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# VERANDA





green: more: On this private estate, adults and children alike delight in the tennis court. more: Simple structural plantings ornament the Elizabethan-inspired Tudor manor designed by architect Charles Lewis Bowman in 1926. more: The neglected grounds were reimagined to create picturesque views and to achieve balance between architecture and horticulture. more: *Fagus sylvatica* 'Fastigiata' flank pool at the estate's entrance.

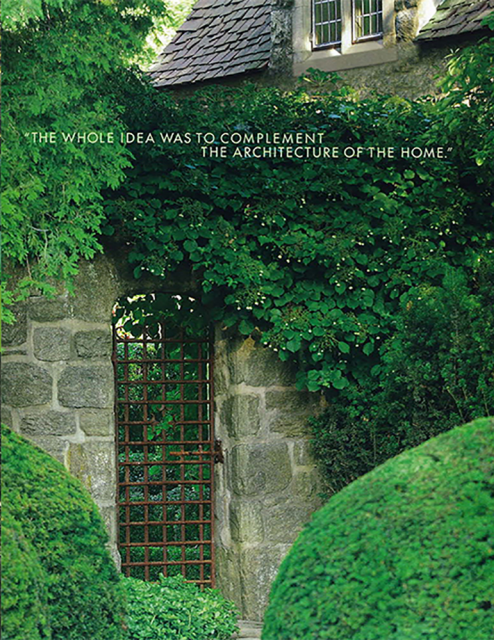




ABOVE: In shade garden, Bacchus water feature is softened with imposing leaves of *Petasites japonicus*. In Greek, petasos means broad-brimmed hat. BELOW: Pair of saddle stones, originally supports for vermin-susceptible storage buildings, grace lovingly restored stonework of entrance to one of the garden rooms. OPPOSITE: Venerable wrought-iron gate punctuates stone wall below climbing *Hydrangea petiolaris*.



"THE WHOLE IDEA WAS TO COMPLEMENT  
THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE HOME."





**ON AN ESTATE IN CONNECTICUT, JAMES DOYLE HAS CREATED A WONDROUS PLEASURE GARDEN**

replete with alluring horticultural delights—herbaceous borders, rose garden, folly, maze, chess set, orchard, parterre, topiaries, water features—and all set about with tropical plant specimens in summer. While pleasure gardens are traditionally public amusement park affairs, this enchanting setting is private and brings joy and happiness to all involved, from owners to caretakers and, immeasurably, to Doyle, the landscape designer who conceived it and attends its evolution. "Old Mill Farm is one of the last great estates in Greenwich, a 1926 landmark treasure," he notes. "My clients and I have tried to create a balance between architecture and horticulture." They have succeeded spectacularly.

At an early age, Doyle was inspired by the work of Russell Page and David Hicks, two British-born designers to the international elite. "I took a position as head gardener at a garden designed by Russell Page in subtropical Southern Ireland. It opened my mind. I started to think about design and other designers, especially David Hicks. I was influenced by the formality, and it became an aspect of all my designs. I continued studying design in England and in America."

Old Mill Farm proved a challenge and an opportunity. "The gardens as seen today did not exist. The grounds were in a state of neglect and disrepair. We went through historical records and the house plans were found at Cornell University, but no garden plans. So essentially we had a blank slate to work with. We restored original landscaping and established a long-term plan to create a traditional landscape, English in style."

Formal and intimate garden rooms are set close to the house with orchard, folly, swimming pool, kitchen garden and pond further afield, often part of a vista. Greenhouses were designed and built to supply interesting annuals, perennials and biennials such as *Delphinium Pacific Giant*, *Digitalis purpurea 'Alba'* and *Lupinus Russell Hybrid*. In winter, they also shelter the tropicals that adorn the garden in summer—a direct influence of Doyle's early Irish garden experience.

"This was a dream project with the perfect client and a collaborative effort from the beginning. We want the gardens to stand the test of time, as the house has. This is a garden of constant surprise. The contrasting areas ensure that the pace of the garden is varied and that these spaces set off the fine proportions of the house. This is truly a private paradise." □



WEST HOUSTON GARDEN: (clockwise from top left) Exfoliating bark marks 10 London plane trees. *Echinops barbatulus* 'Toplow Blue'. Double herbaceous borders seen through armillary. Ornate birdhouse is home to large flock each year. Covered porch with limestone arches is perfect spot for enjoying garden aspects. Sago palms offer strong textural presence. Kripihaka, or torch lily. Axial view through the orchard terminates at a limestone temple rotunda with lead-coated copper dome. *Digitalis purpurea 'Alba'*, or white foxglove, softens English staddle stone. Arbor clad in pink 'New Dawn' roses is a romantic venue when fallen petals blanket path. Filigree detail of the maze gate crafted by a local artisan.

