

IN LIVING COLOR

ONE DRAMATIC GARDEN UNITED TWO DISTINCT HOUSES



A sleek granite waterfall is set into the bluestone retaining wall. Concrete slabs and grating cross the water runnel so that 100 percent of the patio space is usable.

RICHARD HARTLAGE faced some unusual challenges in designing Joanna and David Beitel's Montlake garden. Their request for a flat lawn for the kids and a terrace for outdoor dining weren't out of the ordinary. But Joanna, with degrees in ornamental horticulture and urban forestry, had an ambitious list of features, including year-round interest in hardscape and plants, plus water and an outdoor fireplace. And

then there was the master list of "must-have" plants in her favored color palette of red, orange, periwinkle and chartreuse.

The most demanding part of the project, and key to its success, was melding garden and architecture. The Beitels remodeled an old Dutch colonial, then bought the lot next door and built a second, much more modern house, attached to the first. To keep their double house in scale with the neighborhood, the couple asked for two



What Joanna Beitel calls "the cornerless corner" of the modern house (designed by Holden Withington of Beers/Withington) opens the living room to the garden. Just outside is the football-shaped arbor and laminated polyester fireplace from 3form.



A wide sandstone path, raised beds and a little seating area greet visitors who come through the back gate.

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gardens in front so the houses appear separate when viewed from the street. Around back, they wanted a garden that would smoothly merge the discrepant house styles.

Hartlage, of AHBL Inc. in Tacoma, was undaunted. "Richard handled the elevation changes very gracefully," says Joanna of the transition between the back fence and the back door. He designed broad, grassy terraces to span the space between the back gate and the generous patio. An arcing metal arbor reflects the new roofline while sheltering the patio's seating area. When the white wisteria grows up to cover the football-shaped arbor,

it'll dangle fragrant white racemes of flowers overhead for those lucky enough to be sitting beneath.

"I chose modern materials to reflect the modernity of the house," says Hartlage of the sophisticated palette of bluestone, metal, granite, concrete and sandstone used for patio, retaining walls and water feature. The gray and beige of the hardscape serves as a calming backdrop to colorful pots, plantings and a chartreuse fireplace.

"Color doesn't scare me," says Joanna. "I grew up here, and we need lots of color in the Northwest." Her love of brilliant shades shows



The little front patio is paved in sandstone. The square fountain is made of granite, and the periwinkle wall, made of optical grade acrylic by 3form, lights up at night.



Along the street, the Dutch Colonial still has its brick wall and old garden, while the new house is distinguished by a mesh-like metal fence. In the parking strip, brilliant pink penstemon 'Garnet,' the ornamental grass *Stipa gigantea* and boulders for sitting and play welcome the neighborhood.

in the red house, orange and chartreuse plantings, and a translucent periwinkle wall on the front patio.

The periwinkle wall, which lights up to glow purple at night, anchors the little patio in front of the house. This sheltered spot faces due east, so is great for morning coffee as well as overflow space for parties. Hartlage designed a perforated steel fence, which allows for both light and privacy. Along the street, he designed a colorful, textured parking-strip garden that invites passers-by to pause and relax, with big rocks for climbing and sitting.

Three years after construction, the garden's wide borders are filling in with masses of foliage and flowers. Chartreuse lady's mantle, Japanese forest grass and hostas carpet the shady beds beneath mounds of 'Blue Billow' hydrangeas. Japanese maples and parrotia color up in autumn. In winter, the display is red twig dogwood, double white and dark purple hellebores.

With all the massing and hardscape, did Joanna get her long list of "must-have" plants? She admits to taking out a few swathes of ornamental grasses to make room for allium, day lilies and spring bulbs. Now the kids' badminton net stretches across the back lawn, and Joanna tucks geranium 'Rozanne' into any bare spot. "It was too big a space to hope I could ever have gotten it right on my own," says Joanna. "Working collaboratively with Richard was so much fun." 📍

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