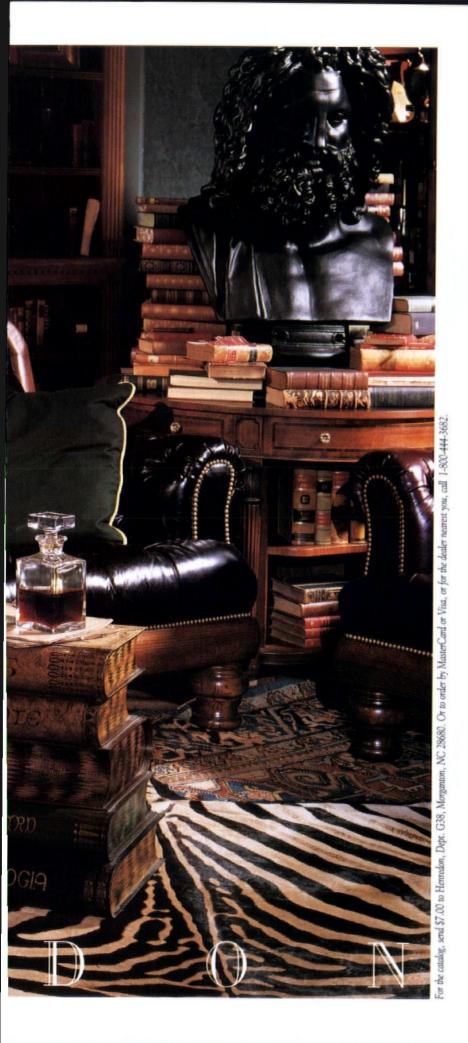




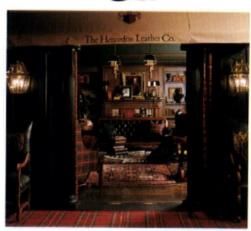
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Alberta Ferretti

House Garden

march threshold



garden

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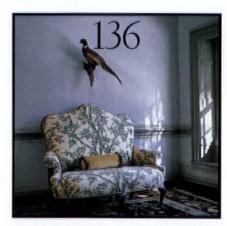
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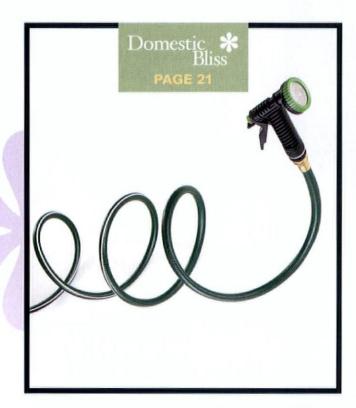
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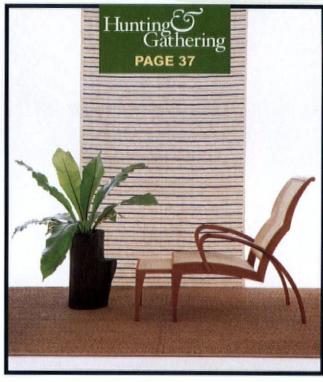
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march threshold





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BUNDLED UP AGAINST THE BITTER DECEMBER COLD, I set out for a long walk in the country. There are only two smoking chimneys on my lane; all the other houses are closed up until the summer season. Thus I am granted silent leave to cut through yards and across pastures, climb over stone walls, and find the shortest path to the sea. Along the way I inspect all the gardens,

down, too, for the season. I don't care what anyone says, dormant gardens are not, as a rule, beautiful. Yes, there's the occasional blush of color to admire—the crimson hue of a peculiar bark, say, or one late bloom arrested at the tip of a gangly stem, the carve of beds in the lawn, brought

into relief by a dusting of frost. But mostly it's a dismal sight. Vines curl and shrivel mid-reach; hosta beds wilt and mound like salad left in the bowl overnight; rose stalks wither cronishly, nothing left to soften the thorns. Dozens of little name tags poke up out of their earthen beds like tiny tombstones. It takes an act of will to imagine what life they once marked. Winter gardens are full of ghosts and memories; as T. S. Eliot says in *Four Quartets*, filled with "the hidden laughter of children in the foliage."

And perhaps that is really the gift of the winter garden. Rather than being a delight for the eye, it offers a chance to listen for the voices. My garden is a regular chorus, probably in danger of becoming a musical comedy. There's the Lover's Bed: so-named because this is the home of Miss Depressa, a weird, blue-green dwarf hysteric who grows along the ground, never touching. She's a fainter. She is accompanied by a handsome, sturdy dwarf fir who grandly sports one (the only one he's ever produced) outsize pinecone. There's Gary's Wall, named for the friend who rolled up his sleeves one day and, in time-honored farmer style, spent an afternoon artfully piling rocks. There's the Guest Bed,

planted for my favorite houseguests, who wanted something curtaining "their" window. Maybe I took a minimalist approach here; everyone who sees this bed wants to add something. My neighbor David generously offers stuff left from the thinning of his beds, beds his mother helped him put in years ago. I accept happily. And Duane, an extraordinary gardener, volunteers to fill in with specimen cuttings from her extensive beds. And so I hear the voices of all who accompany me as I carve my patchwork into this seacoast.

When we began planning this special report on the state of American gardening, that formidable hothouse of the Chelsea Flower Show was in full bloom in London. We were surprised to learn that the buzz among European designers was about American gardens. So we decided to take a closer look at what we were doing right. This, of course, is an ongoing inquiry in our pages, month to month. But there's satisfaction, and delight, in the variety in one issue—Idaho to Arizona, Malibu to Martha's Vineyard. Some gardeners trace a light impression on the land, some etch a bold print, some work in miniature, some with sweeping aplomb. All are finding their voices, with an increasing freedom of character. There is no one school of American gardening; indeed, there are schoolyard squabbles among gardeners about the right and wrong way to hit the ground—as if there were such a thing. Our intention is to celebrate the many possible paths we cut through the wilderness. Our gardening is patchwork, in the loveliest sense of the thing.

My grandmother in Kentucky used to make dresses for all her grandchildren. I remember she would have me lie down on the floor, perfectly still, on brown paper—grocery bags cut open and flattened—so that she could trace a pattern around my little

body. I'd watch as she'd transfer the pattern to fabric; the scraps would go into a quilting bag. Nothing would be thrown out; that was unthinkable. My boys and I, and my sisters and brother and cousins, sleep under quilts patched together over the years by my grandmother, and her mother, and her daughters. Sometimes I finger the tiny squares and imagine the dress or shirt someone wore, someone I knew and loved. So it is looking out over our gardens. Not a seed wasted.



Dominique Browning, EDITOR

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endless possibilities



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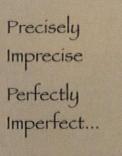






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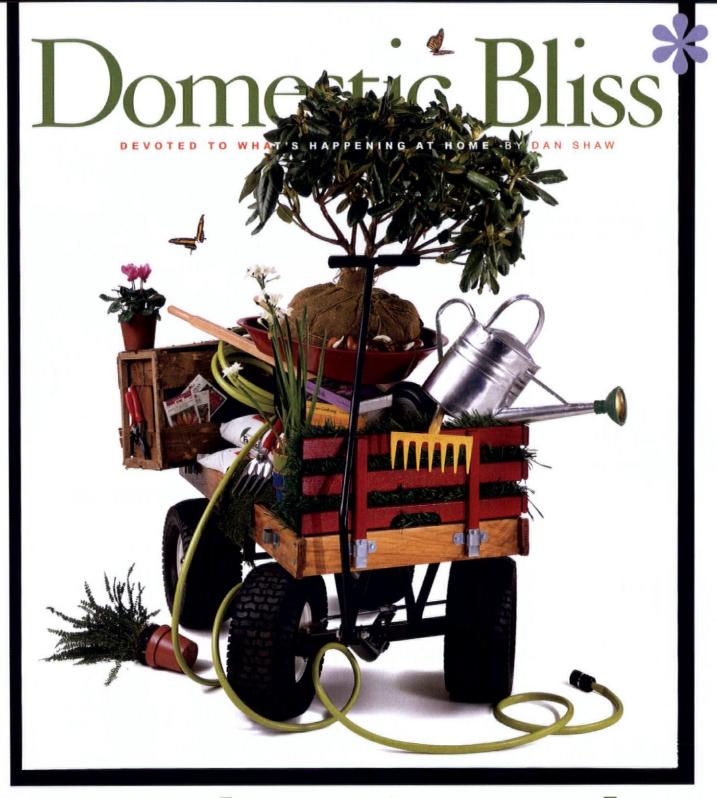




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ready, set, grow!

Whether it's a sport-utility vehicle for getting plants home from the nursery or a little red wagon for hauling peat moss to the perennial border, the right set of wheels is as essential as the right set of tools. No wonder The 20-Minute Gardener is obsessed with shears, spades, and trowels: Good tools make good sense.

Domestic Bliss*

fill'er up

Sport-utility vehicles are a gardener's best friend

ne expects a Park Avenue decorator like Bunny Williams to drive a Mercedes-Benz or Range Rover. But Williams, whose book *On Garden Style* has just been published by Simon & Schuster, drives a Chevy Suburban. "I used to have a Ford Explorer, but it wasn't big enough," says Williams, who spends a lot of time on weekends shopping at nurseries. "The Suburban was the biggest thing I could find that I could still drive. I even had a plywood shelf built for the back so I can haul a double tier of plants."

While a backlash is budding against the sport-utility vehicles and light trucks that are overtaking American roads (and the parking lots of American garden centers), these oversized station wagons are beloved by people who buy and sell plants. "Bigger is better,"

says Fred Hicks, former president of the American Nursery & Landscape Association, who runs Hicks Nurseries in Westbury, New York. He likes sport-utility vehicles because they make it easier to load flats and potted flowers. "With traditional cars,

you have to lift and lean over, which is bad for your back. It also increases the chances that you'll damage the plants. With a Ford

Explorer, the plants slide right in."

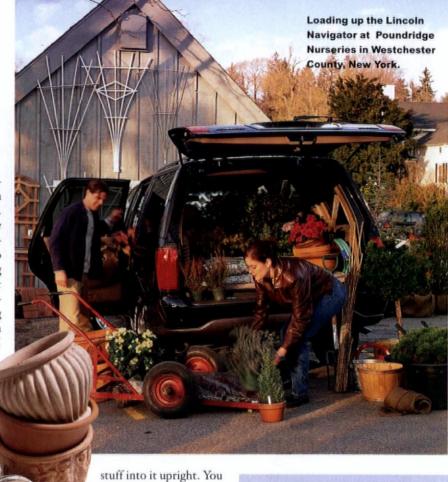
Phil Eichler, co-owner of the Urban Gardeners in Chicago and Galena, Illinois, swears by his Land Rover Discovery. "It's a real sport-utility vehicle. It's the little guy—not the Range Rover," he says. "It's not so big that you can't park it in the city, but it's high enough so you can get a lot of

stuff into it upright. You can buy shrubs and not crunch them."

With a pickup truck, there's no worry about squashing plants, but the absence of a roof isn't necessarily a good thing. "I cringe when I see someone drive into my

nursery in a pickup truck without a tarp," says Richard Berry, coowner of Goodness Grows in Lexington,
Georgia, which specializes in flowering
perennials and old-fashioned flowering
trees. "I tell them they should know better. Winds on a highway can destroy
plants." And at Petals from the Past, a
nursery in Jemison, Alabama, which concentrates on antique roses and heirloom
shrubs, covers are mandatory. "I insist
that everybody bring a tarp," says owner
Jason Powell. "We never let them leave
without the back covered, because we
can't insure the plants will survive."

But whether they use minivans or maxi-wagons, gardeners who opt for utility vehicles differ from those who drive traditional status cars in one major way, according to Dick Campbell, who runs three nurseries in and around Lincoln, Nebraska. "The people who drive BMWs and Lexuses," he says, "have everything delivered."



ROAD TEST

Not all sport-utility vehicles are truly utilitarian. We won't name names, but some of them just don't hold enough stuff. Sure, you can fold down the backseats for extra cargo space, but if you want to take the kids and the dog to the garden center, you need something really roomy, like the new, luxurious Lincoln Navigator. We took it to a nursery and filled it to the brim with:

One 'Blue Star' juniper in a 7" pot Two 3" pots of heather Two 1/2-cubic-foot bags of jade pebbles Two Chamaecyparis pisifera in 9" pots Two rosemary bushes in 6" pots Three small thyme plants One bay tree Two terra-cotta pots holding azaleas One dwarf balsam fir Two large terra-cotta pots One hose One watering can One dwarf white pine One large azalea in a 10-gallon pot One medium-size garden fork One bundle of bamboo stakes

The Chevy Suburban and Plymouth Voyager, a minivan, held even more: eleven and twelve bags of peat moss, respectively, in addition to the above. What's more, all three still had space for the kids and the dog.

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POTTING SHED

talk dirty

A highlight of the Chicago
Athenaeum's recent "Good
Design" exhibition—an
annual event established
in 1950 by Charles and
Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen, and Edgar Kaufmann—was the GE
Dura Phone, which
Ronald Lytel

designed for Thomson Consumer Electronics. (Like some

of the other objects in the show, it was a prototype and is not yet in production.) Lytel's goal was to make a cordless phone that could be treated like just another tool in the garage or workshop: The buttons are large, so it's possible to dial with gloved hands; and the rubber keypad's continuous surface prevents dirt and liquids from penetrating the unit. When the phone hits the market, it will be perfect for the potting shed. Is weeding exercise?

Pruning, mulching, composting, and double-digging can be as beneficial as jogging or swimming, according to Jeffrey P. Restuccio's *Fitness: The Dynamic Gardening Way* (Balance of Nature, \$12.95). His suggestions include combining lunges and squats with weeding (and even wearing ankle weights while gardening); doing chin-ups on a grape arbor, and raking in repetitions and sets, as you would with weights. What could be better than beautifying your backyard and your body at the same time?

cart of the matter

etting plants home from the garden center can be a challenge. Getting them to the right beds can be another. "Little red wagons are invaluable because they hold a lot of plants, and they are easy to pull around," says Richard Berry of Lexington, Georgia. Dick Campbell, of Lincoln, Nebraska, likes wood carts with bicycle tires, below. "They are easier to use than

a wheelbarrow, which needs to be balanced," he says. New York interior designer Bunny Williams likes old wheelbarrows for weeding because they're decorative, though she prefers wood-sided carts for hauling. "They have great balance," Williams says, "and I can pull them myself." Julie Moir Messervy, a Boston landscape designer, keeps red wagons for her children but says wheelbarrows are best on her property. "They can go up and down hills easily," she says. "And they don't get too full. Garden carts can get too heavy."

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GROW IN THE DARK

apermaking is one of those earthy, getyour-hands-dirty art forms, which helps explain how Helen Hiebert was inspired to create her Potted Lamp (\$300). The copper stem is planted in a terra-cotta pot, and the luminescent shade is fashioned from abaca paper handmade from a non-fruit-bearing banana plant found in the Philippines.

An artist based in Brooklyn, New York, Hiebert pierces, layers, weaves, and watermarks her own papers, which she turns into shades for lamps, night-lights, and lanterns. At an exhibition of her work this winter at the Dieu Donné Papermill gallery in New York's SoHo (212-226-0573), the Potted Lamp proved so popular that Hiebert is now developing a smaller, less expensive version. Long may her business bloom.

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rsus Books and Prints specializes in scholarly art books and 19th-century architectural and botanical prints. "These seed packets are a sideline, basically," says Evelyn Kraus, co-owner of the Manhattan shop

(212-772-8787). She came upon an untouched cache of color photolithographs made by the Card Seed Co. in upstate New York in the 1920s, which she sells for \$35 each. Kraus is reluctant to call them folk art. "They are high-end ephemera," says Kraus, who recommends framing them. "They weren't meant to be preserved, but from the vantage point of today we realize how well designed they are."



bamboozled

o give any room a quick hit of Asian attitude, trendy New Yorkers are propping fresh-cut tropical bamboo against their walls and on their bookshelves. "Bamboo is very popular now," says Tom Valdivieso, the manager of Caribbean Cuts, a wholesale florist in New York's Flower District, which sells stalks that are five to nine feet long. "You see a lot of bamboo used in window display and set design." But don't get attached to the look. "The bamboo won't stay green," says Valdivieso, who knows some people paint theirs. "It always dries out. How long that takes depends on how moist it was when cut and how dry the room you keep it in is." If you're lucky, the bamboo poles will last as long as

your infatuation with fusion decorating.



Murray Moss knows that people who like Gaetano
Pesce chairs and Noguchi lamps aren't
transformed into fuddy-duddy
Anglophiles when they garden. The
foldable Dutch watering cans (\$26)
that Moss has added to the vitrines at
his influential SoHo store (212-226-2190)
are as hip as they are practical. Made
of clear or flowered plastic, they can be
flattened and stored in a drawer.



Thirty-seven percent of American households participated in flower gardening in 1996. Flowergardening retail sales increased about 41.7 percent, from \$2.11 billion in 1995 to \$2.99 billion in 1996.



turn-of-the-century Viennese architectural drawings, Dora Frost, of Bridgehampton, New York, surrounds her main portraits with vignettes illustrating a property—special views, prizewinning flowers, important sculpture. Says McCort: "They're as much portraits of the family as of the house."

—Shax Riegler

picture-perfect

isitors understand. No garden ever looks as good today as it did last week, or will two weeks hence. While photographs can always document an especially vivid bloom or idyllic moment, it would take albums to convey everything gardeners feel about their spot of earth. But home-and-garden artists can capture a garden's elusive spirit. "I make the garden look the way the owners feel about it," says New York's Jill Gill, whose specialty is watercolor-and-ink pictures, right. While most gardeners opt to have their plots memorialized during the spring, a painting doesn't have to be realistic. To satisfy one grandiose client, Connecticut-based Maureen McCort made a "very intense" painting in which everything was blooming at once. Inspired by



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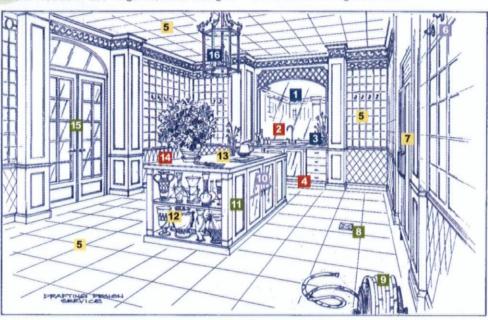
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the sweet smell of excess

In the perfect flower-arranging room, the sink Cathy Graham; New York interior decois deep enough for a big vase; the floor is washed clean with the wave of a hose; and flowers stay fresh in a glass-fronted cooler. We asked some experts-Wayne Woods, owner of the Woods in Los Angeles; floral designer

rator Howard Slatkin: Carolyne Roehm. author of A Passion for Flowers; and Berkeley floral designer Carrie Glennfor their must-haves. The result is a fantasy constructed from great ideas.



Carolyne Roehm

Large wall mirror for

- Howard Slatkin Wayne Woods Carrie Glenn Cathy Graham

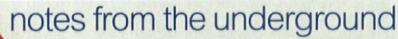
- a 360-degree view of flower arrangements Deep sink with a high faucet for large vases and for floating
- droopy flowers Drawers to keep tools, like Kengyu scissors, organized and accessible
- Separate drawer for florist's foam, tape, and other supplies
- 5 Tiled walls, ceiling, and floors are easy to clean and withstand splashing water from the hose Wall hooks for hanging up tools, baskets, and a broom 7 Traulsen refrigerator with transparent doors to keep flowers cool and fresh
- I Floor drain to
- prevent puddles

- Garden hose for rinsing buckets, filling vases, and spraying down floors **III** Glass-fronted
- cabinets protect fragile vases The center island's
- 41-inch height provides a comfortable level for working
- 12 Adjustable shelves under the table hold vases of different sizes
- 13 Gas burner for searing the stems of poppies, dahlias, and chrysanthemums Marble counter to provide a waterproof surface for cutting stems and branches Wide doorways make it easy to move large arrangements 16 French chandelier for an aesthetic work

space and warm light

AS ALWAYS

"Summer's lease hath all too short a date," Shakespeare lamented. Not so the blooms that Barbra Scott fashions into voluptuous bouquets in her Manhattan studio (212-691-0277). The former clothing designer makes arrangements of preserved flowers using a technique that has been around since Louis XIV. She places live blossoms in barrels of very fine sand to sit for five to ten days until all of their moisture has been extracted. Kept in an air-conditioned environment during humid months, her bouquets maintain their color and shape for up to a year. The flowers don't smell, but that hasn't stopped decorators like David Easton and Parish-Hadley from coming back for more. Scott's motto is "The more colors, the better." She says, "If you are going to have an arrangement for a year, you want to see something different in it every time you walk into the room." -LYGEIA GRACE



"Garden notebooks are invaluable," declares House & Garden's garden editor, Senga Mortimer, whose favorites are the pocket-sized volumes from Smythson of Bond Street. "Whenever I see a plant I like in someone's garden, I ask them where they got it and how it performs." She always jots down blooming time, too, which is essential information. "Notebooks are the best way to record garden lore."



THE DIRT

Thirty-one percent of American households had indoor houseplants

in 1996. The average household spent \$31 on them.

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waterworld

prinklers are a gardening basic," declares Bruce Butterfield of the National Gardening Association. "They're probably the easiest method to use and the least expensive way to water your garden."

Although they are often criticized for wasting water, sprinklers are still the people's choice-13 million households bought them in 1996. But the news is not all bad. People have "gotten smart about using them," says Butterfield, who recently directed the NGA's National Gardening Survey. "They are using more mulch to keep moisture in the ground, and they are also gardening with more native plants," which demand less water. But even if you employ a sprinkler for the most environmentally incorrect of uses-namely, the front-yard lawntake comfort in knowing you're not a maniac. Says landscape architect Perry Guillot, "A well-kept lawn is symbolic of how tidy a person's life can be."



The Rotary sprinkler by Gilmour, \$14.99, and Swan Garden Hose, \$19.99, at Gracious Home, 800-338-7809.

rock of vases

With its shagreen boxes and raku ceramics, Donna Karan's home collection is known for being as esoteric as it is elegant. This spring, she offers her usual array of Asian-influenced pieces. But the surprises are the humble but sensuous vases made from hollowed-out stones found on the New England coast (\$55 to \$240). While her vases, left, usually demand exotic flora, these vessels look wonderful filled with ordinary flowers. Rock on.

The Children's

Kitchen Garden

A Beck of Gardening.

Cooking, and Learning

see jane grow

Georgeanne and Ethel Brennan's The Children's Kitchen Garden: A Book of Gardening, Cooking, and Learning (Ten Speed Press, \$16.95) encourages children and adults to soil their hands together, cultivating herbs and vegetables that they can turn into delicacies. Ethel borrowed this multidisciplinary

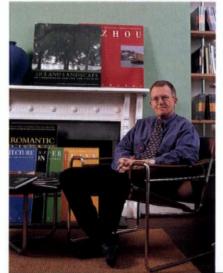
approach to food from Berkeley's East Bay French-American School, where she is a teacher. The book includes composting tips, a guide to conducting a citrus tasting, and easy recipes (spinach-and-artichoke cake, for example). If your children like salsa straight from the jar, imagine how they'll take to the homemade variety for which they've grown the tomatoes themselves. —JAMIE WAUGH

publish or perish

Spacemaker Press preserves great landscape designs for posterity

andscape architects, according to publisher James G. Trulove, aren't like regular architects. They are quieter, less driven by ego, and seldom possess a flare for self-promotion, so few of them are famous. With Spacemaker Press, Trulove hopes to redress that imbalance. He and landscape architect Peter Walker have created a series of monographs that celebrate the garden world's best and brightest. Though aimed at professionals, many of

James Trulove, in his Washington, D.C., office, is a publisher with a purpose



these books will appeal to amateurs. The Rebirth of New York City's Bryant Park shows—with sketches, plans, and photographs—how the park evolved from a dangerous, open-air drug market into one of the most beloved public spaces in Manhattan. Another standout is American Designed Landscapes, a collection of Alan Ward's evocative black-and-white photographs. The series also includes an anthology of Peter Walker's minimalist work and a tome celebrating the irreverent, sometimes off-thewall installations of Walker's wife, Martha Schwartz.

— DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN



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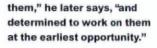
THE BUSINESS OF BLISS

made in the shade

How impatiens became America's favorite annual

1896 Impatiens from East Africa arrive in Britain courtesy of Dr. John Kirk, a British physician and naturalist.

1943 Claude Hope, an Army researcher whose hobby is plant taxonomy, arrives in Costa Rica and finds that impatiens in all colors (except white and purple) are ubiquitous. "I was charmed by



1956 Bob Riemen, at the Ball Seed Company in West Chicago, IL, starts breeding impatiens to improve quality through hybridization. G. Carl Ball, chairman of the board, finds white impatiens in Wisconsin and brings them back to West Chicago, where they become the parent line for 'Pixie White' impatiens.

1968 Claude Hope develops more floriferous 'Elfin' impatiens, which he sends to the PanAmerican Seed Company, a Ball subsidiary. Mrs. Carl Ball plants some surplus trial 'Elfin' at her home. All summer long, drivers stop their cars to inquire about the plants' identity.

1969 Ball Seed Catalogue introduces 'Elfin' impatiens in eight colors.

1980 Ball Seed Catalogue introduces 'Super Elfin' impatiens, which have better architecture—improved branching and thus more flowers.

1989 Ball introduces a new class of seed-propagated New Guinea impatiens,

which tolerate more direct sunlight and are an instant hit with consumers.

1995 The National Garden Bureau celebrates 1995 as the Year of the Impatiens.

1997 Commercial growers sell 17 million flats of impatiens (worth \$108 million), which makes them the number-one bedding plant in America. White is the most popular (because it mixes well with other colors); red is the second.



doggone!

You can't help smiling when leafing through a Lillian Vernon catalogue. What other mail-order company offers to monogram everything from travel mugs and mouse pads to silver-plated toothpick holders? After 47 years, Lillian Vernon (800-285-5555) will publish its first all-garden catalogue this month. It will include items like the dog planter with basket, above, a floral-chintz-and-macramé lacetrimmed hammock; and a bird feeder shaped like a little girl. Go ahead, smile



magnificent obsession

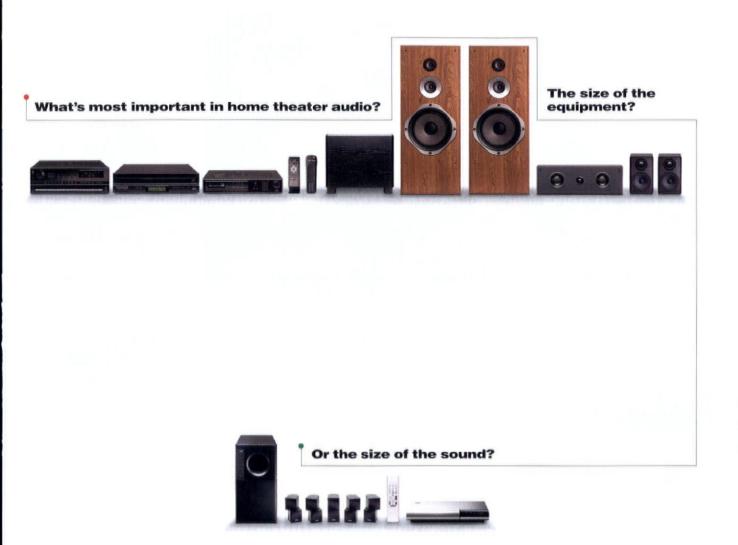
t Crate & Barrel's flagship store on North Michigan Avenue in Chicago, the sidewalk gardens outside are meant to lure shoppers inside. "It's gardening as window dressing," says Doug Hoerr, the landscape architect responsible for planting Crate's four 12-by-20-foot plots on the retail strip known as the Magnificent Mile. "We try to make it theater."

He also tries to make it homey. "The gardens are supposed to be an extension of the store's holistic approach to living," he explains. "We have to make it look like a personal garden that's been growing for two to three years, with the layers of detail you would only find in your own yard." But not necessarily a garden in zone 5. Last summer, for instance, Hoerr planted bamboo and other tropicals, which looked swell

on the sidewalk in August but would never have survived a Chicago winter. "Doug works hard at creating spectacular spaces," says Crate & Barrel's founder Gordon Segal. "He takes us places we've never been by putting things in an urban setting that you've never expected. He's not just a landscaper; he's an artist."

Hoerr's lush and inventive plantings have inspired other merchants along North Michigan Avenue to improve their landscaping, too. (Burberrys, for one, has hired Hoerr to do its plots across the street.) "Stores that used to spend three thousand dollars a year are now spending twenty thousand," says Hoerr, who is also responsible for the street's median strips. Needless to say, Michigan Avenue has never looked more magnificent.





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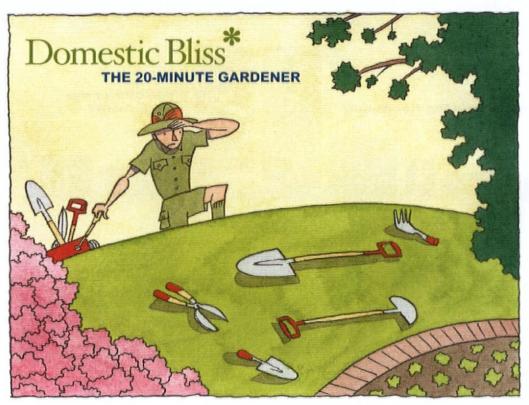
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fools for tools

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The quality of the

tools determines

the quality of

the experience

here is a weekend in early March that Tom always devotes to readying his tools for the upcoming gardening season. He spends hours dressing wooden handles with linseed oil and sharpening blades and edges. Marty scoffs at this. He has proposed a really insulting Freudian explanation for Tom's tool fixation, and he always points out that he, Marty, manages to garden without wasting a moment on such maintenance.

Tom agrees that if he had tools like Marty's, with any lasting benefits, since, on average, he loses he wouldn't maintain them, either. But Tom a garden tool within a day of taking it out of

has got a lot of money tied up in his horticultural armory. He will buy only the very best (usually by mail order: A. M. Leonard of Piqua, Ohio, is his tool purveyor of choice; 800-543-8955). Tom's pruning shears are Swiss, his spades are English and

Dutch, and his trowel was forged in Maine.

Tom learned during his years as a professional gardener that the quality of the tool determines not only the quality of the work but also the quality of the experience. Really fine tools do cost more, but they are better balanced and so are easier to wield and less tiring to use. The handles fit your hand better, and this protects against blisters. What's more, they're made from superior steel, so a premium tool's cutting edges are not only easier to sharpen but also stay sharp longer.

The difference between gardening with good tools and gardening with cheap ones, Tom main-

tains, is like the difference between driving a Ferrari and driving an old Econoline van—except that the price differential is measured in tens of dollars rather than tens of thousands.

Marty replies that he cannot perceive any difference in the quality of the hole made by a plastic trowel and the quality of the one made by Tom's handmade Down-East number. Anyway, Marty insists that the best tools would not provide him with any lasting benefits, since, on average, he loses a garden tool within a day of taking it out of

the box. He claims that this is intentional. Dropping each tool at the site of its use, Marty explains, ensures that no matter where he is in the garden, he will always have at hand the exact implement he needs. Storing tools in the open air quickly ruins them, how-

ever, so Marty prefers to buy his in bulk, and cheap, at the local discount store.

There is a third approach to tools, which Tom learned when he sought counsel on potatoes from Nancy Ross, a vegetable virtuoso in Mount Kisco, New York. Because it's a long walk from her toolshed to her garden, she, like Marty, habitually stores her tools *in* the garden. But, like Tom, Nancy demands quality. So she buys weatherproof tools made of stainless steel. This is a reasonable compromise. As such, it appeals to neither Tom nor Marty.

-MARTY ASHER AND TOM CHRISTOPHER

THE GAME PLAN



Knock rough spots and splinters off wooden handles with mediumcoarse (#80 grit) sandpaper.



Wipe handles with a damp cloth, then coat with boiled linseed oil. Set in a sunny, warm spot to dry.



To sharpen such tools as spades and shovels, remove nicks with a power drill fitted with a coarse grinding disk. Follow the angle of the bevel; leave tool's cutting edge even and smooth.



Finish by stroking down and across the cutting edge with an eight-inch bastard file. Match the angle of the manufacturer's bevel. Sharpen fine cutting tools, such as knives, with a diamond hone.



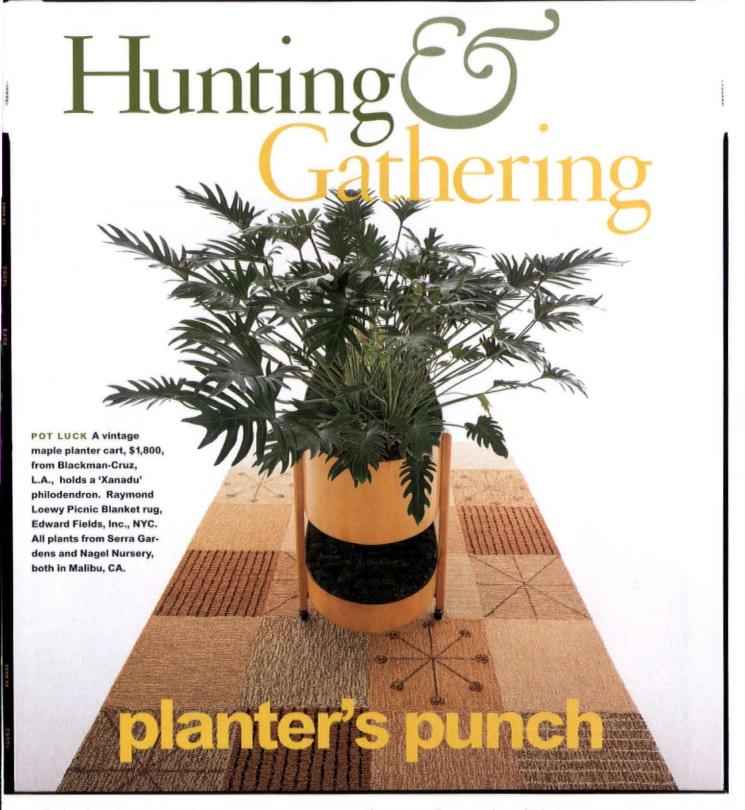




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Philodendron, we hardly knew you. Bird's-nest fern, why didn't we notice you before? Could it be that **planter** you're wearing? Maybe it's the **lighting** or the **furniture** that shows you off to your best advantage. All of a sudden, houseplants, we really like **your style**. This month, we also get **literal-minded**: since several new perfumes are made from **flower essences**, we turned them into bouquets.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD EBERLE PRODUCED BY PAUL FORTUNE



THEY'RE PRETTY, THEY'RE SCULPTURAL, they come from the earth. So why are we so afraid of houseplants when we decorate? Banish the thought of dentists' offices and fern bars. Remember instead those mid-century modernists Ray and Charles Eames, who made rubber plants look stylish in their much photographed living room. It's all in the presentation, as *House & Garden* West Coast editor Paul Fortune discovered when he paired indoor plants with unusual containers, furniture, and rugs. While he used one or two rare plants, including a *Polypodium nudum* hanging fern from Fiji, most were

[WINDOWS]

[WEAVES]

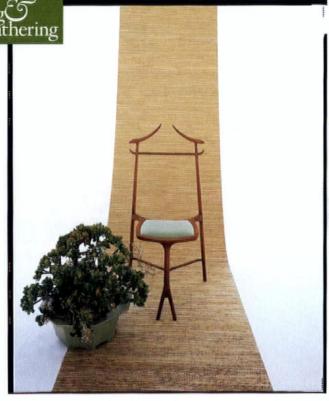
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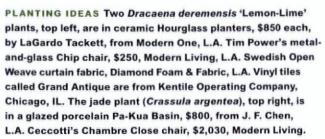
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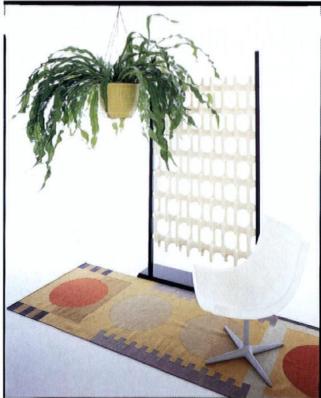
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Grasscloth, Donghia, NY. A group of hen and chickens succulents (*Echeveria elegans*), above left, is in a Hortus planter with varnished beech legs, \$850, through Diva, L.A. Matteo fabric by Creation Baumann, Rockville Centre, NY. The fern (*Polypodium nudum*), above right, hangs in a Bauer Ring Jardinier pot, \$350, from Wells Antiques, L.A. Wood-and-plastic vintage screen, \$2,450, from Modernica, L.A. Umbria handwoven wool rug by David Shaw Nicholls, \$1,220, from Modern Living. The polyurethane Y's chair by Christophe Pillet, \$1,715, at Diva.

Wouldn't it be wonderful.





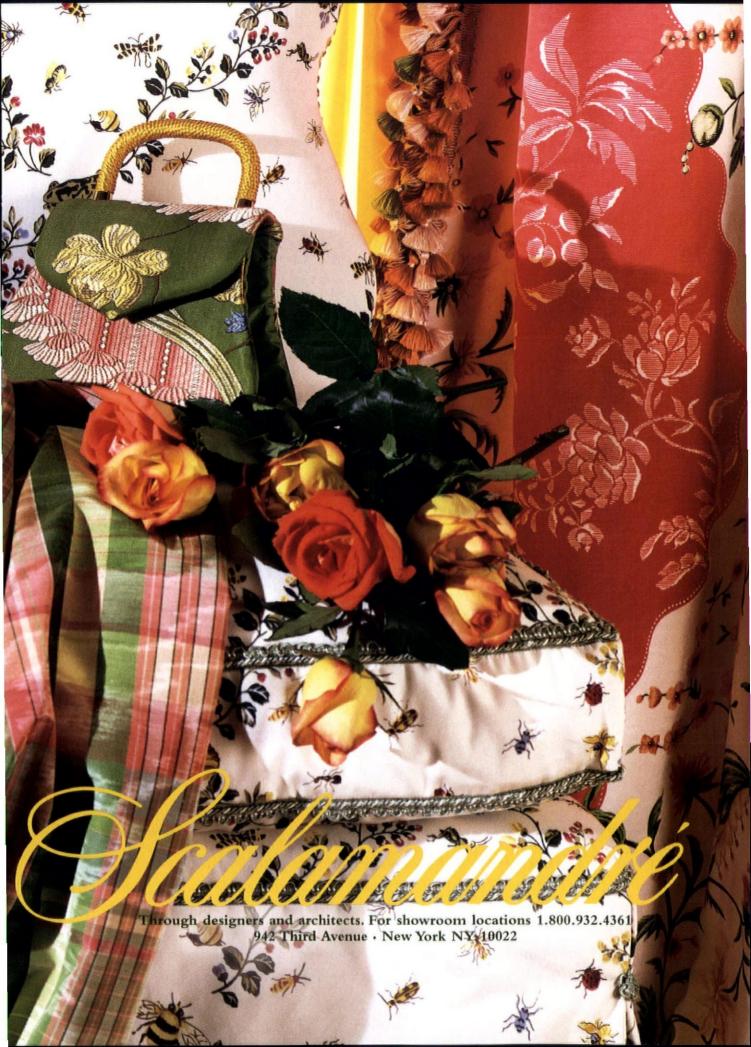
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garden-variety species like jade plants and dracaenas. For inspiration, he looked to two heydays of the houseplant—Edwardian England and 1950s America. The Edwardians favored unusual specimen plants, like velvet elephant ear, which Fortune contrasts with real velvet on a taupe salon chair. In the 1950s, large plants were used like art, much as the huge philodendron on the opening page resembles a Calder mobile, its spray of leaves spreading over the sides of a vintage planter cart. Whether the backdrop is a silk curtain or a brown linoleum-tile floor, these settings bring new life to the plant kingdom.





AMERICAN PERFUME DESIGNERS must be spending quality time in their flower beds, because many of the latest fragrances smell like spring gardens. We wondered what some new perfumes would look like if we turned their accents into bouquets. A professional nose at International Flowers and Fragrances identified the flowers most prominent in these scents, and Manhattan florist Renny Reynolds created arrangements to represent the essences. Reynold's bouquet for Origins's Spring Fever is a miniature rain forest, all

A Touch of the Orient

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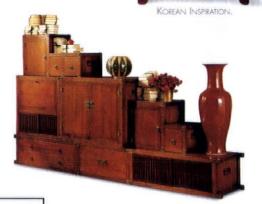
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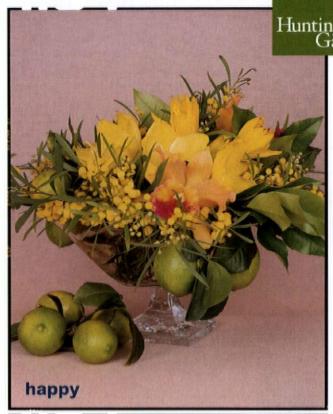
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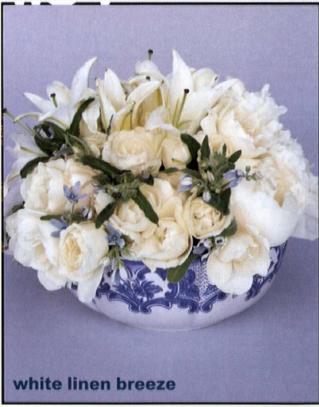
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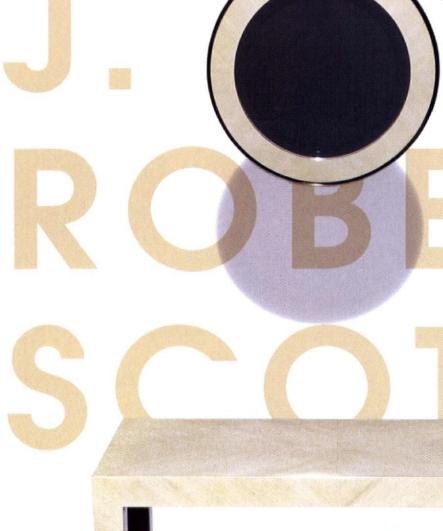






green and spicy. For Clinique's Happy, he concocted a sunny combination of mimosa and orchids. Carolina Herrera's 212 became an elegant profusion of white nerine and lily of the valley. Now our rooms can smell as good as we do. What a breath of fresh air.

IN FULL BLOOM Clockwise from top left: Clinique's Happy smells of mimosa, orchids, amaryllis, and lime. Bowl, \$175, Simon Pearce, NY. Carolina Herrera's 212 contains essence of nerine, lily of the valley, and calla lily. Silver vase, \$995, Asprey, NY. Liz Claiborne's LIZSPORT has notes of peony and freesia. Bud vase, \$45, Calvin Klein, NY. Estée Lauder's White Linen Breeze became a bouquet of cream-colored peonies, 'Casa Blanca' lilies, and roses. Delft bowl, \$50, Tiffany & Co.



something
small and elegant
can fill a
large space.

- Sally Sirkin Lewis

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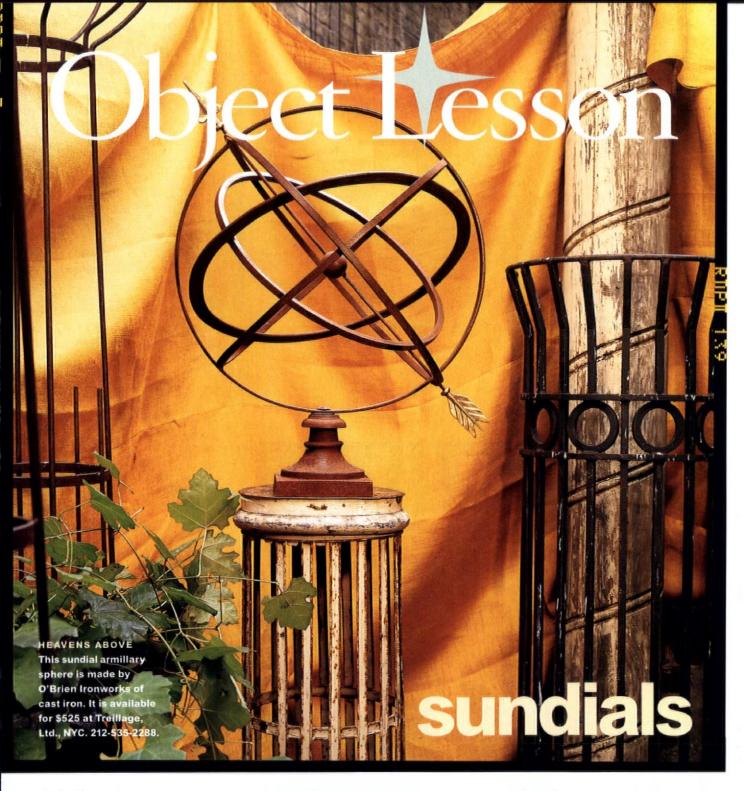
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C L A S S I C D E S I G N



Of all **garden ornaments**, none but the sundial can be said to have **fascinated** both ancient mathematicians and Gertrude Jekyll, that **ultimate arbiter** of gardening **good taste**. Sure, there have been advances in time telling since sundials were invented. But what can compare with **the romance** of these objects, **crafted over the millennia** just to capture the sun's daily **shadow play**?

WRITTEN BY INGRID ABRAMOVITCH PRODUCED BY STEPHEN ORR
PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATTHEW BENSON

Object Lesson

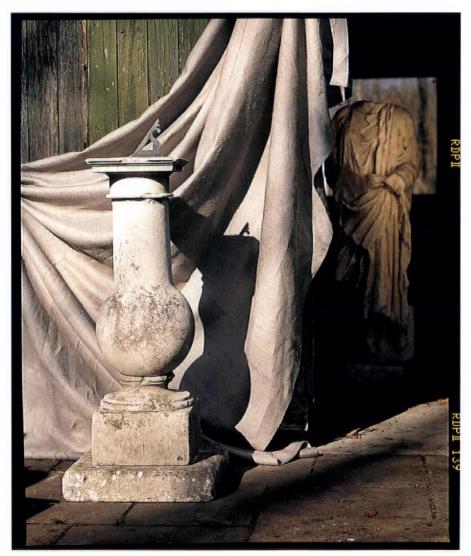
FACES OF TIME

In a digital age, sundials may have lost their edge, yet time has not passed them by. These timepieces won't patch into your computer, and you can't take them diving at five hundred feet. Sundials work in a more organic way, by capturing the shadow cast by the sun as it traces its diurnal path across the sky. This may be an antiquated method of time-keeping, but it is inarguably romantic, so much so that sundials have earned a permanent place in the garden. As Gertrude Jekyll, the English garden designer, decreed at the turn of the century, "A sundial is always welcome in pleasure ground."

Sundials tell solar time, which is not the same thing as the time on your watch. Because the earth revolves on an axis,

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high noon—when the sun is directly south—occurs at a different moment in Schenectady than it does in St. Paul. That is why time zones were invented: you couldn't run the trains on schedule if every village kept solar time.

The earliest sundials, probably developed in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, were simple, consisting of poles or L-shaped bars rigged up as the sundial's gnomon, the part that casts the shadow. Over the years, ingenious changes were made to the basic form. There were horizontal dials, in which a metal face was mounted on a stone pedestal, and armillary spheres, with their intersecting rings, which were first used as astronomical models. Elaborate floral dials made of living plants were a Victorian specialty.

Along with beautifully crafted forms, sundials also inspired a kind of poetry in the mottoes that were often inscribed on their metal plates. These range from the common "I count only the sunny hours" to the less reverent inscription on the sundial at Ladew Topiary Gardens in Maryland, attributed to Hilaire Belloc: "I am a sundial and I make a botch/ of what is done far better by a watch."

Today, sundials are widely available, from the inexpensive versions sold at garden centers for less than \$100 to reproductions of antique dials, like the replica of a nineteenth-century bronze armillary dial, sold by Kenneth Lynch & Sons in Wilton, Connecticut, for \$460, which both marks the time and shows the signs of the zodiac.

ON A PEDESTAL Reproduction armillary sundial, top, \$460, Kenneth Lynch & Sons, Wilton, CT. 203-762-8363. The horizontal dial, left, ca. 1765, is English Portland stone, \$7,200, from the Garden Antiquary, Cortlandt Manor, NY. 212-757-3008.



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MANY SUNDIALS

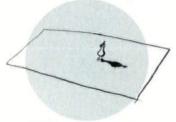
In her 1902 book, Sun-Dials and Roses of Yesterday, Brooklyn's own garden writer Alice Morse Earle suggests these guidelines for placing a sundial:



AT THE CROSSING OF TWO PATHS
Framed by low-growing roses



But not so tall that they block the sun



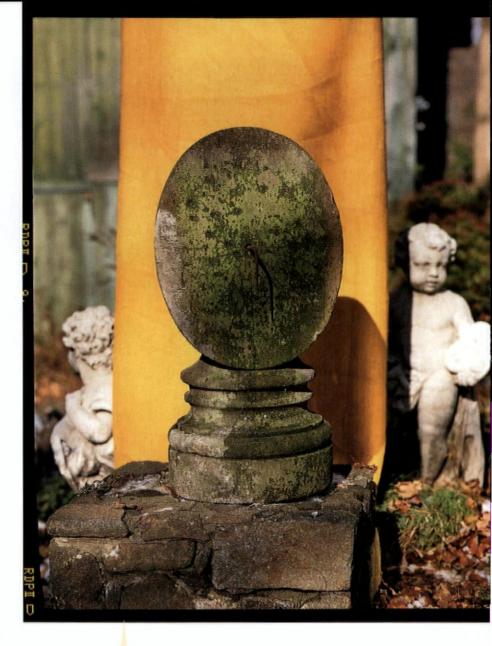
IN THE MIDDLE OF A VAST LAWN
For the minimalist look



What would be more apt than thyme?



AT THE END OF A LONG VIEW Perhaps framed by rows of pines



"sundial time is in rhythm with the seasons. There's something natural about putting one in the garden"

SARA SCHECHNER GENUTH SUNDIAL HISTORIAN, MARYLAND

More expensive, and highly collectible, are the antique dials that turn up at auctions or antiques shops. Barbara Israel, a dealer in Katonah, New York, says early-twentieth-century dials from America and Europe may go for \$2,500 to as high as \$4,500; eighteenth- and nineteenth-century dials, with their elaborately carved stone pedestals, sell for up to \$12,000.

Sundials work only if they are set up properly (see "Telling Time," next page). And the most common variety, the horizontal, should be adjusted for the latitude of the place where it will be used. If you don't buy a dial made specifically for your location, you can usually adjust the angle of the dial plate so that it will read accurately.

For advice on setting up a sundial, contact the North American Sundial Society, whose members—they call

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE The Aztec-style vertical sundial, above, is 19th-century Mexican and made of carved stone. It is \$6,500 from the Garden Antiquary. "Even in the dark, Kate always finds us the most comfortable seats in the house.

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Object Lesson





For a sundial to work, the gnomon must point to celestial north. making the gnomon parallel to the earth's axis. Every hour, the shadow cast by the sun will rotate 15 degrees, or 360 degrees a day. Mike Rogers, president of the Wind & Weather catalogue, offers this method for setting up a sundial: Go out at night and find the North Star. Make sure the dial plate is level. Direct the pointed end of the gnomon toward the North Star. This is enough to set up an armillary or equatorial dial. Horizontal dials must also be adjusted for the latitude. Do this by tilting the dial with a wedge. For more information on adjusting a sundial, consult Albert E. Waugh's Sundials: Their Theory and Construction, or contact the North American Sundial Society, 8 Sachem Drive, Glastonbury, CT 06033.

MAKE A POINT A 19th-century French Romanesque horizontal dial, above, \$1,750, at the Garden Antiquary. A detail of the bronze gnomon on a 1920s sundial, top, \$1,200, from Treillage. Sources, see back of book.

themselves "dialers"—trade information on sundial placement (and plan trips to view prime specimens, like the equatorial dial designed by Henry Moore for Chicago's Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum). There is also a sundial Web site (www.sundials.co.uk) run by the British Sundial Society.

But as Sara Schechner Genuth, a museum curator who specializes in sundials, points out, few people are "persnickety about time measurement out among the flowers." For most, it's enough that these ornaments are beautiful in themselves, existing, like the plants and flowers, in harmony with the sun above.

DIAL SIGNALS: A GLOSSARY OF SUNDIALS

HORIZONTAL DIALS The most common of sundials, they have a flat, often circular metal plate and a triangular gnomon that casts a shadow. These dials are usually set on pedestals decorated with figures such as Father Time assisted by Cupid. VERTICAL DIALS The plate, similar to that on horizontal dials, is mounted on a wall or column. Most are placed facing south. ARMILLARY SPHERES The dial is a sphere formed by a series of solid rings. A rod, usually an arrow, lies parallel to the earth's axis and serves as the gnomon. These can be adjusted for any latitude. **EQUATORIAL DIALS Like armil-**

lary spheres, but on these the rings

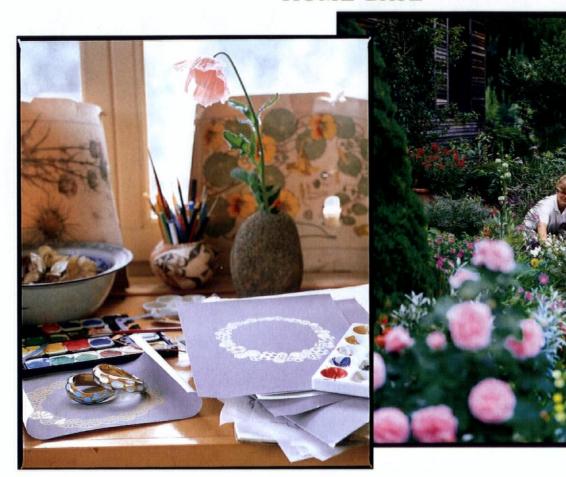
are left open. Some have only a semicircular ring as a dial plate. FLORAL SUNDIALS Topiary dials are made by arranging plants in a pattern to form the dial face.

GREEN GIANT 1898 topiary sundial, Broughton Castle, Oxfordshire, England.



ertise 5881 dept.015

fabric wallpaper window to diments. Waverly designs as shown: Brillian



Jewelweed

Angela Cummings's garden brings forth roses, bracelets, hydrangeas, and necklaces

BY JANE LANE

NGELA CUMMINGS is one of those rare gardeners who shares a friendship with her plants, a camaraderie with each rock and tree, a frank intimacy with every contour of the land. Quiet and thoughtful, she nods out the livingroom window of her Greenwich, Connecticut, house on a winter day to a bold copper witch hazel standing watch in the burnished grass. "We're a competitive society, and everyone wants to be on top of the heap," Cummings says, settling into the folds of a tan leather sofa. Dressed in an oversized loden sweater and trousers, the jewelry

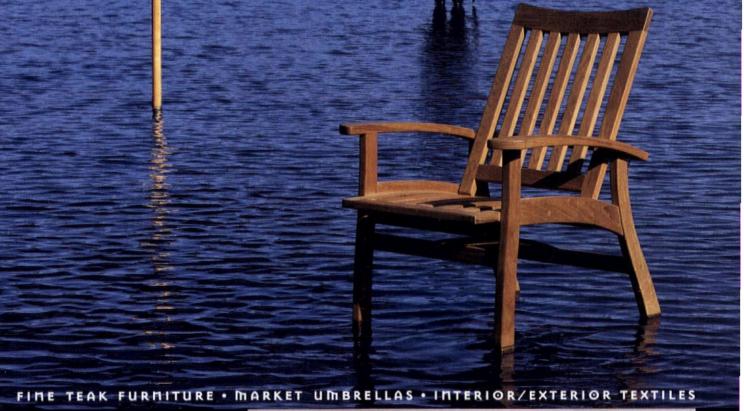
designer wears only one piece—a luminous jadeite-and-silver-link necklace that reflects each changing hue of light. "I'm at the bottom of the heap, because I'm just a gardener."

In her business, however, the fiftyfour-year-old Cummings is firmly at the top. Noted for her chic and sophisticated jewelry, Cummings and her gemologist husband, Bruce, both Tiffany & Co. alumni, formed Angela Cummings Inc. in 1983 and developed it

SAY IT WITH FLOWERS Cummings, above right, treats her garden as a friend. In her studio, above left, a poppy presides over jewelry designs and gold inlaid bracelets. into a multimillion-dollar enterprise. But Cummings lives a universe away from the white-hot heart of her business at Fifty-seventh and Fifth. She works undisturbed, perched high above her house in a snug third-floor tower room that is all windows, with delicate ceiling beams, packed bookcases, and a simple table facing the shadowy southern light (unavoidable, explains Cummings regretfully, since a stairwell with massive oak girders dominates the preferable north side). She stores her materials in a low Chinese red-lacquer chest in one corner of the room and a dark Korean wood chest in the other.

She goes into Manhattan only to

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HOME BASE

meet with company president Michele Ateyeh or with development director Pamela Park Proctor. "I've become an engineer," says Proctor, who transmutes a dried rose petal or a saguaro cactus branch into gold, if Cummings proffers such inspiration. "It's like her love of gardening: it all translates and feeds into her work. The energy is there, at that moment when she sits down to focus."

Because the garden inspires so many of her designs - earrings, bracelets, and necklaces in the shapes of sunflowers, daisies, hydrangeas, leaves of all sorts, spider orchids, even wheat and corn-it would be tempting to view Cummings as an ethereal type. Nothing could be further from reality. Her house, a joint venture between architect Allen Kolkowitz and her, is the product of her desire to "put in a pot a Japanese house, a Shaker house, and the town of San Gimignano and stir." That exotic recipe produced a sleek, serene, practical house with fluid, comfortable spaces suited to the needs of a couple who work at home, as well as to those of their twelve-year-old son, Bruce.

"I never want to live in an old house again," Cummings says emphatically. "I love old houses, but I don't want to manage one: the storm windows, the dank, dark basements. If you refurbish an old house completely, with new heating and everything else, well, that's different, but it's a difficult process. Here, I did get a mudroom, which I wanted, a rug in the basement and these buttery, smooth maple floorboards.' Cummings describes herself as very pragmatic. "Fantasy does not intrigue me," she says, "unless it has to do with humor or playing with shapes. Design in general is not an intellectual pursuit-it's visual. The more you think about it, the less spontaneous it becomes. I'm very visual."

Cummings's memory of her five-acre "piece of dirt," as she calls it, is photographic and intensely personal. She

employs a groundskeeper once a week but disdains those who garden via proxy—"they don't know the earthworms," she scoffs. "The person who has that garden isn't intimately involved. I know the stones around here. By the pond, there are wild grasses and flowers, and the whole place is filled with buttercups that grow through the benches. Last year, twelve baby geese and their parents came as

our guests, feeling safe in that long grass that we let grow. A garden is like your friend who needs a lot of care."

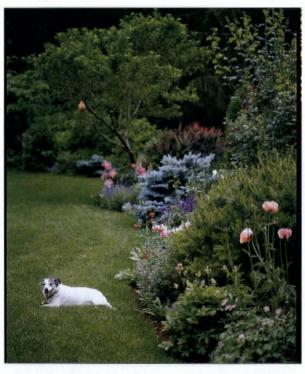
The care part of gardening-the spreading of fertilizer to repel the deer, the pruning, and the acute observation so she can determine the prosperity of various plants in their locations-is what she adores. Her property has a picturesque topography that she and landscape architect Christopher Kusske refined through some grading and drainage improvement. Kusske did the technical work, laying



DOG DAYS Gold-and-turquoise Jaguar earrings lie next to a bowl of shells and a turquoise-and-gold necklace, above. Poppy enjoys the garden, below.

out the perennial beds, and Cummings populated them with her favorite shrubs and flowers. Taking her cue from Japanese gardens, she backs up her perennial beds with evergreen shrubs, "so they're not all beat up and gray all winter." She favors scented flowers and shuns dahlias and some annuals, especially marigolds and impatiens. "The colors are difficult," she says, "but I use them if I have to."

Cummings loves the headiness of the soil, the secret life and language of plants, which she sometimes refers to as if they were people. "You just learn to accept your piece of property as it is," she explains. "Rather than fighting what's here, I just try to accommodate everybody." And, with as much facility, Cummings can toss overboard the encumbrances of a contemporary woman's frantic existence. "As you get older, you become more sensible about what's important," she says. "I know I'm stressed out when I go out in the garden and I'm not happy. There isn't a gardener I know who isn't happy out there. There's no pressure, no money to be made off it. I cannot be a perfectionist out there with a huge garden and tour-de-force plantings. Nature isn't perfect."



Jane Lane is a writer and master gardener.



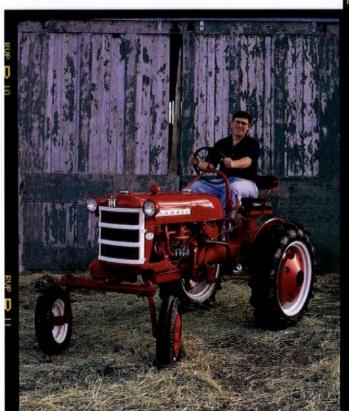
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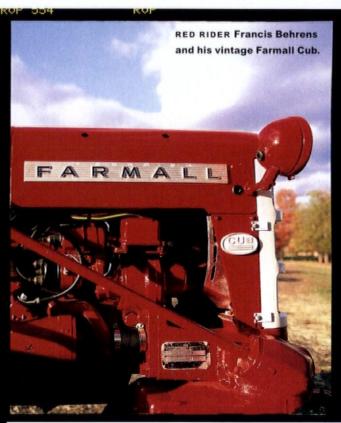
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COLLECTING





Cub Lust

The Farmall Cub has everything—a cuddly profile, vintage good looks, and plenty of collectible attachments

BY TOM CHRISTOPHER

HY DID Francis
Behrens's father
buy a vintage Farmall Cub? "I think
he was jealous of
mine," the fifteen-year-old confides. Certainly I am. What this father and son own
is the archetype, the tractor for which
every gardener secretly lusts.

If nothing else, the Cub offers matchless constancy. From 1947, when the first one rolled out of the factory, until 1979, the last model year, this machine continued substantially unchanged. You can pull an engine out of a '58 Cub like Francis's, slip it into your '68, and keep working. That, in fact, is precisely what countless farmers, nurserymen, and weekend gardeners do. Decades after the manufacturer, International Harvester, gave it up, the Cub still fills a unique role as workhorse and status symbol.

Central to the Cub's appeal is its compact size. Designed (according to Francis's original owner's manual) to "automate the small farm of 40 acres or less," it is rated at around 15 horsepower. A Cub slips easily into a garage; it's the smallest machine you can get without lapsing into the suburban squalor of the lawn tractor.

For make no mistake: the Cub is the real thing. It has the strong, awkward beauty of a sharecropper in a Walker Evans photograph. For the collector, though, the appeal is largely in the accessories. When these tractors were new, you could order a Cub with any of seventeen factory-made plows, cultivators,

mowers, or grader blades. This model's popularity and long life prompted other companies to turn out a menagerie of implements that fit the Cub's hitch: radish pickers, bush hogs, flail mowers, and fertilizer spreaders. Besides these, there was a host of devices designed to run off the Cub's power takeoff. To the farmer, this tractor served as a mobile power plant for operating cordwood saws and threshing machines.

This gadgetry seems specially designed to appeal to the modern male, and I had always assumed that Cub-lust was located somewhere on the Y chromosome. I assumed this until my mother briskly informed me that *she* had very nearly persuaded herself that she needed one, back when we were children. Later,

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Printed in U.S.A. 70-4573-00-1 Revised September 1996





COLLECTING

the boastful owner of a '49 Cub let slip that it was actually his wife who jumped when she saw the ad. Apparently, another gender barrier (if it ever existed) has fallen.

Given the collectibility of this tractor, a surprising number remain working tools. This is in part a by-product of American agriculture's current emphasis on big: big tractors to work big fields on horizon-spanning acreages. No American manufacturer has stepped in to replace the Cub for the one-horse farm, the market gardener, and the nurseryman.

But the Cub also offers unbeatable longevity. Mike Johnson, owner of Summer Hill Nursery in Madison, Connecticut, for instance, still uses the Cub his father bought in 1947 for \$543. Mike finds some irony in the fact that he must pay several times that for any used Cub he finds now. He buys them anyway. His nursery, one of the state's most prestigious wholesale growers of ornamental trees and shrubs, runs on Cubs. Currently, he operates a fleet of twenty-eight.

TILL, BY THE STANDARDS of other antiques, Cubs are a bargain. Charles Pidacks, owner of Village Power Equipment in Berlin, Massachusetts, specializes in servicing vintage tractors. One advantage of Cubs, he says, is that companies have sprung up to make parts, so cannibalization isn't necessary. Pidacks has sold Cubs for as little as \$1,500, though one in good condition, with implements, fetches up to \$4,000.

As always, there are bargains. These are found at equipment auctions (advertised in rural newsletters such as Country Folks New England Farm Weekly, of Reading, Vermont), through Web sites (try www.farmequipmentguide.com), or by word of mouth. Often, though, the best deals are to be had just by keeping your eyes open.

That's how, two years ago, Francis Behrens found his. A friend of his father met a guy who knew somebody. Francis's father helped him pull the head, regrind the valves, and replace the head gasket. Francis sent the body out to be stripped and repainted. Some parts he borrowed from his father's tractor, and these, his father insists, will have to be returned, eventually.

In the meantime, though, Francis is taking his Cub to county fairs to display its gleaming perfection as representative of what farm equipment used to be. Ask him about his motives and he can't say why he does it, except that there were always tractors around when he was little.

In this he puts his finger on a central part of this tractor's appeal. It's an acceptable way for an adult to play dress-up. A Cub transforms cutting the lawn or clearing the driveway of snow from a tiresome chore into homesteading. A Cub turns your weekend cottage into a farm.

It's all harmless enough, unless you fall prey to addiction. There's always another implement to buy; a cordwood saw would surely pay for itself with what you'd save on firewood. Even Francis, who still works weekends to pay for his Cub's paint job, is already contemplating another purchase. Maybe his father will help. They could have joint custody. First, though, he wants to get a car. At fifteen, Francis is too grownup to need dress-up. That will come later.

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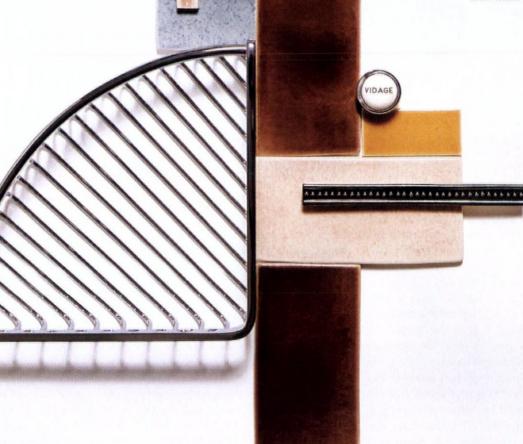
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With Calyx & Corolla, Ruth Owades has a second mail-order triumph

BY LYGEIA GRACE

cess. In 1978, she redefined the meaning of "green" in the garden with Gardener's Eden, her accessories catalogue. At the time, few people imagined that there was potentially big business in the potting shed. Less than ten years later, Owades found another cash cow when she revolutionized the floral business with her fresh-flower catalogue, Calyx & Corolla.

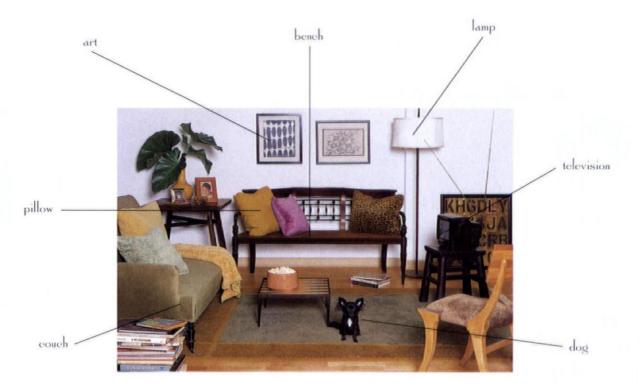
The idea for her second company germinated after she had made several trips to San Francisco's wholesale flower market to buy bouquets. While noticing that "there was always lots of activity there," she also sensed a new attitude: people seemed to think that having flowers at home was a reasonable indulgence rather

than a luxury. Intrigued, she did a bit of digging and unearthed "this antiquated distribution system," she says. Flowers went "from growers to wholesalers to distributors to retailers to the customer. The flower was spending the best days of its life in a warehouse or truck."

Owades knew she could do better by cutting out the middlemen. If the grower sent flowers directly to the customer, they could last ten to twelve days longer. The key was forging a relationship with growers who were willing to pack their flowers in individual arrangements and finding a way to ship them overnight—which had never been done before. "In the beginning," Owades says with a laugh, "when the whole idea came up, the response was 'You must be kidding.'"

Tenacious as honeysuckle, she convinced five growers and Federal Express to form an alliance with her fledgling company.

Today, Calyx & Corolla works with twenty-five growers around the world and fills an estimated 300,000 orders a year. Orchids (\$42 for 11 stems) come from Singapore, ginger (\$47 for 7 stems) from Hawaii, and roses (\$69 for a dozen) from Florida. Because Owades places a premium on service, gift cards are handwritten, vials of water encase individual orchid stems, and little "ice pillows" cushion the journey of every rose. A company "plant doctor" is on call should the flowers languish prematurely. If they succumb, Calyx & Corolla will replace them. As for Owades, it's clear she's a perennial bloomer.

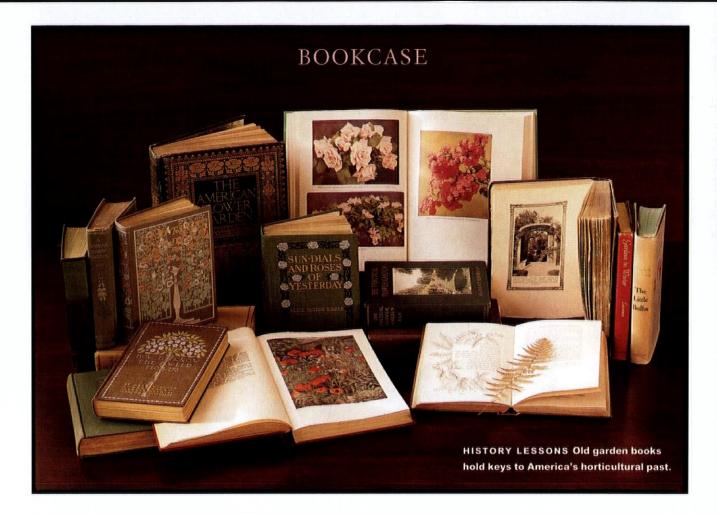




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Yankee-Doodle Dandies

America, not just England, had a Golden Age of garden writers whose observations are as valuable and compelling now as they were a century ago

BY STEPHEN ORR

OST READERS of garden literature think first of Britain's pantheon-Gertrude Jekyll, Vita Sackville-West, E. A. Bowles-who defined a genre from which readers on both sides of the Atlantic have benefited. Although the first strictly American gardening book was published in 1806, it wasn't until recently that our body of comparable work began to be valued. Now, American gardeners are recognizing their own voices from the past-those from approximately a century ago, when garden authorities began to write for a burgeoning suburban public eager for advice. The best writings of this Golden Age offer not so much instructional how-tos as the author's own hard-won experience in the garden. These books, still informative today, are worth seeking out in the original as beautiful and historical items or, more readily, in reprinted editions.

MRS. WILLIAM STARR DANA (1862–1952) How to Know the Wildflowers (1893), an immensely popular field guide to American wildflowers, organized by color and time of bloom, was aimed at young ladies who might have needed some kind of respectable outdoor exercise. Two more books followed: According to Season (1894) and How to Know the Ferns (1899), an adventure into the "cheerful community of the polypody," written under the name Frances Theodora Parsons after her remarriage.

ALICE MORSE EARLE (1851-1911) The first book to focus entirely on the history of American gardens, Old-Time Gardens (1901) is an evocative combination of historical fact and sentimental folklore. Passages in which Earle distinctively weaves in colonial gardening traditions and superstitions make her perhaps the most frequently quoted American garden writer. Her works also include another historical study, Sun-Dials and Roses of Yesterday (1902). MRS. FRANCIS KING (1864-1948) Called the Mother Superior of American women gardeners, King, a founder of the Garden Club of America, was on an almost religious crusade to get the public to garden. As editor of "The Little Garden Series," which was published in

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to the trade

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the 1920s, she addressed the needs of those who gardened in the small plots sprouting in the suburbs. She wrote about her own Michigan garden in The Well-Considered Garden (1915).

HELENA RUTHERFURD ELY (1858-1920) In A Woman's Hardy Garden (1903), Ely spoke plainly to a modern woman who might have wanted to do her own gardening. Ely's frank handling of such mundane matters as the treatment of manure and saving on expenses by the using hardy plants made her very popular.

NELTJE BLANCHAN (1865-1918) As the wife of publisher Frank Nelson Doubleday, Blanchan had the opportunity to publish many books, most on nature subjects. Luckily, her practical knowledge of gardening and its history made her a worthy and readable author. The American Flower Garden (1909) examined prevailing schools of design for the home gardener.

LOUISE BEEBE WILDER (1878-1938) Wilder is our most romantic writer. Her vivid stories and plant descriptions are unforgettable, especially in The Fragrant Path (1932), about scent and memory. Colour in My Garden (1918) is equally astute. In one chapter she notes, "Magenta is the skeleton in the closet of nurserymen and 'rose-colour' is the cloak they use to hide [it]."

RICHARDSON WRIGHT (1887-1961) The former editor of House & Garden is best known for the Gardener's Bed-Book (1929), in which his humorous, acerbic writing runs full throttle. Other works, such as the historical The Story of Gardening (1934) and The Practical Book of Outdoor Flowers (1924), are more restrained.

LESTER ROWNTREE (1879-1979) Depicting herself as a "lone, disreputable-looking female with no tent," the unconventional Rowntree was a roving pioneer in California horticulture. After her divorce in the '20s, she adopted her maiden name as her first and set off-mostly alone and on footthrough the High Sierra. These ninemonth "peregrinations" are detailed in Hardy Californians (1936), in which she outlines with humor and insight her aim to discover new annuals for the California garden.



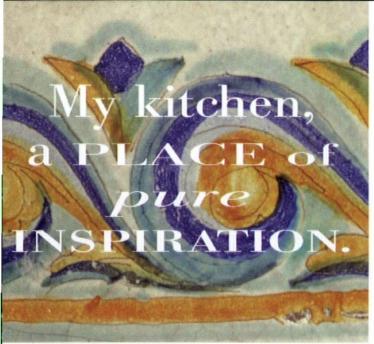
LIMITED EDITION Neltje Blanchan's The American Flower Garden.

ROSETTA CLARKSON (1892-1950) A collector of ancient herbals and an expert on herbal crafts, Clarkson wrote such books as Magic Gardens (1939) and Green Enchantment (1940) to "recapture the mystery and lure of gardens." Besides their practical appeal, her books have a mystical charm that is enhanced by chapters like "Herbs That Never Were" and "The Witch's Garden."

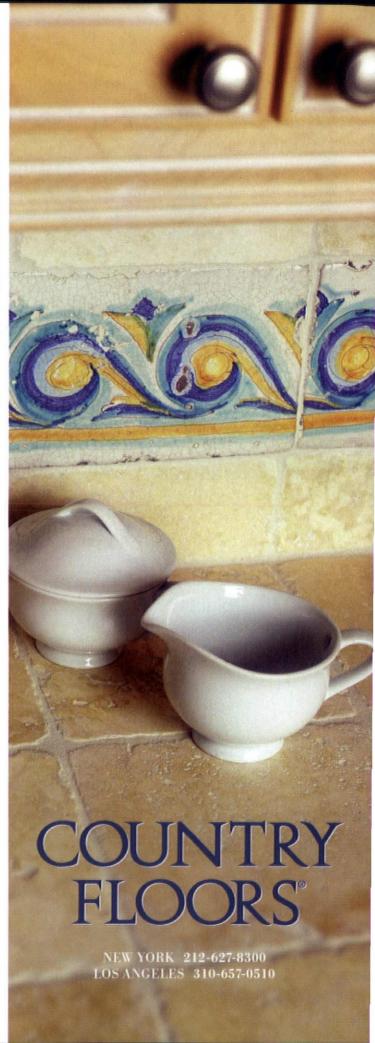
ELIZABETH LAWRENCE (1910-1985) Relatively unknown in her day, this North Carolina gardener was one of our greatest. With her closely observed, high literary style, she can make a reader almost frantic to own the plants she describes. Lawrence writes exquisitely about the daily details of her small suburban yard while introducing a cast of far-flung correspondents in A Southern Garden (1942), The Little Bulbs (1957), and Gardens in Winter (1961).

Katharine White, Thalassa Cruso, Henry Mitchell, Eleanor Perényi, Allen Lacy-the list of great garden writers could continue, except that these writers possess a modern voice unlike that of their predecessors. Besides, there is something about an old garden book, an indescribable something, that a newer one can't match. The embossed binding and the musty library-like smell heighten the appreciation of these works as historical objects. But the best of the more recent work is rooted in the past in one important way. Recounting the themethe identifiable personal experience of gardening-these authors remain, as Mrs. King put it, "Garden Souls."

Montreal











Annuals Ascending

No longer the Muzak of the floral world, these humble plants are undergoing a glorious revolution in the Bronx

BY TOM CHRISTOPHER

or so long ago, annuals in your garden were a sure sign of poor taste. Or at least of poor planning. That's changing, though. In the last couple of years, annual flowers have emerged as the coming thing in garden design. If you doubt this, go to the Bronx and ask for Michael Ruggiero.

Ruggiero is senior curator at the New York Botanical Garden, a sort of horticultural troubleshooter who moves from project to project, making things happen. Ruggiero knows rare plants. He can speak from experience about everything from the flora of New Jersey's Pine Barrens to the hybridization of orchids. Yet he loves annuals.

Ruggiero can remember when this

was an embarrassing enthusiasm. Perennials were what the quality planted. Good gardeners resorted to annuals only when they needed to plug a gap in the perennial bed; or they might use them to splash color in a neglected corner. Otherwise, annuals were things you set out in whitewashed tractor tires. Who even looked at that stuff?

Ruggiero did, and what he saw was gardeners having fun. Annuals, he maintains, are lighthearted flowers. You plant them, and then "if you don't like

LIVE FAST, DIE YOUNG Flowering tobacco, Verbena bonariensis, and New Zealand flax in the annual border at the New York Botanical Garden, top left, and the man responsible for it all, Michael Ruggiero, with a prize Pennisetum.

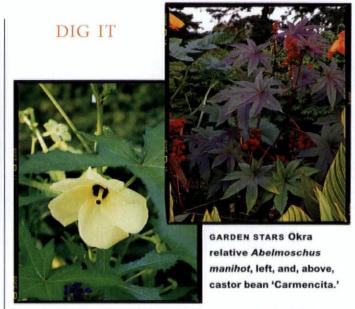
'em, you step on them." He grinds a toe against the floor. "Then you plant something else."

Annuals are a way to express an impulse. A perennial border takes two to three years to get up and running, but a bed or container full of annuals is something you create in an inspired afternoon. Then, the next year or even the next month, you try something completely different. Ruggiero, in fact, likes to change his annuals with the season, so that he has three flower gardens every year.

Traditionally, of course, the transience of annuals was regarded as a liability. Why plant something that had to be replaced every year? From a designer's standpoint, though, Ruggiero sees this as an advantage. The sense of impermanence encourages risk-taking. With







annuals, a failure is temporary, and successes can be brilliant.

This becomes clear with one's first visit to the 189-footlong double border of annuals that Ruggiero plants each year with the staff and students at the New York Botanical Garden. A bold, head-high collage of colors and textures, this planting pushes at the limits of botanical definitions. Along with the traditional annuals—petunias, ageratum—Ruggiero and the students mix in any plant that catches their eyes.

Pennisetum setaceum 'Rubrum,' for example, is a perennial grass I had admired in Santa Barbara, California, but I had been told (smugly) that it wouldn't overwinter north of USDA zone 9. So it's an annual, says Ruggiero, and he punctuates the border with its three-feet-high explosion of purple leaves and pink-tinged floral spikes.

Castor bean (*Ricinus communis*), a tropical oil crop, Ruggiero includes for its towering stature. 'Impala,' his favorite cultivar, grows twelve feet tall, bearing dark-green leaves a yard across. 'Ruby' Swiss chard's scarlet stems have won it a spot here. Cardoon (*Cynara cardunculus*), an Italian relative of the artichoke, normally grown for its edible stalks, Ruggiero plants for its sixfeet-tall tufts of toothed gray-green leaves and its three-inch blue blossoms, which look like thistles on steroids. Ruggiero also includes herbs among his annuals. Curly-leaved parsley may be culinarily second-rate (the flat-leaved Italian kind is best for cooking), but it's superb for window boxes and baskets. Currently, he's building up stock of a variegated calamondin (x *Citrofortunella mitis* 'Variegata'), a dwarf citrus tree with white, gray, and green mottled leaves and white-striped fruits that he plans to work in eventually.

Much of what Ruggiero grows are just choicer varieties of the usual cast. Here he seeks practicality as well as beauty. He loves petunias, for example, but admits that the older types involve lots of labor. Because they tend to blossom only at the stem tips, they must be pinched back constantly and forced to branch if they are to produce a solid blanket of flowers. In addition, as blossoms wither, they must be deadheaded, for as soon as an annual sets seed, it stops flowering.

That's an advantage of the new petunia 'Purple Wave': its blossoms are sterile and don't set seed. *Verbena bonariensis* also has no need for deadheading. Its purple-flowered spikes

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rise three feet high, and, unlike the conventional hybrid garden verbenas ("which are actually *Glandularia*," Ruggiero notes dismissively), *bonariensis* continues to flower right through the summer heat and even past the first light frosts of fall.

Often, though, it's the unexpected use of a thoroughly familiar plant that Ruggiero finds the most appealing. He remembers vividly one Connecticut annual bed that was exactly that: a huge container fashioned from an old four-poster. He returns to the same

Provincetown, Massachusetts, neighborhood every summer to photograph the same window boxes and tubs, so that he can study how the owners' changing tastes express themselves, and how the different expressions change the look of the houses, restaurants, and stores.

According to Ruggiero, success with annual flowers also demands a different style of cultivation. Because of the prestige that perennials have enjoyed, American gardeners believe that stocky plants are not only heathier but also flower best, so you should be sparing with water and fertilizer. This is true of perennials, Ruggiero

notes, but it undercuts an annual display.

Remember that these plants complete their whole life cycle in a few months, he cautions. Keep in mind, too, that annual seedlings from the nursery have grown up with a routine of weekly or even semiweekly fertilization. Ruggiero works a balanced organic fertilizer into the soil before planting, and feeds again, a month later, when

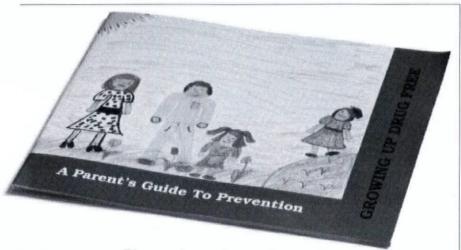


SHORT STUFF The ground cover Zinnia angustifolia blooms all summer.

the weather warms up, with a slow-release fertilizer such as Osmocote. If the plants are flagging by midsummer, he cuts them back and feeds them yet again. Then, as growth picks up at summer's end, he sprays them with a half-strength mixture of water-soluble fertilizer. He waters often and deep in spring, when the annual seedlings' root systems are small. By September his annuals rarely need watering unless a drought settles in.

Above all, Ruggiero likes the sense of new possibilities that modern annuals are bringing. Ageratum, for example, used to be only a little, "mousy" edging plant. Last summer, though, he grew ageratum 'Blue Horizon,' a three-foottall cultivar that doesn't need deadheading and bloomed until November 20 in the Bronx. In addition, this new ageratum actually makes a good cut flower.

"Now you've got cut flowers, middleand back-of-the-border ageratums, ageratums that mix with other annual flowers," he says. In short, there are endless possibilities. What's more, if the one you select doesn't please you, step on it. Then plant another.



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Exiled from Eden

When he was fired by his gardener, one homeowner learned that a rising stock market does not lift all boats

BY DAVID HALBERSTAM

OME TWENTY-NINE years ago, I became the first member of my family to own a summerhouse. The place I bought was an old, somewhat rickety Quaker meetinghouse on what was then a relatively simple island off Massachusetts. The house was sited on an extraordinary piece of property-more than an acre of land hidden away near the center of town. Almost from the start, my friends, who knew about things like this (I did not), congratulated me on the property, and some of them talked expansively about the possibility of a great garden there.

Over the years, the house has become a good deal less rickety. My wife, Jean, has an exquisite eye in all things. If she, like me, is not a gardener, at least she knows what a good garden should look like. We have gradually upgraded the property and improved the grounds. We had, it turned out, a good base from which to start.

The place is located on landfill, the site of the town's original harbor, and plants grow uncommonly well here; in addition, the previous owner, a distinguished portrait painter, had planted a lovely boundary of privet and maple and Russian olive trees. Some years ago we began to look for a gardener.

It was not an easy process. One senior gentleman, the doyen of island

gardeners, listened to our request wistfully. He had planted the original garden nearly half a century earlier and loved our property but felt he was too old to take it on. Another gardener, an old friend, planted a row of shrubs for us. Soon the shrubs

died, as behinder of behinder

did our friendship. Two other gardeners were quite candid: they already had too much work.

In time, we found a talented young woman whose vision of our grounds was similar to Jean's. She liked the contours of the land and its possibilities. She believed in a natural garden, one that uses as many indigenous flowers and grasses as possible. Her specialty

was design, but she said she would also handle the upkeep. Her ego was not inconsiderable, but as New Yorkers we were accustomed to that. Soon our surroundings had become dramatically more handsome, with a beautiful triangular English white garden behind a rock wall as our showpiece. I thought many of the plant choices were

inspired and original. The truth is that I had begun to like the idea of lovely grounds even before she came to work for us, and liked it even more as the potential of our property was gradually realized. I might not know the names of the plants, but I understood the effect of what was being created, especially on myself.

If our gardener's talent was self-evident, working with her was not always easy. Because customers on the island were increasing faster than qualified gardeners, she was soon in danger of being overloaded. She kept taking on work, and seemed to show a lack of concern for the promised maintenance. A few years ago, when

we arrived for the start of the summer and found that nothing had been taken care of, I called her and left a message expressing our disappointment.

She called back immediately and gave my wife a tongue-lashing: she damn well did not, she said, need to come home from a long, hard day to find a message like mine on her machine. In truth, knowing that she was temperamental, I had made my message quite

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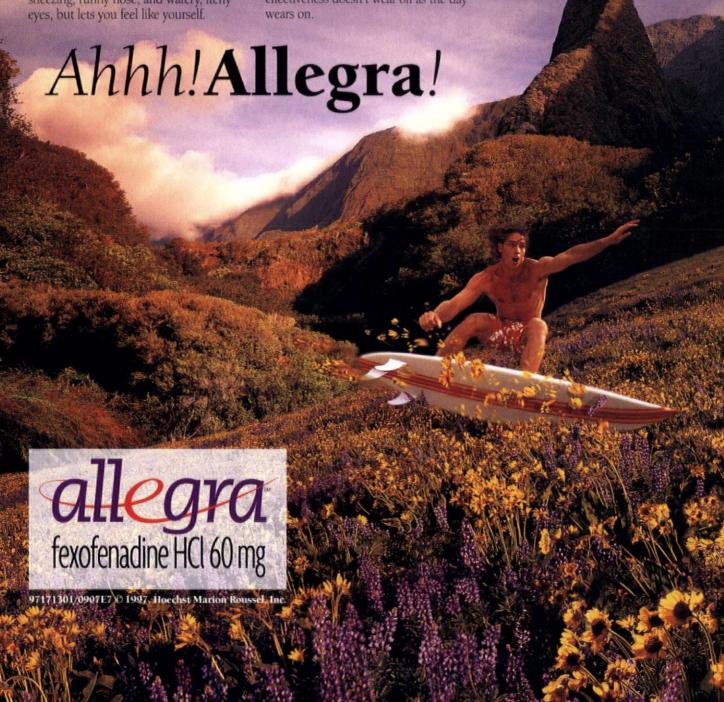
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PRECAUTIONS
Drug Interactions
In two separate studies, fexofenadine hydrochloride 120 mg twice daily (twice the recommended dose) was co-administered with erythromycin 500 mg every 8 hours or ketoconazole 400 mg once daily under steady-state conditions to normal, healthy volunteres (n=24, each study). No differences in adverse events or GTc interval were observed when subjects were administered fexofenadine hydrochloride alone or in combination with erythromycin or ketoconazole. The findings of these studies are summarized in the following table:

Effects on Steady-State Fexofenadine Pharmacokinetics
After 7 Days of Co-Administration with Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 120 mg Every 12 Hours (twice recommended dose) in Normal Volunteers (n=24)

in N	formal volunteers (n=	=24)
Concomitant Drug	C _{max.SS} (Peak plasma concentration)	AUC _{ss} (0-12h) (Extent of systemic exposure)
Erythromycin (500 mg every 8 hrs)	+82%	+109%
Ketoconazole (400 mg once daily)	+135%	+164%

The mechanisms of these interactions are unknown, and the potential for interaction with other azole antifungal or macrolide agents has not been studied. These changes in plasma levels were within the range of plasma levels achieved in adequate and well-controlled clinical trials. Fexofenatine had no effect on the pharmacokinetics of erythromycin or

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility
The carcinogenic potential and reproductive toxicity of fexofenadine Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility
The carrinogenic potential and reproductive toxicity of texofenadine
hydrochloride were assessed using terfenadine studies with adequate
texofenadine exposure (based on plasma area-under-the-curve, [AUC]
values). No evidence of carcinogenicity was observed when mice and rats
were given daily oral doses of 50 and 150 mg/kg of terfenadine for 18 and
24 months, respectively; these doses resulted in plasma AUC values of
texofenadine that were up to four times the human therapeutic value
(based on a 60-mg twice-daily fexofenadine hydrochloride dose).
In in-vitro (Bacterial Reverse Mutation, CHO-MGPRT Forward Mutation,
and Rat Lymphocyte Chromosomal Aberration assays) and in-vitro
(Mouse Bone Marrow Micronucleus assay) tests, fexofenadine
hydrochloride revealed no evidence of mutagenicity.
In rat fertility studies, dose-related reductions in implants and increases
in postimplantation losses were observed at oral doses equal to or
greater than 150 mg/kg of terfenadine; these doses produced plasma
AUC values of fexofenadine that were equal to or greater than three
times the Furnam therapeutic value (based on a 60-mg twice-daily
lexofenadine hydrochloride dose).

fexofenadine hydrochloride dose).

Pregnancy

Teratogenic Effects: Category C. There was no evidence of teratogenic Effects: Category C. There was no evidence of teratogenicity in rats or rabbits at oral tertenadine doses up to 300 mg/kg; these doses produced fexofenadine plasma AUC values that were up to 4 and 37 times the human therapeutic value (based on a 60-mg twice-daily fexofenadine hydrochloride dose), respectively. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. Fexofenadine hydrochloride should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

Nonteratogenic Effects. Dose-related decreases in pup weight gain and survival were observed in rats exposed to oral doses equal to and greater than 150 mg/kg of terfenadine; at these doses the plasma AUC values of exofenadine were equal to or greater than 3 times the human therapeutic values (based on a 60-mg twice-daily fexofenadine hydrochloride dose).

Nursing Mothers

Nursing Mothers

There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in women lactation. Because many drugs are excreted in human milk, caution should be exercised when fexofenadine hydrochloride is administered to

Pediatric Use
Safety and effectiveness of ALLEGRA™ in pediatric patients under the age of 12 years have not been established. Across well-controlled clinical trials in patients with seasonal allergic rhinitis, a total of 205 patients between the ages of 12 to 16 years received doses ranging from 20 mg to 240 mg twice daily for up to two weeks. Adverse events were similar in this group compared to patients above the age of 16 years. Geriatric Use

riatric Use
placebo-controlled trials, 42 patients, age 60 to 68 years, received
ses of 20 mg to 240 mg of fexofenadine twice daily for up to two weeks.
verse events were similar in this group to patients under age 60 years.

ADVERSE REACTIONS

ADVERSE REACTIONS
In placebo-controlled clinical trials, which included 2461 patients receiving In placebo-controlled clinical trials, which included 2461 patients receiving texofenadine hydrochloride at doses of 20 mg to 240 mg twice daily, adverse events were similar in texofenadine hydrochloride and placebo-treated patients. The incidence of adverse events, including drowsiness, was not dose related and was similar across subgroups defined by age, gender, and race. The percent of patients who withdrew premartupl because of adverse events was 2.2% with texofenadine hydrochloride x 3.3% with placebo. All adverse events that were reported by greater than 1% of patients who received the recommended daily dose of fexofenadine hydrochloride (60 mg twice-daily), and that were more common with fexofenadine than placebo, are listed in the following table.

Adverse Experiences Reported in Placebo-Controlled Seasonal

Adverse Experiences Reported in Placebo-Controlled Seasonal Allergic Rhinitis Clinical Trials at Rates of Greater Than 1%

Adverse Experience	Fexofenadine 60 mg Twice Daily (n=679)	Placebo Twice Daily (n=671)
Viral Infection (cold, flu) Nausea Dysmenorrhea Drowsiness Dyspepsia Fatigue	2.5% 1.6% 1.5% 1.3% 1.3%	1.5% 1.5% 0.3% 0.9% 0.6% 0.9%

Adverse events occurring in greater than 1% of fexofenadine hydrochlo-ride-treated patients (60 mg liwice daily), but that were more common in the placebo-freated group, include headache and throat irritation. The frequency and magnitude of laboratory abnormalities were similar in texofenadine hydrochloride and placebo-treated patients.

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ON THE COUCH

mild, but it was decided that in the future Jean would deal with her.

Privately, I began to think of her as the imperial gardener, someone whose vision of what should be done was stronger than that of her customers, whom, consciously or unconsciously, she looked down upon. The question that now hovered over our relationship was whether we were worthy of her, and, in addition, whether we were worthy of our own garden.

Here I should note that the unpretentious Ouaker island I was drawn to has changed significantly over the years. In some ways people like us, with their second houses, are both the cause and the beneficiaries of those changes; we are part of the new culture even as we complain about its coming. Few of us grumble that the values of our houses have gone up, but we like little else about the increased affluence and the declining social relationships that are by-products of the same phenomenon. The line between homeowners and workers seems to be more sharply drawn: now, far more than in the past, the workers are "them" to us, and we are "them" to the workers.

The explosion in building and the surge in property values on the island have, of course, mirrored comparable explosions on Wall Street. A lot of millionaires, many of them very young, have been made, and they need to manifest their wealth immediately. That affects watering holes like ours, for there is a demand for new houses-trophy houses, as they are now called, trophy houses that require trophy gardens.

As I watched the Dow explode in the winter of 1996-1997, I had little sense that I (or our garden) was in its path. To blame everything on Wall Street is, of course, unfair. A collision between us and our gardener was already in the works. It was clear that if what we wanted was similar, we had vastly different priorities. She was an artist, interested in the design and creation of a garden; we, naturally enough, were equally interested in its maintenance.

I trace the decline and fall of our relationship to our decision to build a Japanese koi pond where there had once been a small natural pond. Over the years the pond had become something of a swamp, and we decided to create a cement-bottomed pond ringed with stones and ornamental grasses. We had spent a year in Japan in the '80s, and Jean had noticed how much solace I took in sitting beside such ponds, dreamily watching the beautiful fish.

From the start, it was clear that our gardener did not approve of our fishpond man, who is singularly verbal and passionate about koi and their environment. She complained about the clutter he created, and about the mounds of earth he left behind, which seemed to her to spoil the effect of the grounds. The word "ugly" was soon being applied to the pond, which she regarded as an intrusion on her garden.

TILL, for a brief time I thought things were getting better between the gardener and us. The fishpond man's mounds of dirt had disappeared. The gardener appeared one day with one of my books and asked me to autograph it for a friend, a clear sign, I thought, that I'd been forgiven for my phone message. I felt confident that Jean and I had handled our earlier humiliation with considerable grace. The gardener even brought clients by to see what she'd done with our property.

We sensed, however, that our place seemed to be falling on her list of priorities. Obviously, in retrospect, we should have realized that the surging Dow of 1996-1997 would have significant implications for any homeowner or garden owner on our island. During that winter Jean had written the gardener, listing the things she wanted done for the summer, a relatively simple list. The gardener had written back that because she had not put her crews together early enough, she could not give us any guarantees on maintenance.

In April, Jean went up to look at the property and found that nothing had been done. Even more ominous, the island had never seemed so crowded so early in the season. When Jean went downtown to talk to her friends, they reported that there was a new commercial

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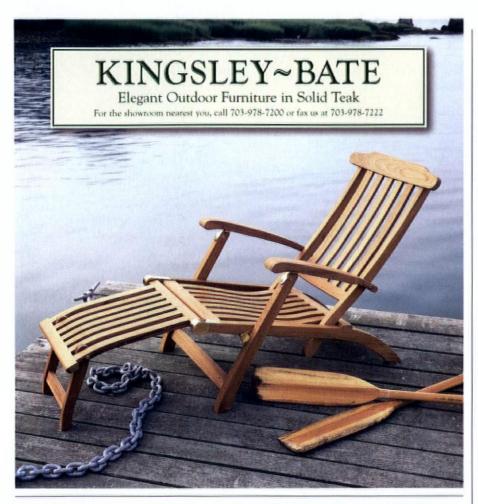
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ON THE COUCH

madness in the air. A generation of young millionaires had arrived and were building huge houses and would pay any price for what they wanted, as long as it was done immediately.

Jean called our gardener several times to outline what she wanted done before we arrived, but there was little in the way of response. Nonetheless, when we arrived in late June we were stunned to find that the grass garden that had once been so beautiful had not been weeded for two seasons, which meant that it was no longer a natural-grass garden but a natural-weed patch. The grass had not even been cut. Jean called and left messages. Finally, the gardener called back. At first she came perilously close to being apologetic, thanking Jean for being so patient and pointing out that she had taken on many new jobs connected to big new houses.

But, said Jean, you were already overloaded last year-why then take on so much new work? What about loyalty to the customers who have been with you for a number of years? Don't you owe them something? Well, no, as it turned out, for then the gardener launched into a tirade against us, or more particularly against our grounds, most specifically the fishpond. She had hated our grounds since the moment the fishpond had been built. She hated the flat rocks that ringed the pond and under which the fish hid. And just what was the purpose of a clearwater fishpond, anyway? she asked. "To see the fish better," Jean answered. But it was not a natural fishpond, the gardener said; a natural fishpond was murky. Ours was wrong in every way. At which point Jean fired her, though perhaps she had already fired us. "My God," said Jean, hanging up the phone, "she just blamed me for her failure to do her work."

We are, it should be noted, trying to learn from the past: we are determined to appreciate the artistic temperament in the future, and we hope to learn to stay in our place. We intend to be worthy of our next gardener.

David Halberstam's most recent book, The Children (Random House), will be published this spring. THE



BESTINFORMATION



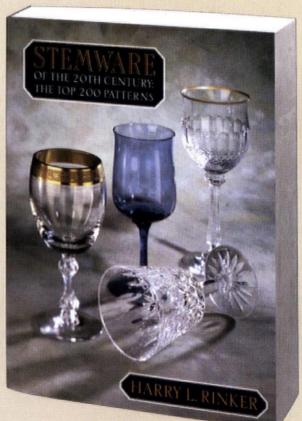
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Clove Struck

Chester Aaron grows 40 kinds of garlic, all of them superior to the supermarket bulbs we're used to

BY ALISON COOK

VERYTHING YOU know about garlic is wrong. That discomfiting truth creeps up on the visitor to Chester Aaron's fouracre hillside kingdom among the redwood groves and blackberry tangles of Sonoma County. Up a dirt lane and past Aaron's snug solar cottage lies a garlic-curing shed that looks and smells and sounds, with its faint papery rustlings, like some improbable wizard's lair. Inside, in ghostly ranks, six thousand bulbs of newly harvested garlic swing by their pale stalks from the rafters. Root-beards dangle as if from shrunken heads. Their neat labels read like a child's litany of the unthinkably strange: Achatami, Inchelium Red,

Brown Tempest, Siberian, French Messadrone, Transylvanian, Red Toch from the Republic of Georgia. The uniform world of white supermarket garlic—the bulk of it from Gilroy, California, the famous garlic capital to the south—seems far away.

Which is precisely the way Chester Aaron wants it. This novelist, a retired English professor, ruddy with a farmer's flush and perpetually on the brink of some merriment or enthusiasm, has dedicated himself to the proposition that all garlics are not created equal.

THE GARLIC LOVER Aaron with some of his varieties of garlic. In a soufflé or on grilled bread, roasted garlic offers the sweetness of the bulb, minus the bite. "People don't realize that garlic comes in many flavors," he laments, his swooping salt-and-pepper mustache twitching in disdain at the tyranny of Gilroy garlic, which he regards as boring and one-dimensionally hot. "I might as well eat a habanero chile as order extra Gilroy garlic on a pizza," he grouses. The garlic that Aaron prizes can have a hot bite, but it dissipates quickly, leaving other qualities to be savored. Indeed, sampling garlic in his kitchen is like walking through a door to a more interesting universe. He quickly strips off the papery skins, presses four to six cloves of various varieties into containers of hummus, and stands back, smiling, waiting for the inevitable thunderbolts of revelation.

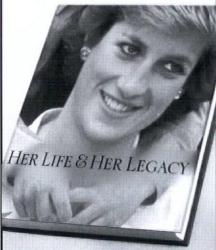
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IN SEASON

RECIPES

ROASTED GARLIC

Adapted from Charlie Trotter's Vegetables

Makes 3/4 cup

4 whole garlic bulbs, tops cut off 4 cups milk 1/4 cup olive oil Salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Place the garlic in a 2-quart saucepan and add the milk. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Remove the garlic from the milk and discard the milk. Stand garlic bulbs on their bases in a deep baking pan. Pour the olive oil over them, cover with foil, and bake for 1 1/2 hours. Remove the garlic from the oven, and when the bulbs are cool enough to handle, squeeze the soft garlic out of the skins. Place the garlic in a blender with some of the oil it baked in and purée until it forms a smooth paste. Season with salt. Can be spread on grilled or toasted bread or reserved for the garlic soufflé recipe.

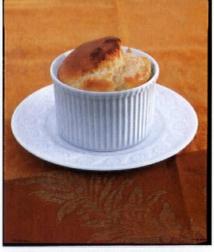
ROASTED GARLIC SOUFFLÉ

The secret to a successful soufflé is the perfect stiffness of the egg whites. Makes 6 or more 1-cup servings

- I Tbsp finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 Tbsp butter
- 3 Tbsp flour
- 1 cup boiling milk
- 3 Thsp roasted garlic purée
- ı tsp salt
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 4 egg yolks
- 5 egg whites
- 6 or more 1-cup ramekins

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Butter six ramekin molds and dust with Parmesan cheese. Set aside on a baking tray.

Melt 3 tablespoons of butter in a 2 ½-quart saucepan. Stir in the flour with a spatula and cook over low heat until butter and flour begin to foam,



HIGH RISE The drama of roasted garlic soufflé in individual ramekins.

approximately 2 minutes. Whisk in the boiling milk until well blended. Add the roasted garlic purée, salt, and cayenne pepper and continue cooking for 1 minute, stirring until the sauce thickens. Remove from the heat. Beat in one egg yolk at a time until all the yolks are incorporated.

To beat the egg whites, place them in a dry bowl (preferably an unlined copper one) 9 to 10 inches in diameter and 5 to 6 inches deep. With a heavy balloon whisk, begin beating as much air as possible into the mixture, turning the bowl so that all the egg whites are being whisked. When the whites are beginning to stiffen, test them by holding up the whisk with a dollop of egg white on it. If the whites stand up on the whisk, they are stiffly beaten. If not, continue beating. When the egg whites are ready, immediately begin folding them into the soufflé mixture.

To fold the egg whites into the mixture, stir in one large spoonful to make the mixture lighter. Then place the rest of the egg whites on top of the soufflé mixture and with a spatula, begin cutting through the center, folding in the egg whites. This process should take no longer than I minute.

Spoon the mixture into the individual ramekins, filling them three quarters full. Set the tray with the ramekins in the middle of the oven and immediately turn down the heat to 375 degrees. Do not open the door during cooking. Cook for 20 minutes. The soufflé should rise over the rim by 2 inches, and the top should be nicely browned. Remove and serve immediately.

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DE MEDICI COÎLES



Pinot Envy

With vintner Helen Turley setting the standard, California Pinot Noir is quickly becoming the wine to beat

BY JAY MCINERNEY

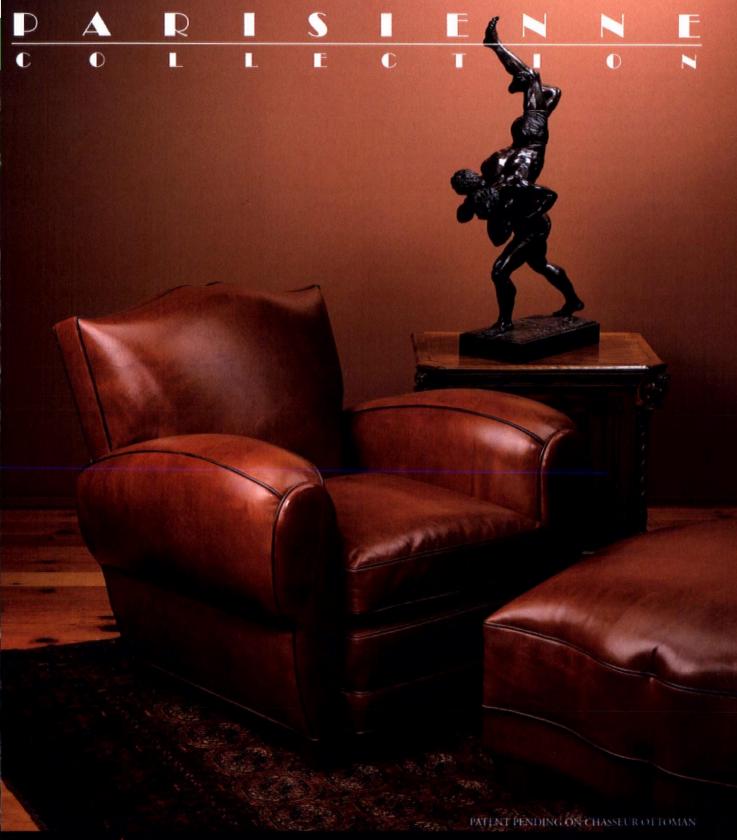
IKE THACKERAY'S Becky Sharp or Marlene Dietrich in The Blue Angel, Pinot Noir has a way of making its admirers look foolish, and I have recently come to regret some generalizations I made about California Pinot Noir in this column last year in the course of praising Oregon's '94 vintage. While most of Napa is too warm for Pinot, there are regions of California that seem to be proving themselves ideal: the foggy valleys of the central coast: Carneros: and western Sonoma. Although the notion of consistently excellent Pinot Noir has always seemed practically oxymoronic, like the concept of "safe sex," the Russian River Valley and the adjacent Sonoma Coast region are turning out excellent Pinots

with greater regularity than the climatically temperamental Willamette Valley or the Côte d'Or.

At a restaurant a few nights ago, an epicurean English actor of my acquaintance was shocked to discover how much he preferred two Sonoma Pinots to a 1994 Dominique Laurent premier cru from Nuits Saint Georges. (Laurent is the hot, new big-oak kid on the Côte d'Or.) The Californians were '95 Marcassin and '95 Martinelli Reserve, both of which bear the stamp of alchemist Helen Turley. To be fair, I'd have to admit that the Nuits was too damn young, but given the continuing condescension of some of our friends across the Atlantic vis-à-vis American wines, I see no reason to be fair. With and without food, the

Sonoma Pinots provided far more interest, fruit, and pleasure. And the Marcassin also showed more finesse. It has the knockout power of ripe California fruit wrapped in a seamless velvet glove. Pinot Noir fanciers often feel they have to choose between the puppyishly friendly California style and the feline reserve of a burgundy, but a wine like this makes you believe you can have it all.

Among the Pinot pioneers in western Sonoma is the Rochioli family, which has been growing grapes in the Russian River Valley since 1938; the fruit was sold off until 1982, when the family first began to produce an estate Pinot Noir. At about the same time, neighbors on Westside Road started the Williams & Selvem Winery, devoted almost entirely to the



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production of Pinot Noir, including one made from Rochioli grapes that is one of the most sought-after bottles around. Both wineries have developed an almost fanatic following over the years, particularly for their small-production, singlevineyard Pinots, nearly all of which are sold through their mailing lists. Getting the top bottlings is a little like getting season tickets for the Knicks, but if you put yourself on the mailing list, both wineries can usually allocate a few bottles of their lesser offerings to you while you wait for the people higher on the list to die off. (Call Rochioli at 707-433-2305-March and October are its release dates; Williams & Selyem at 707-433-6425.) At the moment, the best way to get some of these wines may be to find the select restaurants that carry them. My tasting experience with both wines is pretty limited, but so far I have been impressed with the burgundian complexity of Rochioli and underwhelmed by the lower-caste examples of Williams & Selyem-most recently by the '95 Sonoma Coastalthough I suppose as a late arrival I may

be like someone who finally sees *Rent* after endlessly hearing it touted as the best musical since *West Side Story*.

The Martinelli family has been growing grapes in the Russian River Valley since the turn of the century. They didn't start bottling Pinot until 1993, when wine makers Steve Ryan and Helen Turley came aboard. Their 1996 Pinot-Ryan's farewell vintage as cellar master-will be released in March (Fax: 707-525-WINE). Kistler (707-823-5603), Dehlinger (707-823-2378), and Rabbit Ridge (707-431-7128) also bottle fine Russian River Pinots. A little to the north, Joan and William Smith, of W. H. Smith, have been producing superb Sonoma Pinot Noir since 1992; the '96 vintage of their Sonoma Pinot and their Hellenthal Vineyard bottling should still be available by the time you read this (Fax: 707-965-0324).

In 1985, Helen Turley and her husband, John Wetlaufer, bought what they believed to be the perfect vineyard site on a remote Sonoma Coast ridge, some 1,100 feet above sea level. After producing some of the most renowned Chardonnays and cabernets in California (Colgin, Bryant Family, Pahlmeyer), Turley and Wetlaufer could have found any number of outside investors for their Pinot project. However, not wanting to cede control to anyone less maniacally devoted to quality, they lived like grad students for years while saving their earnings to develop the site. Birds ate most of the grapes before the first harvest, in 1995, which in the end yielded just a single barrel of Pinot Noir. But the few who have tasted it are rapturous. For the 1996 vintage, Turley and Wetlaufer purchased expensive nets to fend off the birds. Remarkably, the wine is even more spectacular. As good as the Pinots from this region have been in the past, their Marcassin may raise the bar.

A large number of these Sonoma Pinots are released in the spring. Perhaps this is the place to mention that many of the best wines in America today-cabs, zins, and Chards as well as Pinots-are available only via mailing list and that it is illegal for private individuals to receive wine shipments in most states of the Union. Grape nuts outside the states of California and Oregon sooner or later have to choose between their respect for the laws of their state and their desire to imbibe the best. Fire up a Cohiba and read Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" while you mull it over. Here's a tip, though: I don't know any producers who ship in boxes that feature the W word.



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THE OENO FILE

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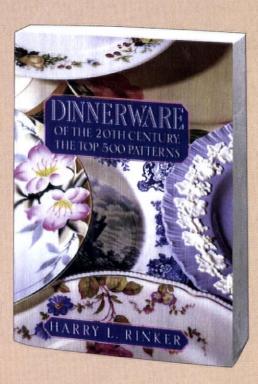
'95 MARTINELLI RUSSIAN RIVER RESERVE PINOT NOIR: A knockout! If Dr. Pepper made a Pinot, this might be it. Wild, very ripe fruit, which keeps coming in waves. The '96 Reserve, which at this early stage seems at least as good, won't be released until September. About \$36. 707-525-0570 '96 W. H. SMITH HELLENTHAL VINEYARD PINOT NOIR: Don't let the lightish color fool you; this is a rich, aromatic, and complex Pinot, which lingers in the mouth long after it's swallowed, \$39, 707-963-7611 '95 ROCHIOLI RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY ESTATE PINOT NOIR: A big, powerful woodsy wine, very Nuits Saint George. Worth begging and cajoling for. \$25. 707-433-2305 '95 LANDMARK GRAND DETOUR: This one definitely belies the notion that California Pinot is unsubtle; it's got sweet, ripe fruit, whiffs of smoke, and beaucoup de finesse. \$30. 707-833-0053 '95 LA CREMA SONOMA COAST PINOT

NOIR: A light and elegant Pinot—a haiku about cherries—which might be mistaken for a Volnay. Great value. \$18. 707-571-1504

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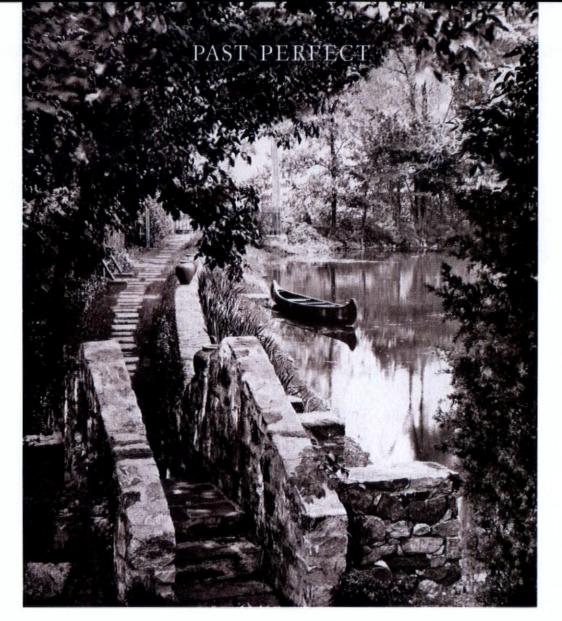
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May 1931

On the banks of the Norwalk River, a Connecticut Yankee cultivated a watery wilderness

BY VÉRONIQUE VIENNE

N THE CROWN of an old dam, a flagstone pathway marks the fragile boundary between cultivated nature and unfettered wilderness—between the deliberate and the accidental, the sophisticated and the sublime. Pictured in House & Garden in 1931, this rustic setting exemplifies the American backyard at its most romantic.

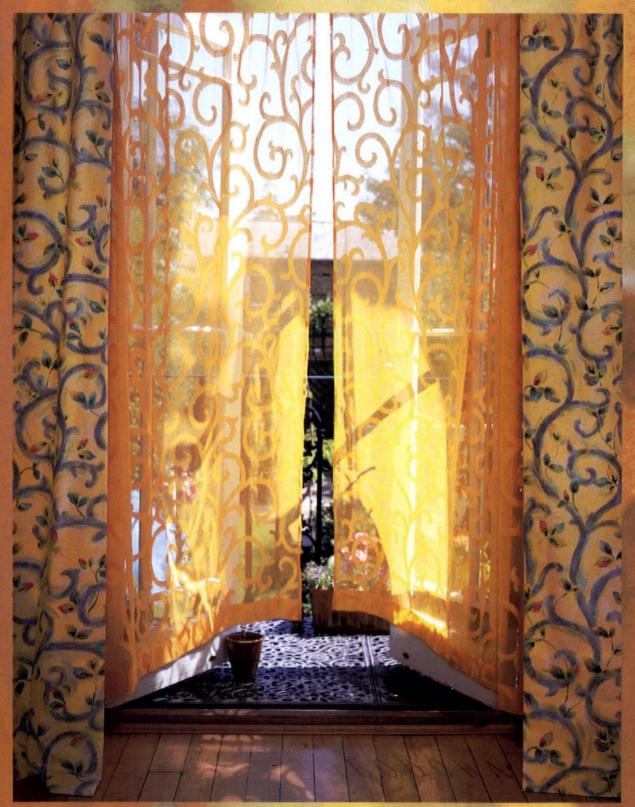
In 1925, when Nathaniel L. Miller, president of a large New York paper company,

bought and restored a two-hundredyear-old gristmill on the Norwalk River in Connecticut, he was careful to preserve the property's historic character in both the house below the dam and the pond that lay above it. Abandoned for decades, the building itself was in ruins, but the pond upstream was an unspoiled watery enclave in a region that was once fishing and hunting ground for the New England Algonquian. While painstakingly rebuilding the mill into a sober but elegant home, Miller, a dapper urbanite, decided to preserve the pristine bird sanctuary above the dam as well. Widening and repairing the dam, he turned it into his own private wilderness.

The stone footbridge over the millrace leads to a grassy path that follows the iris-edged embankment. There, a gently floating canoe invites you on a silent journey—up north, deep into Indian territory, toward the forgotten sources of our history.

ANNAFRENCH

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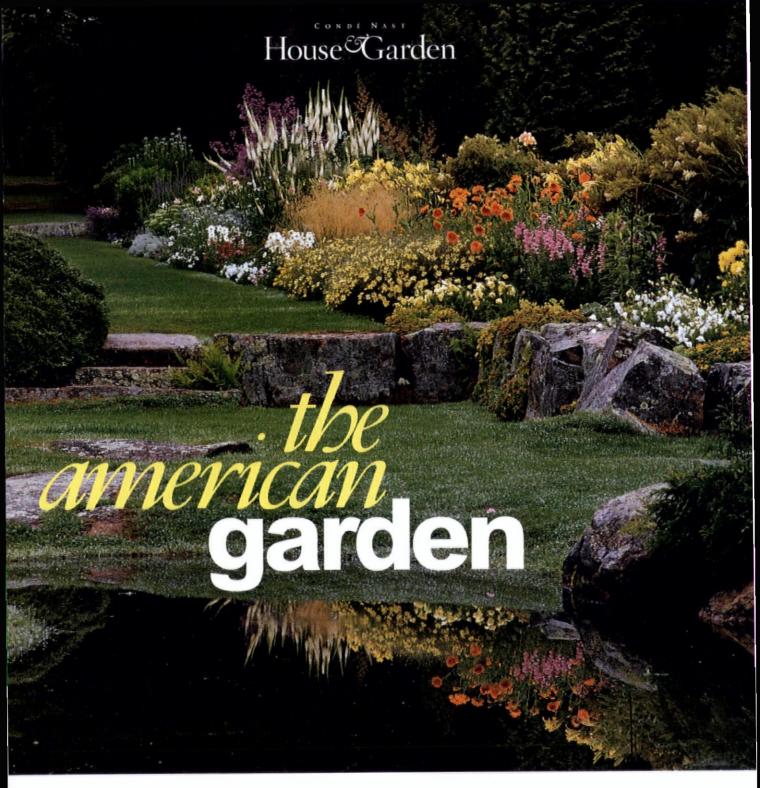
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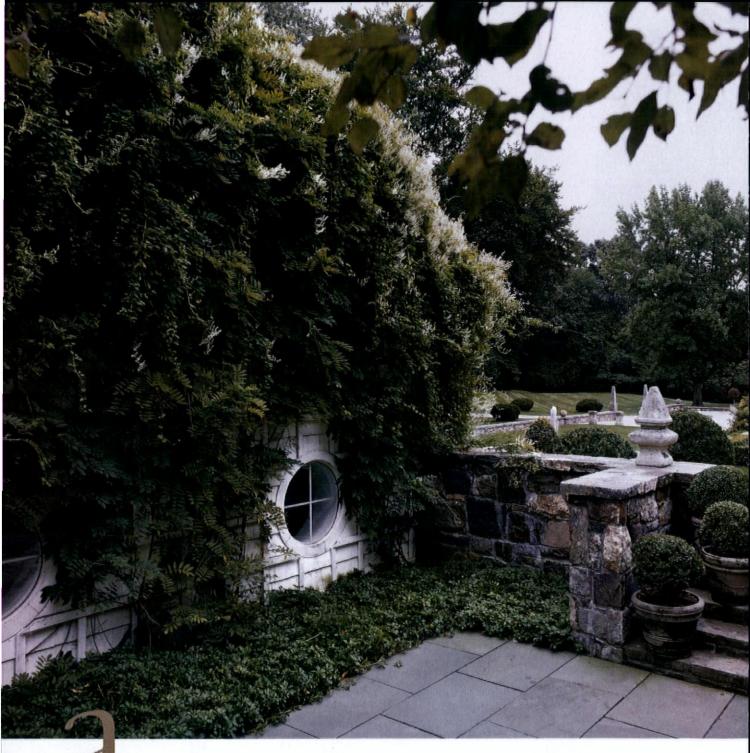


WRITTEN BY ALAN EMMET PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAVID SEIDNER STYLED BY BARBARA TURK



TWO STEPS FORWARD

into a harmonious blend of classicism and modernism



RRIVING AT HIGH AND LOW FARM is like ripping the paper off a box of chocolates: you know you are in for a treat. Wrought-iron gates, flanked by clipped boxwood, swing open as if by magic. The gates came from France, a clue to what lies ahead.

In just five years, Stephen Sills and James Huniford have made a garden that combines echoes of antiquity with a startling modernism that is rare in a private landscape. When they bought their farm in New York's Westchester County in 1992, they found the 1929 house was neglected, its extensive grounds in such a state of decline that most of us would have turned mournfully away. But this was just the challenge that these two interior designers relish. Like a certain eighteenth-century English landscape designer, they could see the capabilities.

High and Low Farm had been the home of garden writer and plantswoman Helen Morgenthau Fox from the 1940s through the 1960s. Her seventh book, written when she was eighty, describes the farm as it was in 1965. She called it High and Low for her "successes and failures, the hilly land, the high trees, and the low herbs." To the present owners, the name seems both apt and historically resonant.

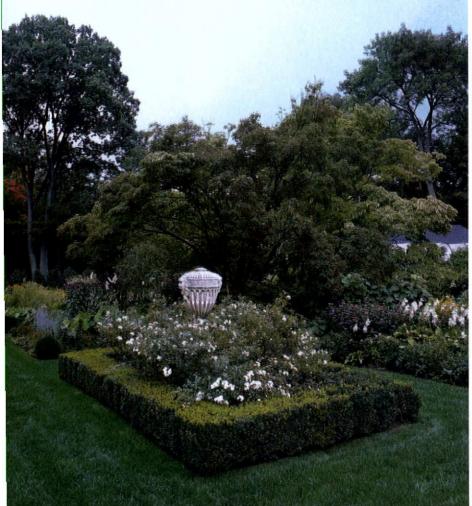
The only remnants of Mrs. Fox's tenure as the gardener were a long

retaining wall and a flight of stone steps. Working together, Sills and Huniford have integrated these and the house into a harmonious whole that would please the most classical of garden makers, from the designers of the great Italian villas to Charles Adams Platt, architect of American country estates.

But the chief inspiration at High and Low Farm is French. The note is struck when you arrive at the graveled forecourt and the house, with its long windows and French doors; you might have happened upon a small château in the Île-de-France. The shade of André Le Nôtre hovers lightly over High and Low Farm, distilled through the sensibilities of the 1920s French modernists. Huniford is entranced by the work of André and Paul Vera, Pierre Legrain, and Gabriel Guevrekian, artists who played with geometry and symmetry in mannered garden designs of the Art Deco period.

The new garden at High and Low Farm has been designed as an extension of the house. Its long central axis is briefly interrupted by a little circle of

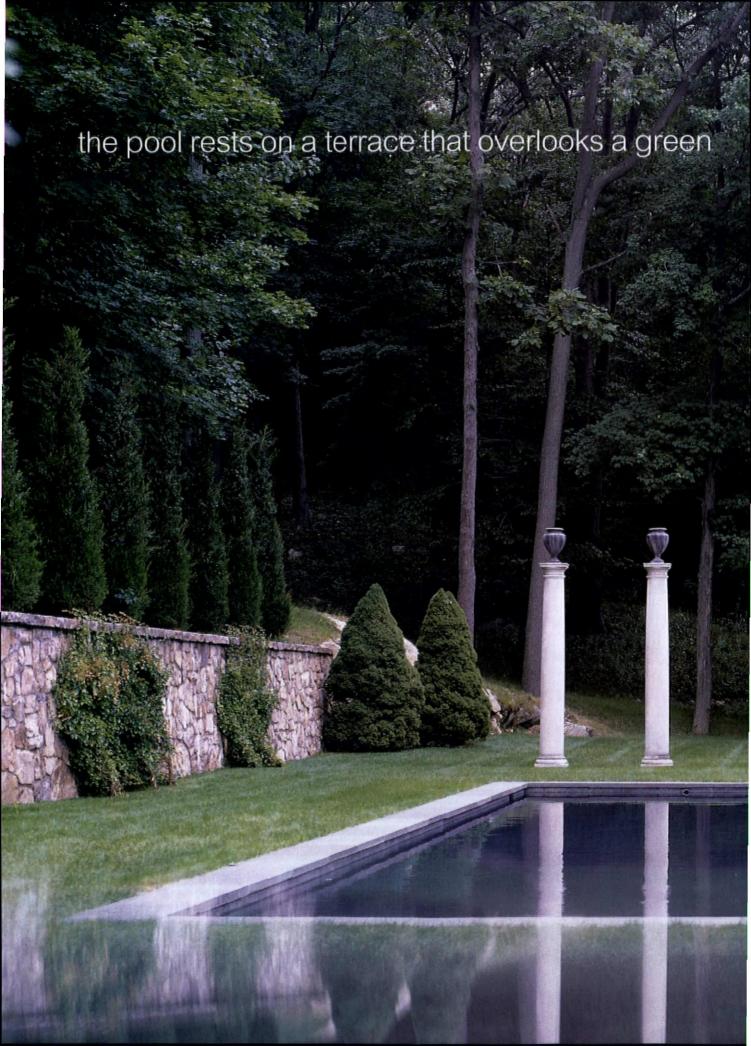


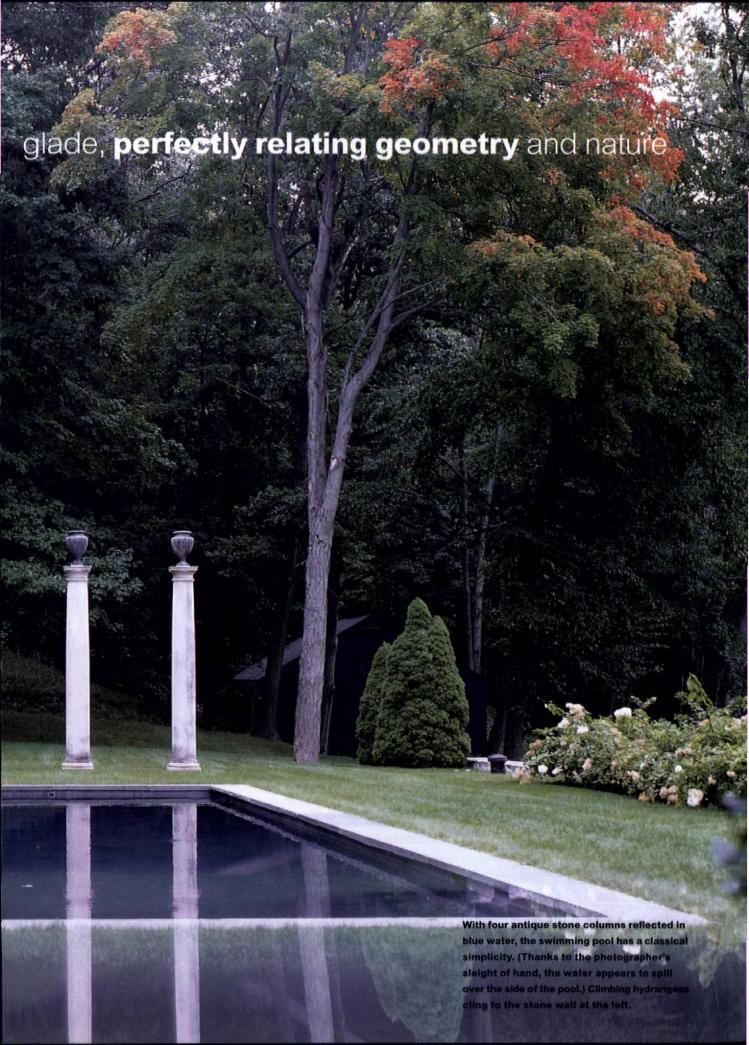


close-clipped boxwood globes in the middle of the forecourt. Circles and spheres are recurrent themes here. The view down the axial path is stopped finally by the old barn, moved there by the owners to make room for the swimming pool. They've painted the barn a mysterious shade of gray, which makes it seem faint and very far away.

A gemlike guesthouse, belying its uglyduckling origins as a garage, trains its four oculus windows (circles again) across a rectangle of grass toward the main house. A jet of water springs from a basin in the greensward. The antique iron furniture on the terrace is painted a

The guesthouse, opposite page, is festooned with silver-lace vine (*Polygonum aubertii*). Shallow steps throughout the garden are wide and deep enough for pots. Eighteenth-century chairs make a cameo appearance on the terrace, above, as if set for a Noel Coward play. In the upper-terrace garden, left, an antique urn rises from a sea of white roses. Perennial beds beside a *Cornus kousa* hold only Huniford's very favorite plants.









Sixteen boxwood balls, top, were placed to form a topiary checkerboard on a terrace, a delightful folly indirectly inspired by French modernist gardens of the 1920s. Above: A fallen star made of stone—said to lead kindly spirits into the garden—has come to rest in front of a wall topped by a mass of hydrangeas.







dark green, nearly black, that the owners saw in France—a color, Huniford says, that never upstages the greens in nature. Versailles boxes hold shiny-leaved brush cherries (Syzygium paniculatum) clipped into double globes. Stone obelisks and

The garden's wide central walkway runs through the boxwood parterre toward the front of the house. Stone spheres placed on an outcropping of the underlying granite, right, interrupt the garden's precise geometry with a capricious fillip.

finials mark the corners of low stone walls. All the sculpture here is geometric; there are no Rococo nymphs. What looks like a lawn beside the guesthouse is actually paving, with pierced blocks that allow grass to grow in the interstices and allow you and your Vuitton luggage to ride right up to the door.

One section of the long garden wall survives from Mrs. Fox's day; her successors have added wide, deep steps that afford ample room for big pots of blue and pink hydrangeas. At the top is the long parterre garden, a series of squares, each hedged by trim boxwood with a box globe at the center. With the restraint that is typical of these designers, each square holds only a single variety of plant, perhaps catmint or aromatic lavender. A file of shell-pink 'David Austin' roses foams like surf over the wall.

On the next level up, deep borders against a six-foot wall would seem to leave plenty of room for the rainbow abundance of an English-style perennial garden. But this is where the Sills-Huniford design sensibility jumps into focus. Like the French modernists and their follower Fletcher Steele, these artists put structure first. Unlike most of us, Huniford is not tempted by every remarkable flower he sees at the nurseries he frequents. He grows what he likes and believes in a generous swath of each variety. But the palette is deliberately limited. Sills says they are continually "editing": one section holds only white flowers, with contrasting forms and tints in the foliage. Other beds include blue and lilac flowers: Baptisia, Russian sage, tall thalictrums, stately Joe-Pye weed, silvery hosta. Huniford loves Macleaya, chelones, lamb's ears, artemisias, mints; he allows them room to spread. There is room here, too, for purely sensuous delights-the fragrant, pristine trumpets of 'Casa Blanca' lilies, the wreaths of pink roses that wind through the graceful ogee curves of wrought-iron arbors.

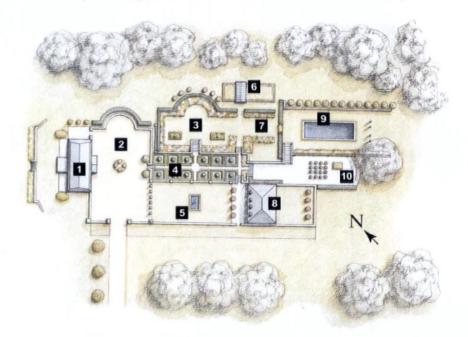
Hedges of yew, holly, and arborvitae rein in the garden on the uphill side. Tall exclamation-point junipers, filling the role of cypresses in Italian gardens, lead the eye to the swimming pool. This formal piece of water rests on a terrace that overlooks a green glade, perfectly relating geometry and nature in the manner of landscape architect Dan Kiley. Four marble columns are mirrored in the still water, evoking the image of Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli. The columns are echoed in turn by the bare trunks of high-pruned oaks and maples at the edge of the woods. Off in the distance is a natural pond, from which a plume of water shoots high into the air, reiterating the motif of verticality.

Once you see a modernist checkerboard on a lower terrace, the elegiac spell collapses. Sixteen boxwood balls bounce up between square paving stones. These and other topiaries have to be trimmed several times during the growing season.

Along a wall just ahead, a rough outcropping of rock has been turned into a garden folly with the addition of a few randomly placed stone balls. Throughout the garden you come upon these orbs, some the size of basketballs, others large enough for a soccer game played by elephants. "We are always on the lookout for good garden ornaments," Huniford says. They keep their eyes open at home and in Europe for objects in their (continued on page 175)

Think Global, Act Local

ames Huniford and Stephen Sills don't fight their site. They have turned the ups and downs of their land into garden features, the all-too-abundant boulders into beautifully crafted walls. The garden respects the local climate, too; the only plants not hardy in their part of New York are the ones they grow in pots.



A MOURNING-DOVE'S-EYE VIEW about 7 acres

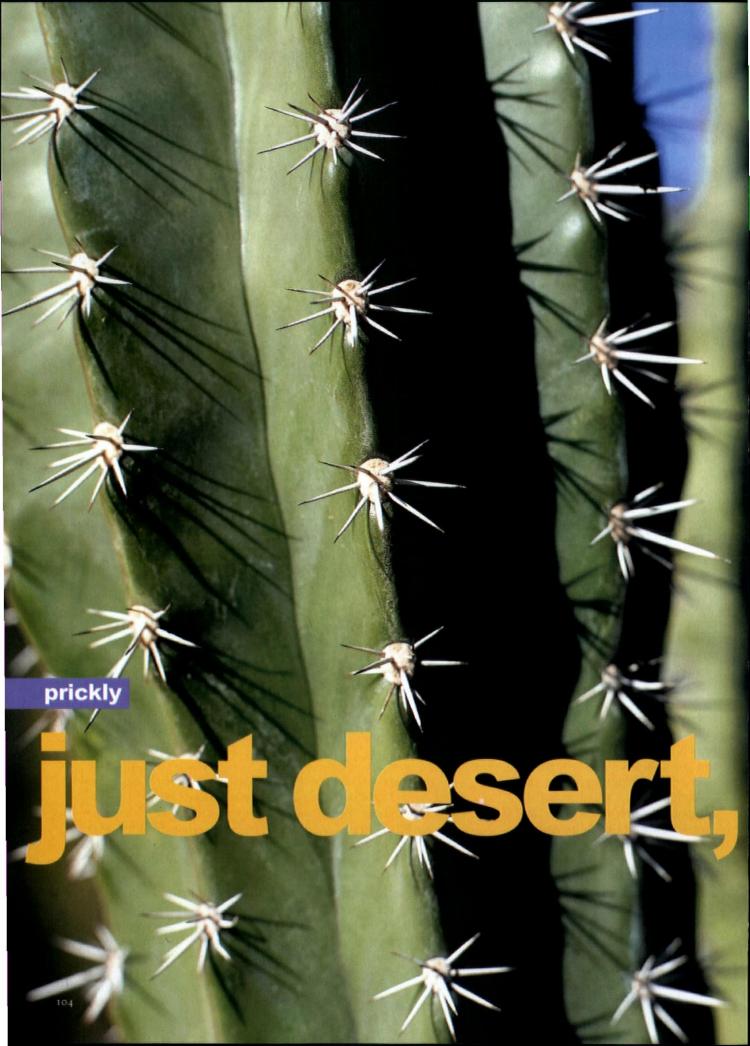
- 1. House
- 2. Parking Court
- 3. Upper Garden
- 4. Boxwood Garden
- 5. Reflecting Pond
- 6. Greenhouse
- 7. White Garden
- 8. Guesthouse
- 9. Pool
- 10. Boxwood "Checkerboard"

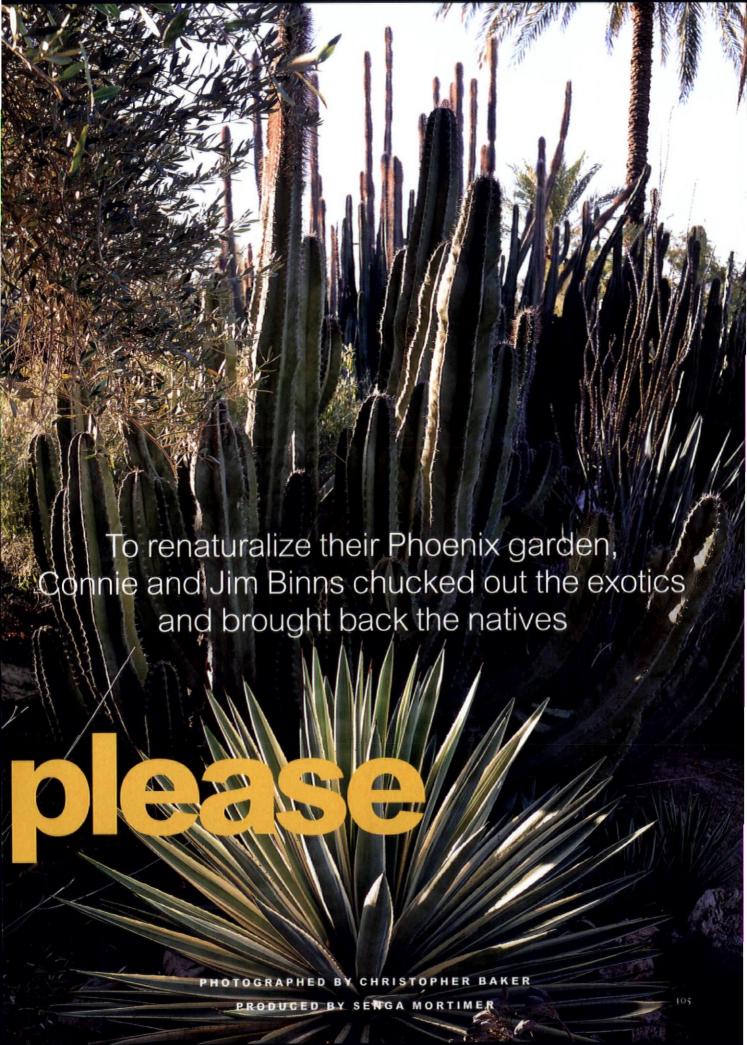
START WITH THE HOUSE Think of the garden as extending the architecture outward. Look out the windows; walk out the doors. "Exterior design," Stephen Sills might say.

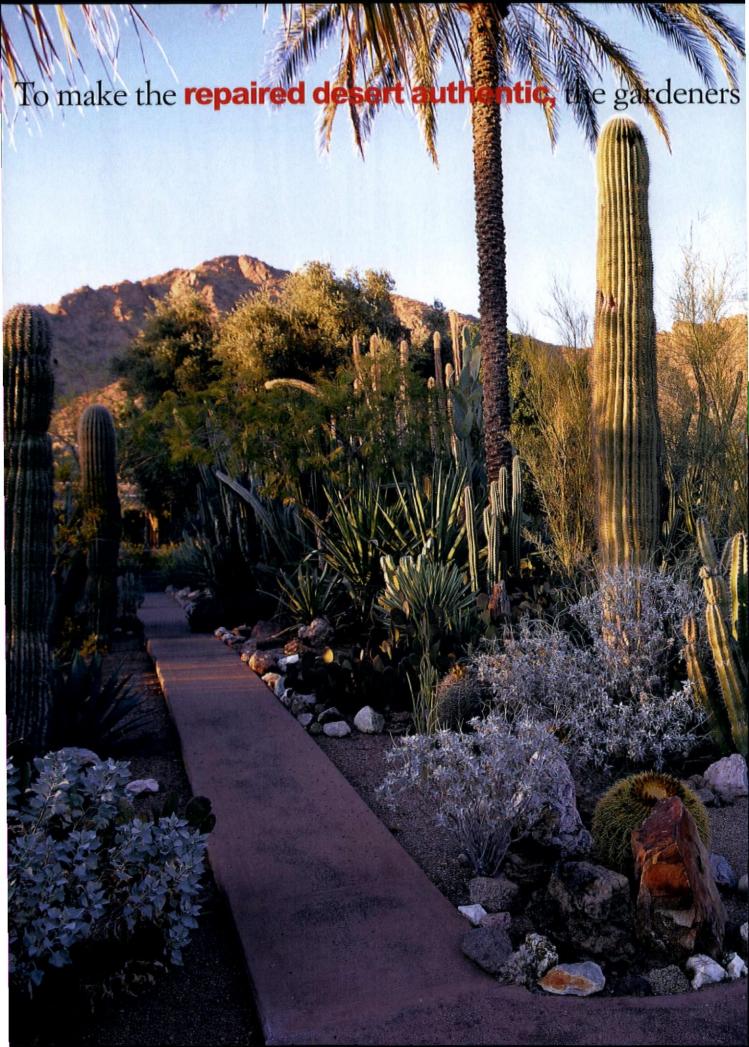
either side to focus the eye. Sills and Huniford arranged stone walls, topiary sculptures, and spires of juniper to lure viewers toward the Zen-like serenity of the pool, with monumental columns and tall trees beyond.

BLOCK THAT AXIS By all means arrange the garden along a central spine—an axis—but end it decisively with a strong piece of sculpture, a tree, or a structure. Don't let the vista seep feebly out into the neighbors' backyard.

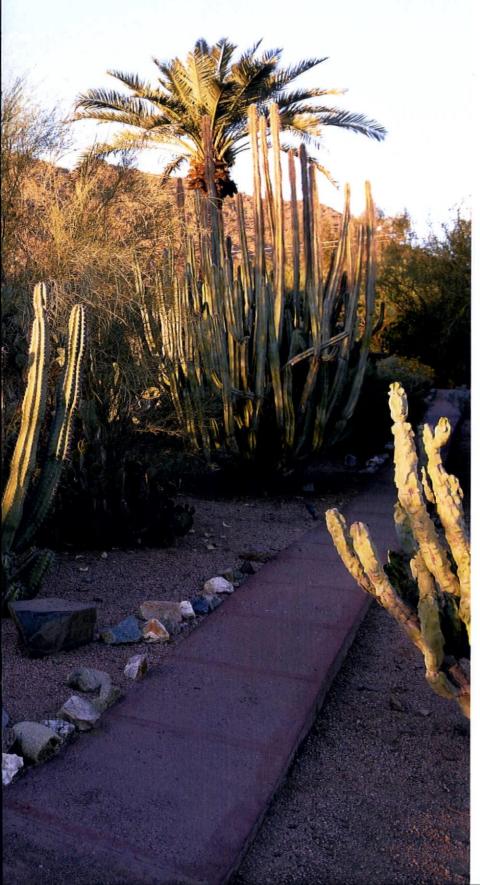
and Sills set limits on what they grow, opting for ample sweeps of purple buddleias, pale pink roses, and the rest. In a smaller garden, it's even more important to limit the palette.







had to resist the impulse to crowd it, to fill in the blanks



ESERT GARDENINGthat is, plotted, planted. deliberated redesertification-is an idea whose time has recently come to the urban Southwest, even to Phoenix, Arizona, a city with a long anti-desert tradition. (Residents began replacing desert with lawn as early as 1903, with the boom that followed the Salt River project.) Since 1937, some 20,000 native plants have been confined to the 145-acre Desert Botanical Garden. But now some Phoenician garden makers have started to invite the Sonoran Desert natives back.

Eight years ago, on an infernal 122degree day, Connie and Jim Binns returned to Phoenix after several years in England and Philadelphia. They bought the Benton House, a historic 6.5-acre property on the flatland south of Camelback Mountain that had been the winter home, from the early '40s, of Connecticut senator William Benton. The Binnses were intent on a historically respectful restoration of the house and also the desert. They sought out an architect, Arizona native John Douglas, who was committed to those goals. Douglas is known for installing native plants outside the buildings he helps preserve, and the Binnses' place had been engulfed by rampaging exotics. "You couldn't see the house behind the cluster of trees in the back," Connie Binns recalls. After landscape architect Christy Ten Eyck, a desertplant expert with a thorough knowledge of the Sonoran floor, joined the Binns team and drew up an exoticsexpulsion list, the symbiotic house-and-

In the cactus garden, previous pages, the bumpy senita (Pachycereus schottii) offsets the fanlike Agave marginata.

Saguaro (Carnegiea gigantea) and Totem pole (Pachycereus schottii 'Monstrosus'), this page, tower over Golden Barrel (Echinocereus grusonii), brittlebush (Encelia farinosa), and senita.

"We wanted to bring the desert right up to the edge



desert-garden restoration began. By then Connie Binns had accepted the project as "a calling" and was delighted, she says now, "to be able to preserve all of this natural desert."

Douglas is devoted to helping Phoenicians reconnect with a desert that is disappearing at the rate of an acre an hour. At the Binns house, he caught Camelback Mountain in the entryhall window "to bring you back in touch

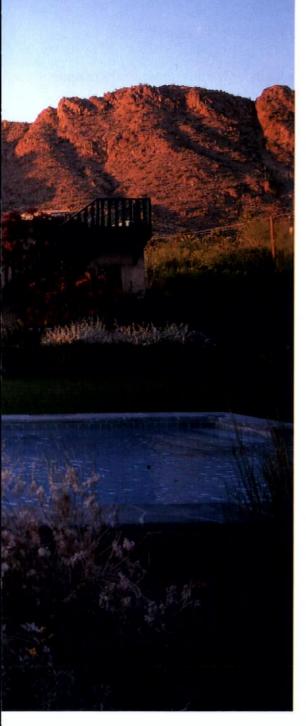
with the desert." Outdoors, Ten Eyck used the same approach. "We wanted to bring the desert right up to the edge of the pool," she says. "The north side of the house had been grass, and we were trying to bring the desert back *into* the house."

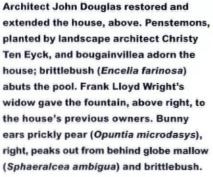
The Binnses' adobe casa, marooned in acres of bright-green grass, had come with a desert dowry, an extraordinary, 8,000-square-foot mature-cactus garden

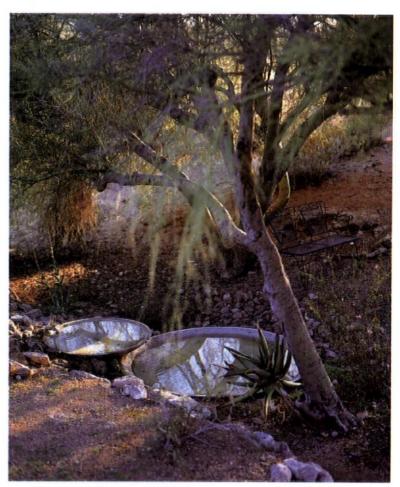
filled with many unusual specimens that Senator Benton's gardener, Elu Doro, had brought back from visits home in Mexico. Jim Binns welcomed the idea of restoring the indigenous landscape around the cactus garden. "It was one of the great features of the property," he says. "The idea of emphasizing that more made good sense."

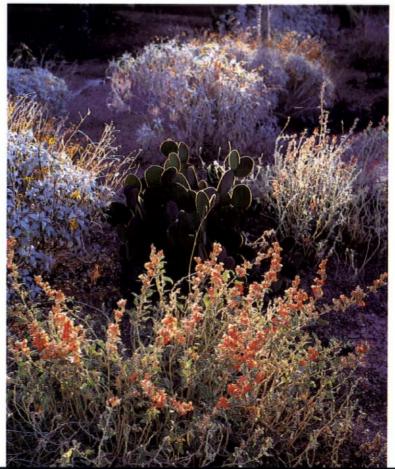
Restoring the desert landscape, however, was to prove a complex undertaking.

of the pool and back into the house" — CHRISTY TEN EYCK









Going Native

he site preserves some elements of the old garden but has many new ones, most of them appropriate to the region. The pool still has lawn in front of it, but behind it native desert plantings come up to its edge. A curved arbor, patio, and hopbush hedgerow were added to separate the pool area from the parking area. The Binnses restored an existing cactus garden, and revegetated the rest of the property to match the desert floor. They brought in desert trees for shade and shadow.

DRY IDEAS There's plenty of hardscape, since it requires no water. New patios and sheltered courtyards integrate well with the garden and help define outdoor rooms and spaces on the large property. Ten Eyck placed a rusted iron arbor and gate by the parking area to mark a threshold to the pool area. Walls and steps were added to define the boundaries of the courtyards. And taking advantage of existing microclimates on the site, she created patios under several large shade trees.

IN THE ZONE Ten Eyck and the Binnses created zonesdesert, transitional, and oasis-with plants of similar water needs. The desert areas include brittlebrush (Encelia farinosa), Engelmann's prickly

pear (Opuntia engelmannii), and chuparosa (Justicia californica). The transitional zone boasts bear grass (Nolina matapensis), autumn sage (Salvia greggii), and mesquite (Prosopis chilensis). Among the oasis plants are twisted myrtle (Myrtus communis 'Boetica'), pineapple guava (Feijoa sellowiana), and rain lily

CUT THE GRASS The Binnses eliminated almost 3/4 acre of turf but kept about a quarteracre "carpet" by the pool, where they entertain.

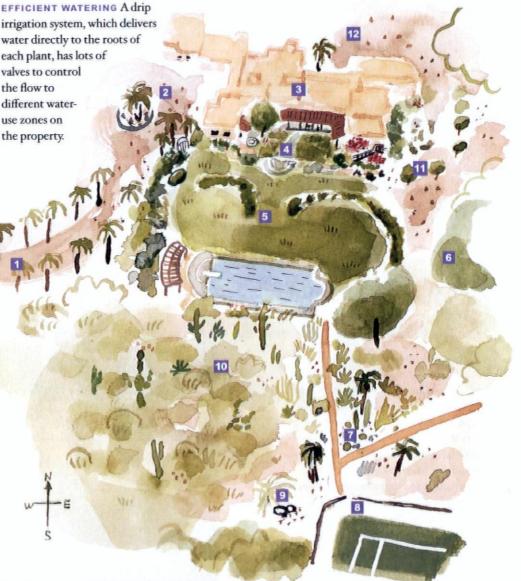
MULCHES Decomposed granite is a topdressing for the planting areas around the house. This keeps the soil moist and reduces the need for extra watering. The oasis areas have soil amendments. GOOD MANAGEMENT Daniel Maeder, of Horticultural Management Systems in Phoenix, knows about all of the desert plants here and, unlike many others in the desert-landscape-maintenance field, does not overwater. Maeder allows plants to grow in their natural shapes, Ten Eyck notes, and doesn't prune everything into balls.

(Zephyranthes candida). EFFICIENT WATERING Adrip irrigation system, which delivers water directly to the roots of

the flow to use zones on

A PIÑON-BIRD'S-EYE VIEW 6.5 acres

- 1. Entry Drive lined with **Date Palms, Desert Trees,** and Agaves
- 2. Auto Court and West **Entry Courtyard**
- 4. South Hummingbird Courtyard
- 5. Pool Area and Lawn
- 6. Revegetation Area
- 7. Cactus Garden
- 8. Tennis Court
- 9. Mrs. Frank Lloyd Wright Fountain
- 10. Natural Desert
- 11. Citrus and Fruit Grove and Herb Garden
- 12. Revegetation Area



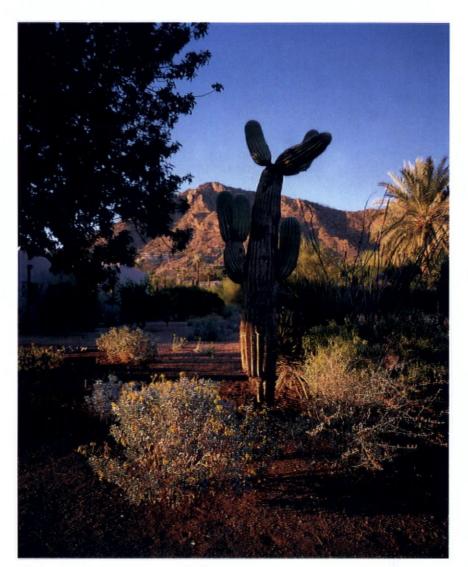








From top: In the native desert area of the property, an outcropping of Engelmann's prickly pear (Opuntia engelmannii) grows among bur sage (Ambrosia deltoidea). The cactus garden is planted with Fishhook barrel cactus (Ferocactus wislizeni), which appears to wear a crown, blue candle (Myrtillocactus geometrizans), and a gorgeously spiraled Emory barrel cactus (Ferocactus emoryi).



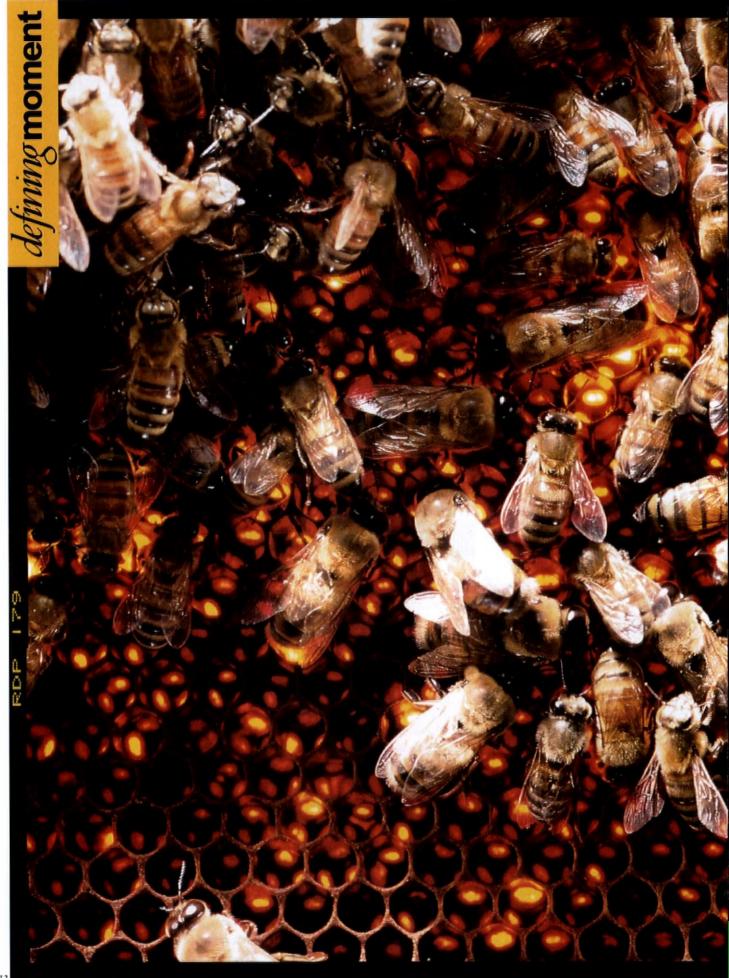
Ten Eyck drew up the exotics hit list, and Connie Binns executed it. Out went the silk oak, oleander, xylosma, citrus, privet, arborvitae, at least an acre of grass, and a palm tree. "I love palms in their place," Ten Eyck explains, "but I have an aversion to them in the Sonoran Desert. I think they're kind of distracting. The neat thing about the Sonoran is the saguaros are the dominant verticals. Most of our desert trees are sub-trees, low, shrubby. Nothing gets above thirty feet."

Though the Binnses planted dozens of nursery-propagated trees, they also acquired some "desert salvage." Desierto Verde, the original desert-tree-salvage company, which saves and propagates native plants, craned in three trees that would otherwise have been destroyed—a mature ironwood and two foothill paloverdes. Desert trees and cacti grow slowly (the saguaro puts out its first bloom at forty, its first arm at

Near the leafy canopy of a carob tree, above, a saguaro (Carnegiea gigantea) appears to dance. At its feet are brittlebush (Encelia farinosa), globe mallow (Sphaeralcea ambigua), and ocotillo (Fouquieria splendens).

seventy), so using native salvage has obvious advantages. "These trees are twenty to three hundred years old," says Joyce Sanders, Desierto Verde's sales representative. "They're gnarled, weathered. It's hard to duplicate that with nursery material." Another sixty nursery-grown adolescent natives—Mexican ebony, mesquite, creosote, jojoba, chuparosa—arrived at the Binnses' in five-gallon cans.

In their thirst for a more waterefficient landscape, the Binnses, guided by Ten Eyck, proved themselves intuitive xeriscapists. Ten Eyck seeded in and plugged in—a desert-wildflower rug: desert mallow (continued on page 175)



bees doit

BEES ARE NATURE'S great anomalies, bearing both a mighty sting and a limitless capacity for sweetness. These tiny, industrious creatures (hence: "busy as a bee") produce one of the most sublime treats on earthand also in the heavens, it seems, since honey is the nectar of the gods. They do so under lamentable working conditions, too: If you think your office is crowded, take a look at theirs. And is anything more onomatopoeic than the sound of bees? No wonder they have inspired so many poets, from Shakespeare to A. A. Milne and Muhammad Ali. Emily Dickinson said it best, when she called them the "Buccaneers of Buzz." Oh, that Emily, isn't she just the bee's knees?

the land masters

A portfolio of designers who are remaking the American garden



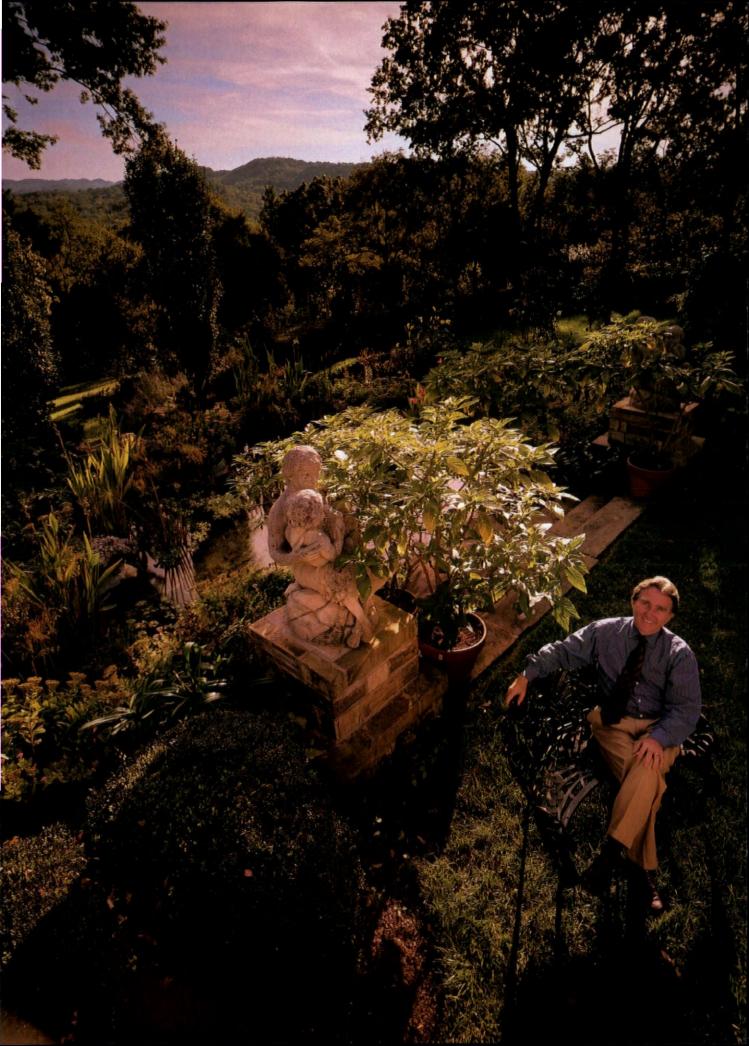
THERE ARE FASHIONS IN GARDEN DESIGN as in everything else, and in the past two hundred years some trends in landscape architecture have been healthy, others not. What unites the seven place makers assembled here is certainly healthy: their concern with living lightly on the land. They differ, of course, on how this should be accomplished. But that's only right. A garden in Tennessee shouldn't have the same ambitions as one in Wisconsin, nor should two designers in the same locale be expected to share a vision. We celebrate a reverence for the land in seven styles of contemporary American garden design.

WRITTEN BY SABINE ROTHMAN PHOTOGRAPHED BY GREGORY HEISLER

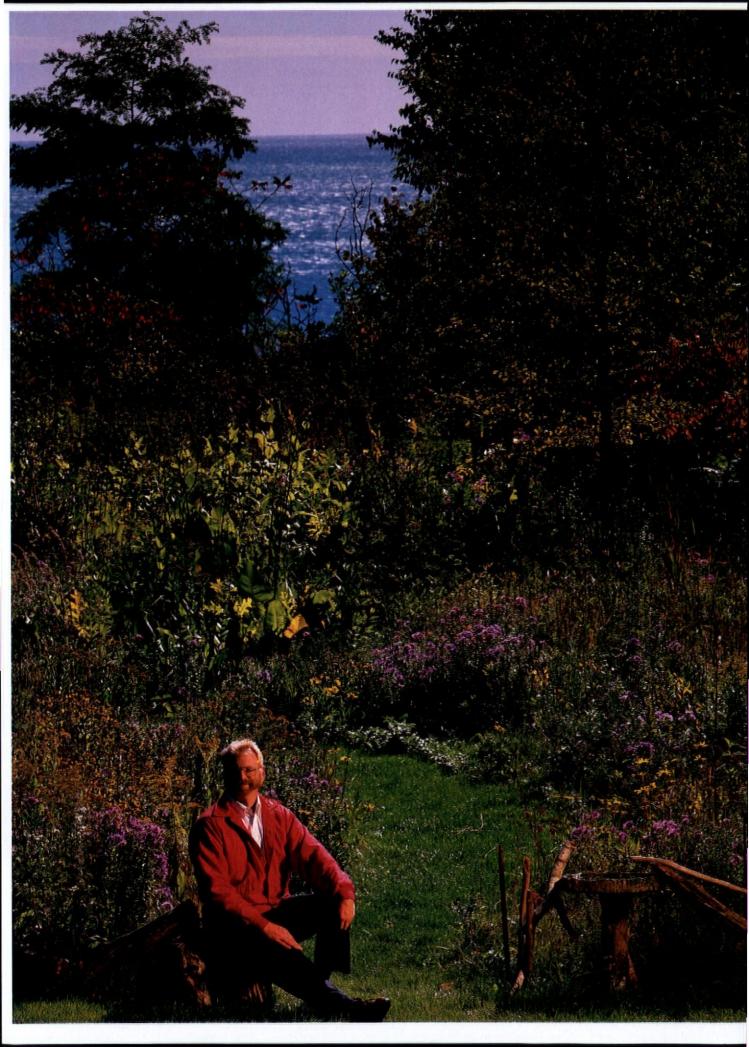


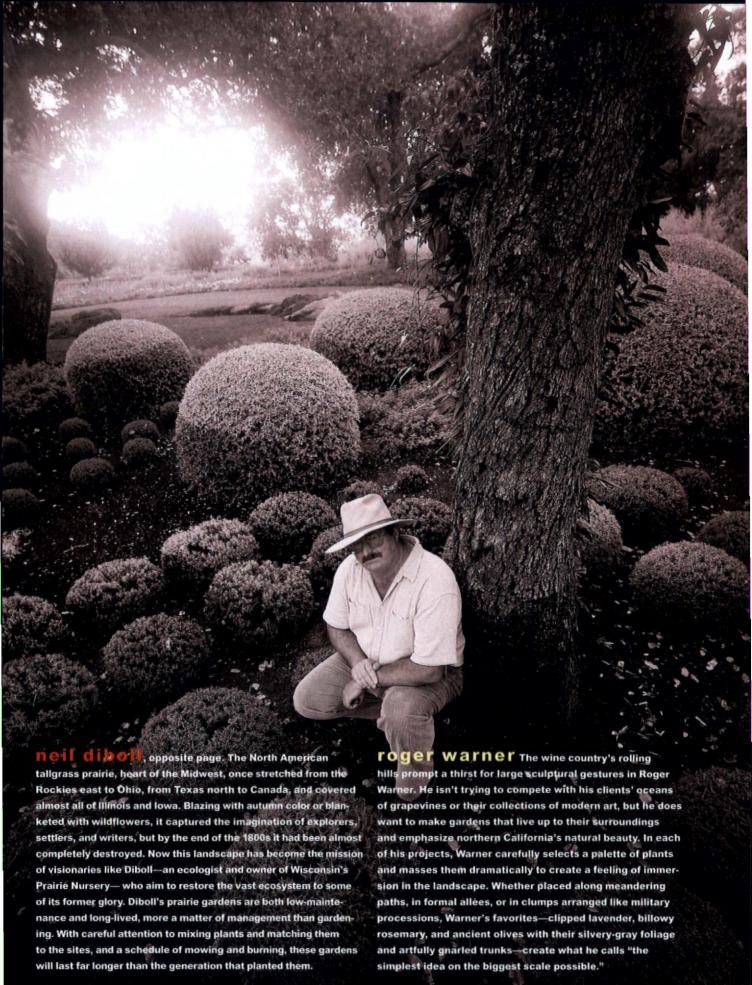
Center's hilltop site, where he headed the team that designed the landscape plan, as though he had been plucked from the crowd in Georges Seurat's Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte and dropped into the world of Magritte. But Olin, of the Philadelphia-based Olin Partnership, is no isolationist. He is instead an architect of welcoming public spaces. Bryant Park in New York City is one such space, reclaimed by Olin after decades of crime and civic neglect. There, as in his other public projects, his design puts society on display and keeps it on its best behavior. Office workers use the park as a lunchtime oasis, and no one steals the chairs; movie lovers attend after-dark screenings of classic films, and no one takes their wallets. And, at least in this one spot, rough-and-tumble New York appears to be a model of civility.

is a belle greene Although she almost always does a drawing or a painting of a site, Isabelle Greene's sense of focus resembles that of a photographer. We see her here framed by the lens-like opening into one of her gardens. Pay attention, she seems to be saying. Look again. As remarkable as they are for riveting the eye, Greene's landscapes are also notable for their fluidity, especially in the dry climate of southern California. Sinuous paths of stone and gravel move through terraced terrain, making us feel as if we are following mountain streams down to the sea. From above, and many of her designs are meant to be seen from above, the scene has the appeal of an aerial photograph; close up, the visitor encounters handsome vignettes filled with arresting arrangements of plants, stones, or sculpture. Though Greene's work is primarily residential, her spectacular Silver Garden is on view at Pennsylvania's Longwood Gardens.





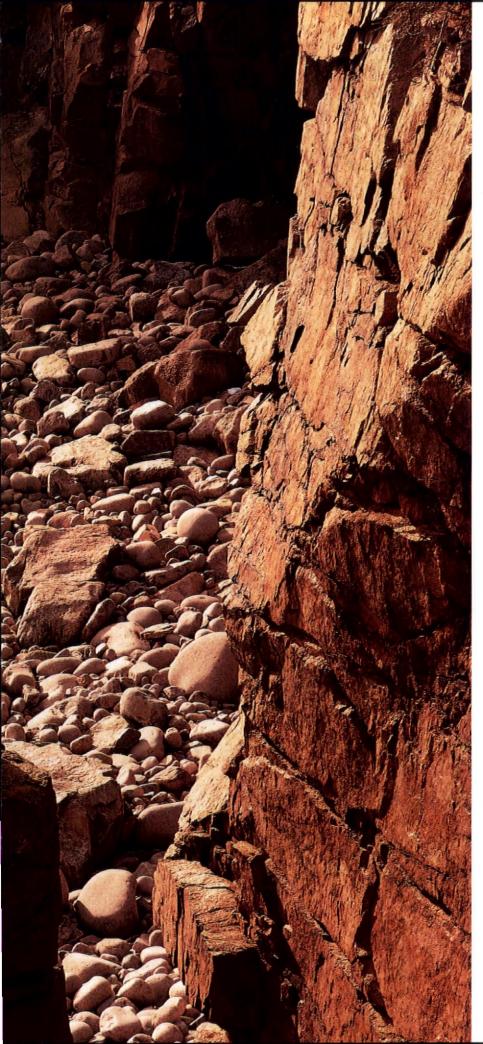




Cliscipline

The fluid improvisations of a Patrick Chassé landscape rest on rock-solid foundations

PRODUCED BY DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN



N BLUE HILL, MAINE, radio station WERU is sending out the uniquely American sounds of Billie Holiday. As she plays with and against standards like "Embraceable You," she seems just the right accompaniment for Patrick Chasse's Sunday afternoon in the nearby village of Town Hill. The summer is over, and the notable gardens of Mount Desert Island are demanding less of their notable landscape architect. While the music plays, he is free to reflect on his unique version of an old standard-the American garden, especially the American garden as conceived by his esteemed predecessor on Mount Desert, the great landscape gardener Beatrix Farrand.

As you listen to him talk, the analogy to Holiday begins to seem more fruitful than far-fetched. A great improviser, Holiday was a disciplined student of the past. She had Bessie Smith behind her, and in the beginning of her recording career she had the solid but inventive Teddy Wilson to back her up. Farrand serves both of these purposes for Chassé. He has done restoration work on several of her gardens in the area-most famously the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller garden, where Farrand pioneered the meeting of Oriental landscaping and English herbaceous borders without compromising the strength of either. He reveres her use of native plants and the way her gardens blend effortlessly into their natural surroundings. The feeling of refuge and refreshment in a Chassé garden owes a great deal to Farrand.

But there are departures—and improvisations. To begin with, there is the loose and casual look of Chassé's designs, which comes in part from the way he blurs the boundaries of his plantings. Then, too, his Asian effects have an arresting modernity that is absent in Farrand's. The unstudied appeal of his gardens rests, of course, on a great deal of botanical knowledge, just as Holiday's seemingly casual improvisations arose from her careful rehearsal of the songs at hand. The idea that a Chassé garden arrives at its beauty by accident is understandable, but it's as mistaken as the notion that any hard-done-by Harlem girl

Patrick Chassé gives a beach on Mount Desert, ME, a jaunty grace note—his bow tie. could step out and invent changes like Holiday's on "Yesterdays." For both artists, beauty is not accidental, but for both, accidents are a part of beauty.

Then there is the subtlety. On an October afternoon, the shades of brown, yellow, and red from the massing of local standbys like hay-scented fern, blueberry, and bunchberry flowing together in a Chassé landscape create a complex and unexpected chord-nature unobtrusively guided by the hand of man. No one uses rock so fluidly as Chassé, so you are often unsure when looking at one of his landscapes where his garden leaves off and the surrounding territory begins. He might bring the forest right up to the house; create a dry streambed and fill it with Nepeta, dianthus, sedums, daylilies, and ferns; expose a rock ledge, fill the cracks with soil, and inlay these pockets with moss, lichens, or bearberry; or make a design inspired by a Chinese bowl and buffer that design with its surroundings by filling it with Chinese juniper, native mosses, and woolly thyme. You look, you are lost in admiration, but often you aren't really sure, unless you ask exactly what has been done or, more especially, how. It's that "natural." And yet trying

to duplicate that effect is like trying to sing along with Billie Holiday. The roots of the magic are surprisingly deep, and the changes are inimitable.

What is characteristically American in Chasse's designs, even in those most consciously Asian, is the way they occupy a territory that is both part of nature and part of us. He points out that while European gardeners have long been interested in the look of the "wild garden," they have usually regarded it as just thata look, without giving much thought to the way their wild gardens fit the

history and landscape of their surroundings. Such gardens strike Chassé as having the feel of booths at the Chelsea Flower Show—discreet displays meant for public viewing. That's not what he's after. Nor is he drawn to



GEOMETRY The finely crushed pink granite indigenous to Mount Desert, ME, unites this unusual cutting garden. The symmetry of the plan is offset by the way the plants—a mix of annuals and perennials—are allowed to invade and soften the path.





EDGES The design inspired by a Chinese bowl, above left, contains white-granite stone dust at its center ringed by native plants. The outer ring of gray-granite pea stone is edged by a traditional perennial border. Chassé restored the sunken garden, above right, first designed by Beatrix Farrand.

garden rooms like those at Sissinghurst or Munstead Wood, where spaces are designed for a display of a few weeks and then carefully avoided for the rest of the season. American gardens, at least the sort he approves of, are meant

to be enjoyed for the whole season. They are living spaces rather than galleries to be visited.

Much of this may sound like the opinion of a true believer whose passion for native species excludes everything



GEOLOGY A quintessential Chassé design, this rock garden is laid into a groove in an outcrop and looks almost like a meandering brook with a lush mix of native plants, rock-garden standbys, and also herbaceous perennials that require a bit of pampering.

else, but Chassé is no exclusionist. His landscapes are founded on a matrix of indigenous flora, but within them you will usually find sophisticated or urbane compartments containing surrogates for native species. The whole is knit together, balanced, as he says, because every foreign visitor has some connection to the local environment. In his Maine gardens, exotic viburnum hybrids such as *V. carlesii*

are mixed with local varieties, and the same is true of azaleas, of which Maine has precious few. Hydrangeas, specifically hills-of-snow (Hydrangea aborescens), which Chassé enjoys using, are not native to the area, but he employs them in a way that keeps them in balance. "It's like a quilt," he says. "The individual pieces can be quite different one from another, but there is always a

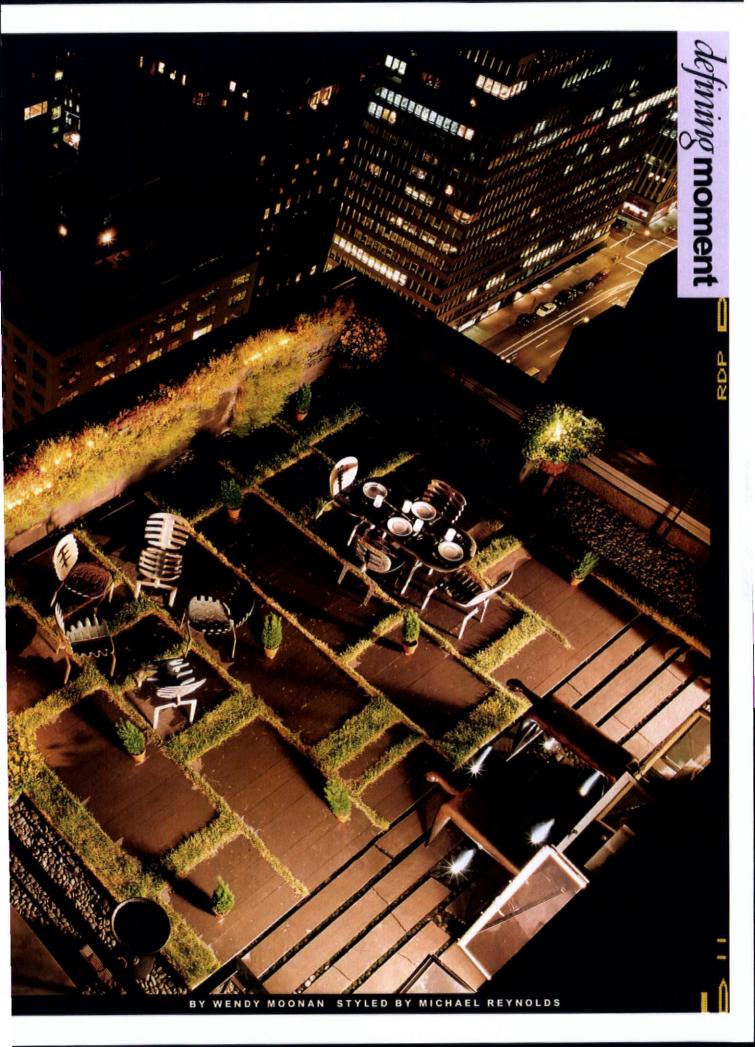
common border tying them together."

The strength of his vision is evident in his gardens and also in the number of otherwise conservative folk who have been weaned from their wish to have gardens resembling Giverny. These clients have been persuaded that the ordinary made interesting is more original and dramatic than courting the exotic. That musical analogy, again, is apt.

city lights

IF YOU LIVED THIRTY-NINE STORIES above Manhattan, wouldn't you want an urban microgarden? Linda Pollak, an architect and professor at Harvard, created one for architect Wendy Evans Joseph and her husband, Peter, a merchant banker, that stands up to howling winds, scorching sun, and downpours (a subroof supports the slate, fountain, and plants). A playground by day, it's a glamorous aerie by night, used for entertaining. Now, that's the high life.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY FRANÇOIS DISCHINGER



romantic Up-1sland Emily Bramhall preserves an area of pastoral calm.

This breathtaking view
of the peonies at dawn with
the potting shed beyond
is one of Emily Bramhall's
favorites. The peonies, over
60 years old, were transplanted by Bramhall from
her great-grandmother's
garden in Delaware.

revelation

amid the frenzied popularity of Martha's Vineyard

BY SENGA MORTIMER PHOTOGRAPHED BY NINA BRAMHALL



HEN MOSHUP, the legendary leader of the Wampanoags, was strolling along the beach on Cape Cod, hoping to catch a whale for breakfast, some sand got into his moccasin and he poured it out into the ocean. Thus was the island of Martha's Vineyard formed. Some residents of Nantucket, the Vineyard's insular rival, dispute this theory, arguing that Moshup emptied his moccasin after breakfast and that the island was formed in an entirely different way. Vineyard residents respond by calling this a fabrication based on jealousy and unsupported by soil analysis. It is unlikely that any one explanation for the genesis of New England's largest island will ever be accepted unanimously. But there is no doubt that the Vineyard contains both considerable sand and remarkably fertile soil.

Despite its popularity with tourists and owners of second homes, some tracts of Vineyard farmland and woodland have escaped cultivation and are now withheld from developers by nature conservancies, as well as by environmentalists like Emily Bramhall, who has been gardening on the island since she was fifteen.

Bramhall, who built a house and garden in the up-island community of Chilmark, bought the property in 1979. "I fell in love with the topography, which was pushed up by a glacier,









leaving lovely woodland ponds and hills," she says. The charming post-and-beam house that she built is nestled on a Pleistocene ridge. The north slope of the ridge accommodates a swimming pool, which was carefully designed to suit the land, and Bramhall's perennial garden. The south side overlooks a woodland "kettle hole," which she enlarged by digging some fifteen feet through the red clay to form a pond.

When you look out across the gorgeous countryside from the house's south porch, your eye is directed to a central clearing by the stands of trees on either side of it, and arrested by their reflections in the pond at the bottom of the hill. The mixed borders are organized along a fairly steep pitch. The beds are secured by drywalls that follow the curves of the hill with the obedience of a contour map. They bear a calculated resemblance to the walls that have divided Chilmark's farms and lined its roads since colonial times.

ELPHINIUMS, foxglove, violas, dianthus, and peonies (the latter transplanted from Bramhall's greatgrandmother's garden) bloom in pastel ribbons in the lower beds. Bramhall's experience as an island gardener led her to select the strains suited to a maritime climate.

An unpretentious post-and-beam pool house stands at the base of the terraced slope; the pillars of its porch are entwined with honeysuckle, and 'New Dawn' and 'Climbing Peace' roses. Directly across the pool, the colors are echoed by rafts of yellow and orange daylilies next to the fieldstone wall.

Gardens such as these, spread over prominent landforms, risk getting lost in the landscape unless they are adjacent to

A group of cousins, enjoying their Popsicles after a barbecue, top, follow their leader along one of the stone walls that enclose the pool. Daylilies are planted next to the wall. 'Blue Butterfly' scabiosas, center left, stand out brilliantly as they mingle with orange geum. Clematis, center right, spills over the wall of the outdoor shower. Bramhall and her son, Ben, enjoy gathering flowers for the house, left.



ground rules

The Spirit of Place

eeking to preserve the natural beauty of her island, Bramhall designed her landscape and garden to follow the contours of the land.

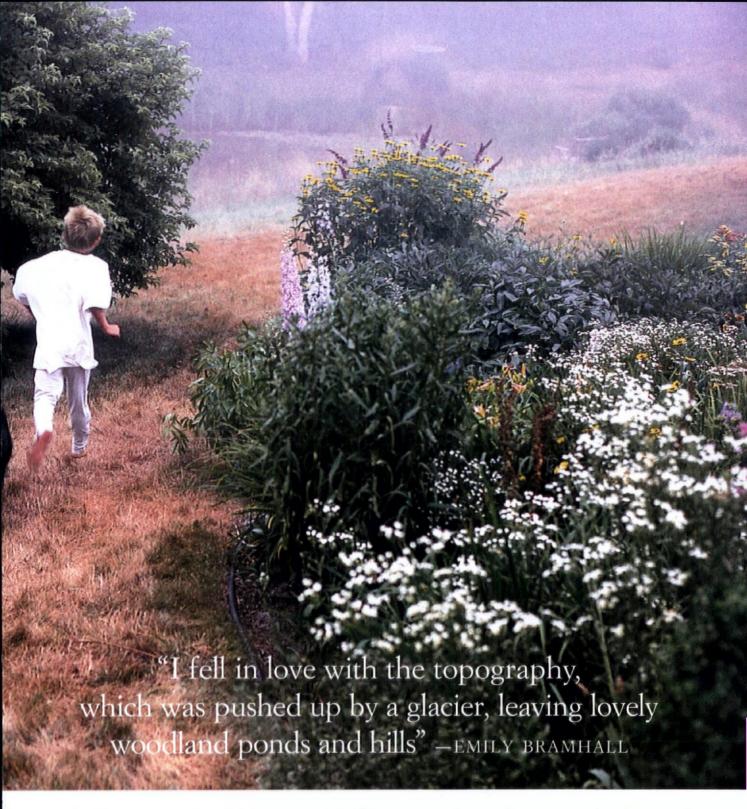




A TERN'S-EYE VIEW 14 acres

- 1. House
- 2. Outdoor Shower
- 3. Bench
- 4. Swing
- 5. Pond
- 6. Stone Bridge
- 7. Crab-apple Orchard
- 8. Existing Woodland
- 9. Flower Garden

- 10. Potting Shed
- 11. Steps down to Pool and Pool House
- 12. Pool Garden 13. Pool House
- 14. Pool
- 15. Bench
- 16. Daylily Borders
- 17. Meadow



a landmark or are unified by some element. Bramhall chose local stonework to bring her plan together. The linchpin of her design is a simple but splendid stone potting shed, which boasts an oculus at its gabled end. It links her gardens to the slate border of the swimming pool and adds a focal point.

If the site dictated the landscape design and the design determined the type of plantings, it was Bramhall who chose the plants. When she received her initial order for \$180 worth of plants, she reports that she was "staggered to find that everything arrived in a little cardboard box and that it was all promptly swallowed by the garden." The coreopsis—which has self-sown—lavender, dianthus, and pink geraniums from that first, very cautious order still bloom, but she soon learned to "buy vast amounts of perennials, adding Alchemilla"

mollis, veronicas, dicentras, Digitalis grandiflora, penstemons, salvias, many varieties of dianthus, masses of annuals, cosmos, and nasturtiums."

This is a garden that doesn't shout at you but is easily recognized as the home of a conservationist, who, while respecting her natural surroundings, can still use them as a foil to enhance a conventional flower garden and give it a sense of age.



gardensupports

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAY ZUKERKORN PRODUCED BY STEPHEN ORR



AUGUSTUS CAESAR LOVED THEM. So did King Louis-Philippe. The two were quick to grab these Egyptian stone structures as emblems of power and prestige in public spaces and imperial gardens. German and Dutch gardeners obsessed with the elaborate treil-lage in fashion in the 17th century used wooden versions for climbing plants. But not much has happened to the obelisk since then, so we thought it could use another look. We asked several young furniture designers to offer their interpretations of this ancient form.

FROM FAR LEFT:
TED BOERNER turned

everyday objects such as inverted galvanized tubs and flowerpots into a tall tower topped with a copper toilet float. **ALISON BERGER Was** inspired by Dutch botanical studies and ancient Roman sun worship to create a combination obelisk/greenhouse of forged steel and handblown glass bell jars. **TODD HASE designed** his obelisk in white lath and wainscoting for the centerpiece of his formal garden. PARALLEL DESIGN considered the needs of the urban apartment dweller with this sleek, houseplant-friendly tower of birch and brushed-aluminum rings.

brushed-aluminum rings BONE SIMPLE DESIGN took inspiration from trelliswork to build a

light structure of gray wire-formed steel, accented with bearings. KRAB DESIGN made

its Infinity obelisk from sinuous curves of waxed, hot-rolled steel that delineate the traditional shape. T.O.M.T. worked with found objects like garden hoses and copper plumbing to construct

sturdy garden support.
CHERYL RILEY'S

this humorous yet

Pagliacci obelisk was inspired by a trip to the opera. It's made of stainless and Cor-Ten steel with handblown Mexican glass balls.

ABRAXAS has lately been working with curved shapes and decided to give this standard form of riveted aluminum a little twist.

Sources, see back of book.





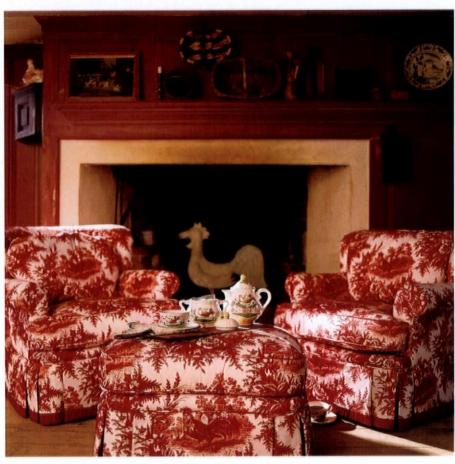
GREEN HOUSE

We've always fantasized about bringing the garden inside, so we filled an old Hudson Valley place with tulips, butterflies, real hens, and even some ceramic ones



tiptoe through the tulips

A rug of dewy moss, a cloud of taffeta, crisp white cotton, and a profusion of tulips bring spring to the dining room, opposite page. The curtains are Brunschwig & Fils Nieuw Amsterdam Tulp chintz edged in Carleton V's Chelsea Chintz in fuchsia. Philippe Starck's Lord Yo chairs, from Luminaire, surround the table, which is covered and skirted in Quadrille's St. Cloud taffeta and a Scalamandré cotton stripe. The colorful crystal is from Saint Louis; the china, by Anna Weatherley, from the De Vine Corporation. On the mantel, Takashimaya tulip vases flank a 1987 Robert Mapplethorpe photograph. Hickory Chair's comfy armchair, above, is all dressed up in the overscale Tulip pattern.



barnyard antics and antiques

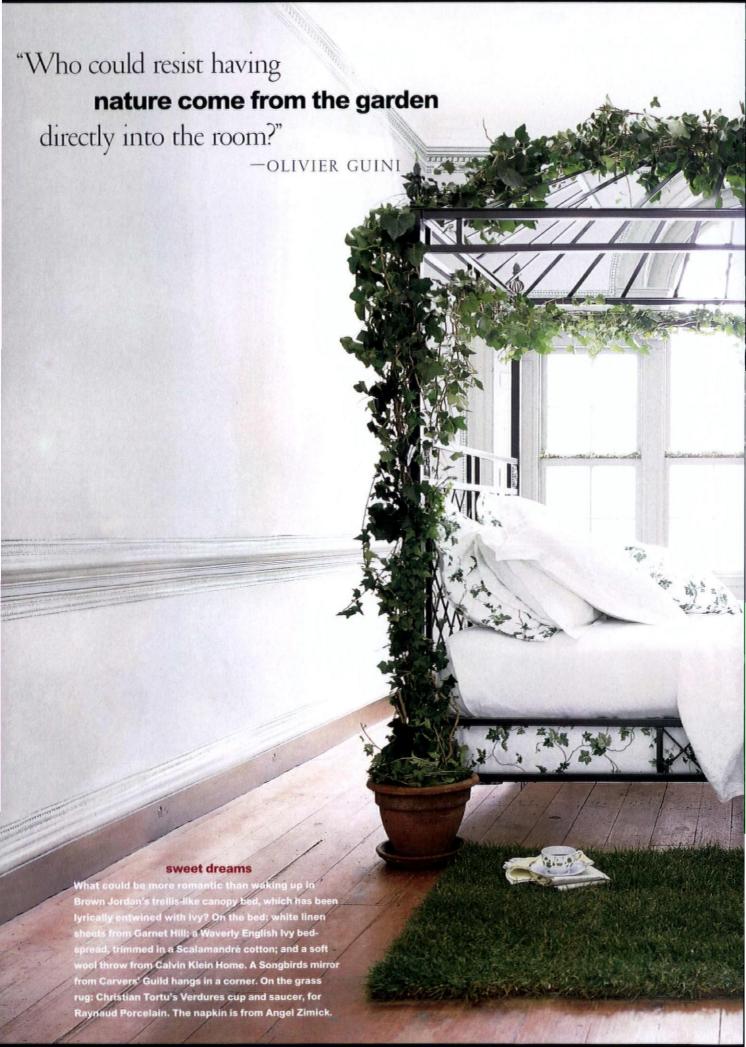
Feathered friends take over the kitchen. Red roosters anchor the toile on Pearson Company's armchairs and ottoman, above, and chickens add a cheerful note to a tea set from the Blachere Group. The weather vane and painting are from Judith and James Milne, Inc., NYC. Christine Lambert (through Escabelle Imports) designed the witty chicken-bedecked fabrics used for the curtains and for the upholstery on a Drexel Heritage chair, opposite page. Real hens and chicks join their ceramic counterparts around Baker Furniture's Pembroke cabinet. The tray is from Calvin Klein Home.

HE INTERIOR OF A HOUSE and the grounds that lie outside its nurturing walls should strike a delicate balance. Early spring is a particularly enticing time: nature, seen and experienced through windows and doorways, exerts a sensuous pull. The shimmering morning light, the delicate hues of flowers, and the coquettish charm of the barnyard get our decorating juices going. Luckily, fabrics and home furnishings manufacturers are on a similar wavelength.

Exuberant new floral patterns are perfect for blurring the boundaries between house and garden. Because there is nothing more inspirational than a good dose of fantasy, we decided to add a generous share of whimsy to the gracious rooms of a 1785 house in upstate New York. We introduced a carpet of fresh moss and fabulous tulip-strewn fabrics and china to a stately spruce green,











winging it

A child chases a butterfly from Evolution, while butterflies of brilliant hues flutter across Baker Furniture's Milling Road sofa, above. The mohair throw is by Richmond Hill through Metropolitan Design Group; the table is from the Moorea Collection by Baronet.

spring planting

A lacquer chinoiserie console and mirror from John Rosselli & Associates, opposite page, contrast with the earthiness of the potting shed. The hand tools are from Takashimaya; the pitchfork from Smith & Hawken. Sources, see back of book.

wood-paneled dining room. We added a dollop of surprise to the barn-red kitchen by upholstering comfy chairs in a cheerful rooster-patterned toile and by introducing clucking chickens and chirping chicks—live feathered ones as well as their ceramic counterparts. Decorator Jean-Paul Beaujard and floral designer Olivier Guini created the ultimate fantasy bedroom, featuring an ivyenveloped canopy bed. "Who could resist having nature come from the garden directly into the room?" asks Guini, who entwined ivy around the bedposts to match the ivy-patterned sheets. "We used outdoor ivy," he says, "but there are some kinds of ivy that can live indoors and last for years, as long as there is real light." The moss rug in the dining room is another matter. "Moss has to be wet all the time to stay green," concedes Guini, "but it's something wonderful and different for a dinner party. Why not?" Why not, indeed.





shopping

OUTSIDE IN

Can't wait to get outdoors after a long winter? Add a touch of spring and fantasy to your house by filling it with a tumult of tulips, cute chicks, and a host of colorful butterflies. Seamstress Camille Casaretti fashioned the freshest new fabrics into draperies, slipcovers, and pillows. You can, too.

—JOYCE BAUTISTA



spring has sprung

^ Blooms come indoors on Mitchell Gold's Lucy chair, \$537, and Asmāra's Soleil needlepoint rug, \$4,050. The bell jar is \$375 at Relics, Hudson, NY.

farmhouse friends

> On cool March nights, cozy up to a fire with a furry companion curled at your feet on a down pillow covered in Pierre Frey's La Basse Cour. Patrick Frey, president of the company, was so proud of the chickens at his country house that he based the print on them.

bulbs abound

V Below, from left: Scalamandré's Tulips print on a love seat; Clarence House's Tulip Bowl chintz; Anna Weatherley's hand-painted plates, \$125 and \$155, for the De Vine Corp.; Christofle sterling silver, \$290 for five pieces; napkin, \$90 for six, from G. H. Interiors, Ontario, Canada; Carleton V's retro print.

Above: Cup and saucer, \$145 for four, from Mottahedeh.



lemon zest

^ Urns and yellow hues give the living room its timeless yet fresh look. Far left: Swatches from Classic Revivals; Ramm, Son & Crocker; and Classic Revivals. The urn by the window is from Treillage, NYC, \$4,200; the other, from Rooms and Gardens, NYC, is \$950. The rug is from Einstein Moomjy.



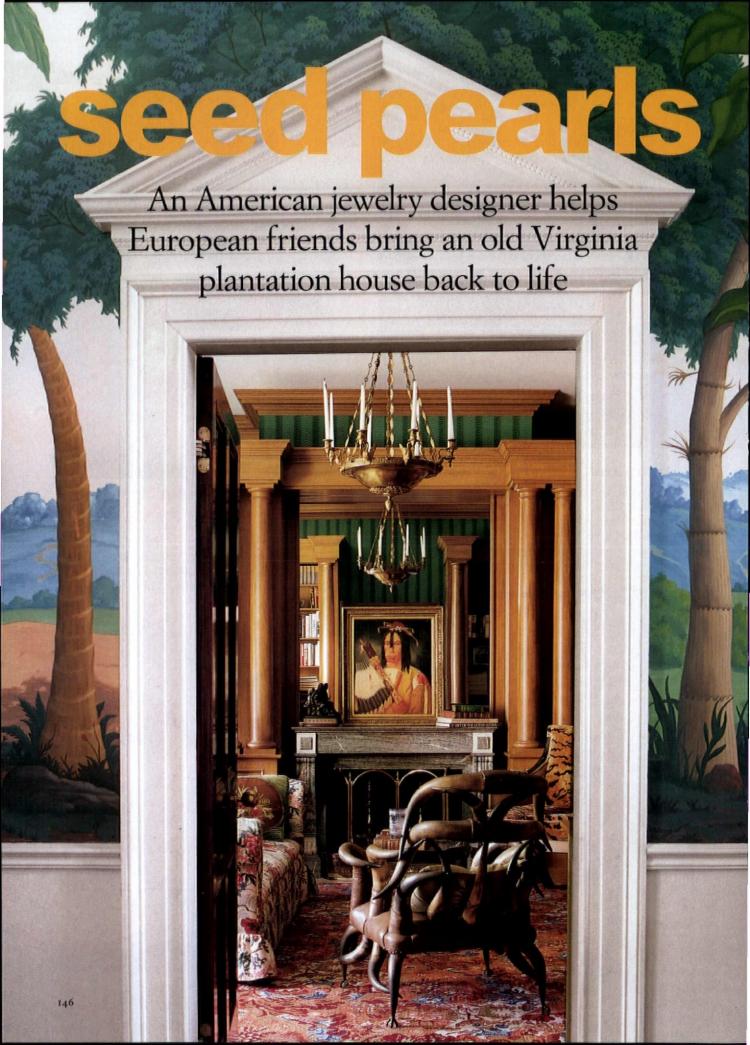
carnation coup

A Schumacher's Garofani carnation print, top, shown in its three colorways, covers Essex Union Club chaises, \$10,600 each, from Richard Mishaan, NYC. Vase, \$475, from Relics, is atop a pedestal, \$575, from the Garden Room, NYC. Magenta cashmere throw, \$1,495, from Hermès.



flights of fancy

< Butterfly collecting is easy. Large pillow, left, in Le Jardin Bleu from Manuel Canovas; small pillow in Cowtan and Tout's Buffon, with Clarence House trim; four linen napkins, \$24, from G. H. Interiors; plate, \$35, Lynn Chase Designs, NYC. Sources, see back of book.</p>





HEN I PICKED UP the phone at my office and heard the voice of my great friend, I was startled—she usually warns me when she and her husband are arriving from Europe. "We have a surprise for you," she said.

My friends, it turned out, had just bought a plantation of about 1,000 acres in Virginia and intended to farm the land organically. There was a house, she said, "but it needs a lot of work." When I suggested a mutual friend—a talented decorator—there was a furtive conversation in the background. "We have other plans," my friend finally said. "You, in fact."

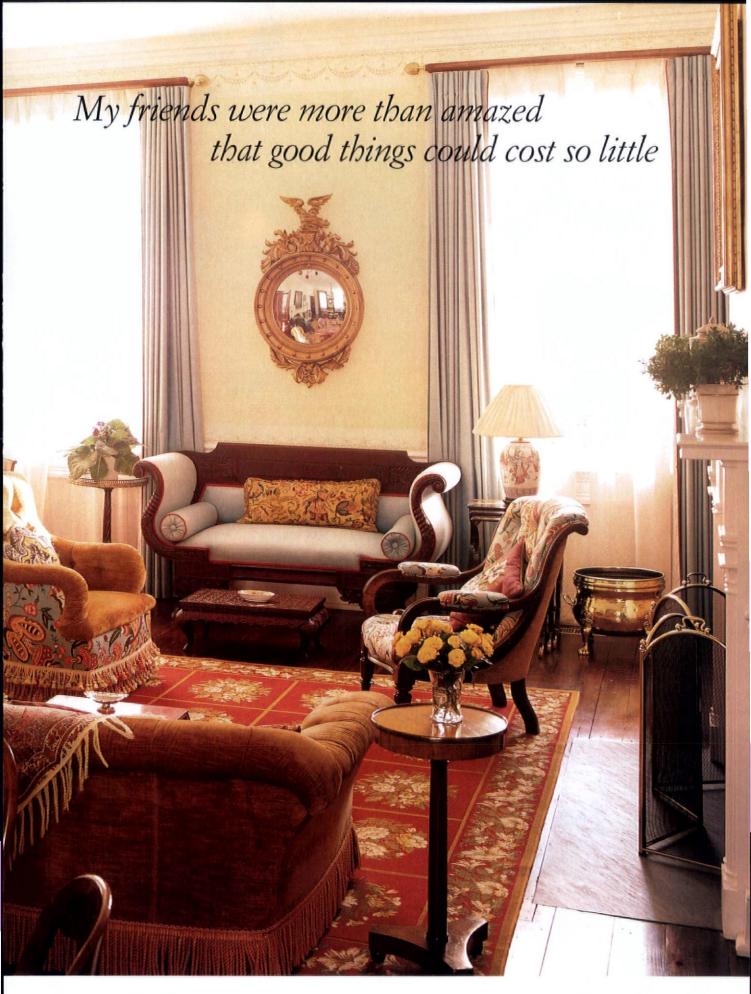
I was flattered, but I'm not a decorator. The only work like that I've ever done is in my own house and apartment, and that was more architecture than decorating. My taste is eclectic and highly personal. I am also very slow: after twenty years, there is still much to be done in my apartment. The problem is that if I see something in my mind's eye, I'm almost satisfied—call it conceptual decorating. Still, my friends were undeterred. And since they're the kindest couple in the world, it was hard to refuse.

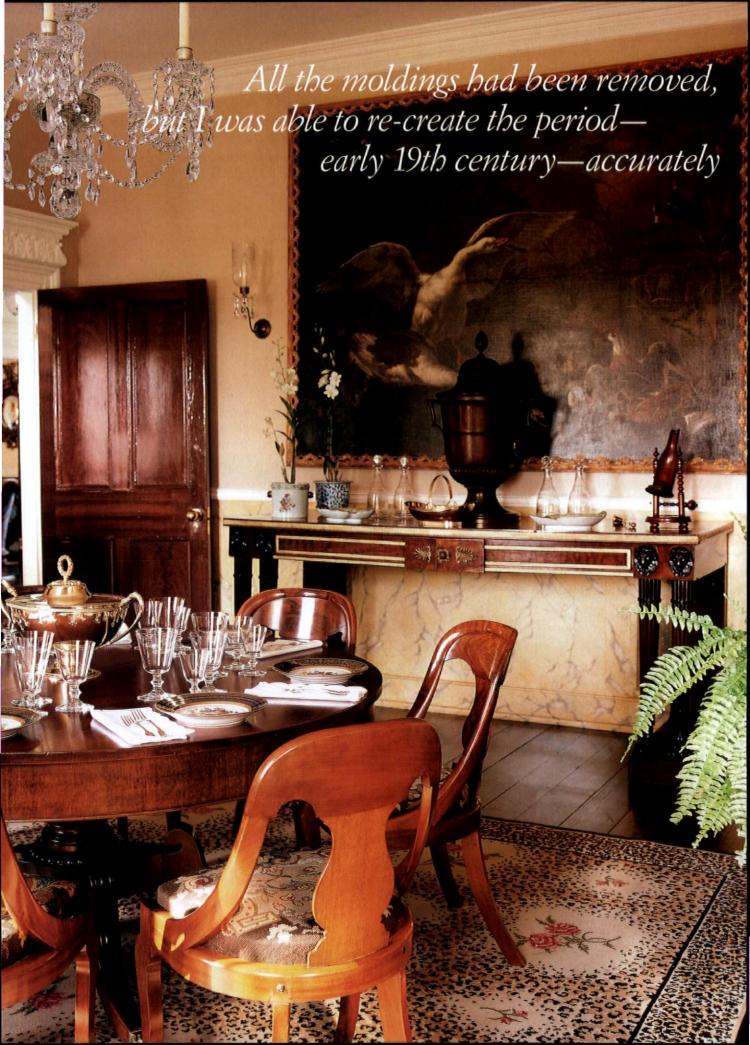


The central hall ends at the garden door, above.

Nineteenth-century American pieces fill the salon, opposite page. Curtains and settee upholstery are Waverly's Petit Point in bluebell. Clarence House's Corne D'Abondance covers both armchairs. Schumacher's Antique Linen Velvet in topaz is on the sofa; custom silk-bullion fringe is by Scalamandré. Veronique rug is by Stark.







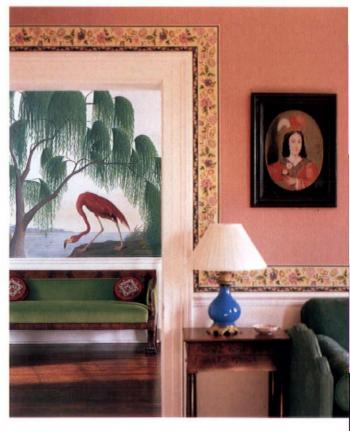


THE DINING ROOM, opposite page, has a burnished look. An English crystal chandelier hangs above the 19th-century American Federal dining table and Restauration dining chairs. Both the Vieux Paris china and the English flatware are 19th century. An 18th-century painting presides over a Georgian English console. The Leopard Rose carpet is by Stark.

IN THE CENTRAL HALL, left, a Regency mirror gives a splendid, slightly distorted reflection of the white-painted stairway.

THE HOUSE is imbued with rich colors, like the blue lamp and the emerald-green settee below, right. From an antique canopy bed, below left, a visitor can glimpse a chaise longue and a 19th-century American silk embroidery above it.







difficult to move doors and align them symmetrically



Their son Marc was in charge of the project, but I was given carte blanche. A motel, three quarters of an hour away, was our home on and off for almost a year, until the house was livable. The house was lovely from the outside, although the landscape had been badly neglected for years. Over a period of time, Marc transformed the grounds into a bucolic English park—planting trees, digging ponds, and building ornamental bridges of Chinese Chippendale design.

The house, unfortunately, was less easily restored. Every sun-dried brick had to be replaced. The wiring was virtually nonexistent—an adversity that was, in fact, an advantage for me. Since every wall had to come down, it was not difficult to move doors and align them symmetrically. All the moldings had been removed in an earlier renovation, but with the help of Architectural Paneling Inc., in New York City, I was able to re-create the period—early nineteenth century—accurately. New bathrooms were made in old closets and storage spaces. One even has a working fireplace opposite its stainless-steel-lined bathtub, which sits in the center of the room.

The kitchen, in the oldest part of the house, had been outfitted in early Depression style. Still, it was big enough to divide into an eat-in kitchen and a separate



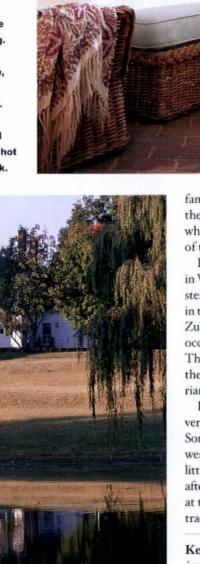
A cheerful breakfast room, above, was carved out of the 18th-century kitchen, the oldest part of the house. The table is French in a 17th-century style; the chairs, 19th-century French. Gerard Wiggins did the stenciling on the walls.

Over a period of time, the owners' son transformed the grounds into a bucolic English park—
planting trees, digging ponds

THE PORTICO, right, is furnished with comfortable wicker chairs and ottomans. It's an ideal place to relax and drink in the verdant countryside.

THE LANDSCAPE had been sorely neglected for years. Marc, the owners' son, went to work on it. Among his graceful touches, opposite page, are ornamental bridges of Chinese Chippendale design, spanning the ponds he had dug.

ALTHOUGH THE EXTERIOR of the house, below, looked beautiful, every one of its sun-dried bricks had to be replaced. Now exquisitely restored, the house is surrounded by gently rolling lawns and plenty of trees that offer shade from the hot Virginia sun. Sources, see back of book.



family dining/breakfast room. I found old beams for the kitchen ceiling and reproduction delft-blue-andwhite tiles for the counters, walls, and chimney breast of the fireplace, which also serves as a barbecue.

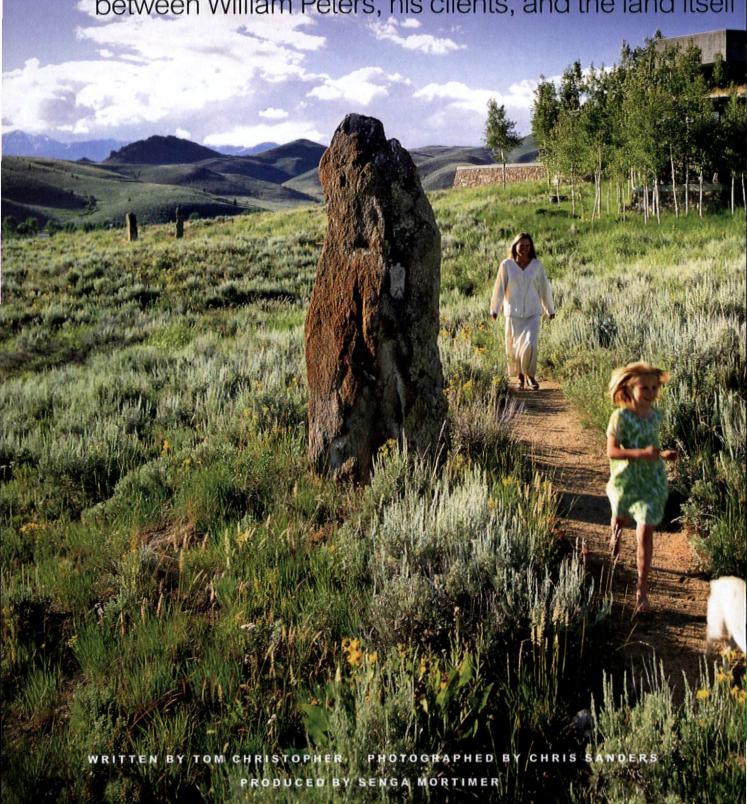
I came across a very talented muralist, Joseph Swan, in Vermont. He and Gerard Wiggins, who painted the stenciling around the double drawing-room walls and in the breakfast room, created a fantasy version of Jean Zuber's Views of North America wallpaper, adding occasional Audubon-like birds to the foreground. This charming frieze proceeds up the stairs, including the second-floor landing, which boasts an early Victorian secretary with Gothic mullions on its glass doors.

I was determined to do the job on the cheap, so I left very low bids on good things at Sotheby's and Christie's. Sometimes we got them, sometimes not, but my friends were more than amazed that good things could cost so little. In the end, everyone was extremely happy. In fact, after a visit Barbara Bush suggested that I do something at the White House. But I demurred and stuck to my trade. I continued to make Mrs. Bush's pearls.

Kenneth Jay Lane is a renowned designer of costume jewelry. This was his only project in interior decoration.









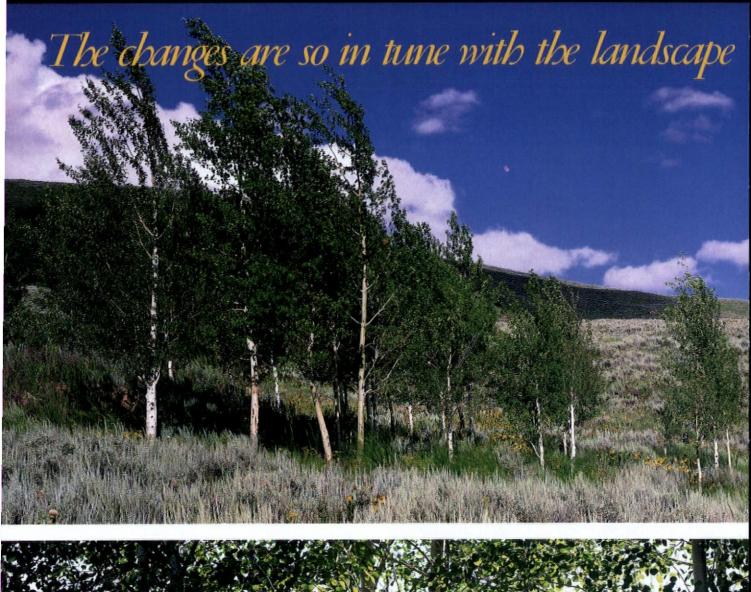
T'S AN AMERICAN DREAM and, usually, an American tragedy. You find a place of extraordinary natural beauty, and it's for sale. So you buy it and create a home there, and in domesticating the landscape you destroy precisely that which originally attracted you. "Gardeners," William Peters explains, "typically impose."

But not always, and the garden that Peters, a California-based landscape architect, has created in partnership with a pair of clients in Sun Valley, Idaho, is proof of that. In its light touch, this garden is a model for something new. It also marks a comingof-age, a move away from old-world concepts.

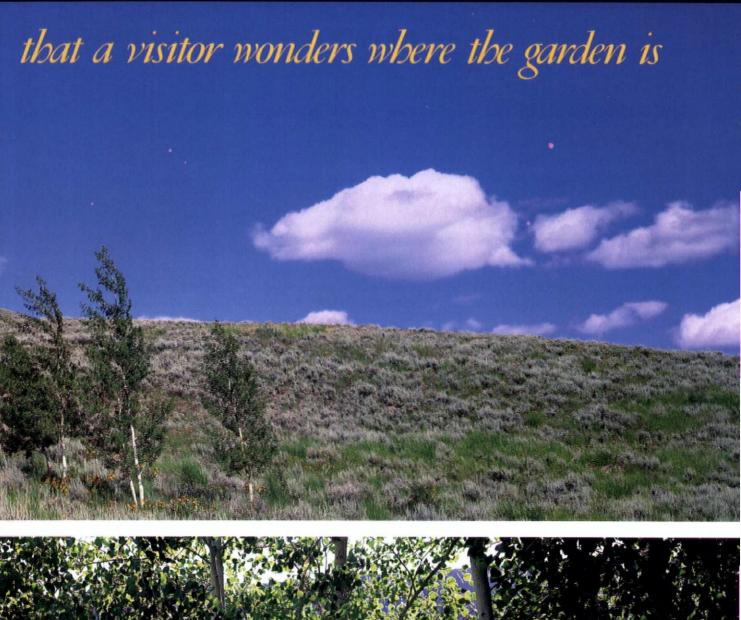
When speaking of this garden, all three creators habitually use the word "we," and unlike most architect/client relationships, the relationship between Peters and the garden's owners has truly been a partnership. For about fifteen years they have worked together, often side by side, in what Peters calls a dialogue with nature. In the process, the three have injected a great deal of themselves into this Idaho mountainside. Yet the changes they have made are so carefully tuned to the spirit of the place that a visitor wonders where the garden is. Gradually, however, you are drawn into an experience that is subtle but deep, a piquant alternation of serenity and surprise.

The owners were excited about acquiring the two-plus acres overlooking the historic Sun Valley

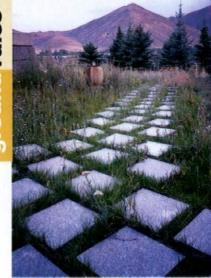
The subtlety of William Peters's work owes something to the Japanese technique of borrowing from the landscape. The monoliths in the garden resemble the peaks in the distance, and the contours of the decomposed-granite path choreograph the stroller's experience of the views.







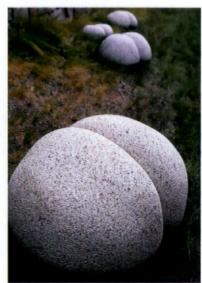




White Sierra granite pavers lend a finished look to a path by the house yet echo the rugged mountainside setting.



A pavement of cobbles and a Jesus Bautista Moroles stone portal, above. provide a transition between the house and the landscape beyond. Korean sculptures, below, sprout like puffballs from the turf.



Lodge. Clearly, creating a garden compatible with the site would not be easy. They knew that the sagebrush that carpets the site is painfully slow to heal from any injury, so they had to work carefully. Besides, the growing season in Sun Valley lasts only six weeks: spring's final frost usually comes at the end of June, and there is frost again by the end of August. Above all, the couple wanted to avoid the mistake they saw in the town below, which wealthy immigrants were turning into an alpine Scarsdale.

They realized that they needed a special kind of help, and when a friend recommended a landscape architect in Marin County, California, it didn't seem too far to go. Especially when, on his first visit to Sun Valley, Peters told them, "We'll keep it natural." Peters has commuted out every spring and fall since 1983.

The new partners' first act was to soften the house's architectural edges with seemingly unstudied clumps of aspens. These are the subject of intense debate every year, as the partnership decides on additions and subtractions. Decisions are hands-on: Peters himself prunes.

LACING THE owners' sculpture has been an ongoing task. A couple of oversized, sinuous stainless-steel pieces by Israeliborn sculptor Gidon Graetz fit particularly well. Set on swiveling bases so that every side can be viewed from the house and the garden, their gleaming metal picks up, bends, and reflects the surroundings. By one entrance, a pair of cut-granite monoliths by the late Texasbased sculptor Jesus Bautista Moroles hints at what lies below.

Running down the slope from Moroles's monoliths is "William's Walk," a feature the couple wanted Peters to create. Peters hesitated for several days after receiving this assignment, then one morning plunged into the sagebrush, Felco pruning shears in hand. What he strove to do was to "choreograph" the stroller's experience, turning him or her here and there, continually lifting the eye from the town below to the superb peaks that fill the horizon. Punctuation was supplied by the owners.

They had shared with Peters their

fascination with the stone-worshiping cultures that built Stonehenge and other prehistoric sites. Still, he was surprised to hear that one day they had driven down to Nevada and brought back three monoliths. Set up along the path, the rugged stones bring a more comfortable, human scale to the mountainside's awesome sweep. In a way reminiscent of a Japanese technique, the garden stones "borrow" from the far-off scenery. First they capture the eye, then they make it jump from the stones' miniature peaks to those in the distance. The effect is to include the whole valley in the garden.

Nature provides color. Flushes of native grasses turn the garden orange, yellow, and blue in turn. Peters loves it best in autumn, though, when only the sunlit gold of the aspen leaves interrupts the tonalities of gray and brown. But if the garden changes with the seasons, it also changes with the time of day. In the morning, for example, the monoliths have a more dramatic presence. Viewed from the house, they are backlighted, so they stand dark against the sun-bleached gray-green sage.

The garden-makers admit to having changed the look of the mountainside. Over time, they've groomed the sagebrush by removing deadwood; and by weeding out the coarsest of the wild grasses, they've gradually refined the landscape's texture. At the same time, the landscape has left its mark on them.

For the owners, coming into harmony with the site's austerity brought about a simplification of their own style. The potted plants, for instance, formerly placed around the exterior of the house, have been removed, so there is no competition with the vista.

For Peters, the change has been a sort of letting go. This garden is not the traditional, sweet, predictable English cottage garden we all were taught to make. In Sun Valley, he has learned to work more boldly with nature. He's learned to be as ruthless as nature when he should be. But he has also learned a kind of selflessness. "We did something that was inspired by the land. If we did it right, you go there and you think, Wow, this is really cool. But you really don't know what we did. That was our journey."

Choreographing a Walk

illiam Peters calls his path-making process choreography, and in fact the way he manipulates the pedestrian's experience in this garden bears little resemblance to classic path design. Classic design focuses on improved transportation: the route is as direct as possible, the surface is of a material that provides easy walking in all weather, and the path is of uniform width, usually four to five feet wide so that two can walk abreast. In contrast, Peters aimed at creating a path more like an animal track. There are foxes on the property, and Peters tried to construct something they might have created—a wandering, narrow track integrated into the hillside. Here are some of his guidelines.

1) DESIGN WITH YOUR EYES AND FEET Peters spent three days walking and looking, trying out different routes to find the most satisfying combination of experiences.

Any site will have better and

worse views, and you can use

a turn to emphasize a good

2) PLAN THE TURNS

3) USE THE CONTOURS

makes you focus."

A walk that follows the contours of the land provides easy walking, but deliberately

turn it so the pedestrian faces

the view directly. "A turn,"

turn your eyes, and it also

makes you slow down. It

Peters explains, "makes you

going against them is another device Peters uses to shape the experience. "If you come to a portion of the walk that is narrower and steeper, you're going to slow down and be more thoughtful. You'll watch your step." So when a path approaches a view Peters wants to exclude, he may turn it so that it proceeds up or down

path must keep their eyes on their feet. But as the path arrives at a more desirable view, Peters flattens it again. Walking becomes easier, so the stroller relaxes and reflexively looks up.

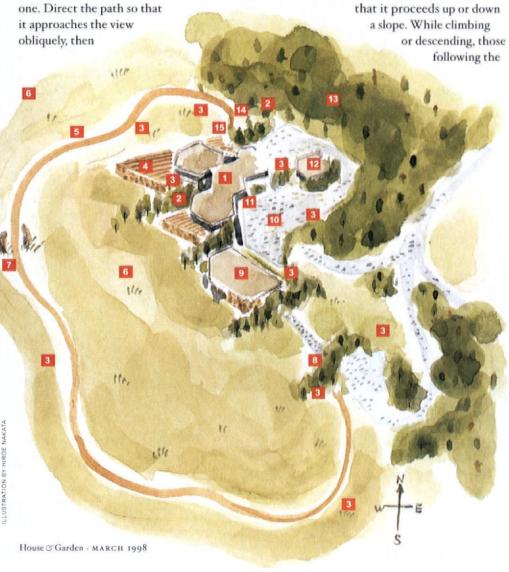
4) NARROW THE PATH

Decreasing the width of the path slows the walker to a more contemplative pace, and is less intrusive on the landscape.

5) FRAME THE VIEWS As he did with the stone monoliths in this garden, Peters framed the views, a practice he considers an essential element of path design. A 360-degree visual sweep is boring; views need a context. Besides, a judicious choice of frames can include the view into the garden, as the stones here do.

A MOUNTAIN-BLUEBIRD'S-EYE VIEW 2+ acres

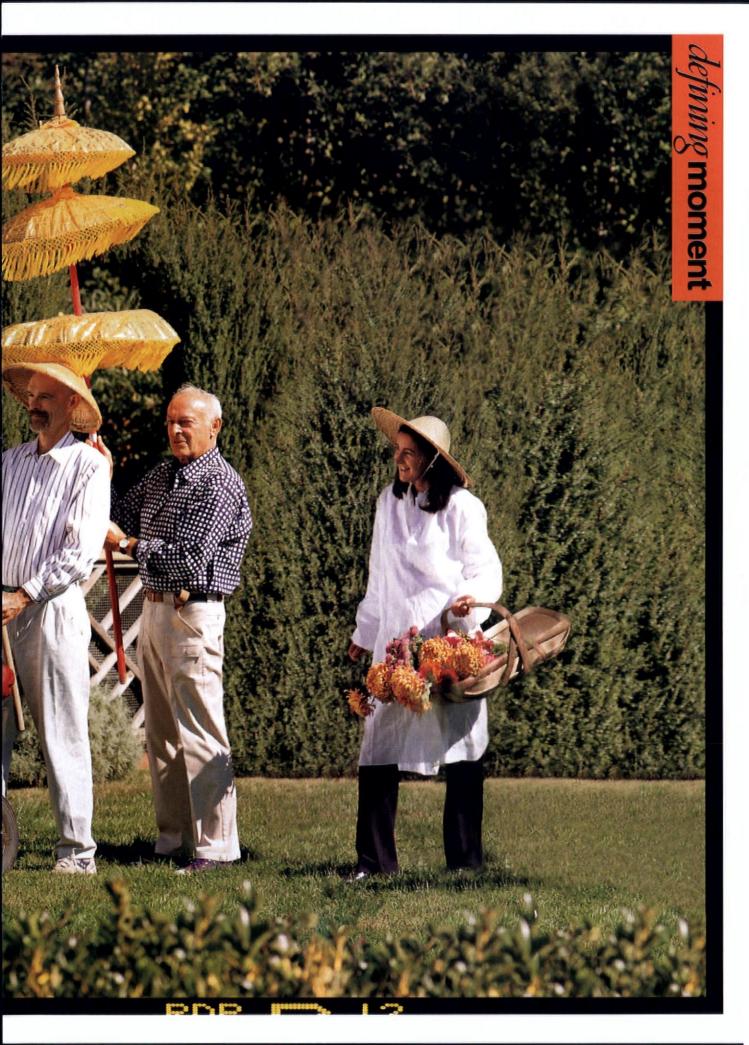
- 1. Main House
- 2. Gidon Graetz Sculptures
- 3. Additional Sculpture
- 4. Deck
- 5. Sculpture Walk
- 6. Sage and grassland
- 7. Stone Monoliths
- 8. Jesus Moroles Sculptures
- 9. Studio
- 10. Auto Court
- 11. South Court
- 12. Guesthouse
- 13. Woodland
- 14. Overlook
- 15. Stone Garden



procession

GARDENING IS AN ART, so who better to set his hand to the soil than an artist? Painter Robert Dash has been creating the sprawling, glorious Madoo Conservancy in Sagaponack, New York, for years (and opens it to the public two days a week from May through September). His nonagenarian mother makes an annual pilgrimage for her birthday, tootling about in a wheelbarrow of his design. Mrs. Dash leads the parade, followed by her rakish grandson Michael, her son Robert (sporting a Balinese wedding umbrella), and a friend, Carmen Moreño. Pretty as a picture, they seem artfully poised for a déjeuner sur l'herbe.





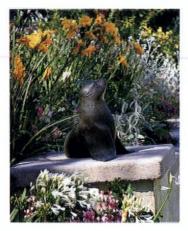


SIMA old

W. Garett Carlson's garden for children has as many delightful surprises as the pages of an old-fashioned storybook

magical

enchantments



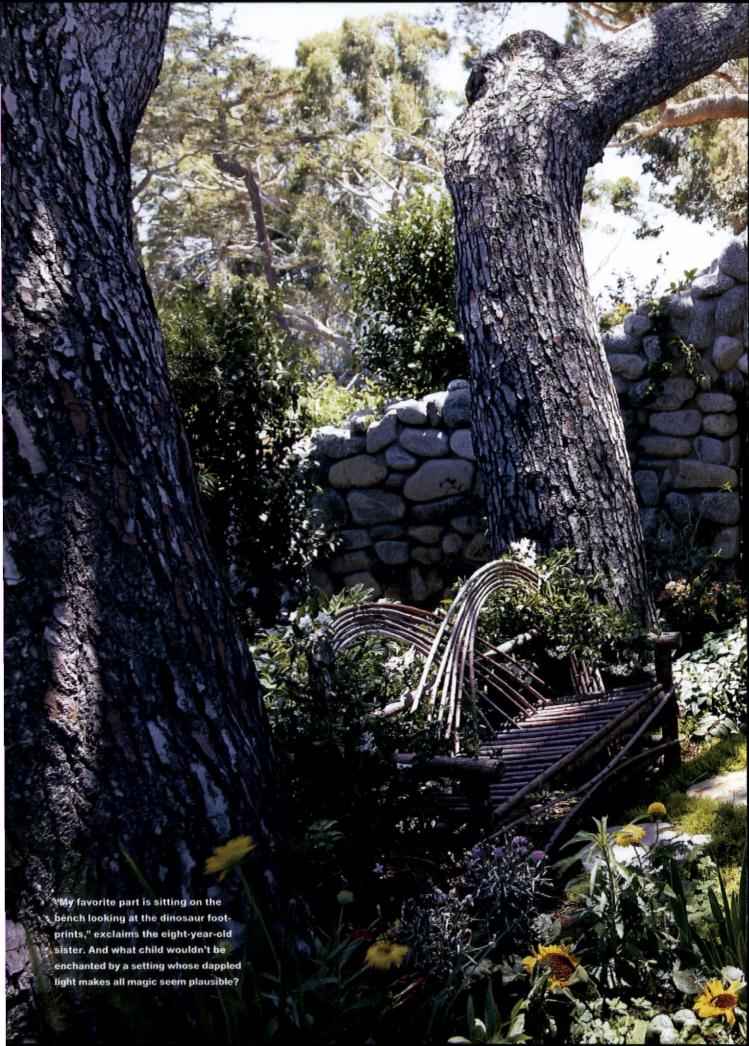
IN AN AGE THAT PROMOTES virtually every personal pleasure except privacy and in which television images crowd the imaginations of the very young, it is a joy to discover a children's garden that provides its young visitors with a sanctuary and an aura of magic.

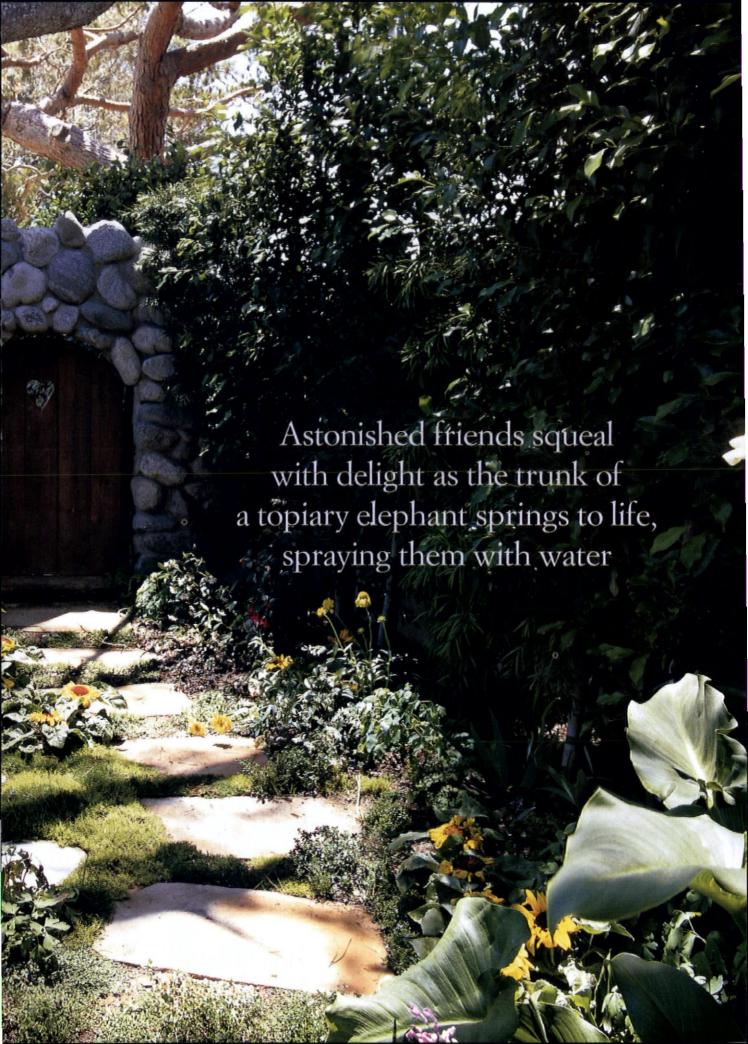
Although the house opens out on spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean, its garden is secluded and mysterious, devoted to the pleasure of four young daughters, ages three,

four, six, and eight. It has often been suspected that there is a garden in each of us that makes its first appearance when we are very young and stays with us until we are very old. Most of us can remember these places and the flights of fancy they inspired. A successful children's garden should make this kind of impression on its small visitors, sparking their sense of wonder and adventure.

The sisters slip into their garden through a miniature version of the door used by Mary Lennox, Frances Hodgson Burnett's young heroine in her much loved classic *The Secret*













A topiary elephant delivering one of its impromptu showers, left. On a sunny afternoon the four sisters preside over a tea party on the patio of the playhouse, top. One of the dinosaur footprints buried along the path, above.

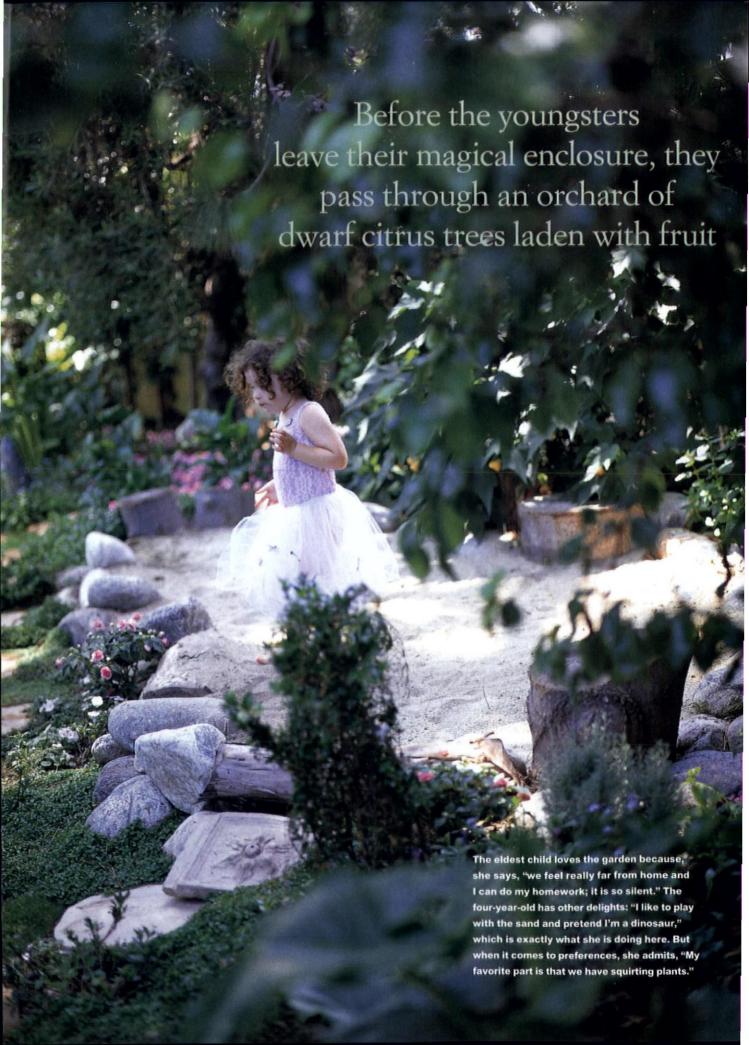
Garden. Once inside this space, the sisters walk along a serpentine path of stepping-stones that takes them past low-lying mists of blue forget-me-nots and clumps of shining gold sunflowers. White clouds of agapanthus and larkspur rise under the huge, saucerlike leaves of elephant's ear (Alocasia). The children scamper by a tiny rustic bench clothed in jasmine and potato vine, and then climb over a log placed across the path. Here, the older ones can test their balancing skills while the younger stop to rest. Then it's on to a gauntlet of water spouts cleverly hidden in the topiary and statuary and triggered by stepping on certain stones known only to the sisters. Astonished friends squeal with surprise, and the girls howl with laughter as the trunk of a topiary elephant springs alive to spray the visitors.

A diminutive playhouse comes into view, surrounded by huge blue globes of hydrangeas and festooned with baskets of begonias and lobelias. Raspberry vines tumble down from hanging baskets above the playhouse's patio. The window boxes are planted with mint, and the windows are thrown open to welcome guests to a playhouse and a patio that can accommodate a tea party—with or without the Mad Hatter.

On the far side of the playhouse, an arbor dripping with grapes leads to a little vegetable garden. Here, the girls can pick tomatoes, corn, zucchini, and lettuce. Before the youngsters leave their magical enclosure, they stroll through an orchard of dwarf citrus trees laden with succulent fruit. Another door in the stone wall behind these trees marks the transition from this grove of edible delights to the tiresome reality of schoolwork and bedtime.

Naturally, the size of things is an important factor when designing a garden for children. This one derives much of its whimsical impact from the decision of land-scape architect W. Garett Carlson to place it next to some of the oldest and tallest trees on the property. The small scale of the garden is thus emphasized, and the trees also provide deep, cool shade punctuated by shafts of sunlight along the garden's paths.

Grown-ups always wonder how to awaken a child's imagination without being overbearing. A look behind the door of this sylvan world reminds us that there are precious few experiences that stimulate a child's imagination as much as an unescorted visit to a secret garden.





SOURCES

Where to Buy It



GREEN HOUSE Pages 136-145

SUNDIALS PAGES 49-54

DOMESTIC BLISS

Pages 21-34

SWEET CO

THRESHOLD Pages 6-10 Rug, \$6,030, Einstein Moomjy. 800-864-3633. Chair, \$1,921, Century Furniture, Hickory, NC. 704-328-1851. Brussels Fringe pillow, \$90, ABC Carpet & Home, NYC. 212-473-3000.

DOMESTIC BLISS Pages 21-34

Garden facts from National Gardening Survey 1996-97, conducted by the Gallup Organization Inc. for The National Gardening Association, Burlington, VT. Page 21, P.J.M. Rhododendron, \$68; children's rake, \$17; books from the Taylor Guide Series, \$20 each; Fafard soil, \$10 for 30 quarts; seeds, \$1 to \$4; assorted bulbs, \$.69 to \$2; paperwhites, \$25; colored terra-cotta pots, \$6 each; all from Chelsea

Garden Center, NYC. 212-929-2477.
Industrial wagon, \$350; Traditional Haws can, \$32 to \$39; Compact sheers, \$32; Perfect Garden hose, \$21 to \$49; Little Red wheelbarrow, \$35; all from Smith & Hawken. 800-776-3336. Lincoln-Mercury Division. 888-2ANYWHERE. Page 22, Metal scoop, \$19; pots, \$8 to \$129, and organic potting soil, \$3.50/bag, Smith & Hawken. Brown Topstich Cooper leather jacket, \$1,395, and cash-

mere crew, \$595, Donna

Karan Collection through

Saks Fifth Avenue. 800-347-9177. V-neck T-shirt, \$120, and navy jacket, \$600, Paul Smith, NYC. 212-627-9770. Page 26, Ursus Books and Prints, NYC. 212-727-8787. Caribbean Cuts, NYC. 212-924-6969. Moss, NYC. 212-226-2190. Garden Artists: Jill Gill, NYC. 212-362-8440. Barbara Bellin, NYC. 212-486-0623. Dora Frost, NY, 516-537-7350. Maureen McCort Home & Garden Portraits, CT. 860-395-0199. Page 28, from top: Garden Notes, \$31 each, Smythson of Bond Street. 800-345-6839. Bean Pen, \$25, and Moroccan Journals, \$98 each, Fellissimo. 800-565-6785. Page 30, Donna Karan Home through select Neiman Marcus (800-365-7989) and Marshall Fields (800-292-2450) stores. Page 32, Melon pot and impatiens, \$60, Victor & Co, FL. 954-764-8000. Douglas Hoert Landscape Architecture Inc., IL. 847-733-0140. Page 34, Sandpaper, linseed oil, coarse grinding disk, 8-inch bastard file, Home Depot, GA. 770-433-8211.

HUNTING & GATHERING Pages 37-46

Planter's Punch, All fabric available through architects and designers. Page 37, Blackman-Cruz, L.A., CA. 310-657-9228. Edward Fields Inc., NYC. 212-310-0400. Serra Gardens, L.A., CA. 310-456-1572. Nagel Nursery, CA. 310-457-9091. Environmental designer Dennis Stevens, CA. 562-654-0425. Sattels, CA. 213-962-5565. Page 38, Mordigan's Nurseries, CA. 213-655-6027. City Studio, CA. 213-658-6354. Kneedler-Fauchere, L.A., CA. 310-855-1313. Available through architects and designers. Randolph & Hein, L.A., CA. 310-855-1222. Schumacher & Co. 800-672-0068. Page 40, Modern One, CA. 213-651-5082. Modern Living, CA. 213-655-3898. Diamond Foam & Fabric, CA. 213-931-8148. Kentile Operating Company, 888-453-6845. J. F. Chen, L.A. CA. 213-655-6310. Available through architects and designers. Donghia. 800-DONGHIA. Diva, CA. 310-278-3191. Creation Baumann, NY. 516-766-7631. Wells Antiques, CA. 213-413-0558. Modernica, CA. 213-933-0383. Page 42, Dialogica, CA. 213-951-1993. Heaven Scent, Page 44, Renny Inc. Design For Entertaining, NYC. 212-288-7000. Page 46, Simon Pearce, NYC. 212-421-8801. Asprey. 800-883-2777. Tiffany & Co. 800-526-0649. Calvin Klein Home, 800-294-7978.

OBJECT LESSON Pages 49-54

Barbara Israel Garden Antiques, NYC. 212-744-6281. Sara Schechner Genuth, Gnomon Research, MD. 301-593-2626. Page 49, Treillage Ltd., NYC. 212-988-3643. Page 50, Kenneth Lynch & Sons, CT. 203-762-8363. The Garden Antiquary, NYC. 212-757-3008.

HOME BASE Pages 56-58

Angela Cummings jewelry is available at: Bergdorf Goodman. 800-218-4918. Neiman Marcus. 800-937-9146. Steven B. Fox Fine Jewelry, CT. 203-629-3303.

HOME ECONOMICS Page 64

Hair and makeup by David Searle/Artist Un Tied.

BOOKCASE Pages 66-68

Anchor & Dolphin, \$3 for a catalogue, R.I. 401-846-6890. Archivia, NYC. 212-439-9194.
Bell's Bookstore, CA. 650-323-7822.
Bibliofind, www.bibliofind.com.
Warren F. Broderick, NY. 518-235-4041. Barbara Farnsworth
Bookseller, \$5 for a catalogue, CT.
860-672-6571. Hortulus, \$2 for a
catalogue, Toronto, Canada. 416-9205057. Landscape Books, \$5 for a catalogue, NH. 603-964-9333. Quest Rare
Books, \$5 for a catalogue, CA. 650-324-3119.

IN SEASON Pages 82-84

Aaron's Garlics, CA. 707-874-3114. Page 82, Harwood Stockton serving platter, \$1,250, Bardith Ltd., NYC. 212-737-3775, Page 84, Apilco white soufflé dish, Williams Sonoma. 800-541-1262. Louvre bread & butter plate, \$11, Bernardaud Inc. 800-448-8282.

ONE LOOK BACK, TWO STEPS FORWARD Pages 94-103

Sills & Huniford Associates, NYC. 212-988-1636.

JUST DESERT, PLEASE Pages 104-111
Christine Ten Eyck, Ten Eyck Landscape Architects,
AZ. 602-595-8628.

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Olin Partnership, PA. 215-440-0030. Isabelle Greene & Associates, CA. 805-69-4045. Hair and makeup by Brenda Green for Celestine L.A. Ben Page & Associates, TN. 615-320-0220. Douglas Reed Landscape Architecture, Inc., MA. 617-354-0554. Neil Diboll, Prairie Nursery, WI. 608-296-3679. Roger Warner Garden Design, CA. 707-942-9372.

WILD DISCIPLINE Pages 126-133 Landscape Design Associates, ME. 207-288-2415.

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Ted Boerner Furniture, CA. 415-487-0110. Alison Berger Glassworks, CA. 213-655-7990. Todd Hase Furniture Inc., NYC. 212-334-3568. Parallel Design, NYC. 212-989-4959. Bone Simple Design, NYC. 212-633-1987. Krab Design, CA. 310-470-3597 for consultation, 310-840-5997 for a guide. T.O.M.T./Rodney Allen Trice, NYC. 718-237-9781. Cheryl R. Riley, Right Angle Designs, CA. 415-386-7828. Abraxas, CA. 510-841-7767. Iron urn, \$68, Grass Roots Garden, NYC. 212-226-2662. Aluminum planter, \$65, C.I.T.E., NYC. 212-431-7272.

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Flower arrangements by L'Olivier Floral Atelier, NYC. 212-774-7676. Camille Casaretti, NY. 718-875-3111. All

fabric available through architects and designers. Pages 136-137, Brunschwig & Fils, NYC. 212-838-7878. Carleton V, NYC. 212-838-7878. Lord Yo chairs, \$309 each, including slipcover, Luminaire. 800-494-4558. Quadrille, NYC. 212-753-2995. Scalamandré, NYC. 212-980-3888. Crystal, \$312 to \$480, Saint Louis. 800-238-5522. Anna Weatherley china, \$125 to \$155, through De Vine Corporation, NJ. 908-751-0500. Tulip vases, \$995 for a pair, Takashimaya. 800-753-2038. Photo, 1987 the Estate of Robert Mapplethorpe/A+C Anthology. Gable chair with tulip print, \$1,280, Hickory Chair. 800-349-HKRY. Ceylon pillow on windowsill, Clarence House, NYC. 212-752-2890. Pages 138-139, Armchairs, \$1,576 each, and Contoured ottoman, \$730 each, Pearson, NC. 910-882-8135. **Tea set**, \$23 to \$120, Blachere Group. 800-641-4808. **Painting**, \$675, and weathervane, \$8,500, Judith and James Milne Inc., NYC. 212-472-0107. Christine Lambert, CT. 860-435-0034. Escabelle Imports, NYC. 212-941-5925. Bristol chair, \$1,095, Drexel Heritage. 800-916-1986. Pembroke cabinet, \$3,670, Baker Furniture. 800-592-2537. Tray, \$80, Calvin Klein Home. 800-592-2537. Animale Rooster in gray, \$263, Vietri. 800-277-5933. Terra-cotta rooster, \$215, Treillage, NYC. 212-535-2288. Terra-cotta roosters, \$20 to \$30. Department 56. 800-LIT-TOWN. Quimper Faience Hen figurine, \$168, Solanee. 800-71-SOLAN. Hen basket, \$70, Cuthbertson Imports, CT. 203-847-7231. Majolica rooster, \$120, The Finished Room, NYC. 212-717-7626. Royal Roosters, \$45 and \$80, Present Tense. For retailers call 800-282-7117. Pages 140-141, East Indies bed, \$2,500, Brown Jordan, CA. 626-443-8971. **Bed linens**, \$1,052, Garnet Hill. 800-622-6216. Waverly. 800-423-5881. Wool throw, \$160, Calvin Klein Home. Songbirds mirror, \$1,190, Carvers' Guild. 800-GILDING. Verdures cup and saucer, \$90, Raynaud Porcelain through the De Vine Corporation. Flowers napkin, \$34, Barneys New York. 212-826-8900. Pages 142-143, Milling Road sofa, \$2,783, Baker Furniture. Pages 144-145, Throw, \$298, Frank McIntosh Home at Henri Bendel, NYC. 212-247-1100. Table, \$375, Baronet, Quebec, Canada. 418-387-5431. Evolution, NYC. 212-343-1114. John Rosselli & Associates, NYC. 212-593-2060. Available through architects

and designers. Hand tools, \$12.50 each, Takashimaya. Pitchfork, \$58,

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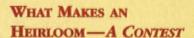
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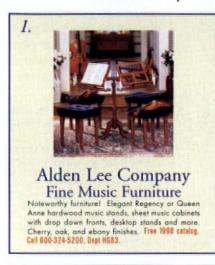
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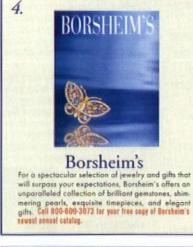
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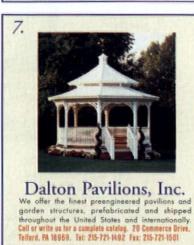


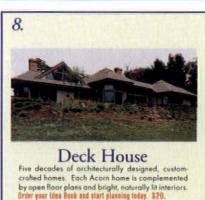


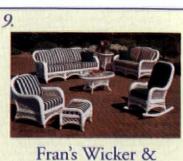












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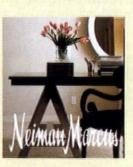
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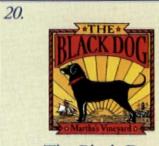
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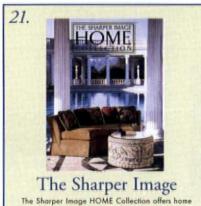
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formal

(continued from page 103) favorite strong, simple shapes. Antique urns are set on newly made plinths that they age with buttermilk. Stone stars are favorites; according to Sills, these stars bring benevolent spirits into the garden. How many more kind spirits will come with the sweet-gum leaves, those yellow stars that drift down in early autumn from the tree outside a sitting-room window?

To explore the rest of High and Low Farm, Huniford whizzes up hill and down dale in a nifty little green farm vehicle with room for a passenger. Nothing runs like a Deere-except the live deer, who are ubiquitous in this part of New York State.

For these two accomplished designers, High and Low Farm represents their first major adventure in making a garden. They pluck garden books-French, American, the classics and the avantgarde-from ceiling-high bookcases in their library and from orderly stacks that cover shelves, a table, and even the floor in Huniford's study. They point to schemes they like, to details that appeal. But their own garden makes obvious what they consider essential: firm structure, a direct relationship to the house, well-defined edges, and the pruning away of all excess. And don't forget all those favorite plants that are encouraged to show off their star qualities. The result is a captivating tension between architecture and planting, the classical idiom and modernism.

The garden looks finished, but apparently it isn't. From the French doors in the library, Huniford looks beyond the grass terrace to a descending slope and the hills in the west. There is to be a pool where the land levels out, but it's still in the "design development" stage. A circle, states Sills. Yes, says his partner, but how about two semicircles, one higher than the other, with water falling into the lower? Hmm, that might be quite wonderful. Decisions take time. Perhaps someday you might even find a crisp zigzag border of plants, inspired by the one in the Vicomte de Noailles's 1927 modernist garden on the French Riviera. Anything seems possible at High and Low Farm.

Alan Emmet is the author most recently of So Fine a Prospect: Historic New England Gardens (University Press of New England).

prickly

(continued from page 111) (soft pink, lavender, orange), brittlebush, desert milkweed, desert lavender, pink and red penstemons, woolly butterfly bush (orange and silver Buddleia), Arizona yellow bells (Tecoma stans); all of these plants boast natural desert colors the Binnses had wanted to play off one another in what Connie Binns calls "this very special Oriental rug." To make the repaired desert authentic, the gardeners had to resist the impulse to crowd it, to fill in the blanks-they had to respect the Sonoran's natural plant spacing. "The desert at this altitude is not lush," Jim Binns remarks. "You'd find greasewood. And you'd find some saguaros. And a lot of empty spaces."

Though Ten Eyck prefers her desert lawnless, the Binnses have kept a patch of double lawn-alternating winter rye and Bermuda grass-between house and pool. They think of it in the English sense, as a beautiful, manicured walkway. Their other parallelogram of green, a deregulated roque court, qualifies as a desert folly-along with Connie's desert-dwarfed herb parterre, on the east side of the house.

In the course of redoing their garden for the desert life, the Binnses found someone with the acute sensibility needed to reestablish the desert: Cesar Mazier, an engineer in agronomy and the head of horticulture at the Desert Botanical Garden, where Connie Binns is on the board. Mazier trimmed, made cuttings, and assigned the baby cacti to "nurse plants"-creosote, mesquite, ironwood-elsewhere on the property. Once a month, custom-built sprinklers on stilts water the cactus garden. "Rain is something beautiful for a plant," Mazier says. "Why not give it a drink of water? We're not talking about mimicking the desert."

Three years ago, the Binnses' desert garden went to the Smithsonianfiguratively speaking. It can be brought to the computer screen on the institution's Archives of American Gardens. With the garden back to its desert right, wildlife-lizards, coyotes, foxes, quail, rabbits, roadrunners, hummingbirds-have come home, too. Together, plants, animals, and the Binnses inhabit nothing less than a mini-desert solitaire.



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