

The Designer



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Residential Merit Award

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The contemporary house and landscape is a standout in the context of its traditional neighbors in Greenwich, Connecticut. A stylishly transformed landscape was created to compliment the home, built in 1998 and extensively renovated in 2006. The new landscape was intended to build upon and clarify the relationships between the interior and exterior spaces of the residence. The design process has resulted in a dynamic and productive dialogue that intertwined landscape and building with interior movement and activities.

The project's building masses, or solids, are connected by a series of ribbon windows that denote a transitional vacant space. These spaces became the design's spatial thread; it is the intermediary paths between the solid structures that activate the site. This produces physical and visual connections that, in turn, alter both. The architectural form of the building structures have been conveyed to the ground plane of the gardens through the use of stone, wood and plants, creating a unique sequence of outdoor spaces that relate directly to the distinctive house and unify the experience of moving through the indoor and outdoor parts of the residence.

The clients needed visitors to be directed to the home's entrance and to experience a sense of welcoming. Through a collaborative approach between the architect and landscape designer, a strong directional pathway now begins at the parking area and leads one under the architectural overhang, a bold gesture of masonry. Through this passage, one emerges into the entrance courtyard, a contained formal garden space that further addresses the relationship between the interior and exterior.

The entry courtyard is defined and enclosed by a custom fence and a low masonry wall. Local bluestone – rough-faced and precisely sawn – was used to construct this wall and the cantilevered wall coming off of the house. The horizontal stone pattern was then repeated as an inlay detail in the driveway. The courtyard space also includes a water feature composed of two geometric stone troughs, and the movement of water from one to another emits a subtle murmur that contributes to the restfulness of the space. Carefully structured and dynamic plant combinations include clipped groupings of boxwoods, yew and barberry all offset

by tufted, blue fescue grasses and textural perennial plantings of *Stachys byzantina*, *Carex morrowii* and *Sanguisorba menziesii*.

Another key component of the site is the side enclave garden, which provides a visual and physical experience from the home's interior. To the side of the house, an aerial hedge of *Pyrus calleryana* breaks up the building mass and adds a horizontal emphasis that is carried throughout the design. The custom-designed cedar lattice fence, a critical feature of the overall plan, demarcates the property line and establishes enclosure in all of the landscape spaces. In addition, cream-colored gravel separates different materials yet promotes unification as part of the thread that ties the spaces together.

Because the modern style of the home stands out from neighboring properties, visual separation between them was most important, and custom fencing helps achieve this goal. The reappearance of materials and patterns throughout the landscape ensures that the contemporary outdoor spaces flow from one to another seamlessly and harmoniously.



Judges' comments:

The landscape is very successful in matching the contemporary style of the house; house and landscape are a coordinated statement. The attention to detail is excellent.