



WORLDWIDE

EDITION 2024 — ISSUE 2



Midsummer

I round the corner of Undermountain Road while on a walk with our dog, Maggie, and we see a hawk touch down in the field just beyond. At left is a view of the spot, about two miles from our house in Lenox, Massachusetts. The scene is mesmerizing. The flora and fauna, the feeling of nature so untouched, although in this area, much of it is less than a hundred years old.

I don't remember reveling in the crisp, layered sweetness of birdsong as a child. Maybe it's because I grew up in the suburbs, a mess of malls and manicured lawns. Maybe it's because I'm older now and I appreciate nature on a level I never had before. In any case, birdsong is incredible. The symphony of sounds I hear in the morning, looking out at our little garden, is music to my ears.

The way we interact with our surroundings, the way we take it all in and adapt and grow alongside the beauty that surrounds us is fascinating. Grand design takes so many cues from the natural world. How could it not?

I sit watching the scenes of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* unfolding in the theater of Lincoln Center. The series of follies based on an enchanting summer night comes at the perfect time; I'm looking for inspiration for this very opening piece and find it in Shakespeare. Nymphs, fairies, mystical things that are magical simply because they are intertwined with the depths of the great forests of Athens, in a literally otherworldly scene.

Sitting on a bench in the middle of Central Park, I forget I'm in the city for a while. Feeling the crunch of stones beneath my feet, the sun warming the top of my head, a walk in my favorite garden becomes a moment of wonder at the beauty and ingenuity of nature that can work its way into a symphony given water, sunshine, and good soil.

As we bask in the long sun hours of summer, I use this issue to bring special focus to three incredibly unique and creative people I know, all doing amazing things for and with nature.

Luciana Garabello uses life as her canvas, living in full color and creating vivid watercolors that invoke a mystic wonderland of forests where magical creatures and imaginations roam. Joe James is a cartoonist and landscape architect who designs and educates with a spirit of wonder. Monica Prado creates beautiful porcelain bouquets, of and inspired by nature.

This issue of MORE is a feast for the senses. Colors jump off the pages, and wildlife fills the margins of every story. A garden is a microcosm of life in so many ways. Take in everything you can, and share it all for others to enjoy.

Kim Duval.

Founding Principal

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Original Cover Art by Luciana Garabello, 2024.

EL TIG

Luciana Garabello's Journey through the Forest





RE



L'OFF

If Tigresita was happy, she told her mother beautiful and very funny things . . . But if Tigresita was sad, she stayed silent, to hide that she felt strange, different from others.

“Is something wrong, Tigresita?” her mother asked when she noticed how she slouched. Sometimes Tigresita closed in on herself like a snail.

“No offense, Mom, I’m in one of my loops. Today I feel like we all fell off a cloud and we don’t know how to return to our true home.”

You’d be forgiven for mistaking the fanciful world of Luciana Garabello, populated by oversized trees, creeping vines, and zebra-headed people, for a dreamscape. After all, the painter lives with one foot toeing everyday responsibilities, and one foot softly planted in a magical realm where a wish can spring to life, like Athena from the head of Zeus, at any time.

“All my life has been like a coincidence,” Garabello says. “I feel like I never had to fight. Things just happened; I manifested them.”

The Buenos Aires–based artist’s earliest drawing experiments began underneath the drafting table where her grandfather, a civil engineer, sketched plans for bridges. When her mother, an architect, signed her daughter up for dance classes at five years old, Garabello used it as an opportunity to explore an inner world of sound and movement, qualities she would later translate to her art.

Fast forward more than a decade, and Garabello landed at the University of Salvador in the Argentine capital. “I was awful, awful, awful,” she says of her general coursework. “But in art class, I was always the best.” She earned a bachelor’s degree in theatrical design, and studied figure drawing, gouache, and acrylics.

Despite dabbling in smaller formats, Garabello was drawn to the larger than life, whether set design, costumes, or murals—the latter perhaps subconsciously absorbed from the city around her, where a vibrant street art scene had taken root during the social unrest that followed the deposal of Isabel Perón, the world’s first female president, in 1976.

Original Art by Luciana Garabello.

Story by Robin Catalano.

Photos by Pompi Gutniski (originally featured in L’Officiel).

As a young college grad, Garabello found herself bitten and smitten, by the travel bug and a Swiss man, respectively. She parlayed her facility with languages—Spanish, English, and French—into a job as a flight attendant. But during her eight years in the airline industry, Garabello recalls, “I couldn’t draw. I couldn’t paint. I blocked that part of me.”

Still, she says, “Even when I was on a plane, saying, ‘Chicken or pasta?’ I always knew I was going to be an artist.”

Garabello returned to Argentina, where she and a friend started an indie shoe brand. Keeping the business running grew stressful once her daughters, Olivia and Luisa (now 17 and 13), were born. Garabello’s brother, a Berlin-based painter, encouraged her to refocus on creativity. She bought new papers, brushes, and paints, and worked in fits and starts, creaky with the rust of long-dormant passions.

Several months later, she hit her stride, with watercolors that bear testament to a perfectly-imperfect philosophy, where stains and smudges aren’t reasons to start over, but become part of whimsical landscapes with grinning forest critters, lanky-limbed humans, and joyful, running children. She returns again and again to nature, conjuring flower-strewn meadows and lush jungles, where you can practically hear the croaking call of the toucan, feel the dampness settle over your skin, and smell the flowers gently folding their petals in preparation for nightfall.

The work began to roll in, a process Garabello describes—as she often describes life events—“like magic.” In rapid succession, she was commissioned to design label art for winemaker Lagarde, create murals for the school in Buenos Aires’ Olympic Village, and illustrate for an Hermès accessories collection. She mounted solo exhibitions in several galleries.

In 2019, a major US financial services firm selected her to paint a mural in the cupola of their office in the historic Gath & Chaves department store building in downtown Buenos Aires. Garabello frequently rode her bike into the city at midnight, and worked in the pre-dawn hours. She finished the mural—which evokes a walk in a shrouded woodland among sturdy trunks, sinuous climbing plants, and breeze-blown branches that extend their leaves in a many-fingered caress—two months before the COVID-19 pandemic squatted over the world.



Now Tigresita was the one who took her mother by the hand and guided her at a fast pace.

“Mom, you are the best mom I have.”

“Thank you, sweetheart, but I’m the only one you have.”

“No offense, Mom, but I already realized that I have no other options.”

Garabello retreated to her home in the Saavedra barrio, along the northern edge of Buenos Aires, where she maintains—no surprise—a teeming garden. (Tending it, deciding what to plant, feeling leaf textures between her fingertips, while sipping a cup of coffee is, she says, a “glorious moment of the day.”) She ruminated. She danced in her pajamas. She danced with her daughters, danced with her dog, Ringo. She painted, and painted some more.

**EVEN WHEN
I WAS ON
A PLANE,
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In 2021, the Cervantes National Theater in Buenos Aires invited Garabello to illustrate a children's book. Because every moment of serendipity leads to another for the artist, the seed for a new book was planted.

Luisa was diagnosed with autism in 2023, and Garabello's own diagnosis soon followed. The painter explains, "Instead of it being something to cry about, I said, 'Wait a second. I always take advantage of errors or stains. I don't try to hide mistakes. That's not who I am.'"

The result: *Sin Ofender* ("No Offense"), released in February 2024 by India Ediciones. In creating it, Garabello was forced to adapt her large-format style to the confines of the page, which required learning to work with an iPad—a small victory for a woman who calls herself the "most analog person in the world." Featuring Garabello's signature where-the-wild-things-are watercolors, the story follows the cat-masked Tigresita ("little tiger," a nod to Luisa's astrological sign), her mother, and their dog as they journey through the park to retrieve big sister Lilo before an oncoming storm.

Garabello just wrapped an exhibition for the book at the iconic Centro Cultural San Martín in Buenos Aires, where she was touched by fans' reactions. "I'm really happy to be helping all of these people who are on the spectrum or waiting for a diagnosis," she says. "A lot of them are women. Women are usually hard to diagnose because they're good at being functional or masking the symptoms."

Mother and daughter are thriving now that they no longer feel compelled to hide their divergent styles of learning, thinking, and emoting. For Garabello, this has meant leaning into the autistic/artistic duality, and letting her creativity take her to places only visited in

fantasy, but that might just proffer a lifeline to hurting humans in this world.

Centro Cultural San Martín will revive the exhibit next April, for Autism Awareness Month. Garabello would like to take the show on the road, and find an international publisher to distribute translations abroad. She has more books in her, although she doesn't yet know what shape they might take.



Like everything in Garabello's career, it's about allowing the right idea, the right moment, the right collaborators to materialize. "When I found my purpose, because I think this is my purpose, it was a big relief," she says. "Not only drawing or creating beautiful things, but having a purpose for me is everything. I can't explain how it worked, but I said yes, and it happened."

From laughing so much, Tigresita's mask slipped. Then her mother took it off and tried it on herself.

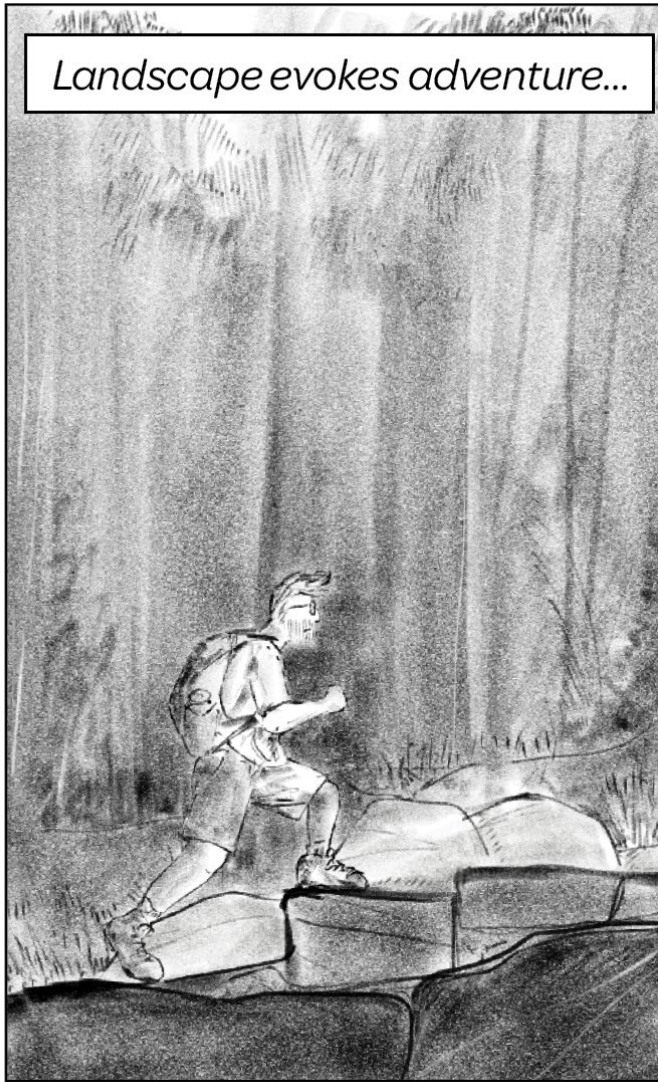
"Tigresita, you are my great teacher. From you I learn the strength of laughter and the power of words," said her mother. "My heart beats so much that I am brave from loving you."



The Story Teller

Visioning Landscapes with Joe James,
Eponymous Practice

Landscape evokes adventure...





“Unpacking Landscape I: Exploring Acadia, September 2022” Cartoon by Joe James

We've all felt the magic: the exhale as you walk in the forest. How your morning coffee tastes better on a patio garden. At times when connecting to nature is hard to put into words, you just feel it. Landscape architect Joe James, founder of Eponymous Practice, well understands this connection and he channels these feelings as his muse.

Joe didn't always think about landscape as a profession. As a teenager, he envisioned a career as a comic artist. In college, he thought about architecture. In the end Joe pivoted to landscape architecture, lured by how the profession combines design with ecology.

"I've always been interested in the natural world, but also the arts, and have occasionally thought of landscape as four-dimensional sculpture that changes over time," he explains. "I think about the seasons and how plants grow, the elements of surprise when moving through the landscape." Like being surprised by the fragrance of a lilac as you walk by unnoticed of its subtle beauty.

"I love when that happens," he says. "You smell it but don't know where it is. I think about plants revealing themselves as you move through a space. For example, clethra is fragrant in late July and early August, so it's a good choice if that's when you spend time in your garden. I like to consider how all the senses combine to capture the magic, how scents often draw you into a space, and establish your memories of those moments."

Joe works throughout New England and New York. Gardens in New York City, especially Manhattan, offer opportunities for surprise and revelation. Joe relishes the times he is able to design often micro landscapes which become juxtaposed against their more dense, urban surroundings.



Story by Laura Mars



*Lotte New York Palace Courtyard as designed by Eponymous Practice and EDG Architects.
Image by EDG Architecture and Engineering, Eponymous Practice and Pixready*

As part of a larger design team, he is redesigning the courtyard at Lotte New York Palace, a luxury hotel on Madison Avenue.

The Villard Houses, as Lotte was called when it was built in 1884 by railroad magnate Henry Villard, was comprised of six individual brownstone residences connected to read as one palatial home in the classical Roman palazzo style so popular at the time.

Joe explains, “The design for the courtyard renovation at the Lotte NY Palace is an interpretation of an Italian Renaissance courtyard. It’s restrained and deferential to the original architecture by McKim Meade & White. It doesn’t restore the original design, which is no longer appropriate for modern use. Instead it respects the space’s tradition and elevates the landscape to meet the stature of the restored facade.”

As a Landmarked property, and a privately owned public space, any changes to the courtyard come with specific requirements to retain not only its historic character but also to serve the public good. While it is primarily a paved courtyard, the space is being renovated to better support plantings with improved soils, irrigation and drainage. Joe is using London Plane trees whose canopies have been pleached (trained into square boxy forms). Topiary boxwood, bay laurel and other evergreens in planters flank the space next to seating areas for guests of the hotel. When work is complete, the courtyard will once again be an oasis in the heart of midtown, full of birdsong and bursting with life in all seasons.

Before embarking on his journey with Eponymous Practice, Joe was a principal with the renowned landscape architectural firm Reed Hilderbrand. He was involved with the Houston Arboretum, Seaport Common in Boston, Massachusetts, and the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, in Washington, DC, among many others.

Now that he is the principal of his his own burgeoning firm, one of his current projects is not a living landscape at all: Joe is writing a graphic novel.

“I never completely stopped drawing cartoons,” he explains. “When I started Eponymous Practice, I was looking for a way to connect landscape architecture with my love of storytelling. Seeing my kids, now 12 and 14, reading graphic novels made me think, Why not a graphic novel about landscape architecture?”

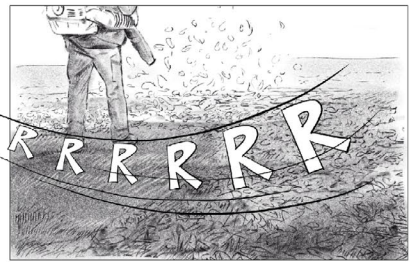
The drawings convey the ephemeral qualities of the landscape that he appreciates. He set the story in Boston’s Franklin Park, where characters celebrate the change of seasons in much the same way we do in our gardens.

“I want to create a fun story that introduces kids to landscape architecture. It will share the profession but also information about ecology, resilient infrastructure and the importance of public green spaces.” he explains. For these fabulous ideas, Joe was awarded both a Fellowship for Innovation and Leadership from the Landscape Architecture Foundation, and a MacDowell Fellowship.

At home in Bristol, Rhode Island, Joe, his wife, also a landscape architect, and their children spend lots of time outdoors, ditching their phones and screens to enjoy nature whenever then can. “Being together out in the landscape is our way of recharging,” he says.

His personal gardens are a work in progress. A grove of witch hazel on the north side of the house is slowly replacing part of the lawn, resulting in less mowing and more pollinators. Behind an outbuilding on the property, he has a secret garden, with a firepit and the family canoe. Over time, gardens have come to mean something different for Joe. “There is a peacefulness about being around plants.”

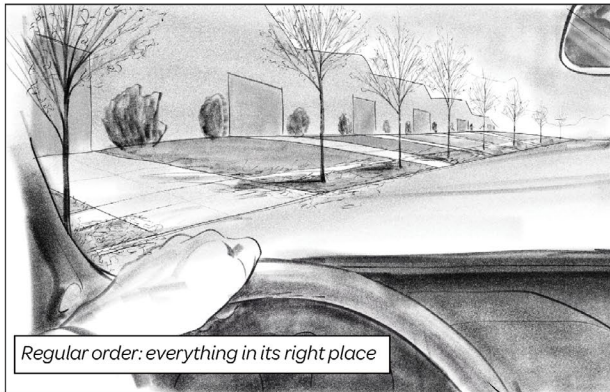
When asked which is his favorite, he laughs. “I can’t answer that! It’s like asking me to name a favorite child.”



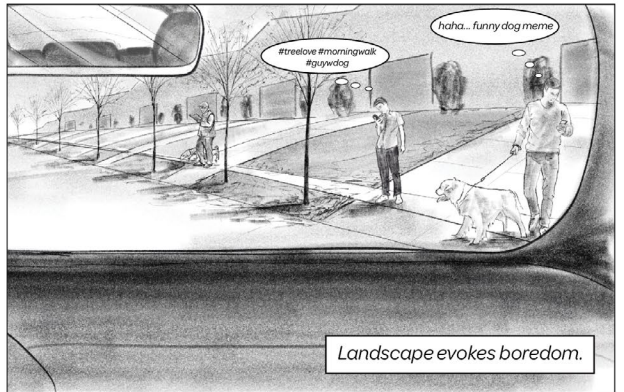
landscape evokes satisfaction...



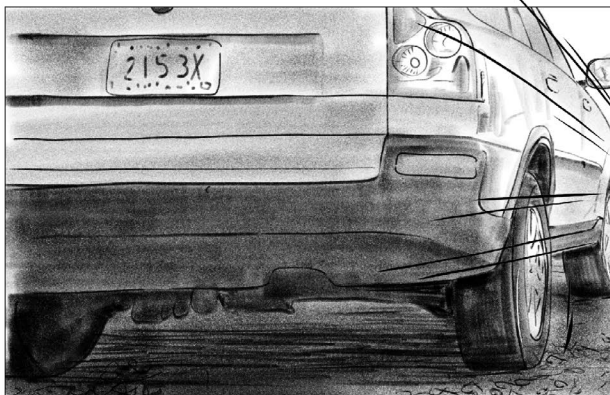
...and also anxiety



Regular order: everything in its right place



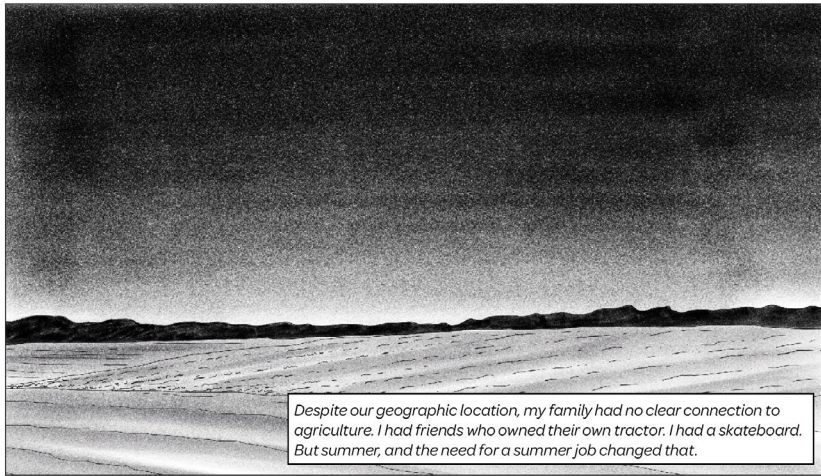
Landscape evokes boredom.



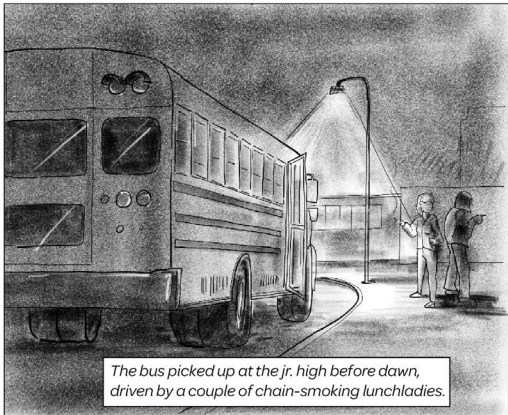
"Unpacking Landscape 3: Suburban Dualities, November 2022" Cartoon by Joe James



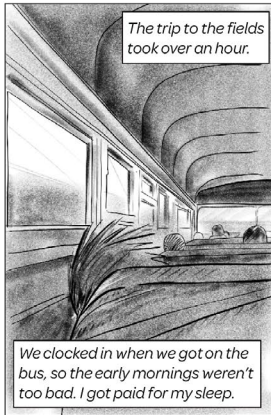
The sight of cornfields aligned to the Midwestern grid brings back summer spent detassling corn.



Despite our geographic location, my family had no clear connection to agriculture. I had friends who owned their own tractor. I had a skateboard. But summer, and the need for a summer job changed that.



The bus picked up at the jr. high before dawn, driven by a couple of chain-smoking lunchladies.

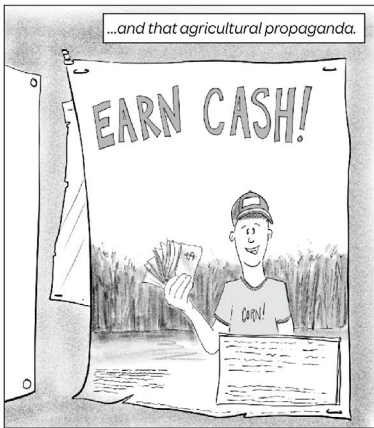


The trip to the fields took over an hour.

We clocked in when we got on the bus, so the early mornings weren't too bad. I got paid for my sleep.



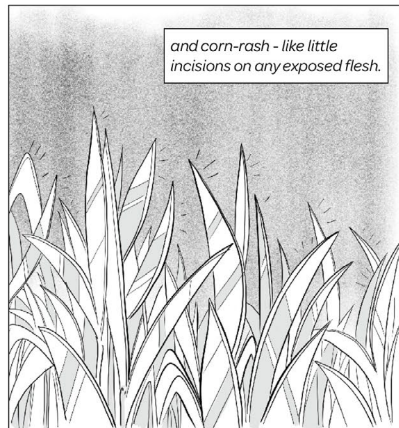
I should have questioned the corn cob with wings...



...and that agricultural propoganda.



We suffered chaffing from dew-soaked clothes...



and corn-rash - like little incisions on any exposed flesh.

Those summers, we were the children of the corn...



...and despite it all, we formed an unlikely bond with our landscape.



Jen Lial Photography



PORCELAIN

Monica Prado's Perfect Flowers

Gardens grow with silver bells and cockle shells and pretty maids all in a row -- so goes the beloved English nursery rhyme. Of this quixotic tale comes the myriad ways to grow a garden, not dissimilar to the ways in which Monica Prado coaxes the softness of delicate flower petals from the hardness of porcelain.

Prado, founder of Monica Prado Fine Ceramics, was seventeen when she discovered her unique technique for molding clay. As part of a work crew repairing a collapsed bridge in Chinautla, Guatemala, she observed villagers scouring riverbeds for clay to create pitchers, bowls, and dishes. The villagers decorated their pieces with native plant and animal designs, and then applied a glaze made from jungle plants.

"I was mesmerized," she recalls, speaking with a spiritual edge to her voice. "I spent all my downtime watching families create these beautiful vessels. They were very patient and allowed me to get close and observe. One group was in charge of the kiln and hauling the heavy clay up from the riverbed. Another group shaped the work and still others did the decorations. Everyone had a role. I saw how this brought an entire community together. It was very beautiful. I was given a few pieces as gifts, some of which I still have."

In 1979, Chinautla had no electricity or running water. When Prado first travelled there she rode a bus and then set off the last few miles to the village on foot. Prado remembers European visitors appearing out of the jungle to buy the ceramics locals had made. But traditions of the culture were not in selling ceramics as a business enterprise. Villagers used what they made and brought out their best pieces for celebrations. The 1970's ushered in a historic population boom in Guatemala and today, Chinautla is very different. But its ceramics remain a hallmark of the town.

When Prado begins to mold her own precious petals out of her studio in southern California, she uses not only her hands but her ears. The clay speaks to her like a living being. "It has its own elasticity, and I'm very careful to let it fold and bend the way it wants to. Working with clay allows me to mimic the movement of nature, to bring life to the flowers. There is something satisfying about using your hands

Photos by Monica Prado. Story by Laura Mars

to make something from the earth into art, to touch something that is harvested and use it make something interesting.”

She is moved by what she calls the exuberance of nature, and works by focusing on the emotion elicited in her by nature—whether a branch, a leaf, a flower. She points toward giant sequoia trees, or a super bloom, or the migration of monarch butterflies as the most exuberant expression. For her, it’s a “feeling of awe and magnificence” that is hard to put into words.

Prado is also influenced by Spanish architect Antoni Gaudi. “His work is so organic, so much of it encrusted with nature -- leaves, birds, insects, flowers. It’s amazing that he has melded structures that people live in with nature.”

Last year, Prado was honored as one of sixteen new artists selected to participate in a unique festival that has been running for nearly one hundred years. The Festival of Arts Pageant of the Masters event occurs every year in Laguna Beach, California - at an open air amphitheater built into the side of a mountain. The show runs during the summer and features a set of temporary galleries for the artists selected for display, as well as a performance based on a unique theme each year. To say the event is sensational may be an understatement. Some visitors see the show multiple times in a season. The theme for 2024 is “À La Mode: The Art of Fashion.” and Prado has made several new pieces for the show.

Her flowers are made from colored porcelains imported from Spain. If she can’t find the color she’s looking for, she’ll blend her own -- like the orange/red for her poppies, with striking gold centers. “The color of a flower’s first bloom is very deep, and then gets paler,” she explains. “Recreating that brings authenticity to the

flower. She can’t wait to get her hands on a pale teal which she knows will look wonderful as succulents.

In addition to being their true-to-life colors, Prado’s flowers have a realistic feel. “After I shape the petals, I use elements of nature, collecting leaves and flowers from my garden and a nearby canyon trail, to texturize, to make each piece more authentic,” she gleams.

As she hand-sculpts every piece, she allows the clay to stretch and pull as it wants to, so that each flower looks different despite the same veining or similar gathering of petals. Creating nature from porcelain is not quick; most pieces take months to complete. Each flower sculpture starts with a spherical porcelain base that the flowers get affixed to. In the case of her blue hydrangea, hundreds of individual flowers were attached to the base, and to each other, with slip, a milkshake-like clay. It took a month and a half, working on it every day.

Prado has two kilns, each about three feet square. Once she’s happy with a piece, it goes into the kiln for a first firing, called bisque, making the flowers strong enough to handle and to be painted and/or glazed. Sometimes she just glazes the tips of the flowers, sometimes she combines matte and shiny finishes, sometimes she works in white and adds color. Once the glaze is applied, the piece goes back for a second firing. “You can’t rush it,” she says. “The piece has to dry at its own pace. If you set it out in the sun to dry faster, it will crack.”

In the case of the blue hydrangea, her most delicate piece, the final magic happened when it was mailed to its destination without one broken petal. It was miraculous, not unlike her work.











The blue hydrangea, in situ in a home in New England.



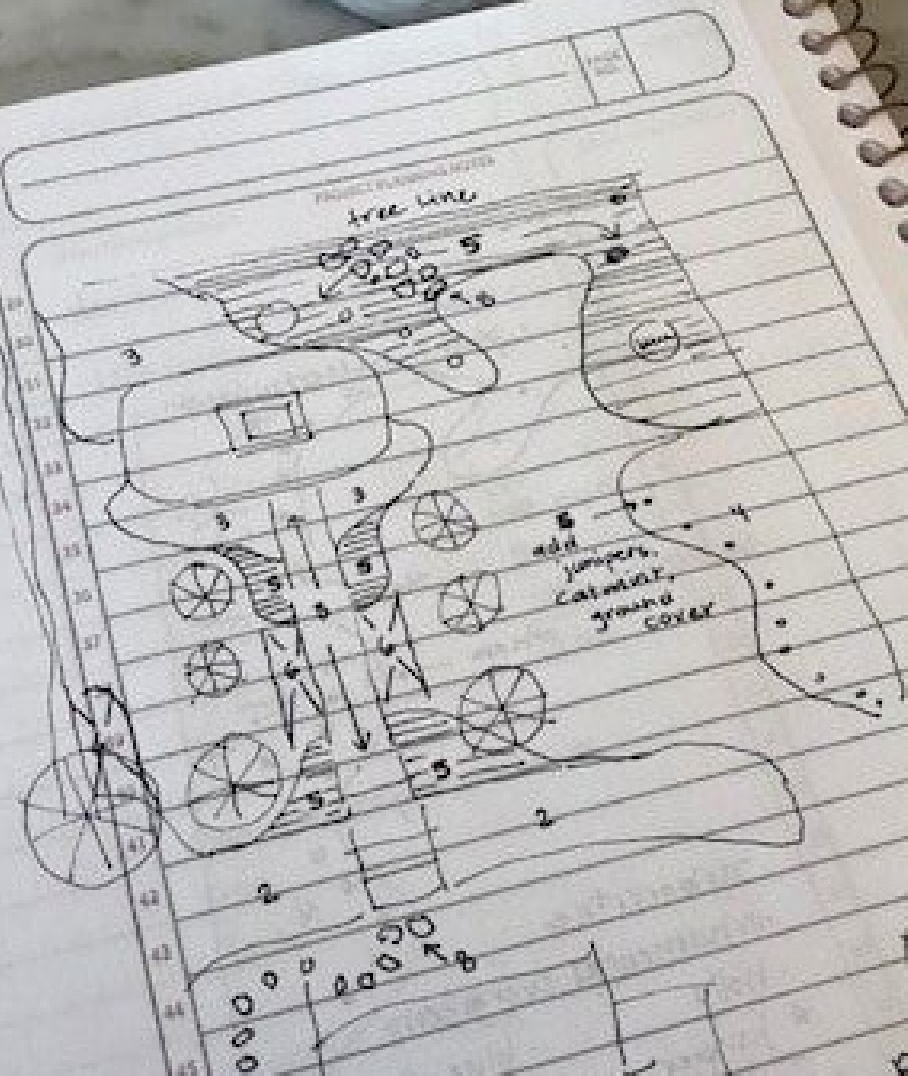
THYME

Ten Years into a Garden's Journey





DESIGNED BY
DATE
PROJECT LOCATION/NOTES



8th phase - Stones stepping
stones to complete
walkway & paths



A benefit of buying a fixer-upper is that the yard is often a blank canvas. A downside is that the yard is a blank canvas, meaning you may be starting from scratch – or worse!

We should have had our soil tested. First mistake. We dug up wild onions and thyme for years. (Wild onions are impossible! Almost as possible as bishop's weed, a prolific groundcover that takes over everything in a New England garden within a matter of a season.)

We should have considered the amount of cut and fill we would need to dig by hand, because a backhoe could not make it to the pitched rear yard terrain, considering the narrow side yards of our Victorian-era street.

Thankfully, the previous owners left a second wheelbarrow next to the dilapidated shed in the woods for our use.

We started our gardens in 2016, just after my husband, Brian, and I emerged from the first renovation of our home's interior. We had so much zest and energy, partly owing to the fact that we were still in our mid-30's. Every weekend during the summer of 2016, we were out in our yard just at the crack of dawn, wheelbarrows and shovels in hands, pushing and pulling dirt, creating something out of almost nothing.

The summer of 2016, we installed a system of perimeter french drains around our foundation, and excavated for a long stone path that would lead to an area further into our backyard, just before a bit of woods on our property, soon to be built with a new stone bonfire pit and seating. Elsewhere in the backyard, we dug up a clothesline with footings four feet deep. We dug up several overgrown lilac and other bramble bushes. A few were repurposed to line a path along our side yard.

And, we took our excavated organic material to a neighboring's town gravel and mulch pit that accepts dirt for its compost operation, going practically under the cover of night so no one could see how bad our donations were. We must have pulled a hundred grubs per square inch of dirt.

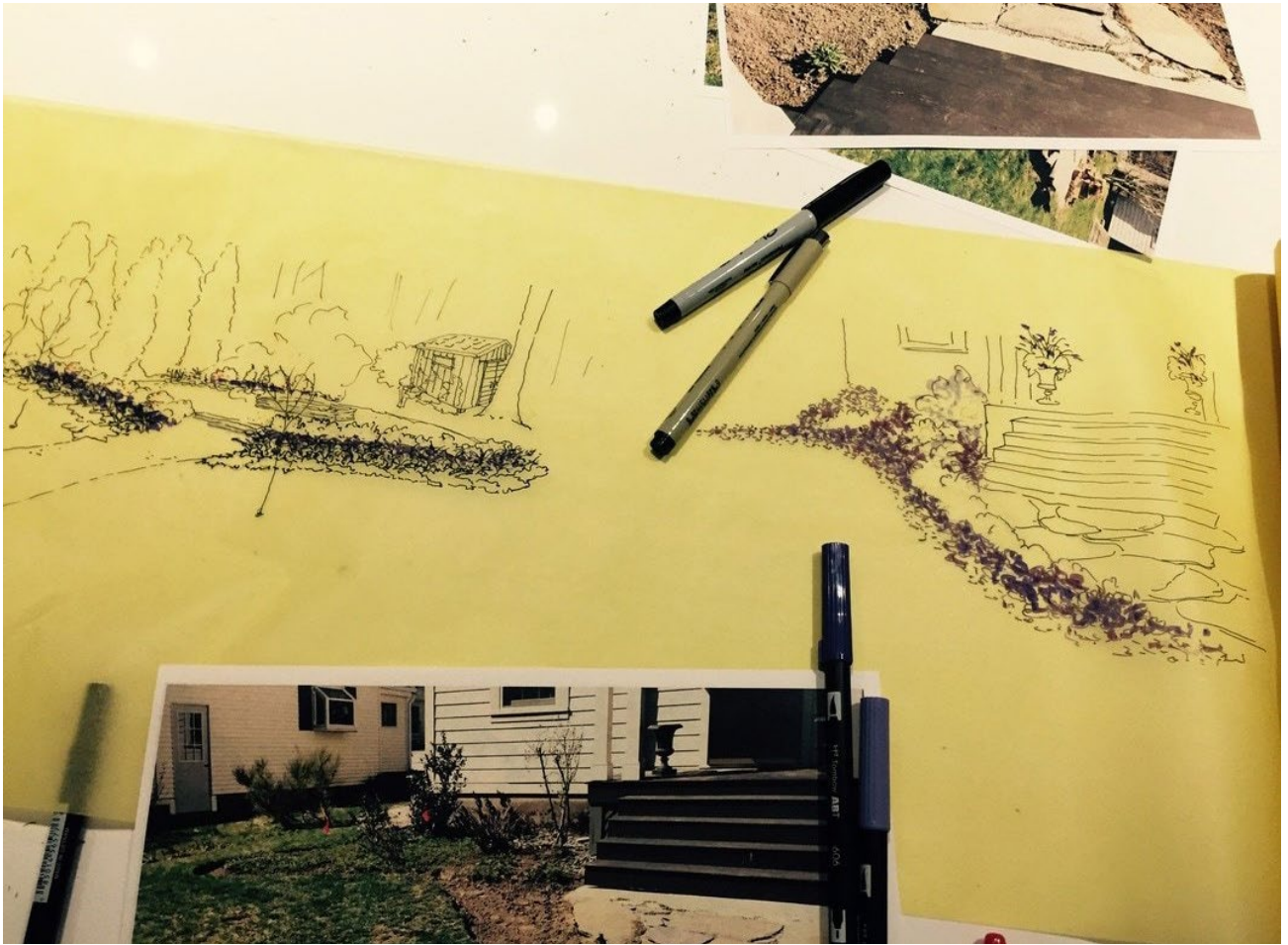
After about a year's worth of digging, the hardscape areas had taken shape.

Summers two through five (2017 to 2020) were more of the same. In case no one told you, a garden takes YEARS to build. Congratulations if you're able to get in most of your plantings in a season. When you're doing it by hand, and reimagining an entire property, there aren't enough hours in the day. And then, of course, trips to the nursery make you want all the flowers in the world. You buy things you don't have space for and hope you can find a spot.

We have had about a sixty-six percent success rate with our plantings, possibly because of our black thumbs, possibly because of our naivety on positioning, definitely because of the terrible soil we ameliorated over the past ten years with dozens and dozens of cubic yards of compost from a local farm.

I started a spreadsheet to catalogue all the species we had planted. I'm now up way over a hundred. The plants that have done well have been the heartiest. Those of you who cultivate roses: Boy, are those fickle little plants. Catmint is amazing. Not only is it hearty pretty much anywhere in our yard, but it's a pollinator species, helping to keep all the rest of our plants flourishing.

Our fruit trees were an early lesson: we initially planted two each of cherry, pear, apple, and peach. Within a season, our peach trees decided the New England winters were too much. Then when we added on to the house in 2021, we had to dig up our beloved cherry trees for the new construction. Our pear and apple trees now stand proudly lining



(above) Sketches for color concept for our firepit and front entry; focusing on purples and deep pinks in the landscape created harmony with our black, navy and white interiors.

(near right) The front of our house, as seen in the original real estate listing from 2013.

(far right) The front of our house, as seen this June.







June 2016

June 2024

our stone path, but even they were tough. I learned that pear trees have branches that like to go straight up. We've had to train our branches with posts and ribbon over the years to keep them looking graceful. Our apple trees took a bit to flourish, but now they are healthy and producing hundreds of fruits each season. Last year I baked four tarts just from what was left by the time we came back to the house from California.

In just a couple years, we realized the effects of crowding. I wanted a garden where no mulch would be visible, and we have accomplished that! The downside is that we need to transplant pretty much every summer. The upside is that we now have plenty of plants!

We have several zones in our gardens: a lower patio bed, on the north side of the house, with nothing but catmint and creeping phlox. In a bed below our stone retaining wall, we have rhododendron, two of which have been moved three times over the course of the past eight years and are finally thriving. That area is mixed with hosta and pachysandra and creates a nice bit of color when viewed through our back windows and doors.

Farther up our steep backyard hill, we have a zone of conifers sprinkled with weigela, foxgloves, thistle, astilbe, climbing roses, little yellow flowers that we can't recall the name of to save our lives, false indigo, and roses of Sharon. The conifers include a white pine that has doubled in size every year since we planted it, as well as several pairs of ornamental dwarf Alberta spruce that we take from our front planters after Christmas each year, and a pair of blue spruce that will thin at the bottom to make way for lower groundcover species once they mature.

Around our firepit we have native blueberries, strawberries, lilies, matchstick bushes, catmint, sedums, and butterfly bushes. We HAD about a dozen lavender plants but they too succumbed to our black thumbs a few years ago.

In our front yard, we lost a Japanese maple that predated us. It was hideous, and it had to go. In its place we planted a bed of hearty succulents, and to replace the shade we planted two elm trees. One is already well over ten feet tall! We have a beautiful border bed of peonies that leads into a hedge of lilacs on our western side. It provides much needed color early in the season.

A magical part of building a garden is seeing how the colors and shapes intertwine over time. Plants make room for one another. Shade plays such an important role in helping nearly everything in a garden thrive, but too much shade stunts growth in many species. The sheer volume of birds that flock to our lawn is just incredible. We also have black bears, chipmunks, squirrels, foxes, fisher cats, and lots of other small animals that come to our yard for the nuts, berries and fruit we have left for them by design. Our catmint hums with bees and butterflies from June to September. It's glorious.

The best part is that any patch of grass can become something more -- something so much better. Any part of the landscape can be returned to nature, either highly curated like our landscape or naturally, by taking a hands-off approach. My definition of a garden is any space that has been granted back to nature with *intention*.

In a previous issue of MORE, I ran a story about a man in the UK who focuses on rewilding. Chris D'Agorne lets nature take its course, and he brings landscapes back to rugged, fruitful, beautiful living things where perhaps previously we humans had sucked them dry of any productivity. It's so important to keep building up these things we tear down, not just for our own awe and wonder, but for the benefit of all the natural things that surround us and give us life on this planet.

I have a treasure trove of failures and successes in our garden, but my biggest success is just the simple sights and sounds and smells of what we created that bring me joy in the morning, afternoon, and night.

THE DRIVE TO DOVER PLAINS

Photographs from the Countryside





Looking out over Gould Meadows - W. Hawthorne and Interlaken Road - Lenox, Massachusetts





The entrance drive to a home off Route 41 in Salisbury, Connecticut



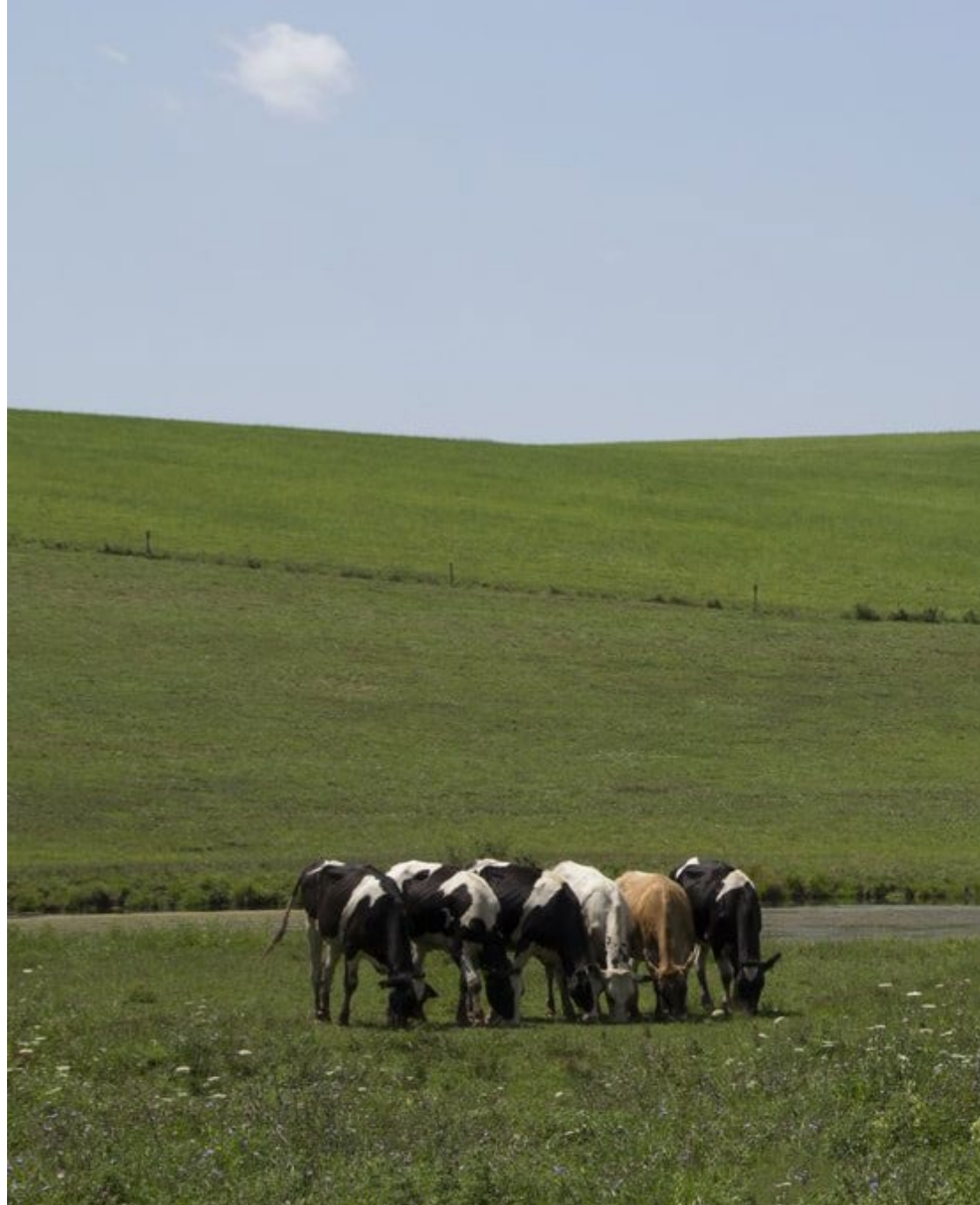


Looking out over Tory Hill Route 41 - just outside Salisbury, Connecticut





Clothes drying in a yard near Amenia, New York





Cows grazing not far from Dover Plains Metronorth train station in Dover Plains, New York





A close-up of the cows making creating their own landscape



Until Next Time...

Nature and human life are patterns of one another, intertwined with one another in every way. Gardening is a way to see this as true. Some things grow in any environment; you can throw a weed almost anywhere and it will grow. Often the most beautiful, delicate things are a little less hearty. A rose takes care, maintenance. And some things triumph through seemingly impossible circumstances, like a tree that begins to regenerate even after it's been chopped, oftentimes years later. It's an awesome thing to experience this in real time. You plant hoping for incredible growth. You get rain for a month, or a deep winter, or a drought, or high winds. After, you see what still thrives.

And the beauty takes on a life all its own. Plants spread, some flourish, some are held back. Some creep through and create a collage in the shadows of something larger.

Design is analogous: a concept is formed, and tested against reality. And iterated. The interesting turn is that in buildings, at some point things must be solidified. Construction is not easily dismantled; it's not plastic. And so like fostering the bloom on a rose, planning and care are unending if you want to achieve beauty and simplicity.

I'm fascinated by it all. There are so many existential and rhetorical questions I pose to myself when I look out at our own gardens. I constantly draw new comparisons, and learn so many lessons I've applied over the years to life, relationships, design, art, the list goes on. The best part is that the process repeats forever. In paying attention to the patterns of plants, you can be inspired for almost anything.

I'm so happy you've joined me on this journey, and I look forward to hearing your garden stories. At left is me toiling away in our yard, digging out Phase Four of our own landscape plan. Are we ever really done?

Much love and hugs.



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