

Landscape designer Michael Schultz has created his own beautiful and welcoming garden in the middle of Portland. He cleverly layers plants like Chinese fan palms, darmera and hybrid lilies against hardy Northwest natives like rhododendrons and sword ferns to create the feeling of a lush, tropical paradise. Extensive paths invite guests to wander while plinths provide architectural interest.

# PARADISE FOUND

WRITTEN BY LORI GLEICHMAN PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILL GOODMAN



Schultz has created a casual outdoor room, complete with a fragmented roof, which he designed and built with the help of his friend Jim Bauer. The stainless steel couches and seats are covered with off white upholstery. The side tables are large rounds that Schultz salvaged from some downed Douglas firs, and the hand-woven rugs were a gift from a friend from Nepal. The rich burgundy is the perfect backdrop for the lively leopard and tiger patterns. They are just the right finishing touch to this tropical paradise.

"OUR FAVORITE TIME IS THE EVENING," Michael Schultz of Michael Schultz Landscape Design of Portland, says of the beautiful backyard garden he created and enjoys with his partner Will Goodman. "It's beautiful when the sun hits the water in the fountain and the hummingbirds are flitting from flower to flower."

Schultz deserves that time to unwind after working in the garden, which he maintains himself with just some seasonal help from his crew. "It takes quite a bit of care, but I don't mind," he says. After all, every feature has been handpicked to create just the right place for relaxing and entertaining.

Schultz originally started with one 60-by-100-foot lot, but when the opportunity presented itself to buy the house behind them, the couple gained another 6,000 square foot lot, creating about 9,000 square feet of combined backyard space. They maintained their residence in their original home, but turned the other house into an office for him and a guest suite. It also houses an art studio for Goodman, which has French doors that open to a terrace that overlooks the garden beyond.

When wandering amongst the lush landscape, two things are clear: Schultz has clearly been influenced by the Asian tropics and he's not a Northwest traditionalist.

"I started with the notion that more foliage, like the tropics, would create a retreat and enhance the sense of privacy," he says. "At the same time, I like things to be geometric. I like the calculations involved," which is clear by the amount of work that has gone into creating the perfect hardscape against which the lush plantings flourish.

The garden features extensive acid-washed concrete patios that have been precisely placed and then stained with greys, browns, and blues to reflect a tropical color palette. A poured path and bridge, stained turquoise, meanders through the garden, spanning the koi pond and then terminating at the house. The z-shaped plinths along the edges of the pond offer architectural interest and also serve a practical purpose: they provide protection from the raccoons and herons that have been spotted hunting the koi. The raised, rounded space tucked on the other side of the bridge is the perfect spot for a bar when Schultz and Goodman are entertaining.

The garden is truly an extension of the couple's living space and areas have been designed with specific purposes in mind. There are dining areas, lounging areas, and an outdoor room covered by a fragmented roof, which Schultz designed and built with the help of his friend Jim Bauer. There



Schultz deliberately painted the house a deep brown to serve as a neutral background to the lush garden. From the rattan lounge chairs, Schultz and Goodman can relax and enjoy a view of the garden. When they are entertaining, the steel cubes (designed by metal craftsman Todd McMurray of Todd McMurray Design) can be combined into a bench or scattered throughout the patio as individual seats.

Equal attention has been paid to the front of the Schultz-Goodman residence, which has a view of the downtown Portland skyline. "I wanted to celebrate the look of the house," explains Schultz, referring to the linear, mid-century design. In the front courtyard, he created the illusion of a pedestal for the house and then dressed the gardens around it with warmer earth tones and pops of purple.



are paths to quietly stroll along, edges to sit on while enjoying the musical rhythms of six different water features, or specially designed metal stools and tables to pause at while savoring a glass of wine.

Scattered throughout are a mixture of eclectic but meaningful things. The black fountain, flanked by reproduction Thai Chinese guard lions, was the first item the couple purchased for their house, long before there was a house. The large tractor wheel that flanks the outdoor room is a cherished memento of a deceased friend, while the unusual rugs were a gift from another. The side tables are large rounds from a Douglas fir that Schultz salvaged from a job site where some trees had to come down. He hauled them home and preserved them with polyurethane.

And everywhere there are plants and flowers. While Schultz clearly understands the gardening restraints

in Portland, Oregon, he has done many things to mimic the tropical paradise he is aspiring to while also ensuring there is plenty to look at during the winter. For example, Chinese fan palms are reliably hardy in the Northwest and darmera (Indian rhubarb) has a distinctly tropical look. For summer, Schultz has scattered the garden with more than 30 varieties of taller, hybrid lilies that offer an abundance of texture, color and fragrance. He tends to use brilliant shots of whites, reds, yellows and oranges to offset the rich varieties of green.

And while he calls it a "gardener's garden" in which plants have come and gone for the last four years, right now he thinks he's found the perfect combination.

"I guess you'd call it a mixture of organic and modern Avant garde," Schultz concludes. "Right now, we think it is absolutely beautiful and there's nothing I would change."



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