



Golden Trowel Winner

# VIEWS EAST

For many Seattle designers, Asian influences are a natural part of the Northwest scene



Above: The granite stair, 1, between the motor court and garden entry is planted with yellow carex, 'Silver Knight' heather, miscanthus grasses and 'Ann Folkard' geranium. 2. Right: Ken Philp, the garden's designer. Opposite: The main entry courtyard, a puzzle of moss-jointed concrete slabs, 3, offers views of the lake, 4.



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## Three cheers!

- **Category:** Professional
- **Location:** Seattle, Washington, Zone 8
- **Challenge:** Designing and constructing around existing mature trees; planting and maintaining the narrow planting strips between concrete pads.
- **Achievements:** The preservation of an existing sweetgum in the entry courtyard; addition of an outdoor living room and a fireplace; planting of moss ground tapestry and joints between path slabs; naturalistic paths at the perimeter of the property.

BECAUSE OF ITS SPARE, EXACTING DESIGN, AND BECAUSE PLANTS like heavenly bamboo, red laceleaf Japanese maple and katsura tree are included, this Yarrow Point garden, designed by Kenneth Philp of Seattle, Washington, has a distinctly Asian feel.

"Living and designing in the Seattle area, Asian-influenced design is part of the vernacular," explains the designer. "Some aspects of Japanese design are apparent in the Yarrow Point garden, such as the repetitive rhythm of wood; the blocky, stout proportions; and the horizontal lines and broad overhangs. The horizontal planes of the house lead to the larger planes of concrete in the courtyard."

Trim the color of dragon's blood decorates the windows and roof line—the result of a reaction between the Douglas fir wood and Sikken's sealer, which tends to turn the wood a little redder than it would be otherwise. The house itself even looks like an enlarged abstraction of a Japanese teahouse, a style the clients did not originally have in mind.

"They thought they wanted a traditional house layout. But in looking at the site and listening to their ideas, the architect, Rex Hohlbein, offered a modern footprint, which they loved. They jumped into the process with both feet," says Philp.

As in a traditional Japanese landscape, stones of many sizes

**Great Idea** Structure areas just outside the house as though they are rooms without walls. This creates continuity between indoors and out, as well as spaces that naturally become gathering places.



Above left to right: Bonica™ shrub roses, 1, are planted alongside the garden's meandering paths. The russet tones of the cutleaf Japanese maples, 2, converse with the asiatic red of the house window trim, 3. The garden path is flanked by lady's mantle, spreading yew and privet honeysuckle.

populate walkways, walls and even planting beds. "The granite boulders are indigenous to the Pacific Northwest and were quarried from the Cascade Mountains; they were bought from Marenako's Rock Center. Using local materials is always an important consideration in our designs to help create spaces that are appropriate for the site. In this design, the boulders are placed primarily in groupings of threes and fives, as is done in traditional Japanese garden design."

Irish and Scottish mosses become an outdoor carpet, serving a purpose similar to that of sand in a Zen garden. It provides a simple, elegant counterpoint to the harder elements of the boulders and concrete slabs. Using different types of moss creates depth and variety within the carpet.

In the main entry courtyard, a fireplace with nearby seating is so integral to the architecture, it is like a living room without enclosure. "In addition to the pool and spa, the owners wanted

a gathering space in and around the entry that was strongly connected to the house. This kind of outdoor foyer is an inviting way for visitors to enter the house instead of a more formal treatment," says Philp. "The owners wanted the patios to replace the traditional, high-maintenance 'suburban backyard.' As a result, there is no lawn, and the patios serve as the outdoor social spaces."

While the layout close to the house is formal and modern, the garden paths at the perimeter of the property are looser, meandering. The transition is marked by a change in hardscape—poured concrete slabs for walkways are punctuated by large, flat granite steps, and beyond them paths of local basalt gravel wind through *Calluna vulgaris* 'Silver Knight', *Geranium* 'Johnson's Blue', *Rosa Bonica*™ and *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Morning Light'.

Below, clockwise from top left: A medley of soft pastels: Bonica™ shrub roses, 'Johnson's Blue' geranium, 4, miscanthus grasses and 'Silver Knight' heather. Irish and Scottish mosses grow between and beside concrete slabs, 5. The courtyard garden, planted with Japanese forest grass, 6, Irish moss and set with boulders. Hinoki cypress, 7, creates a privacy wall behind the pool.

