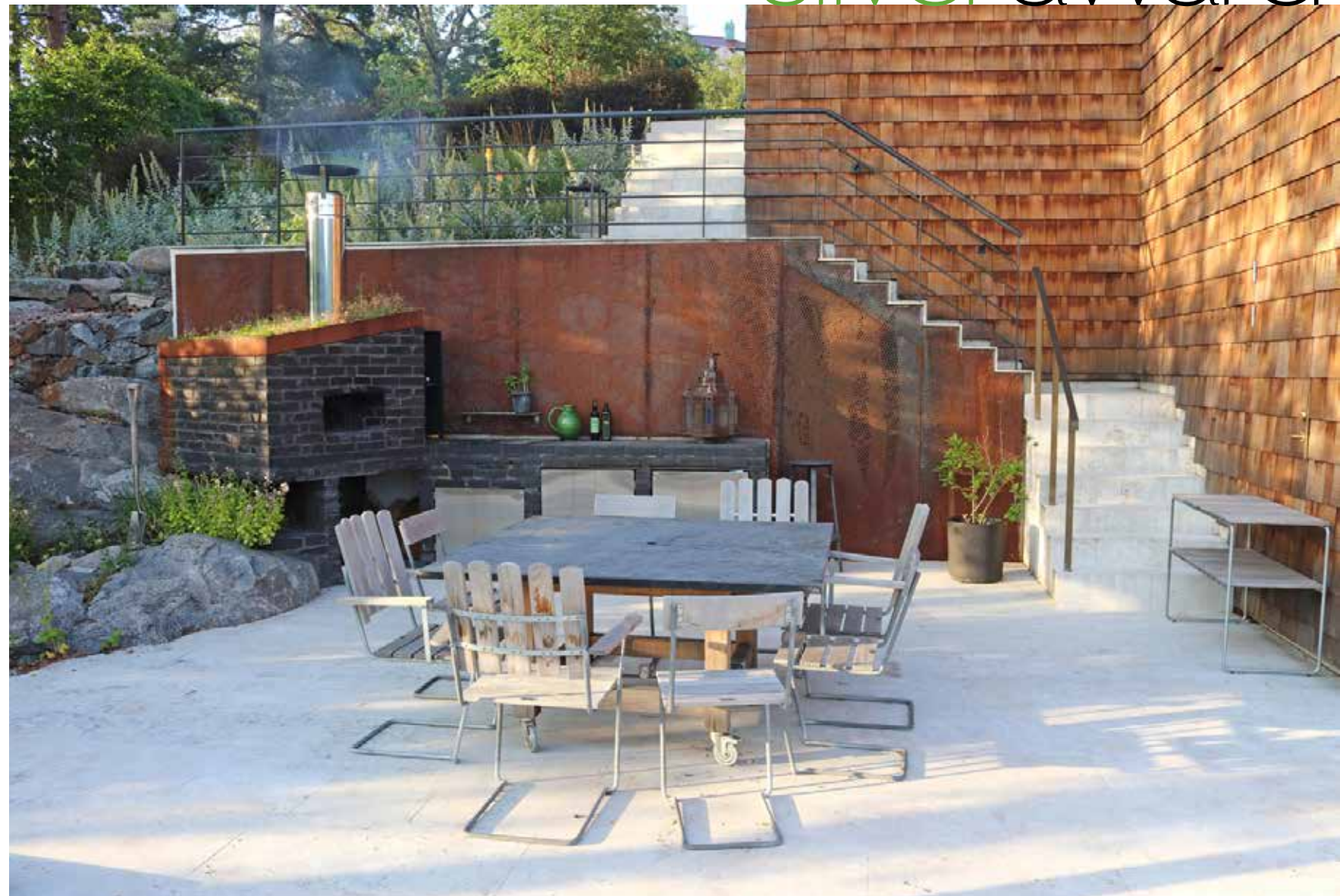
annikazetterman.com

Firm Location: Stockholm, Sweden

Zone: 6

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is an intimate and personal site of landscape spaces featuring very individual and customized selections. Overall, it's a tight vertical site with great outward views. These simple selections and masses work. There's quite a bit of hedging, but that can be very effective. The way things are nestled between existing boulders feels nice. The pool's reflection is lovely, and overall placement is great. The pergola structure is also nice.



The bespoke pizza oven with a unique sedum roof is perfect for these clients who enjoy socializing (above).

The intent was to create several garden areas in different directions of the house, including a unique touch in each space, such as this horse sculpture embedded in lush plantings (left).



Evening light in the entrance garden enhances the fictive wall.



STEAL THIS:

Hard and soft landscaping materials were carefully selected with the aim to bring them to life, with textures, patterns, and volumes having great effect upon the final result. Interesting foliage was key in plant selection.



Circulation was eased throughout the garden through multiple stairs and paths. The intent was to utilize elevation to advantage and create dramatic expressions that blend with the current architecture but that also respect the wild and allow the natural landscape to connect with the arranged space (right).

The visitors entrance welcomes all with its spectacular view overlooking the bay.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ANNIKA ZETTERMAN

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LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Residential Bronze Awards



GREGG RESIDENCE

Residential Category under \$25,000

Project Location: Tucson, AZ

One exciting result of the basin's depth was the rapid growth of nearby trees. Note this amazing tree growth about 6 years after installation.

Artistic Landscape Architecture, Josh Gormally, MLA, APLD

artlandarch.com

Firm Location: Tucson, AZ

Zone: 9b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This design shows beautiful plant massings and strong plant forms plus amazing textures both in plants and hardscape materials. Collectively, they define the composition. The overall design is great as seen in the "Before" and "After" photos. The incorporation of water harvesting into this design and how it flows with the overall shapes and forms are wonderful.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSH GORMALLY



bronze award

BEFORE: The conditions of the home were very sparse, consisting of a few sporadically placed boulders and a few common landscape plants. The landscape had also been treated with decorative granite gravel (below).

Take a look at this “After” shot—what a difference! At the clients’ request, the new design used the University of Arizona’s Cancer Center landscape design as inspiration for its calming, engaging, and natural feel (left).



STEAL THIS:

Multiple tree species from the adjoining native desert were identified and then incorporated into the enclosed back yard to tie the two spaces together. This created the illusion of a larger overall space and integrated the garden into its surrounding ecosystem, which resulted in many bird species frequenting the garden.



Several landscape elements found at the Cancer Center, such as colored gravel pathways, planting mounds incorporating split face granite boulders, flagstone benches, and individual plant species, were utilized to suggest this special place (left).

This “After” shot of the back yard’s renovation shows how it offers the shelter of native trees as well as water from a fountain and bird bath (not shown) to welcome many native winged visitors (right).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSH GORMALLY



MEDDING RESIDENCE

Residential Category under \$25,000

Project Location: Tucson, AZ

Artistic Landscape Architecture, Josh Gormally, MLA, APLD

artlandarch.com

Firm Location: Tucson, AZ

Zone: 9b

Lawn was removed both to conserve water and create a more interesting space. The final installation was a unique Japanese-style meditation garden complete with a custom granite boulder and flagstone bench (above).

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The front seems to have had the priority of increased details, but the overall composition is good. The planted masses and contrasts for this situation work well. The design leads to a beautiful transition to a more sustainable landscape. It's nice that this design focuses on water harvesting and using plants that require less water (rather than a lawn).



This "After" shot shows the renovated front yard, which is now a beautiful desert ecosystem that's both functional and aesthetically engaging (left).

The homeowners have received many compliments on the front yard's beauty from visitors and neighbors, and butterflies and hummingbirds frequent the space too (below).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSH GORMALLY

STEAL THIS:

During the initial consult, an entryway microclimate was discovered to be suitable for tropical plantings. This unique space defines the home's entry, serving as a transition from the harsh desert outdoors to the cooler inner confines.

SKYLINE SPRINGS

Residential Category over \$100,000

Project Location: Tucson, AZ

Prideaux Design

prideaux-design.com

Firm Location: Tucson, AZ

Zone: 9a



A completely new access point was created with a prominent rusted steel panel and gate design. This new modern steel gate and panel creates drama at the entrance and will stand the test of time in the Tucson climate (top).

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The raised pool certainly brightens the back yard tremendously! It is a difficult site since the pool takes up the yard. But this is now a fantastic, "super cool" pool with a great vibe. The transformation is amazing.



The gorgeous, original, vintage Brown Jordan dining set received new life.

The glistening blue glass encases the entire pool beam. The entire space speaks to the clients' sense of adventure and appreciation of unique and modern design (left).

The concrete under the patio was completely replaced with freshly poured (in strips, in place) concrete with a beautiful etched finish (right).



STEAL THIS:

One goal was to design a pool that created drama and color for the entire space. The pool was raised and completely tiled in a blue glass to give the illusion of a cube of water rising out from the ground. The pool is visible from most rooms of the house, and it provides a cooling effect in the heat of the Tucson summer.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATT VACCA

bronze award

The pergola is positioned at the at front walk over the top of rock garden. The one-acre site sits on a gently sloping upper half of mostly woodland while the rest is a steep ravine with an artesian spring and all-year creek.



GARDEN AMONG GIANTS

Residential Category \$25,000–\$100,000

Project Location: Vancouver, WA

Seasons Garden Design LLC, Vanessa Gardner Nagel, FAPLD

seasonsgardendesign.com

Firm Location: Portland, OR

Zone: 7b

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VANESSA GARDNER NAGEL, FAPLD



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The wonderful use of red as a repeating accent color throughout helps unify spaces—and it's so much fun! The circle motif repetition and Asian elements also work well. As a collector's garden it's delightful and a great expression of the owner. This is a good effort in a difficult space.

Even the glass-filled fire pit incorporates red. The stone-filled gabion wall does double-duty as seating and as a retaining wall.

The homeowner wanted to be assured of large amounts of fall color as summer color should not compete with the woodland environment. This view of the autumnal colors is across the central garden (left).



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Non-Residential Design Award



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEVIN NELSON

gold award



PRIVATE SCHOOL COURTYARD

Project Location: Summit, NJ

M. ERBS Fine gardens

m-erbs.com

Firm Location: Denville, NJ

Zone: 6b

The design allows quiet private spaces for one or two students as well as larger areas for many students to congregate. Students are seen relaxing and enjoying the view when using the space in spring (left).



The plant palette was chosen based on utility as well as multi-seasonal interest in spring and fall when school is in session. This shot from late summer is just before the Asters start blooming (top).

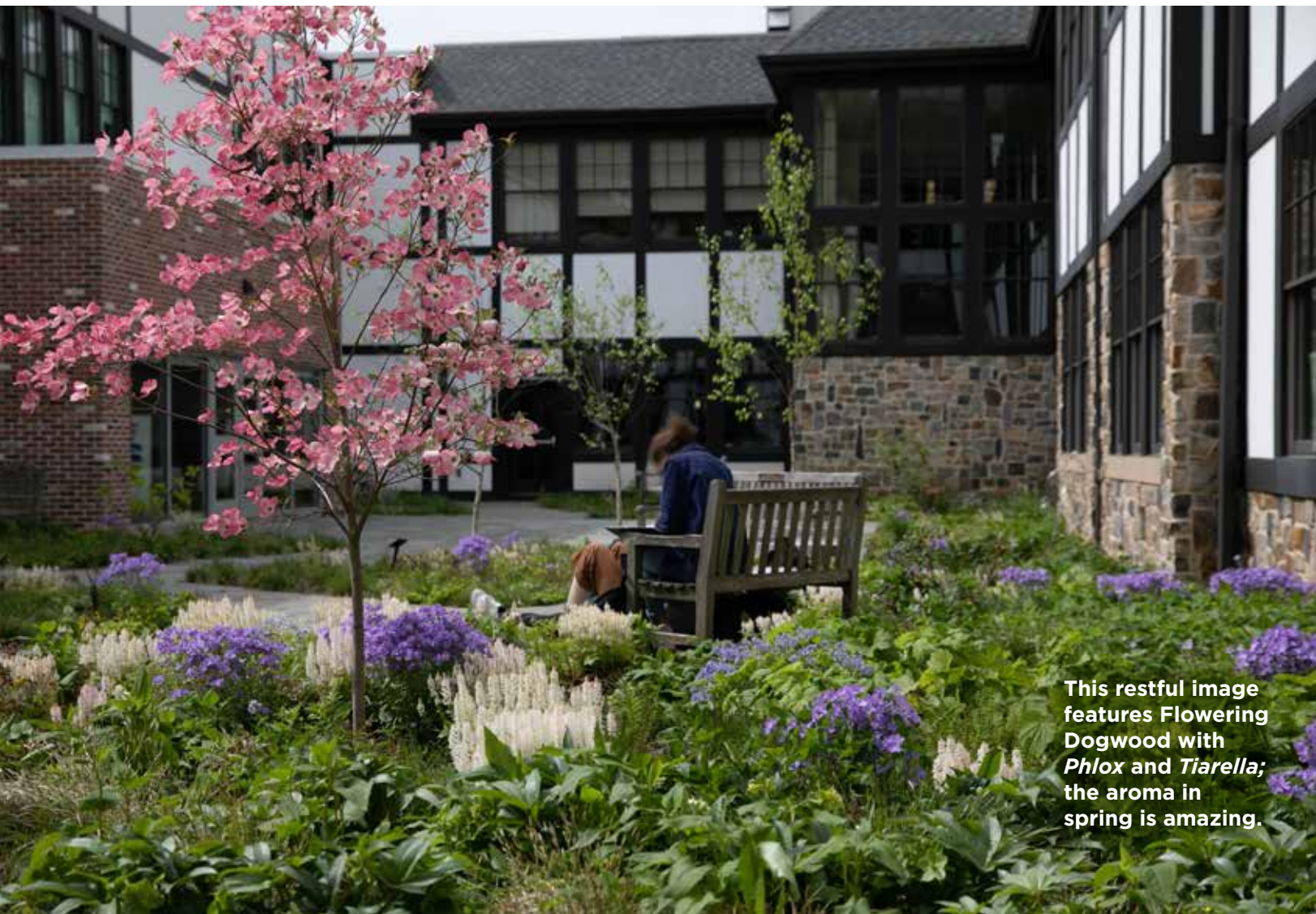
This aerial view clearly shows the courtyard's scale and layout. Notice how the angles balance one another (above).

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This design is amazing in so many ways! The offset angles create harmony and balance against the rectangular grid of the existing walls, while the planting design provides excellent interest in spring and fall. The sitting spaces are laid out in such a creative—yet still functional—way. This well-executed composition using high-quality hardscape materials includes appropriate paths that lead to seating areas. The innovative ground planting design is a rich tapestry that features a woodland designed plant community that's both lovely and functional. This is a wonderful example of a matrix planting; it's awesome to see it applied.



Asclepias tuberosa was used both for its visual interest and ecological value; it is being allowed to reseed (above). PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEVIN NELSON



This restful image features Flowering Dogwood with *Phlox* and *Tiarella*; the aroma in spring is amazing.

The placement of these two benches creates opportunity for conversation. The goal was to create a serene space for students and staff to enjoy nature in the center of the academic building by creating an ecological planting design that seamlessly provides a natural and fluid connection between buildings (above).

The herbaceous plants were chosen to knit together and cover the ground like a woodland floor. A mix of woodland ferns contributes to the "lightness" of the overall planting mix.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK PETERSON (ABOVE AND TOP RIGHT)

Tiarella 'New Moon Motley' and *Phlox divaricata* 'Blue Moon' in the woodland floor plant mix look wonderful in spring. The space was planted with trees and shrubs as well as a plug-planted herbaceous palette for the mid- and ground levels (above).

STEAL THIS:

Walkways were arranged to slow down users and choreograph the experience as visitors move through the space. Benches were arranged at the terminus of the walkways to provide group and individual seating and control movement.

2020 APLD
INTERNATIONAL
LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Planting Design Awards



KEMPTON, PA GARDEN

Planting Design Category

Project Location: Kempton, PA

Donald Pell Gardens

donaldpell.com

Firm Location: Phoenixville, PA

Zone: 6b

These compositions, which are evocative of an impressionist prairie, are carried throughout the property (above).

These stylized blocks of *Allium* add gorgeous seasonal color to hold a visitor's strong interest (right).



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB CARDILLO

“Blocks” of emergent herbaceous plants were used to simplify the composition as a controlled work of art.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
ROB CARDILLO



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is beautiful: abundant, fresh, and exactly the way we should all strive to be planting in this time of species loss. There are wonderful sweeps of color and a nice blending of plant materials. There are some woody plants in the composition, and bulbs for the spring display; the *Baptisia* and *Geum* will add color in spring too. The use of natives provides a timely and individual approach to current planting design. This is both well executed and well implemented.



Plant layers were chosen to carry color and hold texture through much of the growing season, including fall (as seen here) and into the spent foliage of a winter landscape.



To reduce erosion and sediment run-off, steep slopes have been stabilized with large boulder outcroppings, aggressive cespitose clumps, and stoloniferous roots as well as plants that grow aggressively from seed.

STEAL THIS:

The plant materials were carefully selected for their ability to thrive in dry shale soils. The primary layer of plants will spread, ramble, and seed their way through the layers to add depth and sustainability to the block plantings.

WESTPORT RETREAT

Planting Design Category

Project Location: Westport, MA

Nilsen Landscape Design, LLC

nilsenlandscape.com

Firm Location: Marblehead, MA

Zone: 7a



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

It's great to see overall site planning and landscape planting design in this stellar example. The reduction of lawn is so important today, and the mix of natives and introduced plants is good. The parking area, which has been placed off to one side to avoid affecting the view, and the new, Lavender-edged walk definitely lead visitors to the door. The trail through the meadow that's visible in the plan is a nice touch, as is the walk to the orchard, which ties in with the end of the drive. The "Before" and "After" photos show the evolution of this residential site, which is a very nice improvement.



This "After" shot shows the overarching goal of the design, which is to reflect the quiet, pastoral feel of the local landscape while providing privacy and context for the house to the land.

The home's winter silhouette provides a strong image. With that as inspiration, the design goal was to use only perennials around the foundation to preserve the winter form and emphasize color and texture during summer (left).



BEFORE: You can see the original landscape was quite barren and devoid of interest. The house seemed to float in an expansive yard with no real transition from the perimeter woodland to the dwelling. Its compacted dirt driveway was the prominent view (left).

PHOTOGRAPH BY
ANDREA NILSEN MORSE



The gravel driveway leads to a parking area and a Lavender-lined walkway to the front door.



STEAL THIS:

The home's silhouette in winter resembles an Andrew Wyeth painting. Using only perennials around the foundation preserves the stark winter form and emphasizes color and texture during the key summer months.



A custom sculpture by a local artist is a focal point of the entry area. Gaps in the existing perimeter canopy were planted with large evergreens to enhance privacy.



A long plant bed along the driveway provides views from inside of the house and a sense of enclosure from the full depth of the 13-acre property (above).

Now, a deep meadow provides a transition from the manicured lawn to the woodland edge. The meadow was created by slice seeding a custom blend of wildflower seeds into the existing turf (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ROSEMARY FLETCHER



BEACH HOUSE ON THE GOLF COURSE

Planting Design Category

Project Location: Frankfort, KY

Inside Out Design, LLC, Andrea Wilson Mueller, APLD

insideout-design.org

Firm Location: Frankfort, KY

Zone: 6b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The design definitely provides a sense of enclosure and attractive views from the porch, plus there's a good use of layering. Overall, this is a solid composition and the improvement is very evident. The planting layers and masses work well in this location, incorporating functional plants for a hard location. The urn focal point and the use of the Sedum as a filler groundcover are good elements. This nicely composed and accessible planting plan shows good execution.

Large limestone pavers were laid from driveway to the back porch.



The back patio is surrounded by three species of Hydrangea, and shade perennials including low-growing Scotch Moss, Hostas, and Ferns in a simple, yet interesting, planting scheme. Scotch Moss brightens the space and creates a very tranquil feel and expands the mostly monochromatic scheme (above).

BEFORE: The existing Oak (creating a mix of sun/shade), drainage issues, and a messy downspout were among the design challenges (left).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY INSIDE OUT DESIGN, LLC



A large green ceramic container was added as a focal point off the master bedroom patio and complements a bold green painting that hangs in the master bedroom.



The “hidden” gutter/downspout directs water to the rain garden, which resolved the drainage issue. The rain garden had to be excavated twice to 5 feet for the mix to break the hardpan for proper drainage. ‘Ice Dance’ Sedge, Blue Flag Iris, *Coreopsis*, and Prairie Dropseed are featured.



STEAL THIS:

A natural hardscape of flagstone paths complements the existing natural limestone wall and provides a maintenance and viewing path. Stepping stones create an inviting, natural walkway with *Sedum kamtchaticum* (sunny areas) and Scotch Moss (part-shade to full shade areas) between the stones.

The wall off the kitchen/living room patio has become a focal point from the addition of “Charlie,” the 20-plus-year-old weeping Norway Spruce whom the homeowners named. “He” provides winter interest but his unique shape commands attention anytime.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY INSIDE OUT DESIGN, LLC



NEW PLANT ORDER

Planting Design Category

Project Location: Concord, CA

Terralinda Design, Linda Middleton, FAPLD

terralindadesign.com

Firm Location: Walnut Creek, CA

Zone: 9b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is a great example of drought-tolerant plantings showing good texture and color selections on a residential scale. The colorful design is well established, and the composition shows well.

The new design features drought-tolerant garden plants with succulent accents, year-round interest, and color, and is designed to draw hummingbirds into the space (above).

A small basin captures rainwater to provide a needed water source for wildlife (right).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JUDE PARKINSON-MORGAN



STEAL THIS:

The amount of supplemental watering was reduced not only by replacing the main planting areas with low-water-use plants but also by having a professional assess the health of the existing plants (which were failing), who attributed their decline to overwatering.

The front yard layout allows drought-tolerant plants to take center stage while pushing the Roses, Lavender, and *Escallonias* to the property's edge. The design makes it more convenient to hydrozone efficiently, creates better soil conditions for each palette, and improves maintenance access (below).

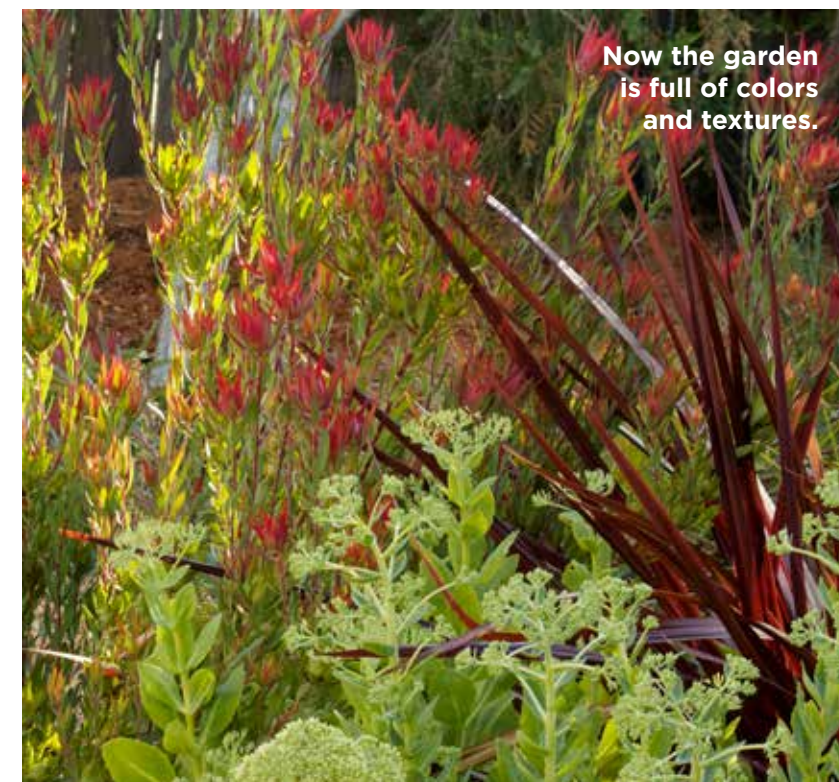
The arching blades of this ornamental grass soften the edges of the walkway (right).



The evergreen tufts of low-maintenance Mat Rush lend a light and airy feel.



One of the nectar-rich plants is *Kniphofia*.



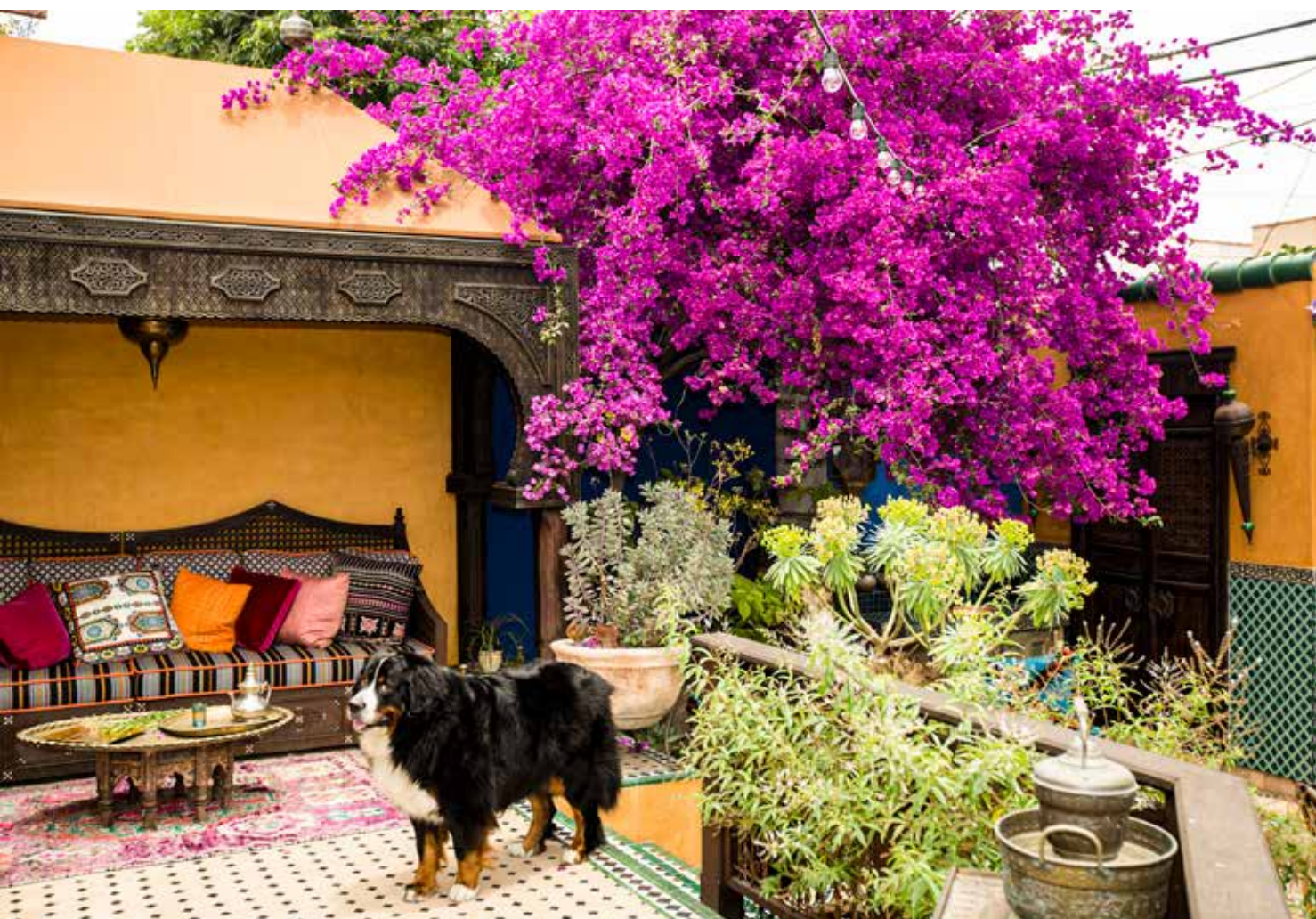
Now the garden is full of colors and textures.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUDE PARKINSON-MORGAN

2020 APLD
INTERNATIONAL
LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Small Garden Awards





DAR BEN-LISA

Small Gardens Category

Project Location: Los Angeles, CA

Laura Morton Design

lauramortondesign.com

Firm Location: West Hollywood, CA

Zone: 10b

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF DUNAS PHOTOGRAPHY

This “After” shot of the pavilion features the spectacular magenta “waterfall” (a huge existing *Bougainvillea*) and split-level terraces (above).

JUDGES’ PERSPECTIVE:

Wow! Imaginative, creative, and fun. This remarkable design shows how amazingly a theme shapes a space and its details. It is what was needed to define this Moroccan room. The layout and detail of the pavements work well, and the scale and character are fitting, making the space look and live large. The design makes great use of the diagonal axis and offers wonderful attention to detail.



This sumptuous tented lounging space with custom sofas is located right off the bedroom and across from the spa. An infrared heater in the pavilion takes off any chill.

Moroccan railing, tiled steps, carved wood, upholstery, and plant material all contribute to a visual feast. Aside from vines, an accent Palm, and Tree Aloe, shapely pots keep plants elevated. Simple mulch on available “yard” space is easy to groom and allows the dogs to wander without damaging plant material.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF DUNAS PHOTOGRAPHY

STEAL THIS:

The clients wanted to be transported to their favorite exotic vacation spot: Morocco! To do so, the space was treated as a sumptuous, split-level jewel box. Layers of artisan-crafted elements serve as focal points and details to keep eyes moving so one doesn't notice how small it is. The diagonal lines and Moroccan tile patterns visually expand the space.

This small space serves many functions. On axis with the doors, tiled steps descend to the lower courtyard patio featuring an authentic white marble urn fountain, also on axis with the steps. Color and tile work keep the space visually cohesive (above).

Stepping onto the lower patio, the intimate dining area invites visitors near the fountain. Colorful Moroccan lanterns hang from existing Palm trunks (right).



gold award

From the drive, the exotic courtyard doors open into a space that intrigues yet does not reveal all.



**CITY COURTYARD GARDEN**

Small Gardens Category

Project Location: Philadelphia, PA

MGH Gardens, Maria Hasenecz

mghgardens.com

Firm Location: Philadelphia, PA

Zone: 7b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is such a sweet little space with lovely details; it feels very cohesive and comfortable. There's a great reuse of materials and of using local materials. There were challenging logistics, yet it's very nicely done, especially the stepped trellises to add height! The fountain style stops the design from feeling too stiff and contrived plus its glossy finish and deep green glaze add light. The opportunity to be functional and attractive has been accomplished in this solid project and design solution. There are good brick wall/stucco treatments and good use of colorful annuals and of deciduous and herbaceous material with nice foliage textures. This is really a remarkable transformation—well done.

The beautiful aerial view from the second floor shows small spaces can have a big impact.



STEAL THIS:

The iron and powder-coated aluminum trellis work, railings, and planter choices further developed the traditional formal Charleston garden concepts. Walls serve as attractive backdrops to the focal points that move the eye through the space and add complexity to a small area.

The planter window boxes tie into the garden design below. Carefully chosen premade window boxes, urns, and a water feature support the vision of a Charleston garden (left).

The homeowners' garden bench adds a traditional formal flair to the plantings (right).

The cast iron trellis and niche add vertical interest, while plant life has to withstand the intense urban radiant heat despite its part-shade site (above right).



gold award



LAUREANO RESIDENCE

Small Gardens Category

Project Location: Louisville, KY

Myers + Co. Landscape Architecture, Josh Myers

myersandcompanyla.com

Firm Location: Louisville, KY

Zone: 6b

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSH MYERS

Planters frame the steppers that connect the driveway and bluestone walk. A hidden garden is revealed featuring the client's favorite urn to delight visitors as they approach the front door (above).

Cobblestone pavers replaced the existing concrete driveway and a Pennsylvania bluestone walkway replaced the existing brick walk (above right).

The wall and the Japanese Maple create an intimate and private space, even though it's in front of the townhome (right).



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

What a beautiful, simple, elegant, understated, and cohesive design—yet far from predictable. It's very well done. This lovely example shows how a small entrance can make an impressive first impression. The tight space and place require simplicity, and this design delivers that. The enhancement, too, is in the selection of the beautiful hard materials as well as the strong forms. The "After" images illustrate how well the addition of design fit with the selections and materials. Overall—it's a success!





The design intent was to include a modest palette of hardscape and plant materials to create an elegant and impactful outdoor space that matched the level of detail of the home.

STEAL THIS:

A classic, formal design with Boxwood hedges layered with Hydrangea, Dwarf Korean Lilac on a standard, and a specimen 'Bloodgood' Japanese Maple sets the feel for this project.

Twin planters are set up on an axis to the urn. Custom bluestone curbing and circular banding inside the courtyard define the edge of the garden and highlight the urn as a focal point (above).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSH MYERS



Another "Before" photo shows how underutilized the original garden courtyard was. The clients were inspired to bring the same attention to detail to the home's exterior once an extensive renovation of the interior was completed.





BOWERS RESIDENCE

Small Gardens Category

Project Location: Tucson, AZ

Artistic Landscape Architecture, Josh Gormally, MLA, APLD

artlandarch.com

Firm Location: Tucson, AZ

Zone: 9b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The “Before” and “After” shots show the opportunity to add design to the entry. The design is solid and looks fun and functional. The pleasing variety of mulch textures and attractive drainage solutions are pluses; there’s also a good plant palette for spring and fall. This design has solved the water issues on the site well.



In stark contrast to the granite gravels and boulders, river rock was utilized instead of granite rip-rap in order to make the “riparian” areas more pronounced (above).

BEFORE: You can see the Agave was randomly situated in the landscape (left).

The view from afar in this “After” shot shows the plantings that were placed in the basins to suggest riparian plants (top left).

STEAL THIS:

The design goal was to accomplish functional and useful drainage solutions while creating an interesting, whimsical, and diverse space in a very small front yard. This was accomplished using many colorful and diverse landscape materials.

Many different species of interesting and colorful plants were incorporated into the plant palette including native Cacti, Sonoran desert native shrubs, desert-adapted plants, and pollinator attractors (left).

The river rock swale system was designed to direct rainwater into designed water harvesting basins. The drainage swales and basins were designed to simulate natural streamways and have a curving, undulating layout that's both energetic and engaging (below).



The existing Agave was transplanted to be used as an accent plant near the entry walkway to allow for construction of one of the water-harvesting basins.



Three Totem Pole Cacti and boulders were framed between colored boulders and used as accent elements.



COMPACT CONDO GARDEN

Small Gardens Category

Project Location: Jersey City, NJ

A Small Green Space, Emma Lam

asmallgreenspace.com

Firm Location: Jersey City, NJ

Zone: 7b



The vertical garden is obviously a tremendous space-saver, but it also helps define the living area and breaks up the beige blank wall.

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

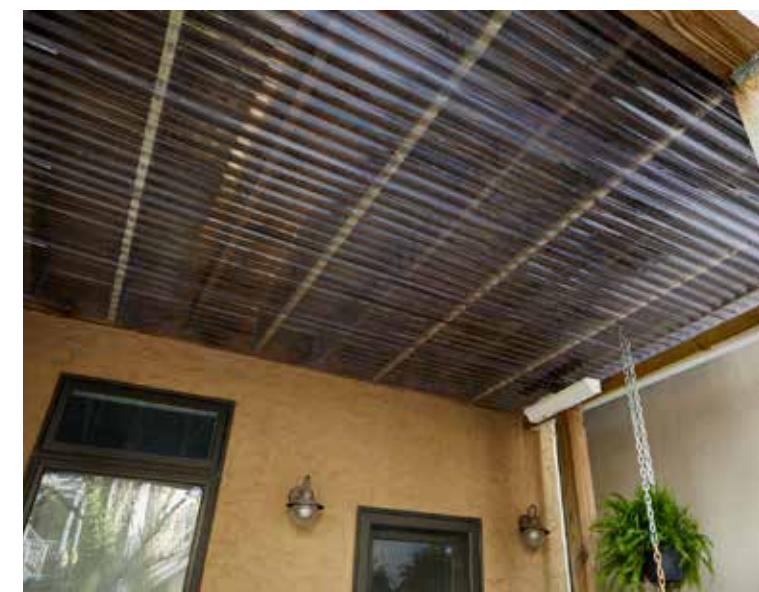
This is an excellent use of space and rework of an existing fence. There are great artistic details and the furniture is both multi-functional and appropriately sized. What a creative and efficient way to use a small space. This solution works, though a condo complicates solution opportunities. But it's fun and functional, simple and complete. Love all the separate rooms and how well they work together. That's nice double-duty as a children's play area and family space too.



The clients' ground-floor apartment is very small, and they saw their outdoor space as an underutilized "extra room." Success (far left)!

To complete the family-friendly space, a custom chalkboard and a nifty child's sand-table, which doubles as a coffee table, were added (left).

The 10x9-foot area under the neighbor's deck was waterproofed by installing clear, corrugated-roofing and gutters that partially drain into the hanging plants. Now that space can be used even when it's raining (right).





STEAL THIS:

To visually separate the client's space from the common yard, a bluestone patio was designed and installed. The space's border was further defined by incorporating fiberglass trough-planters filled with ornamental grasses along one side.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
MEGAN MALOY
(EXCEPT BEFORE IMAGE)



What a difference this "After" shot demonstrates! A bluestone patio, plantings (even a vertical garden), and furniture are part of the redesign (top).

BEFORE: There was no definition of private space within the larger common yard area (above).



The hanging chair, storage/cooler, and plants combine to welcome the family to this private retreat (above).

The existing fencing was remodeled by removing the pickets and topping the fence with a smooth cedar-cap, which saved waste from the landfill, decreased the installation budget, and maintained the desired "open" feel (left).



The planted green roof atop the existing shed hides its unsightly view from the deck.



MINI GREEN-ROOF IN THE CITY

Small Gardens Category

Project Location: Hoboken, NJ

A Small Green Space, Emma Lam

asmallgreenspace.com

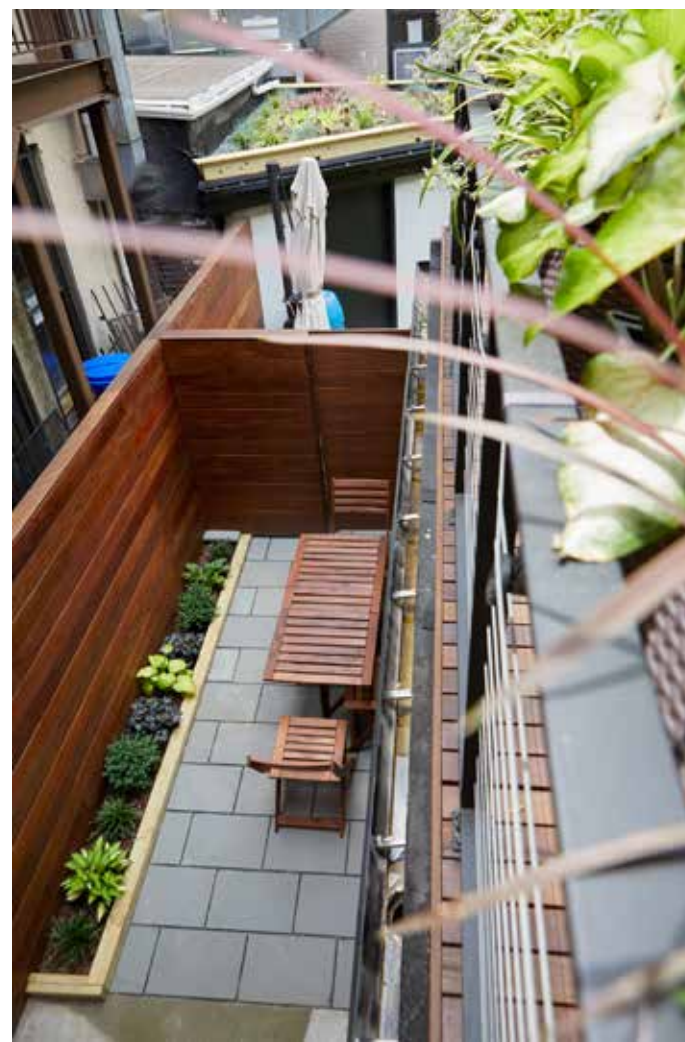
Firm Location: Jersey City, NJ

Zone: 7b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

Clean, simple spaces with high-quality materials—and what a nice way to use different levels on a difficult site. These are good efforts with the additions to this small garden. It's a creative use of space, of diagonal axis, and of solutions. Also, kudos to photographers who probably contorted themselves into a pretzel to get these shots! Finally, the roof treatment is excellent.

The multilevel plantings help create the garden feel and still maintain openness (right).



STEAL THIS:

The gardens were designed on several different “levels”: in-ground, raised-bed, containerized, and rail boxes so the clients would feel surrounded by plantings, but not be overwhelmed by them.

Rail box plantings surround the deck. The main area of the garden was designed to include horizontal lpe fencing, an inset lpe deck laid on a diagonal, an L-shaped raised bed with bluestone cap that doubles as seating, and the artificial lawn (top).

The new design has incorporated a private area for the clients' Airbnb unit. The petite planting area holds shade-tolerant plants (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MEGAN MALOY



EMBRACED SECLUSION

Small Gardens Category

Project Location: Bozeman, MT

Blanchford Landscape Group, Mason Shaffer

blanchfordlandscape.com/

Firm Location: Bozeman, MT

Zone: 4b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

The design concept is solid and actuated with design layers from the pavement surfaces, walls, fences, and overhead canopy. It works both functionally and visually and is a great solid space and design. The plants are appropriate choices. This design has done well in creating a quaint space with a cohesive color scheme.

It's quite intentional the way the courtyard space has the feeling that it's much larger than the 600 square feet that was available. Large-scale elements (specifically the stone stairs, boulders, and seasonal containers) were used to dramatically help manipulate the perceived space (above).



Experientially, as visitors approach the entrance to the courtyard beyond, the design hints at what is awaiting without giving too much away (left).

STEAL THIS:

The design installation used bio-stimulant products (instead of traditional fertilizers) and soil enhancing mulch to ensure a healthy and natural soil ecosystem would be maintained.

The patio took a sunken circular form with a radial play in order to maximize the usable space and to solve the head room issue with the roofline (above).

A bird's eye view of the courtyard reflects the design intent of a diverse and complete sensory experience (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAUL CREATIVE



DESERT SPA COURTYARD

Small Gardens Category

Project Location: Tucson, AZ

Prideaux Design

prideaux-design.com

Firm Location: Tucson, AZ

Zone: 9a

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

There is something so beautiful in this design's simplicity and restraint. This design solved a problem (that of space and water harvesting) with simple forms, but still included details with high-quality materials. And these are lovely choices of materials. That's a great feature wall and an interesting water/table design. All the hardscapes are very well done.

The design's strong lines of simple geometry are revealed in this down view of the space (above).

The long linear water trough features a movable lpe wood "sleeve" that creates a small table for the space. It is flowing from the veneered wall (right).



STEAL THIS:

A key component of the interior remodel was the use of a stack stone veneer. That stone is also used to tie together the interior with the exterior.

Large specimen Cacti in pottery containers create focal points (above).

Smooth stucco and a painted niche set the tone for this home (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATT VACCA



Low maintenance plants were necessary for the garden to remain tidy during periods of the client's extended travel.



The snappy red motif is a great sight viewed from the second story. And look at all the places where the cats can hide and play.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCUS MUSKAT

COURTYARD SAFARI

Small Gardens Category

Project Location: San Ramon, CA

Terralinda Design, Linda Middleton, FAPLD

terralindadesign.com

Firm Location: Walnut Creek, CA

Zone: 9b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is a beautiful courtyard space. Especially within the limits of the HOA rules, this solution works, and it will improve with establishment. Love the color scheme and how it was designed with the cats in mind. Love the giraffe!! There is good use of lighting and incorporation of fun accent colors.

The breezeway entry features climate-appropriate plants (right).



STEAL THIS:

The client's high-stress job required frequent international travel. Being outdoors with her beloved Bengal cats was her way to decompress and recharge after the workday. The design required a safe, enclosed outdoor space for her "indoor" cats and plants and objects to engage the cats.



The Bengal cats love to play in their enclosure! (above left).

The artistic metal giraffe casts interesting shadows at night (above).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRALINDA DESIGN

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Details Design Award



The view from perched high up on the deck clearly shows the beautiful symmetry of the overall space.

silver award



TIMELESS RENOVATION

Project Location: Frankfort, KY

Inside Out Design, LLC, Andrea Wilson Mueller, APLD

insideout-design.org

Firm Location: Frankfort, KY

Zone: 6b

PHOTOGRAPHS BY INSIDE OUT DESIGN, LLC



BEFORE: This shot taken before starting the work shows the one oak and a few 'Limelight' hydrangeas. The mature oak's root zone was protected during the course of the project.

Take a look now! This cozy gathering spot is tucked away behind greenery. Several fringetrees were planted for screening and added privacy and were highlighted with LED uplights (top).

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This very-well executed design shows a good example of “Before” and “After” shots. The designer’s changes are good within the context of existing conditions, showing well-defined and well-designed enhancements to the site and for the residents. Its use of high-quality materials and beautiful construction show strong spatial definition, and this lovely functional space connects the house to the garden.

It's all in the details. This simple color scheme adds to the classic, clean feel (below).



The gentle slope of the land allowed a transition with steps, columns, and the curved retaining walls. The columns flank the steps to guide one to/from the fire pit area. Containers on the columns add the opportunity for summer foliage and color.



This welcoming view is framed by the ‘Limelight’ hydrangeas, columns, and containers, and is illuminated by landscaping lighting. While the fixture itself is practically invisible, the light provides ambiance and safety to the space after dusk. (above).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
INSIDE OUT DESIGN, LLC



The fire pit space (shown here directly outside the lower basement doors) looks great at all times. The steps create a sense of new space coming from the covered existing patio and helped keep the fire pit area lower so the view remained open to the golf course (left).

STEAL THIS:

A portable, cozy fire pit has a built-in look with a gravel detail below the base. The cut out with gravel is designed this way because the fire pit is metal, therefore preventing visible rusting on the pavers.

2020 APLD
INTERNATIONAL
LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Specialty Projects Awards



A photograph of a well-manicured backyard pond. On the left, a wooden gazebo with a dark roof and string lights stands on a patio. A blue 'WELCOME' sign is attached to one of its posts. The pond is bordered by large, dark grey rocks and is filled with various aquatic plants, including tall green reeds and lily pads. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding trees and the gazebo. In the background, a dense line of green trees forms a natural backdrop. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and inviting.

gold award

POND LIFE CALLING

Specialty Project Category

Project Location: West Dundee, IL

Reflections Water Gardens, Larry Carnes

reflectionswatergardens.com

Firm Location: West Dundee, IL

Zone: 5b

Water's calling! This peaceful recreation pond provides a gathering place for the family and is the canvas for the homeowner's passion for nature.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
CAPLAN STUDIOS PHOTOGRAPHY



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is such a great “Before” and “After” change! It’s a nice space and place, and the planting masses look good and stable. The natural swimming pool has been beautifully tucked into the architecture of the home.



This is the perfect location for rustic pond-side dining al fresco, bird watching, and family conversation (top).

Grab a cool drink and enjoy summer afternoons in the shade of the lounge seating area, with the three-foot deep koi pond off to one side (above).



Grasses, sedges, and low-lying shrubs, trees, and native perennials dot the landscape of the 20- by 40-foot recreation pond that is home to dragonflies, monarch butterflies, and beneficial insects.

STEAL THIS:

The pond is fed by a circulating flow that travels from a stream and cascades through and around boulders before dropping into water that is majestic in all seasons.

Koi gracefully glide and dive in their water home, which was hand-dug from hard-packed clay.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JUDE PARKINSON-MORGAN

Ponds built with strength and passion create a beautiful stage for fun and frolic, as well as the artful sights and sounds of nature.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
CAPLAN STUDIOS PHOTOGRAPHY



What a dramatic difference one can see in this “After” shot! The pool area’s new contemporary aesthetic complements the home.



TORRENCE COURT SWIMMING POOL PROJECT

Specialty Project Category
Project Location: Cincinnati, OH

**Stride Studios,
Bill Ripley, FAPLD**

stridestudios.com
Firm Location: Madeira, OH
Zone: 6a

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN KURTZ



BEFORE: This shot shows the dilapidated swimming pool, pool deck, and stone retaining walls.

JUDGES’ PERSPECTIVE:

This is a dramatic “Before” and “After” showing really effective integration of a pool house, pool, and home. Updating a pool can be hard; this was a great use of materials, construction, and context. The project fits into the site and connection with the house. Overall, it’s a great functional composition and a beautiful blending of historic mid-century modern architecture with the clean, geometric lines of the new pool space.

A contemporary aluminum arbor, with cantilevered framing and cabling, was designed to connect the home to the pool house. The structure served as an artistic connection between buildings and helped satisfy municipal zoning requirements.

Focusing on the existing lines of the home and spaces as well as existing features adjacent to the home guided design. These organic, curved linear walls are juxtaposed to the straight linear metal structures (right).





The spa and fire table nook were located adjacent to the bright, open pool house. Adding the spa was a client request.

Materials and color echoes between the project components is another way to marry the site to the home.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
RYAN KURTZ



The pavement materials were selected so they could run outside-in, unifying these elements. Materials were locally sourced as much as possible to help decrease the carbon footprint caused by transportation.



STEAL THIS:

This space bridges the home's Carl A. Strauss-designed Modernist architecture with the emotional tone of the property and its venerable part of a Cincinnati neighborhood, whose predominant aesthetics are large, fieldstone walls and naturally vegetated grounds.

The completed project looks great from all angles; this is the top of the steps as visitors approach the space from the home (right).



BROOKLYN FAMILY TERRACE

Specialty Project Category

Project Location: Brooklyn, NY

Dimastery Studio, Dima Rumiantcev

dimastery.com

Firm Location: Brooklyn, NY

Zone:6b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is such good use of a very small space. The “Before” and “After” photos illustrate the functional and visual enhancements that the design has contributed. Plantings add good contrast to the roof. This is a cozy, simple space with two functional living areas.



The terrace's pergola and lounge were both bespoke creations. The efficient, yet airy pergola unit provides afternoon shade over the lounge seating as well as space for plantings to soften the construction (right).

A birds-eye view of the completed terrace shows how much open space there is (left).

PHOTOGRAPH BY
DIMA RUMIANTCEV

'Limelight' Hydrangeas anchor the ends of the unit with native grasses and other plants in between. Low-maintenance shade and privacy plantings surround the lounge (right).

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY
MARK ANDREW PHOTO
EXCEPT WHERE NOTED



STEAL THIS:

The design challenge was how to fit all the clients' requests into a 400-square-foot terrace! So, to preserve open space for play and entertainment, the main design features have been placed along the perimeter.

The dining table is custom-made for a tailored fit. Five chairs plus a custom planter with a built-in bench provide ample seating.

INVESTORS HERITAGE NATIVE PUBLIC GARDEN

Specialty Project Category

Project Location: Frankfort, KY

Inside Out Design, LLC, Andrea Wilson Mueller, APLD

insideout-design.org

Firm Location: Frankfort, KY

Zone: 6b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

From its “swamp” beginning to the project’s completion makes for a good change. Love the use of the very lush native plants to attract pollinators and to be cognizant of water usage. This design is very creative and offers good circulation. There is also good placement of the rock and integration of stepping stones through the main circle.

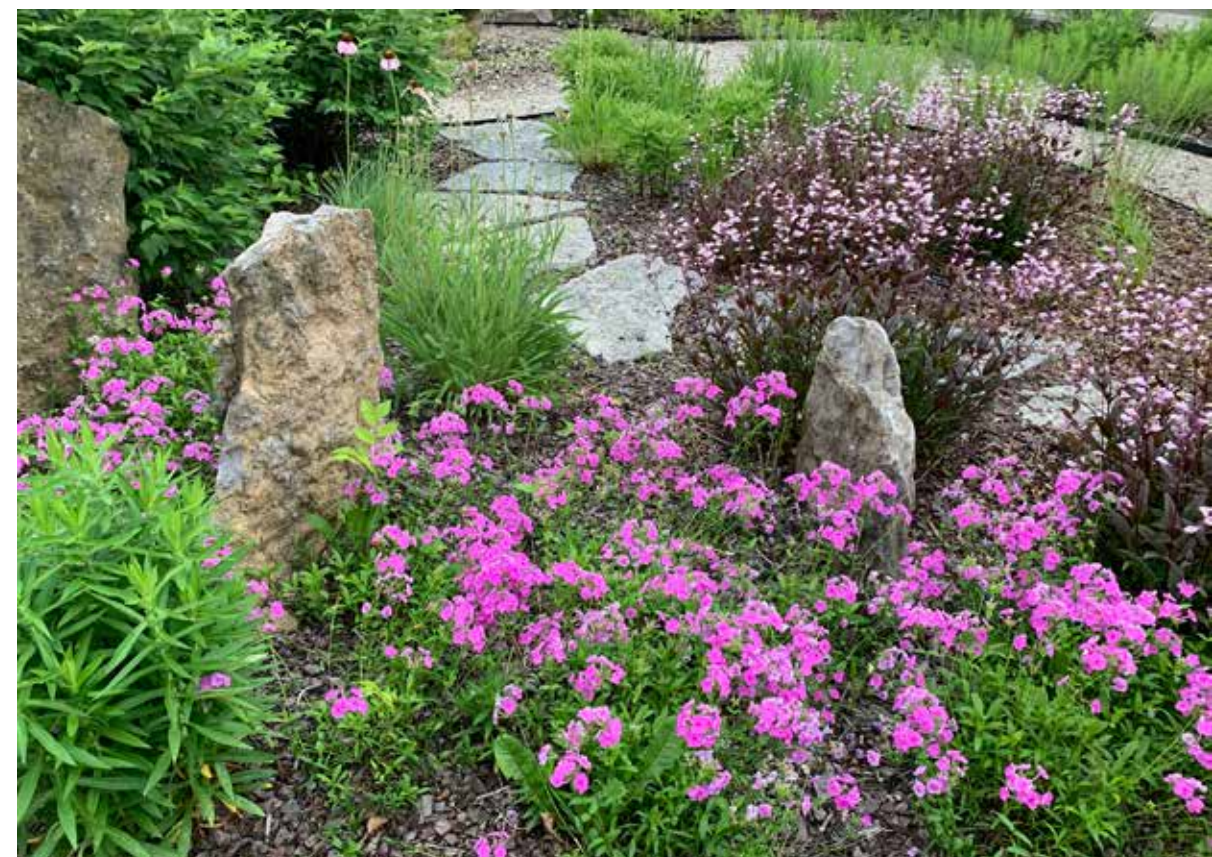


BEFORE: This photo shows the flooded site, which had significant drainage issues and little topsoil.



Ozark Coneflower and *Phlox* are among other emerging summer and fall bloomers. Over 30 species of native trees, grasses, shrubs, and wildflowers have been layered in the diverse garden (top left). Though the bulbs have faded, *Zizia* blooms yellow throughout as others emerge. The natives are extremely drought resistant and require little additional water (above).

The custom cairn fountain is surrounded by native plantings and grasses that emerge behind the boulders. The pondless water feature, the focal point, was created out of varying shapes and sizes of limestone boulders and was one of the biggest design challenges (top right).



Phlox and Beardtongue brighten the limestone flag path as they weave between the stones. The path was designed for 3/8-inch pea gravel atop compacted dense grade. The edge restraint was to keep the natural creek feel and to remain within the relatively low budget (above).

LONDON ROOF TERRACE

Specialty Project Category

Project Location:

London, England

McWilliam Studio, Andrew Wilson

mcwilliamstudio.com

Firm Location: Beaconsfield,

Buckinghamshire, England

Zone: 9

The view across the new terrace and garden shows the bespoke planters. The Chelmer clay paving bricks were cut in half longitudinally and mounted onto cement board to reduce the material input in order to achieve the shallow tolerances required for weight loading (right).



BEFORE: The original terrace space, legally the balustrade, had to be retained. The homeowner wanted a place of sanctuary, color, and planting diversity while accommodating areas for entertaining and relaxation. The space overlooks shared gardens whose access is restricted to residents only (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GAVIN MCWILLIAM

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This project shows excellent understanding of technical issues with loads and rooftop plantings. The openness of the plantings complements the classic nature of the existing parapet. The “Before” AstroTurf allows the “After” to be even better; it’s a great change to a growing roof space. The overall composition is good and fits the context. Love the concept of this garden!



The view across the gravel planting shows the new colorful diversity of plant material. The garden’s biodiversity and a pollination station create a feeding oasis for local insects and bees (above).

The view across the scree garden features the planting tapestry and planters (left).

STEAL THIS:

The plantings are dynamic and textured, positioned in random groups across the entire garden. Seasonal color and interest are delivered through perennials and low groundcover species, emphasizing early summer, autumn, and spring when the homeowner is in residence.

silver award



The serene four-season pond is reminiscent of a Northwoods lake, surrounded by trees and plant life, and providing a home for fish and wildlife.



BEACH VACATION AT HOME

Specialty Project Category

Project Location: Highland Park, IL

Reflections Water Gardens, Larry Carnes

reflectionswatergardens.com

Firm Location: West Dundee, IL

Zone: 5b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is a great and well-executed home design project. The excellent water garden is the feature, and it's so well done: it reflects the sky, has garden to lawn connections, and contains lots of details. What a beautiful natural swimming pool!

Boulders provide extra seating along the pond's perimeter, offering a space for reflection and for dangling one's feet (below middle).

The private, 46- by 23-foot sandy beach beckons visitors to indulge in hours of reading, relaxing, and swimming (below).

Serenity is found beside water whose surface is like glass—a space away from computers and mobile phones. This peaceful place is now enjoyed by two generations of the homeowner's family.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAPLAN STUDIOS PHOTOGRAPHY



**FRONT-YARD ZEN IN
HIGHLAND PARK**

Specialty Project Category

Project Location: Highland Park, IL

Reflections Water Gardens, Larry Carnes

reflectionswatergardens.com

Firm Location: West Dundee, IL

Zone: 5b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

What a stunning way to welcome guests to a home! It's a beautiful entry with strong lines and details that have been carried out in a simple way. As a standalone element, it's very well done.

A vertical pool adjacent to the walkway provides two illusions: the pool as a separate water feature and slab steps that seemingly float on water (above right).



STEAL THIS:

Within Zen philosophy, geometry provides balance—the yin and yang of life—where peace and tranquility are in harmony with work and play.



Koi gracefully glide through their peaceful water home.



A great room with steps to the second floor provides interior pool views for reflection and contemplation. The three jets deliver soothing sounds of gently dropping water (left).

The pristine water is the result of a complex water filtration system, for which controls are accessed from the home's basement.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAPLAN STUDIOS PHOTOGRAPHY

TORRENCE COURT CHILDREN'S GARDEN

Specialty Project Category

Project Location: Cincinnati, OH

Stride Studios, Bill Ripley, FAPLD

stridestudios.com

Firm Location: Madeira, OH

Zone: 6a

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

Excellent! What a great transformation of a hillside space into a place! It's a good linear space and place that show great construction and detailing. Overall, it's a good contribution to youth play and stories. These kids are so lucky to have such a beautiful, interactive space to enjoy outdoors. Love the details!



Year three of the installation; the hobbit hole façade is starting to fill in with vegetation (left).

PHOTOGRAPH BY
RYAN KRURTZ

The whimsical custom metal gate symbolizes the family's three children and shares the story about the neighborhood's prolific lizards. The lizards came to this country from Italy in the early 1900s with the home's original family (below).



This overhead view of the garden was taken from the home; the parents can keep an eye on the kids at all times (left).

The clients requested raised vegetable beds (whose side panels echoed the paneling in the home), a place to grow cut flowers, and space for outdoor "musical instruments." They also required a guardrail around the edge of the terrace as a safety feature for the children and visitors (right).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM RIPLEY



A CHILD'S HILLSIDE GARDEN

Specialty Project Category

Project Location: Fairview, NC

Gardens by Mardi, Mardi Letson

gardensbymardi.com

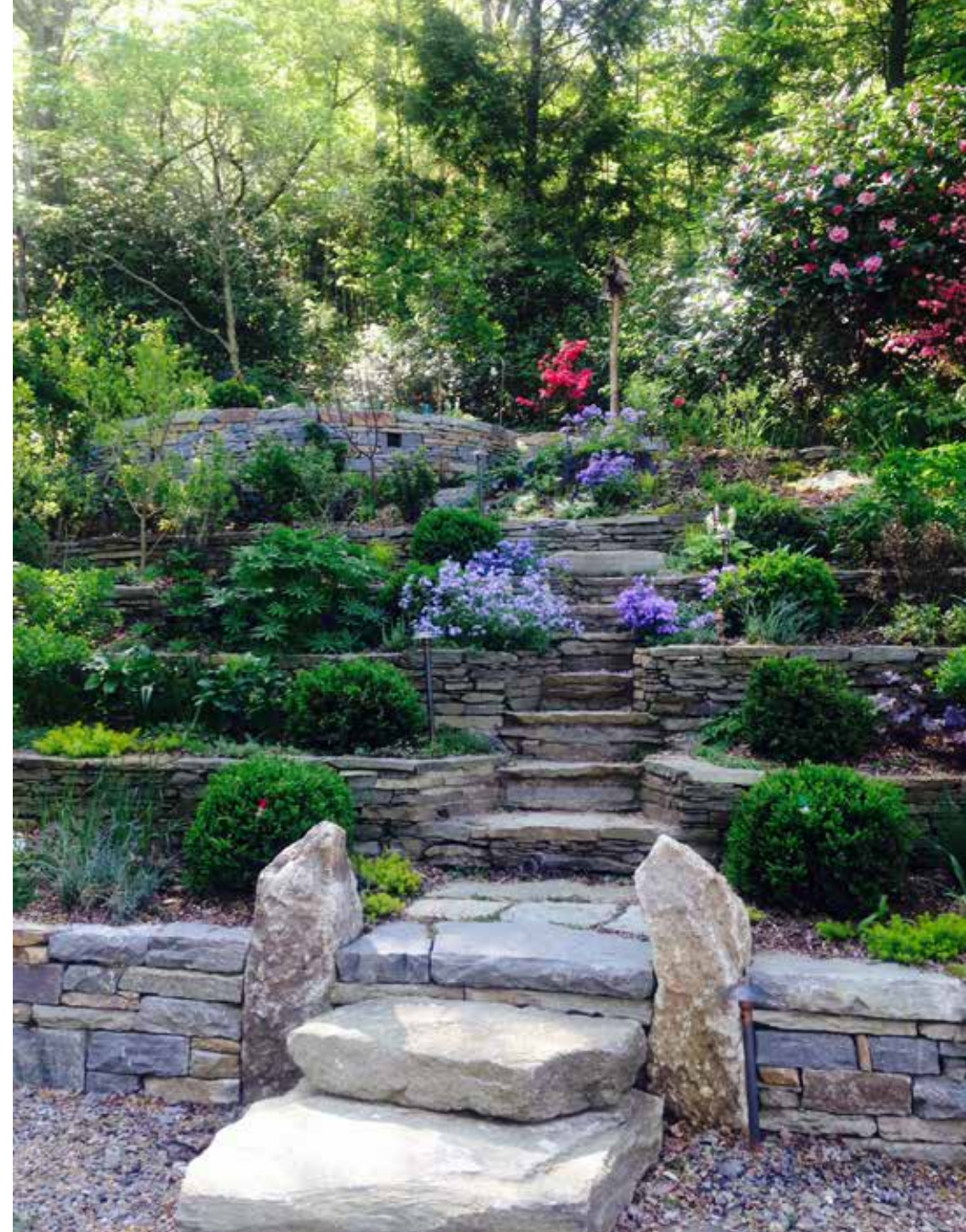
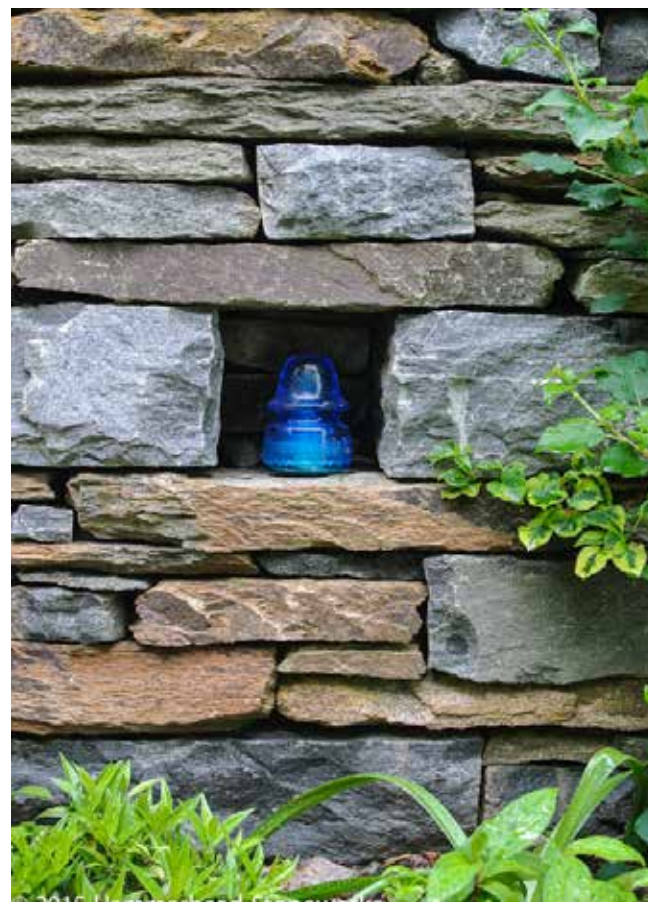
Firm Location: Asheville, NC

Zone: 7a

There are plenty of places for children to explore. Child-sized furniture invites reading, contemplation, and tea parties (above).

Incorporating “art and whimsy” was one of the client’s requests, so the homeowner’s family collection of insulators was repurposed as lighting. A conduit was built into the wall (right).

PHOTOGRAPHS THIS PAGE BY
MARC ARCHAMBAULT,
HAMMERHEAD STONework



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is an interesting area within an overall landscape. While the spaces are simple and directed by their location and context, the potential is in the utility as a space in time. The story potential, day and night, brings endless opportunity to all. This project features enchanting lighting, beautiful plantings, and lovely details. The stone craftsmanship is amazing.

Rhythm. Texture. Form. Color. Balance. Proportion. Harmony.
The garden is beautiful in every month (left).

STEAL THIS:

This lush, colorful, enchanting hillside garden entices children outside for imaginative play by featuring surprises in unexpected places, such as nooks for an outdoor fairy collection, child-sized furniture, ground level plantings to encourage inspection of tiny or unusual features, and labeled plants.

The upper area was graded to create a landing that was furnished with two chairs for the clients to enjoy the mountain views (left).

PHOTOGRAPHS THIS PAGE BY
HOMEOWNER



O'FARRELL RESIDENCE

Specialty Project Category

Project Location: Santa Fe, NM

Living Water Irrigation and Landscape LLC, Mark G. Brotton, APLD

livingwaterSF.com

Firm Location: Santa Fe, NM

Zone: 6b

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This project reflects good incorporation of water harvesting, Xeriscaping, and using locally sourced materials. The “Before” and “After” images are dramatic, almost as if they’re from two different clients. The project is an island within the overall site, and a good concentration of design contrasts to the native landscape beyond. This is an especially good plan with its onsite utility of water resources.

The pond plantings hide the fish in the pond from the direct sun. Simple and clean plantings encourage a soft and comfortable visual feel (top left).

The patio flows effortlessly in conjunction with the walkways and stone theme. Irrigation of the annual pots were plumbed through the flagstones to permit inconspicuous water connections (above).

The hardscape design included an inviting rear patio, safe walkways with excellent flow, and an attractive front entry along the driveway wall. This view shows how the walkway was widened, as well as, the stone theme consistent with appropriate transitions (left).

STEAL THIS:

The wood portal and latilla fencing was updated, and the culminating element was the set of custom metal gates showcasing the client's love for bats.



JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This majestic waterfall tucked closely to the seating area is a wonderful way to enjoy a water feature while sitting outdoors.

A lion face fountain provides a unique water source while bringing a feel of an old English garden into the space (above).

Hydrangea, Black-eyed Susan, and a mix of in-season perennials support the creeklike feel of this beautiful water space (right).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAPLAN
STUDIOS PHOTOGRAPHY

SUMMER SPECIAL IN SOUTH BARRINGTON

Specialty Project Category

Project Location: South Barrington, IL

Reflections Water Gardens, Larry Carnes

reflectionswatergardens.com

Firm Location: West Dundee, IL

Zone: 5b

The homeowner requested a companion front yard installation resulting in a spectacular, 6-foot-tall water feature with a “hidden” bluestone patio, seven primary cascades, and traffic-stopping roadside appeal (right).

Two seating areas—the dining up top and the lounging below—are within earshot of the pleasing sounds of moving water. Both provide perfect options for enjoying this outdoor summer retreat (bottom right).



STEAL THIS:

The water feature is based upon an illusion of height. The first waterfall is three feet tall, the second tier is five feet, the final is six feet tall, and the berm behind is even higher. Service mechanicals are set several feet belowground.



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PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLIE HOPKINSON

gold award



BREAKING GROUND

Project Location: London, Chelsea Flower Show

McWilliam Studio, Gavin McWilliam

mcwilliamstudio.com

Firm Location: Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, England

Zone: 9



In the ornamental meadow, wide drifts of *Salvia* 'Caradonna' connect the various cells of the meadow like a nascent thought or idea (far left).

Taller perennials including *Laser trilobum* emerged from the matrix planting, which also include *Melica altissima* 'Alba,' to create a light and airy quality (above).

The dry stone wall used sandstone to reference local geology. The same sandstone was used throughout the garden as gravel, paving, copings, and boulder seating to create a sense of unity (left).



apld.org

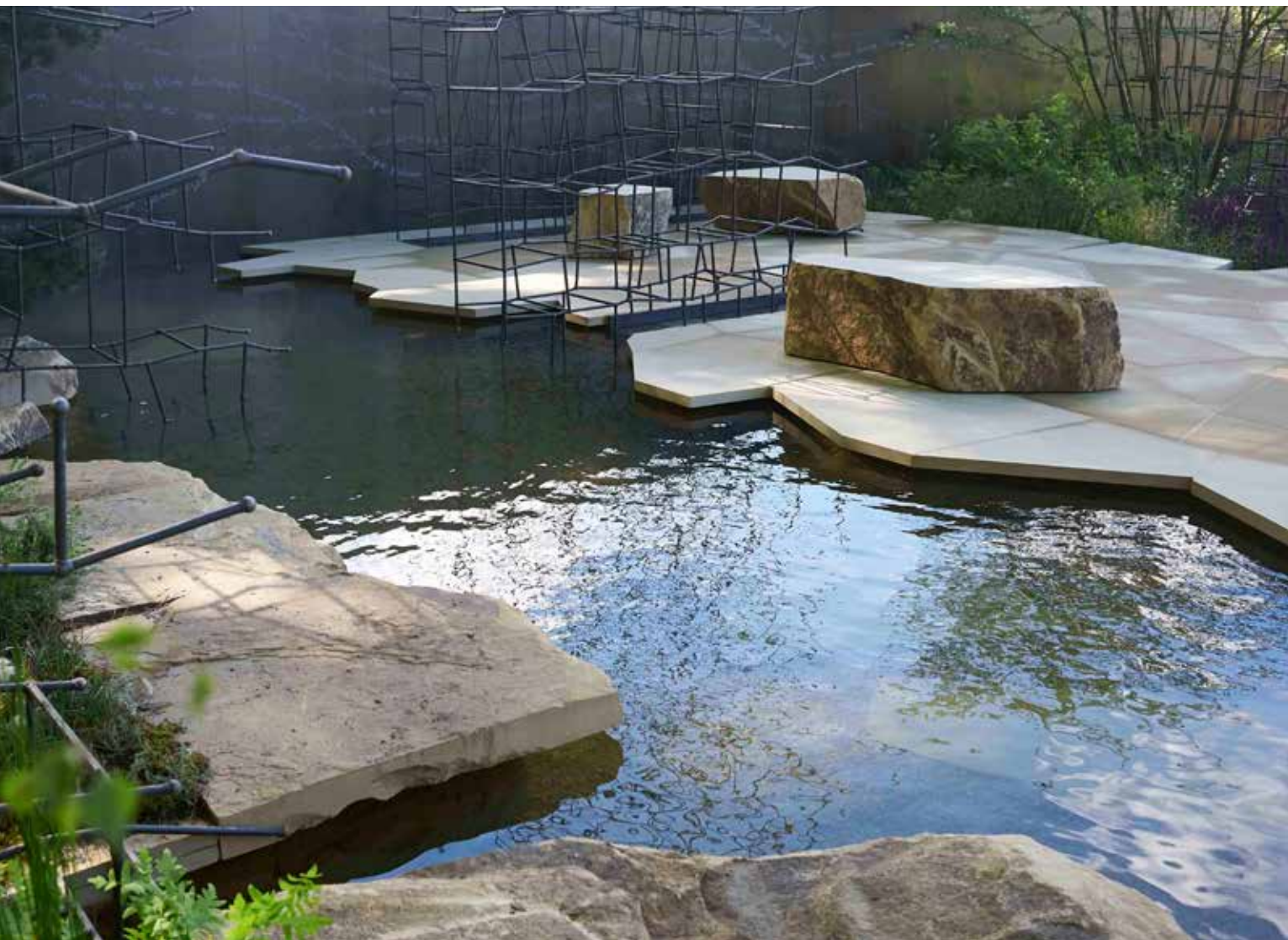
243

JUDGES' PERSPECTIVE:

This is a great small garden with a message. Its very interesting design concept focuses on breaking down barriers or “walls” to deliver education for all (rather than for a privileged few). Its contrasting natural edge to the pavement on one side and the refined cut edge in parallel is a telling statement for education. The open wall of individual cells that collectively define a mass represents the community. In contrast, the rich plantings “glue” the hard features to the ground, a platform for success. This is a strong concept that’s carried out nicely into this space. The complex and dynamic plantings and sculpture work well together.

The deep, clear pool linked the heathland to the new garden, formed of a large terrace and the “synaptic” meadow. The asymmetric shapes of the terrace paving referenced magnified patterns of neuron cells (below).

This view is along the length of the garden and transparent walls. The structural elements were designed to be relocated after the show and the long wall is used as a permanent feature at Wellington College (right).

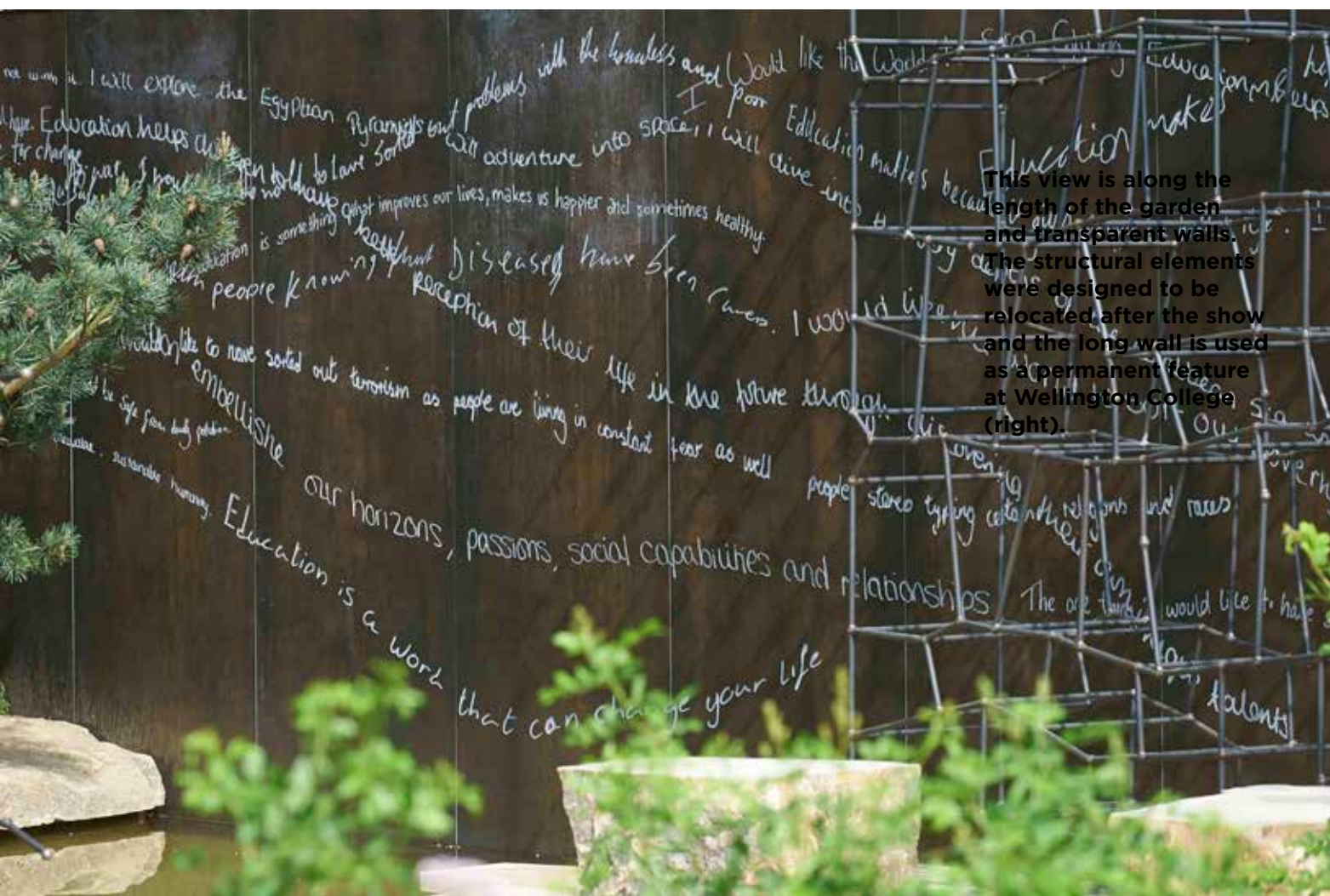
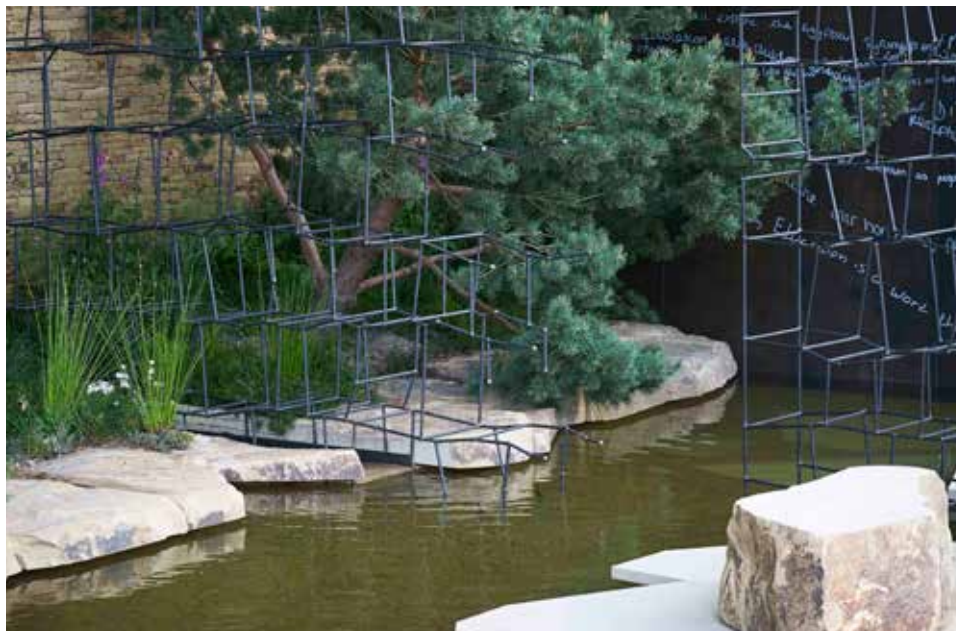


The planting to the rear of the garden recreated virgin heathland habitats, a mixture of grasses, *Pinus*, and *Betula*, now extremely rare and threatened.

STEAL THIS:

Tall steel sculptural “walls” created height and visual drama, transparent and light in visual terms but monumental and bold. The structure of the walls gradually opened to seemingly disappear.

The long side wall was constructed using large sheets of porcelain cladding printed in “Dark Steel” tone to match the steel walls, engraved with handwritten messages from Wellington scholars (below).



This view is along the length of the garden and transparent walls. The structural elements were designed to be relocated after the show and the long wall is used as a permanent feature at Wellington College (right).

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