

Triangle

JUNE/JULY 2021

# HOME

DESIGN & DECOR®

*The*

# COLOR

*Issue*



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LIVING COLORFULLY

COLOR CRUSH:  
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# AN EYE FOR DESIGN

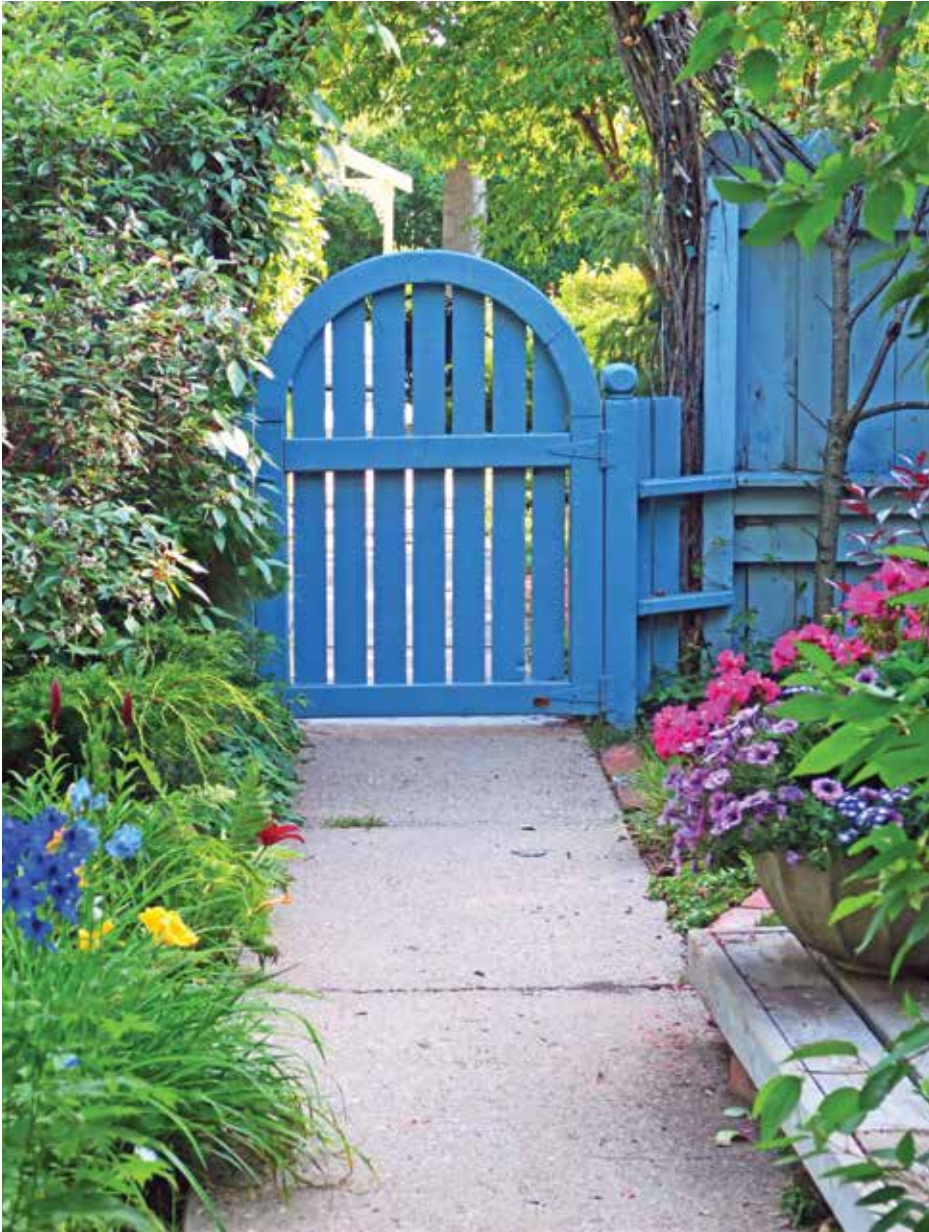
BY DAVID PAYNE



THE MAGIC OF PLANT PLACEMENT CAN ENHANCE (OR BLOCK) VIEWS IN THE YARD.

As any good magician knows, if you control the eye, you control the view. What an applicable strategy for landscaping! There are ways to direct views in a landscape, and a professional landscaper can help you achieve it successfully the first time without a lot of experimentation.

First, using different plant heights keeps the eye moving, adds drama, and organizes the landscape bed. For example, I often see a group of pine or hardwood trees in a front yard standing solo in a landscaped island. Adding medium-height trees under the pine canopy, such as redbuds or dogwoods, adds interest. By stair-stepping down to a third group of shorter azalea bushes underneath the mid-height layer, the landscape suddenly seems harmonious and complete.



“LIKE A MAGICIAN, A LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONAL KNOWS HOW TO LEAD THE EYE THROUGHOUT THE LANDSCAPE, SETTLING ON THE GOOD FEATURES AND GLOSSING OVER THE NOT-SO-DESIRABLE ONES.”

Installing the tallest trees or plants at the back of the bed, medium height plantings in the middle, and then short, compact plantings up front, provides you with the perfect progression for harmony.

When designing with height in mind, trees provide natural height at two different levels, while garden sculptures such as obelisks, birdhouses, and trellises provide alternative methods of achieving background height.

Using plants as pathway directors is another method of leading the eye to a particular view. The appropriate plantings create flow within the landscape, carrying the view to an area you wish to highlight. Narrowing the view down a pathway bordered by rows of boxwoods on each side directs the eye to a focal point such as a pair of colorful Adirondack chairs, a water feature, or a classical urn planted with colorful annuals. Narrowing the view also draws the eye to a focal point that is just beyond the homeowner's own landscape, if desirable.

Alternatively, there are often views that should be blocked from sight. Unsightly HVAC units, for instance, can disappear behind appropriate quick-growing shrubberies such as laurel or holly. Tall grasses or large movable potted plants are other ways to hide functional parts of the landscape.

Obscuring other utilitarian features, such as an entry gate to the backyard, by strategically placing shrubbery in front of them provides a subconscious barrier to entry from the street and keeps the look clean and organized.

Like a magician, a landscape professional knows how to lead the eye throughout the landscape, settling on the good features and glossing over the not-so-desirable ones. ♦