

Fall 2010

The Designer

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2010 International Landscape Design Award Winners

Interview with our Landscape Designer
of the Year: James Doyle Associates

Student Spotlight: Jing Zhang

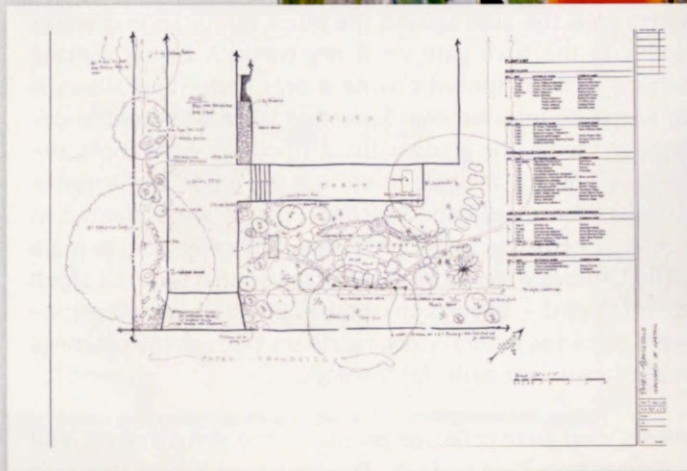
Allied Member Listings



Association of
Professional
Landscape
Designers

We Define Landscape Design

Photo by: Lepera Photo



Judges' Comments: A strong overall impact... In such a small front yard, it's not inappropriate to cram it full of many details - this garden makes sense as a "candy box"... excellent (example of) repurposed materials... reinforcing the theme and expressing the owner's values.

Residential Merit Award

Paseo Tranquillo - Santa Barbara, California

Grace Design Associates, Santa Barbara, California

The owner's 1948 urban bungalow rests on a slightly sloping urban plot with clay soil and a zone 9 Mediterranean climate. We had a mandate to remove the lawn dominating the front yard, inherited from the previous owner, and replace it with a productive and sustainably built, low-maintenance and water-smart garden. It had to be flexible in its roles as an outdoor living space attractive to wildlife, and gorgeous. We sought to create a "blended garden" in which fruit, vegetables and ornamentals cohabit successfully and beautifully. The plants would be well-adapted to the site conditions and blend harmoniously with the architecture, site, neighborhood and environment.

When the lawn was removed the site was subtly terraced and graded level for furniture and for keeping storm water on-site. Existing mature plantings of Jacaranda, tulip tree, property-lining hedges and a Cecile Brunner rose were incorporated to give the garden maturity and complexity, to define the space and create green walls and welcome shade. Old hand-hewn curbstones, local field stone and a sandstone wall cap were salvaged from an abandoned orchard and incorporated into the garden's dry rock walls. The terracing formed raised beds, improving drainage in the heavy soil.

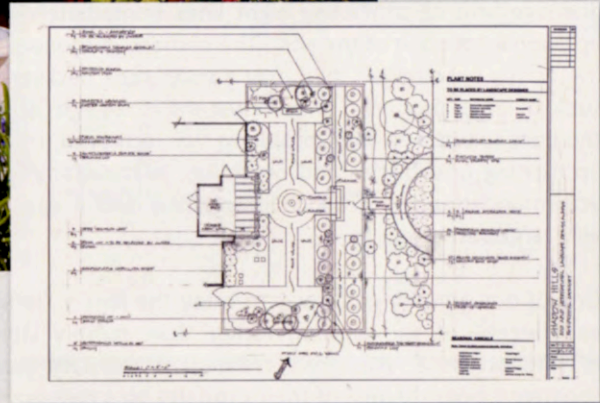
Low-water-demand, root-rot-resistant perennials fill these beds, providing cut flowers and low fuss maintenance. Fruit trees were incorporated into the beds and adjacent to the drive and strategically placed where screening or height was needed. Large flagstones set over sand created a permeable patio situated to take advantage of existing shade from the street tree. An open screen and entry arch add privacy, definition without forming a barrier and support peas, beans, cukes and other climbers in season. Large pots are used for raised vegetable gardening, and deliver structure, interest and color while providing a stoop-free way to work. Gravel was added to the rough asphalt drive to dress it up and it now reads as part of the garden and serves as additional gathering space as needed. Scavenged materials were patched up and colored. Most of the pots were from the "chips and dings" corner and a large concrete bowl used for the fountain was originally cracked and unattractive.

The owner participates in the local "Food Not Lawns" neighborhood garden exchange group. Neighbors stop in to chat, and surplus produce changes hands. What began as a "get rid of the lawn" campaign has become community-making, living simply and well, and leaving a light footprint.



Photo by: Gramen Studio

Judges' Comments: This design, the plants in it, and its relationship to the home and to the surrounding landscape are seamless. The garden has appealing warmth with an abundance of pastel color, and the palette of colors fits well with the color and style of the house.



Residential Merit Award

Shadow Hills - Santa Barbara, California

Grace Design Associates, Santa Barbara, California

The client was a former garden writer for the Los AngelesTimes, a very knowledgeable “retired” rosarian and fuchsia expert (there’s a hybrid named after her!) and an avid lifelong gardener. The pressure was on to “get it right” for this savvy homeowner. Her needs included a gopher- and rabbit-free garden space; as many flower beds as possible without having to step in dirt to get to the plants; a reliable irrigation system; a fountain; shade for the existing patio; a neat and tidy groomed look; screening neighbors while maintaining view; some pots for succulents; and a little bit of lawn to provide a place for the eye to rest.

We decided upon a formal layout with walks along primary, secondary, and tertiary axes to divide the space into numerous narrow beds and lawns and provide “clean shoe” access. At the terminal points of axes, we provided places for focal point objects. Benches at the “T” intersections of axes provided visual interest and a welcoming place to sit and take the view. A fountain was placed at the intersection of primary and secondary axes with bedding around it.

To exclude gophers and rabbits, we designed a barrier wall with tight fitting gates. Another low wall adds structure and a unifying backdrop for plantings without obstructing views. Plantings were selected to screen the neighbors, yet maintain a feeling of expansiveness, hold down costs, and minimize opposition to the project from the Home Owners Association.

A perimeter seat wall around the patio provides a sense of enclosure on the patio.

We also terraced the site to accommodate imported soil amendments, add architectural interest – and provide more beds! Informal plantings in a restrained color palette outside of the walled garden blend seamlessly into the view beyond. A dry creek outside of perimeter wall keeps collective neighborhood runoff moving through the property without erosion, and a simple footbridge traverses the creek and adds interest.

The primary axis extends beyond the perimeter wall to strengthen the design, echo the inner garden and lead the eye to the ocean view. Plants outside of the wall are protected by gopher baskets, and a bench was placed next to the community walking path in the welcoming shade of an existing Pepper tree for all to use.

A low retaining wall (stucco over C.M.U.) divides the garden into two level terraces. Formal steps and pilasters, laid out along the primary axis, add elegance, draw the eye to the expansive view and are “neat and tidy.” A wood arbor was installed using custom-made iron posts and brackets. Fiberglass columns were installed over the support posts, and a movable canvas “roof” allows for temperature and brightness adjustment.