COLORFUL KITCHENS

DESIGNER’S-EYE VIEW

OUTDOOR FABRICS

Color!
More Than Meets the Eye

Color is such a huge part of design that it seems almost impossible to tackle. It’s so integrated with what designers do that it seems almost impossible to tease apart the various nuances and techniques applicable to its uses.

In this issue, our contributors have gone above and beyond to share their knowledge and perspectives about color with fantastic actionable tips and tools. Here’s a preview:

Chris Freimuth interviewed APLD member and sculptor Jan Kirsh about placing colorful sculpture in the landscape. He started as a skeptic. Did Jan change his mind? I don’t post “spoilers,” so I’ll let you find out for yourself. Lindsay Kerr took the walk of a lifetime, the 500-mile Camino de Santiago in Spain, and wrote about her designer’s-eye view of the plant communities she saw along the way, man-made and “planted” by nature. Speaking of nature, we’re lucky to have a book excerpt from Karen Chapman’s new book Deer-Resistant Design.

Eva Leonard takes us up on the roof for this issue’s Case Study, detailing the challenges of bringing colorful gardens to the skies of New York while Marti Neeley, FAPLD, invites us to look beyond the landscape for color design inspiration. Jenny Peterson helps us learn how to design incredibly colorful outdoor kitchens, while Leesa Martling gives an overview of color as light and how that applies to design. Joshua Gillow also took the trip of a lifetime and shares what he learned about his visit to Hobbiton in Matamata, New Zealand. Finally, Laura Morton shared her best tips for working with colorful outdoor fabrics as part of our design roundup.

I’m sure, after reading, you’ll look at your practice in a new way!

KATIE ELZER-PETERS  EDITOR@APLD.ORG
Deer Resistant Design

book excerpt: See page 60 for more.
Color = ?

While pondering the connection between color and the many ways it influences our work as designers, my mind quickly turned to thoughts of music, as it often does, since I find the two subjects inextricably linked. It was notable that I could quickly rattle off dozens of band names and album and song titles that had the word "color" or referenced a specific color. "Purple Rain," "Yellow Submarine," “Paint It, Black,” “Brown Eyed Girl,” "A Whiter Shade of Pale," The Colour and the Shape, Living Colour, Color Me Badd, Pink Floyd, "Goldfinger," Green Day. Even if you do not know these songs, albums, or bands, the influence of the referenced color might at least give you a clue as to what it is all about—or at least what you think it is all about. Maybe you are correct, maybe not.

Cultures all around the world associate meanings to certain colors, though maybe it’s not the same meaning for the same color from one country to another. Take yellow, for instance. Throughout North America, yellow is associated with sunshine, happiness, and optimism. In Latin America, however, yellow is a symbol of death and mourning. So while the aforementioned music may be a universal language, color may not be likewise.

Color has meaning. Color has power. Color has the ability to influence the way we feel, or even cause us to stop, slow down, or go. How does color influence your work today? What language is it speaking? What is the provenance of its meaning? Read on and discover the many ways color can have an impact in your work.

Cheers,

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

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

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

Not sure if your story is a good fit? As Editor in Chief for 2019 Katie Elzer-Peters is happy to discuss your idea with you. Reach her at editor@apld.org.

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The designer wants you!
Jan Kirsch’s pears in St. Michaels, MD. For more, read Chris Freimuth’s interview on page 52.
PHOTO BY STEPHEN CHERRY
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Christopher Freimuth is the founder and director of CF Gardens, a landscape design firm based in New York City. He collaborates with a dedicated team of gardeners to design, install, and maintain rooftop and backyard gardens throughout NYC and the metro region. Trained at the New York Botanical Garden’s School of Professional Horticulture, Christopher’s aesthetic brings horticultural sophistication into the urban environment. By prioritizing ecological planting design, he creates gardens that support the people, plants, and pollinators of his beloved city and its surroundings.

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Joshua Gillow has always had an incredible respect and curiosity for Mother Nature and all of her infinite wisdom. After growing up working in a family-owned garden center, he received his degree in Architectural Design and Engineering, which led him to start his own firm. Joshua now designs and manages the construction of bold outdoor living spaces all over eastern Pennsylvania. When he isn’t spending time with his family or bringing families and friends closer together outdoors, he trains and competes around the country as #the_design_ninja with the goal of competing on the hit NBC TV show American Ninja Warrior.

Lindsey Kerr is a horticulturist and garden historian with a passion for public gardens. She holds a Master of Historic Preservation degree from the University of Georgia and a Master of Science in Public Horticulture from the University of Delaware. She is an active member of the Editorial Advisory Group for Public Garden, the magazine published by the American Public Gardens Association. Lindsey is always up for a new adventure, and she has worked and gardened in seven different states. She is a gardener at the Trust for Governors Island in New York City.

Eva Leonardi is a New York City-based freelancer who writes about architecture, travel, interior design, and landscaping. In addition to The Designer, her outlets include Landscape Architecture Magazine, Modern Luxury Interiors South Florida, Time Out New York, and Singapore Airlines’ silverkris.com travel guide. Her website and blog, www.retroquesting.com, is devoted to adaptive reuse, design, and travel. She loves Manhattan’s community gardens and finding willow trees in the city.

Leesa Martling designs private gardens in Los Angeles, CA. Her article “Seeing Green” explains the way our eyes process light waves, concepts she learned while working as a Scenic Designer and which she finds applicable to garden design. Leesa loves the challenge of working with and educating her clients on ways to protect the environment through sustainable practices, as well as helping to create a link between their gardens and their busy lives. You can find Leesa online at leesamartlinglandscapes.com.

Marti Neely, FAPLD, has been in practice as a landscape designer since 1988. She has built a successful career by combining her education in fine arts, sociology, and horticulture to create outdoor spaces uniquely suited for her clients. A keen understanding of how people, places, plants, and patterns interact enables Ms. Neely to develop designs that are not only functional but, fresh and dynamic. Understanding the importance of being involved in the industry led her to serve as president of the Association of Professional Landscape Designers in 2013. She is the current past president of the Nebraska Nursery and Landscape Association.

Jenny Peterson is an Austin, TX-based garden designer with her firm, J. Peterson Garden Design, as well as a writer, author, and speaker. She specializes in designing, writing, and speaking about gardens that enhance the quality of life, heal from the inside out, and help to create balance and wellness. She is author of the award-winning book, The Cancer Survivor’s Garden Companion: Cultivating Hope, Healing & Joy in the Ground Beneath Your Feet (St. Lynn’s Press 2016).
When thinking about color in the landscape you can’t ignore fabric. Outdoor furniture with cushions, pillows, curtains, and custom touches finish a design and turn it from something to look at to somewhere to live in. I talked with Laura Morton, FAPLD, and principal of Laura Morton Design, in Los Angeles, California, for tips because she specializes in weaving fabric colors and textures into each of her projects, starting from the beginning.

FABRICS AT THE FOREFRONT
Laura says, “From the very beginning, I have always loved fabrics. I had all hopes of being a fashion designer at one point.” She says she likes the feel, how they’re woven, and pays close attention to the construction and manufacturing of the fabrics. Laura doesn’t just add them to add them, though. “As the designer, I envision an entire look for the client, including a color palette that incorporates fabrics. The client always has the option of saying ‘no’ to parts of the presentation, but I find that using fabric and tile samples as part of the presentation is a nice way to bring color to the client even when the plants I might have selected aren’t in bloom.”

Laura’s “Blue Bayou” project won an APLD Silver award in 2018. There was an existing citrus orchard to build within, and the finished space was intended for lots of entertaining. She built in a long curving bench that echoed the lagoon-shaped pool. Because the valley site is really hot in the summer, Laura used a consistent blue to keep it cool and used its complement, orange, as the accent. The orange slice pillows are fun accents that speak to the citrus trees around the project. All fabrics are from Sunbrella, and the piping with tufted edge cushions reflect the scale of the project.

PHOTO CREDIT: ROSS WHITAKER
PHOTO CREDIT: JEFF DUNAS
ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS KEY
“Most out-of-the-box furniture comes with a cushion in a super boring color, usually white, green, or beige.” Sometimes she’ll recover a cushion, while other times she’ll have an upholsterer start from scratch. Laura also designs a lot of custom and built-in outdoor furniture. “A good upholsterer will come to the site and measure.” She suggests looking for marine upholsterers in your area if you’re not sure where to start, as they’re used to working with outdoor fabrics.

LAURA’S TIPS FOR USING OUTDOOR FABRICS TO ENHANCE LANDSCAPES
- Select fabrics based on where they’ll be used. If it’s near a family pool, then you’ll need something rough-and-tumble and able to handle kids climbing on it. In formal areas, you might go for a more tailored look.
- Pay attention to the overall scale of the furniture when specifying details such as the size of the piping.
- Add detail with different finishing touches, from piped edges to knife edges, butterfly corners, or rounded or boxed construction. (Laura says it helps to learn the vocabulary.)
- Take cues from the textures of surrounding plants and landscape features when choosing fabrics. “Oftentimes, there will be something existing in the landscape to inspire me. Maybe there’s a beautiful old Chinese Elm with rusty orange tones in it, and I’ll go looking for fabric to pull that into the design. Or maybe there’s a fabric to reflect the shine of paving stones.”
- Choose quality and protect it. Laura says that most people are familiar with Sunbrella, but her go-to is Perennials Fabrics. They have a huge range.
of textures and colors including vinyls that feel like leather, outdoor velvets, and more. She notes that it’s important to create covers for large pieces that can’t be moved to protect them from sun, animals, and weather damage.

Layer fabrics for interest and utility. For example, you can use more-delicate fabrics for pillows that might not be outdoors year-round or that can be less expensively replaced from time to time. Laura still recommends using a filling for outdoor pillows.

Think outside the box for comfort when custom constructing. “Sometimes I will use a base of firmer foam topped with a medium foam on top.” This is not unlike a pillowtop for a mattress.
Located in the small agricultural town of Matamata, an approximate 2-hour drive from Auckland, New Zealand, lies the magical movie set of Hobbiton. The natural, beautiful rolling hills and green countryside pastures inspired this whimsical creation that was made famous by the Lord of the Rings film trilogy and the Hobbit film series. Enchanted by its scenery, awe-inspiring countryside, and being lovers of travel, my family and I were beckoned to experience this bucolic setting first-hand!
Spending time at Hobbiton greatly exceeded my expectations. The focus on detail was incredible, from the specific plants chosen for the wild Shire landscape, to the perfectly scaled hobbit holes, to the hand-created and hand-painted lichens on the fence posts—everything was so extraordinary and magical.

From a family-owned and -operated sheep farm to the most famous tourist attraction in New Zealand now, the set is just shy of 12 acres and features 44 hobbit holes. To create the movie magic, the hobbit holes were built at a 90 percent scale to make the hobbits appear smaller, while the holes alongside Gandalf were built at a 60 percent scale to give him his wizardly stature. While a majority of the holes are simply facades that cover empty dirt holes (the interior shots were filmed in a studio), none lacks sheer and utter craftsmanship and forethought.

My wife, Bryn, reminisces, “There are real jars of honey at the beekeeper’s house, metal at the forger’s abode, and even clothes hanging on the line as if they were to be taken down at any moment.” One hole, named Bag End, is the only hobbit hole to have an interior, although it is a mere segment of wall only seen when the door is propped open in the film. Faux or not, the surrounding landscaping undoubtably is a major part of the pastoral pull.
There are anywhere from 30 to 200 plants around each hobbit hole, creating myriad colors and textures that touch upon each of the senses. Made to mimic an idyllic seventeenth century English countryside, complete with barberry hedges, apple orchards, and pear trees, all plants, flowers, and vegetables are real and mostly sourced locally. In true Hollywood fashion, director Peter Jackson spared no expense and even moved a 35-ton tree from a neighboring farm using 2 bulldozers and several diggers, just to enhance the set’s appeal! With such painstaking care, it is now the job of 8 full-time landscapers in the warmer months and 5 in the winter to maintain the grounds.

Each year more than 300,000 people from around the world visit Hobbiton, and the set welcomed its one-millionth visitor in 2015. My family and I feel very fortunate to have experienced such a beautiful and charming place that encourages free-range exploration.

While walking around, you can truly envision yourself in the films; there is something to discover at every turn, all tended to with utter care! New Zealand, as a whole, is a country I suggest everyone put on their bucket list. The people are so friendly and welcoming, and never would I have imagined standing next to a fern tree while staring at a glacier! It’s absolutely stunning.
Each year more than 300,000 people from around the world visit Hobbiton.

**HOBBITON FUN FACTS**

1. The first *Lord of the Rings* book, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, mentions children playing under plum trees, but real plum trees would throw off the careful scale of the movie set. Instead, Peter Jackson opted to plant apple and pear trees, strip any fruit, and replace them with fake plums. Despite the time and energy devoted to doing this, this scene was cut from the picture.

2. Production crews regulated the length of grass before/during filming by letting the sheep graze. However, of the 13,500 native sheep on the farm, not one was used in the film. The director preferred the dark faces and legs of Suffolk sheep, which were brought in for filming.

3. While shooting the movies, the indigenous frogs were so unbearable loud that Peter Jackson created a paid position for a “frog-wrangler” to move all of the frogs to a different pond on the farm and to keep it that way!

4. The Shire from the original *Lord of the Rings* trilogy was constructed mostly of styrofoam and plywood for short-term use and was dismantled after filming. The set had to be rebuilt for the *Hobbit* film series but it was designed as a permanent setting, employing 70 set builders to complete the task.

5. The Green Dragon Inn is the newest Hobbiton addition. Visitors can relax after their tour and enjoy apple cider, ginger beer, and an array of local brews and light fare. It took 60 builders and landscapers working round-the-clock to complete this fun and functional destination.
Outdoor kitchens have long been a next-level investment for upscale home improvers, but recent trends prove that these outdoor entertaining areas are shifting from functional kitchens to stylish landscape focal points. That’s because, according to outdoor kitchen expert Christa Weddle of Luwa Luxury Products, a major infusion of vivid color allows designers to transform the typical stainless steel outdoor kitchen to a unique—and exciting—design opportunity.

COLOR, COLOR EVERYWHERE
“I think homeowners and designers were simply getting bored with the standard stainless steel,” Weddle explains, “and when the market demands something new, innovation happens.” Innovation, indeed—enter appliances in bright hues of tangerine, crimson, plum, aqua, and even white. According to Weddle, the trending shades right now in their Hestan collection are orange (“Citra”), red (“Matador”), and white (“Froth”). And for those of you who are sufficiently dubious about using white outdoors (“It’ll show all the dirt!”), keep reading.

The color comes in the form of interchangeable powder-coated panels—the finish allows for easy clean-up and maintenance, with panels easily replaced if they get damaged or the homeowner desires a different look or color scheme. Prefabricated fiberglass concrete cabinets are assembled (Lego-style) on-site, with cutouts for appliances, providing nearly infinite creative possibilities for designers.
DETERMINING COLOR SCHEMES

Yet, experienced designers know that not everything can be a focal point, so when planning for such eye-catching structures, it pays to view these bright kitchens as simply an integral part of the overall color scheme. Think of the kitchen as a large, flowering perennial in your dominant hue, then choose your planting scheme and coordinating outdoor accessories around that.

With white, gray, and stainless steel outdoor kitchens, nearly any color combination will work because the starting point is a neutral color. When red, orange, and turquoise enter the equation, however, there are decisions to be made. Make the wrong ones and risk ending up with a garish, even tacky, final product—but when thoughtful choices are made, the outdoor kitchen is tasteful and cohesive.

Aside from personal preference, choosing the color of an outdoor kitchen can actually start with the geographic region of the property itself. Homeowners in very hot and humid areas may feel some psychological relief with a white, stainless/gray, or cool-hued outdoor kitchen, while those in colder or more rain-prone locations might appreciate the mood-lifting warm tones of red or orange. However, Weddle stresses, “A gray shade named ‘Pacific Fog’ is universally popular, even in the overcast Pacific Northwest region.”

Speaking of gray, when determining planting plans, furniture, and coordinating fabrics, neutrals such as white and silver/gray offer balance and sophistication to brilliantly colored kitchens. Silver foliage, variegated foliage, and white blooms is an ideal counter to one other strong pop of color, creating a bold yet chic visual experience. 

See the Color Combos sidebar for suggested combinations on the next page.
THE BELLS AND WHISTLES
After determining the color scheme, what other upgrades and kitchen features are trending? While simple outdoor kitchens may offer a galley style with built-in grill, oven, sink, refrigerator, and counter space, large and more luxurious kitchens boast a wide range of upscale details. Cocktail centers including beverage dispensers, wine reserves, and ice makers, along with smokers, pizza ovens, flat screen TVs, and fire bowls are higher-ticket add-ons that complete the outdoor cooking and dining experience. These choices, of course, are mostly budget-driven, but as with any well-designed outdoor space, it’s possible to create an overall master plan and install it in logical stages.

Destination kitchens are also in demand rather than the more typical perimeter kitchen that adjoins to the back of the house; destination kitchens offer homeowners and their guests a more dramatic walk through a stunning landscape before arriving at their cooking and dining space. For those with larger properties, grander visions, and healthier budgets, destination kitchens are a noteworthy luxury.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS
While not necessarily the “fun” part of planning an outdoor kitchen, functional considerations have the ability to make or break the space. But according to Weddle, one of the most common laments from homeowners after completing an outdoor kitchen is inadequate countertop space as what might seem to be enough horizontal space for cutting and prepping is often underestimated. Other functional considerations include:

■ COVERS: Roofs extend the usability of the space, particularly for those in rainy, hot, or humid climates.
■ VENTILATION: Covered outdoor kitchens require a powerful, outdoor-rated hood to keep their entertaining area free of smoke and to maintain a fire-safe zone.
■ NEARBY SEATING: From simple patio sets and bar stools to seating with custom cushions and tables with fire bowl inserts, having adequate space to wine and dine is crucial.
■ GAS, ELECTRICAL, and PLUMBING LINES: Basic requirements like these are often not included in the outdoor kitchen estimate—be sure to budget time and money properly for additional trades, materials, and permitting/inspections.
■ HEATERS, FANS, and MISTERS: Make the outdoor kitchen as comfortable as possible for the most complete experience.

For more information about Luwa Luxury Products or the Hestan collection, visit www.luwaluxury.com.

Color Combos
Square is kitchen color, dots are coordinating colors – two color combos are given for each color of kitchen

By the Numbers
Dimensions: 8 ft. x 10 ft. — 12 ft. x 12 ft. up to 20 ft. x 30 ft.; “L” shape
Budget: $7,000 — $25,000
ROI: Up to 25% upon sale of house
Seeing Green

BY LEESA MARTLING

"By the way, most of the light that comes from the sun is green."
—BILL NYE

Color is a powerful tool to create depth, excitement, and distinction when designing a garden. Not only can color create mood and be used for focal points, it can also soften or define edges, brighten shady areas in the garden, and create exciting color contrasts in a sunny bed or border. All of these qualities can be used to delight and entertain all who visit the garden.

When we think of using foliage or flowers in the garden often the idea of these combinations is to create harmony or color contrasts. We take into account whether the surfaces of the plant material are matte and light absorbing or glossy and light reflecting. Seasonal changes and available light influence our selections relating to color as we strategically build our plant palette.
UNDERSTANDING COLOR

Color is light, it is variety, joy, and exuberance—you cannot approach color from only one direction. As a designer you will need to be able to evaluate the color as it relates to the environment as a whole and the light that is available throughout the seasons. One way to help make these choices skillfully is to understand that color is more specifically a light wave, and light waves can be measured.

Light’s three primary colors are blue, red, and green, and these primary colors have very distinct light waves.

- Blue is a short-wave (short wavelength)
- Green is a medium-wave (medium wavelength)
- Red is a long-wave (long wavelength)

GREEN

Let’s start with our most valued and dominant color in the garden, green. Green is categorized as a secondary color when it comes to a physical material such as paint, but not when it’s measured by light or light waves.

Green is the dominant color in most gardens, and in many ways, green is the perfect color, the color of balance and harmony. Greens are chromatic peacekeepers, getting along well with any color. But they can be overwhelmed unless, as in nature, they are allowed to predominate. Consequently, greens love the company of other greens. Cool, dark greens, olives, and yellow greens all work together.

Our eyes can relax when we look at green because the green wavelength is the perfect length to fit our eyeball; it lands on the retina without much focusing effort.

By contrast, red light waves are long so the color advances towards the viewer. Blues or cool colors are short light waves, so these colors recede.

We all have colors that we prefer and use frequently, but most of the time we are solving design issues related to existing hardscaping: a pool, gray stone, terra cotta tiles, and possibly a brightly colored building. This means that factoring in all of these existing colors in the landscape or the big picture is imperative. Luckily, we have green, our peacekeeper, to act as our visual palette cleanser.
RED
Red is the opposite of green; it’s an advancing color in the light wave spectrum. Reds, burgundies, and oranges look good placed next to green. It’s no mistake that in nature we see red berries on green shrubs or notice the seasonal changes of a summer green leaf turning crimson-orange before falling from the tree. And, of course, the new growth on some plant material appears first as a reddish hue and then changes to green as the growth matures. The two opposite colors, green and red, act as complements to each other, like friends who agree to disagree.

BLUE
The short wavelength of blue, with its higher frequency, means the color needs to oscillate quickly to keep up. Blue’s short wavelengths traveling along next to red’s long wavelengths act like a waddling duck trying to keep up with an ostrich at full stride. All that frenetic back and forth creates visual excitement and makes quite a show when they’re paired in the landscape.

In our Western gardens, think of a blue Agave americana paired with a bright background of red Bougainvillea. In a cooler climate, consider the combination of a Maple tree’s burnt orange and golden leaves against a crisp blue sky.

Blue’s short wavelength, when paired with green’s medium lightwave, is calming and soothing, like a pond edged with blue Hyacinths and Equisetum or a swimming pool with a lush hedge of Podocarpus gracilior. The combination of green and blue in the garden can seem tailored and subdued.

The vast color spectrum with which we work as garden designers and planners is challenging, but the knowledge of these basic principles of the science of light and color can help us understand how balance and contrast can work together and how we can wield these color waves to our advantage while planning, creating, and growing beautiful gardens.
Adam Woodruff’s Jones Road project. Compare it to the mural photograph on the following page.

PHOTO BY ADAM WOODRUFF
Color is magical. It can invoke energy, quiet your mood, help you sleep, and define your personality. For many people choosing a color scheme is frightening, but for me, it is quite enjoyable. It can be a daunting task when your client is not able to offer direction in that regard or suggests only one color they prefer because a garden is best when it's designed with contrast and complement. I find looking outside the plant box and into auxiliary worlds of design offers many opportunities for discovering color combinations, patterns, and even textural ideas. Start looking, and you'll find that you can find inspiration for color in unexpected places.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS
Traveling to view gardens, attending conferences, or just visiting new cities for pleasure affords the opportunity to discover new ideas for architectural details and color combinations. Older buildings, especially those from the early to mid-twentieth century, are filled with a wealth of ideas that can be used in our landscape designs. Not only have I found patterns and paving details that are valuable for hardscape design, but also amazing murals offering stunning examples of color play that provide inspiration for planting designs. Look carefully at the colors used in the tile mural and compare them to Adam Woodruff’s Jones Road project (previous spread). See how the combinations of color, tone, and value are so similar. This demonstrates how easily we can be inspired by even small sections of larger works of art.

Detail view of a tile mural. Compare it to Adam Woodruff’s Jones Road project on previous spread.
ARTWORK

The Impressionist painters of the early twentieth century offer a treasure trove of inspirational works that can easily be translated into color schemes for the garden. The paintings of post-Impressionist painter Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) include bold strokes of vibrant complementary hues. Gaugin’s use of intense pigments in generous masses is reminiscent of the rich swaths of color one finds in a mixed planting.
FASHION AND TEXTILES

Today’s fashionable fabrics bring additional ideas for combining colors that can be translated into planting designs. My granddaughters have a keen sense of mixing bright colors and patterns with abandon. Nothing is off limits when it comes to putting together their look for the day. The leggings shown in this photo are a bold display of cool tones with an almost florescent quality. Many of these colors are reflected in this planting of *Echinops* and *Stachys*. The adjacent colors vibrate off one another to create a greater intensity than either would on its own.
In addition to the fabrics we wear, the fabrics that are combined to create quilts provide another avenue for inspired color choices. Designing a quilt is much like designing a garden. The space is composed, color balance must be achieved, and rhythm, repetition, line, and form are all used to create a design that is pleasing. Quilters have one advantage over us in that their material, fabric, can be dyed to whatever color they choose.
MAPS, DIAGRAMS, AND GRAPHICS

Even something as commonplace as a city map can provide ideas for composing with color. Graphic representation of buildings using color makes finding one’s way much easier. The colors used in this map section are vibrant and well suited as the basis for a color display in a public courtyard as shown in this photo by Adam Woodruff. The dark background of the map is represented in the Physocarpus and Pennisetum. The fuschia translates to the vibrant tones of the Tradescantia with the Coleus in the background picking up the orange in the center of the map. The yellow and green are reflected in the Colocasia and Lantana, with the purple Verbena being a twist on the blue.

With color surrounding us in every aspect of our lives, finding inspiration really is at our fingertips. It is as easy as looking in front of us and asking, “How can I use that?”

For me, finding these serendipitous design ideas is like winning the lottery. The greatest invention of our generation was putting a camera in our phones. With this we will always have the ability to document the snippets of genius that cross our paths. Whether it’s a storefront display of candy or a parrot in a pet store, keep your eyes open and your camera ready. Inspiration to pull you out of your design rut is waiting just around the corner.
Garden Sculpture for the Skeptic

BY CHRIS FREIMUTH

Three Habaneras at Tred Avon River, Easton, MD

PHOTO BY STEPHEN CHERRY
I sat down with Jan Kirsch this spring preparing for a fight. Jan is an artist and garden designer who has been in the business of adding hand-made sculptures to gardens for decades. Her muscular and modern interpretations of fruits and vegetables can be seen in spaces throughout her home region in the Chesapeake Bay and the country. Spoiler alert: they’re amazing.

Meanwhile, I’m an admittedly harsh skeptic when it comes to inserting sculpture into a garden. I don’t know if it’s pretention or a poor education, but I often find garden sculpture to be out of step with the neighboring plant material, overly sentimental in its agenda, and simply distracting.

So sometime in March I got out my boxing gloves and a cup of tea, rang up Jan, and started grilling her. How should one choose what kind of art to put in a garden? Where, specifically, should sculpture be sited in a garden? How do you intend for guests to interact with your garden art?

Needless to say, Jan schooled me. She adeptly answered my questions point by point, eventually dealing the TKO with a story about—of all things—*Mahonia*. If there’s
one thing I’ve learned in this industry, it’s that you don’t mess with a story about Mahonia. I’m sure you know what I mean.

Picture, if you will, a mass of Mahonia as tall as you are and planted in a broad swath at the back of the border. It’s late March or early April, and you can smell it before you see it—that sweet honeysuckle scent pouring from bright yellow florets on tasseled inflorescences. Inset among one of the eddies along the border, you glimpse a fiery accent. Nothing can compare with the brilliance of the flowers at eye level, but … wait, is that a habanero? The 24-inch glossy sculpture resting on the ground is a solanaceous sun rising out of the dark, dank earth. It nearly illuminates the Mahonia above.

Fast forward a month or three as the Mahonia transitions from flower to fruit and the evergreen foliage courses with chlorophyll. With longer days come warmer soil and a profusion of summer color along the border. Suddenly that glossy pepper becomes mother hen to a lower-growing roost of perennials. Alongside the royal hues of Echinacea and Astilbe she provides a grounding warmth; later, she is the rounded orb against which the Salvia leucantha “pops.”

As fall turns to winter, the pepper’s seasonal role as supporting actor transitions as cold weather sends all other color packing and the carmine sculpture takes center stage. Brightening up the holiday seasons and keeping our sanity in the nearly
unbearable days of January and February, she reminds us that joy still exists, that there is reason to hold on for that Mahonia on the horizon.

The story of the Mahonia is the story of garden sculpture well executed. With just a few strokes of imagery, it shows a situation in which sculpture can be an integral part of—rather than an irrelevant addition or annoying distraction to—a garden’s narrative arc.

“If a garden is already fabulous and has living focal points and specimen plantings, then I don’t want to site a piece of art that fights the plant material,” Jan says. “It’s important to choose the placement appropriately, so it’s a collaboration between the art and the garden.”

I just love that word: collaboration. Where I’d griped about sculpture as stealing attention from the garden, Jan showed me a scenario in which sculpture brings attention to the garden.

Before siting a piece of sculpture, Jan sits with a space to ask what it needs. She takes an inventory of the plant textures, proportions, and calendar of bloom. She considers the hardscaping and researches the climate. She asks herself where the storyline has holes, and where her art may be enriching and not merely superfluous. She considers whether she wants people to engage with her work through touch (put it at the edge of the bed) or sight (tuck it deeper into the bed).

Of course, this process is not unlike the process for designing the horticulture, hardscaping, or any other aspect of a garden. When one thinks appropriately about garden art, one asks the same questions and pays attention to the same nuance that we designers have been focusing on throughout our careers: Does this section need an evergreen anchor or a flurry of ephemerals or a rill or...?

When it comes to garden sculpture, Jan suggests, ask your garden what it wants and proceed from the answer it gives. Just don’t be surprised if, in place of yet another stately Boxwood round, it’s asking for a bright orange Habanero!
A Designer’s Dream Garden
(Despite Wildlife, Water, and Weeds)

EXCERPTED FROM DEER-RESISTANT DESIGN © BY KAREN CHAPMAN COMING JULY 23, 2019

QUICK FACTS
- LeJardinet
- Home of Andy & Karen Chapman
- Designed by Karen Chapman
- Location: Duvall, Washington
- USDA: Zone 6b
- Soil type: Clay
- Years established: 6
- Property size: 5 acres
- Problem critters: deer, rabbits, voles, and lazy barn cats

“‘At least he used the path.’”
ISLAND BORDER

As soon as I saw the sun-bleached bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), I knew I had stumbled across the perfect focal point for a showstopping “Karen lives here” border. I drew inspiration from the Northwest Perennial Alliance Border at the Bellevue Botanical Garden, which features meandering paths that immerse visitors in the sights, sounds, smells, and textures of its abundant plantings; however, in lieu of a typical high-maintenance perennial garden, I wanted to focus on trees and shrubs, creating a rich tapestry of colorful foliage accented by just a few choice perennials, selected for their good manners and easy-going attitude. Another consideration: as with most homes in the area, our water comes from a private well. Far from being a reliable resource, this has the very real potential to run dry after prolonged summer droughts; therefore, it was important to select plants that would be drought tolerant once established.

With the weeds removed and French drains added, we were ready for the fun to begin. Renting oversized Tonka toys to move boulders and more than a hundred yards of topsoil saved time, energy, money, and possibly our marriage. Andy became quite the expert at maneuvering three-man rocks with a utility Bobcat, nudging them gently into place. Likewise, a skidsteer was key to moving an existing cedar-shingled cabin to a better location. I knew it would perfectly anchor one end of the new border, while visually balancing the upright form of the maple and creating a charming focal point, visible upon entering the property as well as being perfectly framed by a new picture window in the kitchen. Three men, a big machine, heavy-duty straps, and some choice words later, the cabin was where we wanted it, although the grass looked as though we had hosted the Nascar races for the weekend.

Andy and I designed and built a triple arbor, paying special attention to scale. A single archway would have appeared diminutive in such a wide-open space, yet we didn’t want a solid structure that would block views of the garden.

The arbor not only highlights the pathway leading into the island border, it also serves as a year-round focal point, especially dramatic in the skeletal winter garden.
An understated post and rebar design, each arch linked by a swag of marine rope, did the trick, giving dimension while maintaining transparency.

With the cabin, boulders, arbor, and a simple path in place we began to plant evergreen and deciduous trees that provided height and color while giving the illusion of transitioning into the forest beyond when seen from a distance. With all my plant choices, I first considered what design attributes I was looking for (e.g., a fast-growing deciduous tree with golden foliage for full sun), then researched options both in my personal library of garden books as well as online, before finally cross-checking my shortlist against the anticipated level of deer resistance. In this instance, I selected golden locusts (*Robinia pseudoacacia* ‘Frisia’), which in this area do not sucker and have proven reliably deer-resistant thanks to their barbed branches.

Other deciduous trees in this border include weeping willowleaf pear (*Pyrus salicifolia* ‘Pendula’), paperbark maple (*Acer griseum*), Himalayan birch (*Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii*), and Persian ironwood (*Parrotia persica* ‘Ruby Vase’). The latter has since become a firm favorite with its spidery red winter flowers, interesting bark, and stunning range of foliage color, from green, gold, and orange to deepest purple and burgundy; it’s also more of an upright vase shape than the broad-spreading species.

In winter, when the fleeting summer orange of the perennial crocosmias dies down, the colorful peeling bark of this paperbark maple (*Acer griseum*) will be clearly visible.

A variety of conifers contribute year-round color, from the rich green of Hinoki cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*) through the blue tones of a deodar cedar (*Cedrus deodara* ‘Feelin’ Blue’) to the gold of an oriental spruce (*Picea orientalis* ‘Skylands’). A Port Orford cedar (*C. lawsoniana* ‘Wissel’s Saguaro’) is a columnar sentry, its cactus-like arms just begging to be hugged, while a white pine (*Pinus strobus* ‘Blue Shag’) offers a mound of teddy-bear softness. Color, texture, and personality—my sort of garden.

From there I layered in shrubs that offer multi-season interest, skipping those with plain green leaves, even if they also contributed summer flowers, in favor of those that offered a framework of colorful foliage. I opted for a sunset-
inspired color scheme—warm shades of gold, orange, red, and even hot pink accented by purple and softened with blue-greens. These vibrant shades would be sure to make a statement whether viewed up close or from a great distance. Plus, it was fun, so why not? We managed to salvage several mature shrubs from the original front garden, including a treasured Exbury azalea with highly fragrant blooms the color of liquid gold, lichen-encrusted branches, and jewel-toned fall colors.

After noting which path the deer took through this area, we planted a barrier of tall, thorny shrubs, including barberries (*Berberis thunbergii* ‘Rose Glow’), hollies (*Ilex* ‘Red Beauty’), and false hollies (*Osmanthus heterophyllus* ‘Goshiki’). This spiky barricade forced the deer to either stay on the path or find another way around, protecting more delicate plants from their careless hooves.

Yet this border needed to be more than just a collection of deer- and drought-tolerant plants, albeit combined with an eye for nuances of color, contrasting textures, and intriguing forms. It also needed to be appealing in every season. Today, hundreds of yellow and white daffodils (*Narcissus*) herald the arrival of spring, flanking paths and clustering at the base of mossy boulders.

By early summer spirea foliage glows, golden leaves highlighting the abundant pink flowers. I have the last laugh even if the deer decide to nibble some of these blooms, as the new growth is a rich coral-orange, which I love even more than the flowers. Blue-flowering catmint (*Nepeta*) and geraniums (*Geranium* ‘Rozanne’) and glaucous-leaved smokebushes (*Cotinus coggygria* ‘Old Golden Dutch Master’ and white Mount Hood daffodils are highlights of the early spring garden.}*
Although deer pass through this border daily, the damage done is minimal. While the newly emerging foliage of dozens of orange daylilies (*Hemerocallis* ‘Flasher’) are tempting in early spring, a quick spritz with a proprietary deer repellent seems to be enough to persuade them to do their taste-testing elsewhere.

Fashioned’) help to temper the fiery barberries and crocosmia, while a burgundy Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* ‘Fireglow’) and a purple smokebush strike a high contrast against neighboring golden conifers and a sweep of incendiary orange daylilies.

The cabin is highlighted by a late-summer meadow of golden black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *sullivantii* ‘Goldsturm’), the rich brown central cone of each daisy echoing the dark cedar shingles. As summer moves into fall I find myself frequently reaching for my camera to photograph the feathery Arkansas blue star (*Amsonia hubrichtii*) as it transitions through shades of copper and gold.

Meanwhile a katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*) exudes its distinctive scent of candy apples as the entire border embarks upon an autumnal display that lasts from September to late November. Even in winter this border is noteworthy, the bare tree branches and colorful bark, seed heads, grasses, and winter-hardy leaves etched with hoarfrost, highlighting their patterns and silhouettes. Like the rest of the garden this border is constantly evolving, but it has come a long way from its inauspicious beginnings.

Strategically placed Arkansas blue star (*Amsonia hubrichtii*) is an autumnal star. The wispy foliage shifts through shades of gold, orange, burgundy, and purple, each kaleidoscopic variation more camera-worthy than the last when set against a purple smokebush.
Amber Freda of Amber Freda Landscape Design reinvents an apartment rooftop in the Park Slope neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York, as a tranquil green space, weaving in colorful plantings to rise with the city skyline.

A view of the completed Brooklyn rooftop garden shows the space planted with Arborvitaes, Creeping Jenny, Petunias, Mexican Feather Grass, ‘Tardiva’ Hydrangeas, Boxwoods, ‘Sea Green’ Junipers, and Catmint.
When Brooklyn-based landscape designer Amber Freda’s client asked her to transform the gray, barren, unfinished space that comprised the rooftop of his Park Slope, Brooklyn apartment into a garden with a natural, informal look, Freda had her work cut out for her.

Freda took over the project from another landscaper with whom her client had worked after it had gone over budget. But Freda, who also teaches both at the Brooklyn and New York Botanical Gardens, was more than up for the task at hand. First, she offered new solutions to the rooftop garden project that helped bring the costs down and kept the project moving forward.

“The previous designer had recommended much larger and more expensive custom planters,” says Freda. “We reduced the weight load on the roof and cut down on planter and soil costs by using smaller, prefab planters.”

Some of the project’s more formidable challenges were due in large part to the location where the garden was to be installed. Freda notes that weight is always a concern on a rooftop garden, and it was with this one in particular.

In this case, it was because the redesign introduced so many new plants and planters that added significantly to the garden’s weight load. The solution was for the client to install steel beams to help to reinforce the roof so it would be able to withstand the new weight load.

Extreme exposure to the elements presented another concern in the rooftop garden. Says Freda, “A rooftop garden is an extreme environment. I like to compare it to gardening on top of a mountain. The garden will be exposed to extremes in wind, sun, and cold, so we needed to use plants that can thrive in these conditions.”

Freda also opted to use perennials, grasses, and trailing plants to give the garden fullness, texture, and variety. “There’s a bit of an interplay working between the very straight, clean lines of the planters and hardscaping and the softness of the plantings,” she says of the approximately 1,000-square-foot garden.
KEEPING IT GREEN

A number of ecological concerns came into play in the design of this Brooklyn rooftop garden. One important consideration was the garden’s decking material, which is made of composite wood. Freda explains: “It’s illegal to have more than 20 percent real wood on a roof in New York City, so we recommended going with composite wood instead, which can cover the entire roof surface and creates a very seamless appearance.”

Composite wood is also low maintenance, retaining its color without the need for continuous resealing that one would experience with a real wood deck. In addition to the low-maintenance composite decking (rated for fire safety), the design makeover also included a custom-built pergola, an outdoor kitchen, and multilevel plantings.

Keeping eco-friendly considerations in mind, Freda also used pollinator-attracting plants, a water-efficient drip irrigation system, and a low-energy use, low-voltage LED lighting system in the creation of the project. In addition, all of the fertilizers and pesticides used for the garden were completely organic.
COLOR AND LIGHT
Freda selected plantings for the garden that included Hydrangeas, ornamental grasses, evergreen Arborvitae, Inkberry Hollies, Catmint, and Creeping Jenny. She also used drip irrigation lines hidden in the decking to water the planters, which are illuminated at night with the low-voltage landscape lighting.

Opting for a floral color scheme using mostly pinks, white, purples, and blues, Freda’s goal was to create a harmonious, soothing effect within the garden. She also selected Knock Out® Roses, 'Tardiva' Hydrangeas, Salvias, and Butterfly Bushes for their long bloom times in containers.

Freda describes the style of the project’s plant palette as somewhere between that of an English garden and New York City’s elevated park known as the High Line, giving an informal and slightly wild feeling to the space. This vibrant, less controlled, organic palette stands in appealing contrast to the modern, more defined lines of the outdoor furniture and hardscaping.

On sunny days when the flowers are in full bloom, the colors pop against the bright blue skies, the tall deep-green trees bordering and shielding the garden and the chartreuse groundcover and shrubs spilling out of the planters. It’s easy to forget that this is a garden on an urban rooftop.

At night when the pergola of the rooftop garden is illuminated, the soft glow of its lights complements and enhances the warm wooden hues of the deck and furnishings while spotlighting the trees and shrubs. With the lights from skyscrapers shining in the distance and stars twinkling overhead, the roof garden morphs into a cozy, woody environment that evokes a country or mountain getaway miles away from Brooklyn.
Mist blanketed the valley and Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port as pilgrims walked steadily uphill, over the Pyrenees, and into Spain on the first day of the journey.
My feet were covered in blisters and my left knee was in agony. Travelling alone, with a backpack heavy with belongings and only a cellphone for photographs, I limped westward. I glared at my watch, hoping that time would miraculously leap forward and I would be in the city of Burgos where I was promised a bed and a day off to rest. I paused repeatedly to study the *Colchicum bulbocodium* blooming in the gravel of the dirt track. These little lavender flowers drew me onward. I knew that if those little flowers could succeed in such harsh conditions, then so could I. At the bottom of a hill, a woman touched my arm and then pointed at my feet. “Sandalias,” she said, and then she was gone.

Walking over 500 miles is not for the faint of heart. From mid-September to mid-October 2018, I walked across northern Spain on the Camino de Santiago. The Camino de Santiago, or the Way of St. James, is a series of pilgrimage routes leading to Santiago de Compostela, a city in the autonomous community of Galicia. Pilgrims have been following various routes to Santiago to behold the relics of St. James since the Middle Ages. In recent years, the Camino has become increasingly popular among those seeking a spiritual journey, renewal, or simply a challenge.

I decided to complete the Camino Francés (the French Way) and thus began my journey in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port in France. My walk took me across the Pyrenees, southwest to Pamplona, on to Burgos and León, and farther west to Sarria and Santiago de Compostela. After I completed my Camino, I added a day of walking between Muxía and Fisterra on the Galician coast.

I was immediately struck by the presence of container gardens along the narrow village streets. The evening before I began my walk in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, I took photos of a garden of mismatched pots and plants pressed up against the side of a house. The plants were common—*Pelargonium*, *Petunia*, *Tagetes*, a Climbing Rose, a few herbs—but I was taken with the simple beauty and joy of it. Little did I know that these container gardens would become a theme throughout my Camino. They never cease to delight me when I came across one. They were the bold declarations of gardeners in towns with narrow lanes dominated by the brown walls of houses built up to the street’s edge.

**Spanish figs range in color from yellow, to green, to dark purple, and each is a welcome treat.**

![A streetside container garden in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, France. For many years, I snobbishly dismissed Geraniums (*Pelargonium* sp.). Europeans seem to have no qualms, embracing these tough and colorful plants that thrive in the harsh conditions of container in a city.](image-url)
Throughout the small towns in Spain, painted garage doors and window frames draw the attention of even the weariest pilgrim. Green painted windows and doors brighten up otherwise somber stone or brick buildings.
“If I don’t finish the Camino, please plant a fig tree along the path in my memory,” I told a new friend as we walked to Pamplona. *Ficus carica* were a saving grace along the Camino. Pilgrims often start walking before sunrise, and complete 12 to 18 miles before stopping after midday. In the intense heat and sun of late summer, finding a fruit-laden fig tree leaning over the road or tucked next to an abandoned factory felt like a gift. Some of the fig trees were planted as offerings from locals to the pilgrims. It was a simple gesture of goodwill that left a profound impression upon me.

The natural landscape in northern Spain was a study in contrasts. I walked through miles of native Buxus in Navarra. Rioja wine grapes and olive groves gathered close to the paths near Logroño. West of Burgos, the Meseta Central opened before us, a wide plateau dominated by large-scale agricultural fields of cereals and dried sunflowers. Shade was rare and the landscape, burned brown and the end of the season, felt as foreign as the moon. The land began to rise again in the province of Léon as the Camino entered the hills of the Galician Massif. *Daphne* and *Lavandula* grew wild and oak trees leaned over the
track. Walking west from Astorga, the landscape changed dramatically again. High up in the hills, the plant palette changed to a variety of grasses, ericaceous plants, subshrubs, and groves of small trees. These are the landscapes I dream of creating, but, looking out across the mountains and then down at the dry rocky soil at my feet, I knew that this was a landscape I could never replicate. I did not go to public or private gardens in Spain. Instead, I sought inspiration from ordinary landscapes, gardens, plants, and artistic displays that could be seen from the streets or paths. I was grateful throughout the Camino to find these moments of visual

(and edible) pleasure. My Camino was both a challenge physically and spiritually. I chose to trust the woman gesturing “sandalias” at my feet and bought inexpensive sandals in Burgos. What a godsend! No longer in pain, I felt renewed and walked 18 miles the very next day. For the next three weeks, my focus turned both outward to my surroundings and the people I encountered, and inward as I considered my contributions to the world. I left Spain pondering these questions: As a gardener and designer, what gifts do I share with passersby? How can I offer more?
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