

VERANDA

◆
2020
OUTDOOR
LIVING
AWARDS
◆

Ireland's
Majestic
Mansions

The Romance of
SPRING

Classic Gardens, Wild Patterns
& Party-Ready Porches

Limelight hydrangeas bloom over a low stone wall on a farm in Millbrook, New York. Design, Janice Parker Landscape Architects

VERANDA
Best of
OUTDOOR
LIVING
2020

◆ BEST IN SHOW ◆

It's a winner's circle edged in Iceberg roses and purple alliums, olive trees and camellias. For *this celebration of outdoor design*, our judges pored through scores of entries, seeking the landscapes with the strongest ground game. They came up with garden gold. From an emerald jewel in downtown Chicago to a flourishing wildlife sanctuary in Montecito, these are the landscapes par excellence.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DURSTON SAYLOR



Beyond the pool (left), **Douglas firs** frame a pedestal and classic limestone urn. Crowning it is a wrought-iron arbor cloaked with abundant **trumpet vine**.

Magnificent Farm Rescue



An abandoned Christmas tree farm is recast as a refined weekend retreat, with age-old agrarian ideas guiding its return to grace.

WHAT A FARMER DOES IS never wrong." Such is the premise Connecticut-based landscape architect Janice Parker relied upon in resurrecting an abandoned Christmas tree farm in the Hudson Valley. The more than 40-acre property was in a state of disarray, its gently sloping grounds dotted with derelict farm buildings and runaway irrigation ditches. But Parker and the property's owners, designer Darren Henault and his husband, attorney Michael Bassett, didn't simply see the gentleman's farm it could be, they saw shadows of what had arisen there over half a decade. "This had been a farm for a long time, and in trying to figure out what to do with hundreds of Christmas trees, we began looking more deeply at the survey and trying to imagine what the property would have looked like in earlier years," says Parker.

She searched for geometry in the trees that remained. "Farmers create symmetry by simply laying out rows of trees," she notes. "It's an iconic landscape we can all understand." She found the probable



grids and began using these as a road map for reintegrating approximately 600 of the Christmas trees into the landscape in a more symmetrical pattern, but also for adding other natives like maples and crab apples that would have also been there.

This formed the architecture for a series of expansive, grassy rooms, vegetable and flower gardens, and low fieldstone walls.

Success hinged on patience. "You see what's working, and you add a little at a time," Parker

says. "It's a living, breathing landscape, and that requires compromise and a healthy respect for the classic vernacular."

Millbrook, New York

DESIGN BY **JANICE PARKER LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS**, WITH DARREN HENAULT



Grass-jointed bluestone pavers edged in **variegated hostas** create a soft, organic approach to a gravel dining terrace beneath the pool's cedar pergola.



WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

"I love seeing silhouettes of the Christmas trees in the distance. It's fabulous how the designer adapted the design to the property's history." —BUNNY WILLIAMS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEIL LANDINO JR.; OPPOSITE PAGE: 1 AND 6, DURSTON SAYLOR; 2, 3, 4, 5, AND 8, NEIL LANDINO JR.; 7, JANICE PARKER.

ESCAPE TO THE COUNTRY

The best pastoral gardens remain rooted in their surroundings. Here, Parker's elements of a classic rural design



1 A GRASSY POOL DECK

"Avoid the 'suburbanization' of a landscape. For instance, setting a pool in grass keeps it rooted in its surroundings."



2 GENERATIONAL HARDSCAPE

Broad terraced steps built into a gentle slope are deliberately overgrown and give the appearance of having always been there.



3 A RIFF ON A LEGEND

Borrow inspiration from garden greats. This urn room was inspired by Beatrix Farrand's work at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C.



6 HUMILITY OF MATERIALS

Walls crafted of local fieldstone cut in random rectangular patterns are just 30 inches tall. "This makes them look more natural and allows the flowers to spill over them."



4 COLOR BONANZA

Creating a fenced flower garden off-limits to deer means you can have a lot of fun. "We planted everything from sunflowers and zinnias to dahlias."



7 ORNAMENTAL SYMMETRY

Limestone finials set in rows between the house and pool echo the agrarian grid patterns reestablished throughout the property.



8 A HISTORIC FARMHOUSE

The house is always the starting point. This circa-1800 home is "rooted in so much tradition, it sets the tone for the property."



5 RESPECT FOR THE ORPHANS

Repurpose everything you can. Distinct layers of Douglas firs, Normandy spruces, and concolor firs give this farm a singular beauty.